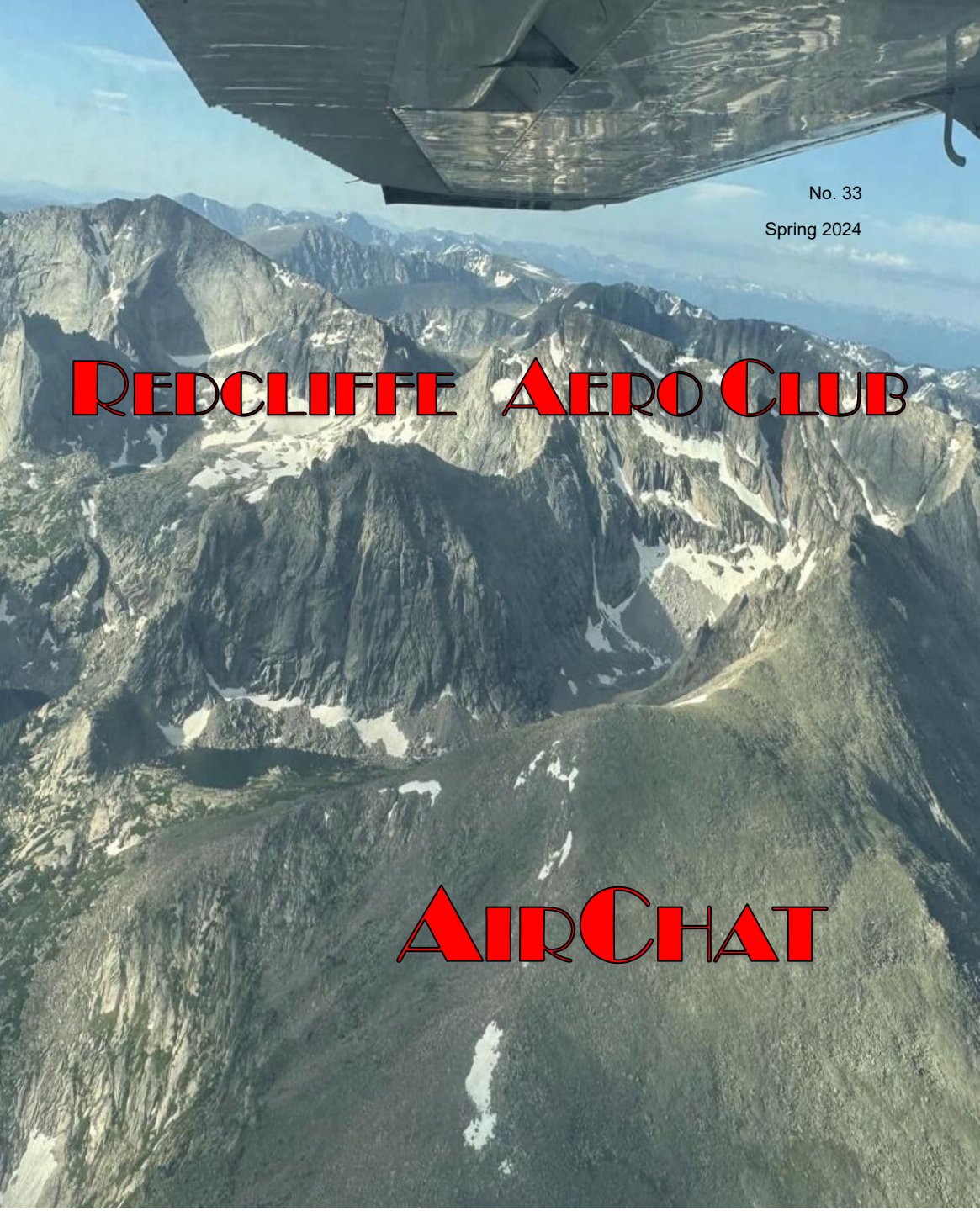

No. 33

Spring 2024

Redcliffe Aero Club

AirChat

OVER 50 YEARS OF PROFESSIONAL AVIATION TRAINING
CHARTER AND QUALITY AIRCRAFT HIRE

Chief Pilot / Head of Ops
Mal McAdam

CEO
Stephen White

Grade 1 Instructors
Mick McLean
Brendan Power
Valeria Thompson
Stephen White

Grade 2 Instructor
Matthew Matthews
Angus Nugara
Sebastien Rousseaux

Grade 3 Instructors
Tapi Maupvire

Office Administrator
Deanne Harvey

RTO Co-ordinator
Bernadette Killick

Administration Officer
Kellie Forbes

Club Life Members
Norm Briggs
Mike Cahill
Ron Ennis
Mark Roberts-Thomson
Phil Ware

AirChat Editor
Philip Arthur

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This page: Moreton Bay islands Front cover: Rocky Mountains USA Rear cover: Glasshouse Mountains

From the president

Dear Members,

As we move into the final months of the year, I wanted to take a moment to share some updates on the exciting progress at the Redcliffe Aero Club.

First, I'm thrilled to announce the installation of new signage on our building! This fresh look enhances our Club's visibility and presence, helping us stand out in the local community while continuing to represent the passion and professionalism we share in aviation.

Looking ahead, the Board is holding a dedicated Board Planning Day in October. This session will allow us to take a closer look at our goals, develop a roadmap, and prioritise future initiatives that will shape the growth of our Club. We're committed to ensuring that your membership experience continues to improve, and I look forward to sharing the outcomes with you all.

Lastly, I'm proud to report the success of the recent annual visit from the Hong Kong Flight Training Centre students (below), who joined us for four weeks. It was a wonderful opportunity to host these international students and share our love for flying, while fostering strong global connections in the aviation community. Thank you to everyone who helped make their stay such a rewarding experience!

As always, I encourage you to stay involved and share your thoughts with us. Your input is vital as we plan for an exciting future at the Redcliffe Aero Club.

Blue skies and safe flying.

Warm regards,

Sam Keenan

President, Redcliffe Aero Club

CEO update

Dear members

Since my last report we have been concentrating on improving aircraft utilisation. Part of this equation is to increase our instructor staff numbers. To this end we have welcomed Mick McLean, Grade One multi-engine instructor in July and Matthew Matthews, Grade Two instructor who started this month. This brings our total instructor staff to nine. Kellie Forbes has also joined our staff on the weekends in a reception/ administration role. Kellie is a club member working towards her RPL and I know will do a great job for us on the weekends. Please welcome our new staff when you meet them.

We continue to take on full-time students in our diploma courses as existing students complete their courses of training. We currently have 15 full time students and will be welcoming another cohort in January, as we work towards taking advantage of the recent doubling of our approved VET Student Loan cap.

Our students continue to achieve their goals which we celebrate throughout the year. These achievements will be formally celebrated at our annual Wings Dinner to be held in the hangar on Saturday 23rd November. I hope you can join us on the night to congratulate all those members who have achieved significant milestones in their pilot training.

My last report notified of a recently completed CASA compliance audit of our Part 135, Air Transport and Part 138, Airwork sides of the business, resulting in no significant issues found. We will soon have another CASA compliance audit of our Part 141 RPL/PPL/CPL flight training school.

I'd like to wish you and your families all the very best for the Christmas season and hope to see you around the Club. I encourage you to make the most of our facilities and services be it training, Club flyaways or hiring our aircraft so you can enjoy the privileges of your pilot licence.

Best regards,

Stephen White

CEO

RTO roundup

New Students

We have had 8 new diploma students since the last issue of AirChat. The first group of students commenced in April and are already nearing the end of their PPL training phase. The second group commenced their studies in late July and are already the best way through their RPL training phase.

First Group: Mitchell Higginson, James Gridley, Jared Littin and Rogan Coyles.

Second Group: Emma Dobson, Jack Colbert, Tyler Pietsch and Terry Akanitin.

I'm sure most of you have already met our new students, but if you haven't, please feel free to drop by the Club to say your hellos… or better yet, challenge a student to a game of pool!

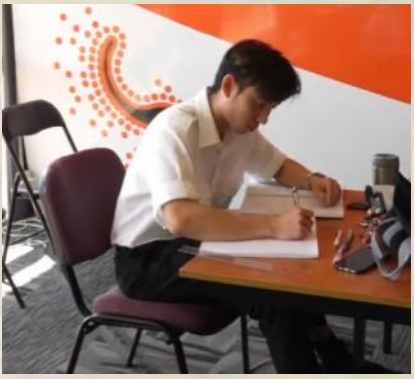
Milestones

We have had several diploma students achieve some massive milestones. Chloe De Chellis, Xavier Blunt and Jhye Fisk have all achieved their PPL and are starting to prepare for their CPL subjects.

Both Jaime Clarkson and Ethan Carlson have achieved their CPL and MEA Class Ratings! They are now on the home straight to get their Instrument Ratings. The team at The Redcliffe Aero Club wish the best for Jaime and Ethan. These two have put an amazing amount of effort in their studies and flight training.

Bernadette Killick

RTO Co-ordinator



Editorial

Dear aviators

As I mentioned in the last AirChat I'm finishing up as editor and this will be my last edition. Eight years after I took on the role I think it's time to have a fresh approach. So all the best to the new editor. Please support them by contributing plenty of articles.

In this edition we have Bob Tait recounting his record achieving high altitude flight in a 182, while Phil Ware describes how one private pilot got into trouble due to inadequate consideration of his weight and balance.

I met Linda Sollars, A320 captain extraordinaire at Oshkosh, and write about her background in aviation and how she built one of the first High Wing Slings and flew it from South Africa to Oshkosh. Rob Knight gives some pertinent advice on avoiding surprises while Jim Davis returns with some tips on low level flying.

Mike Cahill went to Oshkosh in July and describes some of the highlights from that week-long aviation extravaganza while Garry Ayre followed up his Oshkosh visit with a trip to the USAF museum in Dayton Ohio and provides some insight into what you can find there. I also went to Oshkosh but on the way to Wisconsin stopped in Denver for a few days to do some mountain flying over the Rockies. I describe the flights we did and can't recommend it too highly for any pilots heading to the US. Meanwhile Paul Smeath, Sam Keenan and Bryan Galvin describe Club flyaways to Murwillumbah, Noosa and Chinchilla, and I recount our recent outback trip to Carnarvon Gorge, Charleville and Lightning Ridge. They were all great events enjoyed by all participants and demonstrate some of the great activities our Club enables us to take part in. Be sure to join a Club flyaway next year.

We also have another 'instructor intro' article in this edition and Bernadette summarises latest developments in the RTO department.

Thanks to all of you who have contributed to AirChat over the years and happy reading.

And don't forget - **please email your stories for inclusion in the next AirChat**. The email address remains the same.

Email: airchateditor@redcliffeaeroclub.com.au

Philip Arthur

Keep yourself informed as to what's coming up and tell us where you'd like to fly to by joining the RAC Flyaways Facebook group. Go to the link below:

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

Also, the Club's famous get together barbecues are held at the clubhouse on the first Friday of every month.

Please call the Club reception at least one day before to register your attendance for catering purposes.

The best of Curly's corner

by Phil (Curly) Ware

A life member of the Redcliffe Aero Club with a long and illustrious career in the RAF and Air Traffic Control, and still today as a private pilot, Phil is always keen to share his knowledge and experience with the rest of us.

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

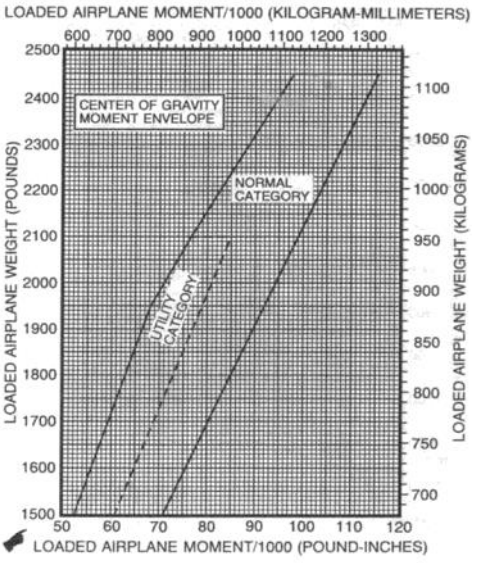
Even though all trainee pilots studied and passed their weight and balance theory, they were allowed to use a 'standard weight' of 77kg per adult instead of actual weights. This approach proved problematic at times.

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

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

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

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



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

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

CAUTION - This aircraft is fitted with long range fuel tanks

Do not fill above 92 litres with 2 POB

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

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

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

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

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

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

Happy and Safe Flying :-)

Curly

Attitudes

by Bob Tait

Over four miles up in a 182

Establishing an Australian altitude record

The lights were on in the little country aeroclub building as the committee met to continue planning for the 1976 air show. The town of Ingham in far north Queensland was well known as an active centre for general aviation. A busy flying school also provided charter flights to serve the various homesteads and nickel mines to the west. But for tonight the committee's attention was focused on the air show.

The main order of business was money of course. In particular what type of advertising would provide the best value for money. Street banners and newspaper articles were already organized but we needed a broader reach. TV advertising was prohibitively expensive, but wouldn't it be great if we could get at least a mention on TV news? What would grab the attention of the TV news producers? How about a record attempt! TV producers love covering record attempts - they can't resist it. We began researching for a suitable record and we settled on the Australian Altitude Record.

To make it an official record attempt we had to register it with the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) in France. The records were allocated a class and group. We chose:

* Class C1 Group B
* Normally aspirated
* Unpressurized
* Below 2500lbs at take off

Next we contacted Peter Taylor, Queensland manager of Rex Aviation, the Cessna dealers for Australia. He agreed to donate a brand new Cessna 182 VH-RUO. The only proviso was that I wear a Rex Aviation T shirt.

Next stop Ansett Airlines. They agreed to lend me a portable emergency oxygen kit for the attempt. Then it was on to the Ingham ambulance service who gave me a briefing on the symptoms of hypoxia and the proper use of oxygen. Then on to my good mate Geoff Brown, Australian Manager of Jeppesen. Geoff agreed to act as the official representative of the FAI and supervise the entire event to ensure that all of the rules were followed correctly.

Next, I had to obtain a barograph and send it to the National Instrument Company in Brisbane to have it calibrated in a pressure chamber and sent back to me with a lead seal to ensure it could not be tampered with. At the completion of the attempt, I was to send it back to the National Instrument Company to have it interpreted and the official height reached certified.

When all of this was done and dusted, we had to consider the fact that a Cessna 182, at over 20,000ft, would be invisible to people on the ground so the whole thing would hardly be classified as a spectacle! So we contacted Radio 4TO Townsville and they agreed to set up a live radio link so they could interview me during their breakfast session.

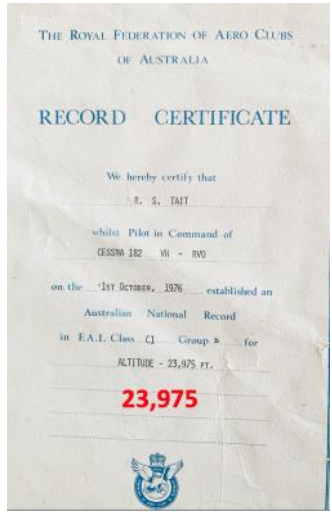
6.00am on the big day. The 182 was fueled with minimum fuel. It was then placed on scales to check that it met the weight limit. It was a crystal clear morning as the 182 got airborne off runway 05 and climbed away like the proverbial 'home sick angel'. Passing through 10,000ft, 15,000ft, 20,000ft it felt like it was on its way to the moon! My interview with the radio station was interrupted by Townsville Air Traffic Control giving me as traffic to the jets on descent into Townsville!!

Then, despite the early promises, the laws of physics got in on the act. The rate of climb started dropping as the air-starved engine intake could no longer sustain efficient combustion. Finally, the only way I could maintain a positive rate of climb on the vertical speed indicator was to maintain full throttle (11 inches of manifold pressure), with the mixture leaned to best power and the stall warning sounding continuously.

The message was clear. VH-RUO was incapable of further climb. 30 minutes after take-off the altimeter was reading 24,000ft. Outside air temperature -33°C. No point in hanging around up here.

Because I had left with bare minimum fuel, I had no reserve fuel left. But I had planned for that. I reckoned that if I couldn't pull off a forced landing from 24,000ft over the aerodrome I'd give the game away!!

The National Instrument Company's official recorded altitude came back as 23,975ft.



THE ROYAL FEDERATION OF AERO CLUBS OF AUSTRALIA

RECORD CERTIFICATE

We hereby certify that

R. S. TAIT

whilst Pilot in Command of

CESSNA 182 VH - RUO

on the 1st October, 1976 established an

Australian National Record

in F.A.I. Class C1 Group 5 for

ALTITUDE - 23,975 FT.

23,975

Milestones

Congratulations to all our students who recently completed a milestone in their training at the Redcliffe Aero Club. In addition to those pictured here, Jared Littin, Tyler Pietsch and Rajesh Ramanath achieved their First Solos. The whole Club wishes you all well for your future endeavours in aviation.

Alex Mergler First Solo 14 April

Cooper Withers Grade 3 Flight Instructor Rating 23 May

Angus Nugara Multi-Engine Aeroplane Class Rating 11 July

Jack Colbert First Solo September 6

James Gridley First Solo 13 May

Ben Wright PPL 14 September

Chloe De Chellis PPL September 16

Xavier Blunt PPL 25 August

Jaime Clarkson MEA Class Rating 9 August

Mick McLean Flight Instructor Multi Engine Class Rating Training Endorsement 9 May

Mitchell Higginson PPL 5 October

Ethan Carlson MEA Class Rating 14 August

Quinn Hawker CPL 18 May

Jhye Fisk PPL 24 September

Tom Wilson RPL 25 August

Nader Anabtawi First Solo 17 April

Isaac Jordan-Som First Solo 15 May

Tim Juta PPL 16 June

Terry Akanitin First solo 12 September

Salman Riaz MEIR 16 June

A fling with a Sling

An A320 captain's long journey to 'home built' GA

by Philip Arthur

I met Linda Sollars, A320 captain and renaissance woman, at Oshkosh this year while I was wandering around admiring the vast array of planes. I'd been following the development of Slings for about 10 years and when I passed 'Sling Island' I saw her sitting in her High Wing (HW) Sling 4 chatting to people. She'd flown in from Michigan the day before, where she'd had the original Rotax 915 engine replaced with a 160 hp turbocharged fuel-injected Rotax 916. And it was two years after she'd personally flown the HW from the Sling Factory in South Africa to Oshkosh in 2022. And that was nine months after she'd commenced a full self-build of the plane at the Sling factory near Johannesburg. But her amazing story goes way, way further back than that. I was so intrigued by our five-minute chat that I arranged to sit down with her for a one on one in depth interview the following day.

On arriving at the Sling stand the next day I discovered Linda and a few of the Sling personnel in the process of reinstalling the cowling on her HW after completing the 25-hourly inspection of the new engine. It was clear she was relishing the opportunity to be 'hands on' with the aircraft.

Once she'd managed to pull herself away from the plane she started to open up on her background. It was quite a long and fascinating story.

A glorified bus driver

When she was young, Linda dreamed of being able to fly like a bird or like Snoopy from the 'Peanuts' cartoon strip flying on his Sopwith Camel. One day she told her father that she'd like to be an airline pilot. He told her they were just 'glorified bus drivers in the sky', so she discarded the idea of a career in the airlines, especially after a high school counsellor suggested the best she could hope for was to become a flight attendant (it was the 1970s after all). While flying occasionally on RPTs as she grew up, being a pilot just didn't seem a viable career for her. So, concluding her desire to fly like a bird was a childish whim, she continued with more conventional studies.

Excelling in maths and science at high school but being not so good at English, in what would become typical of her later life, she decided to use her time at the University of Connecticut to improve on her weakness. Not knowing what she wanted to do for a job she reasoned that writing proficiency would be essential in whatever career she pursued and so undertook a major in English in her undergraduate studies. During those years she says one of the most important things she learned was 'how not to take NO for an answer and how to make stuff happen!'. She wanted to travel but hadn't learned a foreign language at high school and that would normally bar her from taking part in a university exchange program. They hadn't sent students to England before so she asked 'why not?' and lobbied for a 'Junior Year Abroad in England' program. After some cajoling the staff stopped saying 'No' so she spent one year in the UK and travelled extensively in Europe while there. She's proud that the exchange program she initiated continued for many years after she'd pioneered it.

What? There are small airports and planes?

Linda started playing around with computers while at uni and considered a masters in Management Information Systems in the business school but realised that at that stage in the 1980s the lecturers didn't know much more about such systems than she did. So, once again reflecting that one of her weaknesses was lack of knowledge of finance, and reasoning that whatever she did in the future a knowledge of finance would be critical, after completing the undergraduate degree she started an MBA in finance. In one of her first MBA classes a professor mentioned that he owned a Cessna and flew out of a small airport nearby. 'What? There are small planes and small airports? I had no idea.' The next day she headed to the airport to investigate and was immediately hooked. It reawakened her dreams from earlier and she gained her private pilot licence while completing the MBA.

Commercial pilot or Wall Street financier?

Now she was really entertaining the thought of life as a commercial airline pilot. As we all know, the airline industry is very cyclical and at that time in the 80s it was a low cycle with lots of furloughs. She discovered that there was a rigorous requirement for good eyesight at the airlines, the FAA requiring 20/80 vision correctable to 20/20, and she didn't meet that. So, she tried bio feedback therapy to improve her eyesight and thought of laser surgery but it was brand new at the time and cost a lot and eventually 'I just ran out of money'. She therefore settled on her private licence and once again parked her desire for a flying career.

Parked at 'Sling Island', Oshkosh 2024

Having completed the masters, she was determined to fold flying into her career and took a job developing a computer data base for an aviation brokerage. If she couldn't fly commercially at least that would mean some contact with the industry. That morphed into an aviation insurance job and during four years as an insurance broker she discovered that none of the people she worked with in the insurance industry really intended to be there. So, she decided to get out and used her MBA in finance to move to Manhattan and make real money at Lehmann Brothers (long before their infamous collapse that triggered the GFC). That move, and the increase in salary, allowed her to own and operate a Cessna CT210 and fly out of a base at Morristown, New Jersey.

As she continued to fly privately and build up hours it was costing her a lot to maintain the Cessna, with $10,000 being typical for an annual inspection. So, showing typical initiative, in 1995 she decided to take a two-year sabbatical from financial services to gain her A&P (Airframe and Powerplant) certification, the US equivalent of a LAME. That allowed her to work on the externals (airframe) and engine (powerplant) of her CT210 to ensure that it met FAA safety standards. It'd also satisfy her curiosity on how a plane worked. Concurrently she obtained her certification in electronics technology.

From Wall Street to 35,000 feet

Being passionate about aviation, Linda had been attending Oshkosh regularly, starting in 1985, and while there in July 1997 she learned that the FAA were planning to ease the requirement for eyesight testing of airline pilots. So, at 35 years of age she made a new plan. She'd pivot from finance to the airlines and fly for United, favoured by her for its equipment, destinations and hiring practices. But there'd be a sunset clause in her agreement with herself. If she hadn't become a United pilot by the time she reached 40 she'd return to Wall Street.

Taking a job as a pilot meant a massive pay cut for her but the money was a secondary consideration. This is what she wanted to do. The first step was to buy a Piper Apache twin to build her multiengine time. She worked her way towards a job with United, first landing a job as a pilot with a charter company and later a regional carrier. After joining the regional, Linda realised that the operations manuals were inconsistent,

Proud owner of a CT210

so used her downtime to set about creating a single document to bring together all the information and handed the result to management. That experience led to her developing a resource management program and, given her background with an MBA, A&P, plus plenty of flying experience, put her in pole position for a management position. She was invited to be chief pilot for the regional but was not interested in the job at that time, as she just wanted to build time to be eligible to join United.

Eventually she did win a position with United in 2001, just before her 40th birthday. Sadly, she was almost immediately furloughed in the wake of 9/11. 'But, hey, I'd achieved my goal!'

When the furlough was announced, the Director of Operations of the regional airline called and offered her the assistant chief job and put together a compelling package and she went back to them. Subsequently promoted to Chief Pilot she was flying out of Dulles International (near Washington DC) and commuting between there and New Jersey where she was living with her extremely patient husband of many years. Gordon, who Linda refers to as 'Professor-Doctor -Doctor-Esquire-Esquire,' is a (now-retired) professor of business ethics and also a lifelong learner, who she says, is 'brilliant and beautiful and takes care of the stuff that I leave in my wake as I plough through life at blinding speed.' Needless to say, the constant commuting meant they didn't see a lot of each other but Gordon understood she was chasing her dream.

In 2002 JetBlue, the only airline based in New York, invited Linda for an interview. Having heard about the work she'd done at the regional airline they wanted her to run their System Safety Department. It wasn't a flying position but it could potentially lead to one. Another attraction was that most of JetBlue's routes are north/south. If she could work her way up to a pilot's job it may be her ideal place to work as she could fly internationally but not mess with her circadian rhythms. The company was only hiring captains at the time and they required 1000 hours turbine experience and she didn't quite have that, but in 2005 after they started hiring first officers she qualified. Initially she also retained her role in the safety department but after a couple of years became a full-time pilot and was promoted to captain. She continues to fly for JetBlue today, and loves working there, thinking JetBlue is the best company ever. It really is her dream job.

Travel vs touring

Linda always wanted to travel but likes to differentiate between 'travel' and 'touring'. For her, 'touring' means dropping into different places for short periods while 'travel' means embedding yourself in a culture for an extended period of time so you really understand how other people live and think. That sort of travel is what she really likes to do and her unique mix of skills lets her do that. Her seniority at JetBlue means that her rosters are flexible. She can work for a month then take a month off, then work for a month and have another month off. And so on. That allows her to travel to far-flung places and spend time there. For example, her experience in developing safety systems at JetBlue led to her being invited to present a course in developing airline management systems in India and therefore spent time lecturing at a university there, while still flying fulltime for JetBlue.

As you may have noticed already, Linda has an inquisitive streak and a continuous desire to learn new things. She also has a passion for safety and worked with a few government-industry workgroups on matters such as the Safety Advisory Circular and at the Safety Management Focus Group. She has also been active in not-for-profits including board and leadership positions with the Association of Women in Aviation Maintenance.

In addition to being a self-confessed 'driven personality', Linda's pursuit of knowledge is accompanied by a constant desire for self-improvement. After a sobering experience in a 360 degree performance review with her subordinates at JetBlue, in which she had to take onboard some 'quality feedback' about her seemingly less than ideal people skills, she hired a qualified life coach to help her become more people-oriented. That so impacted her professional leadership skills and personal relationships that she was inspired to obtain those same qualifications. She attended a coaches' training academy for two years and became a certified life and leadership coach and obtained certifications in nutrition and brain health so she could mentor others. 'And it improved key relationships in my personal life as well'.

I need a plane to fly in my retirement

A while after starting with JetBlue Linda realised that her CT210 was not getting much use. She was doing all the flying she needed with JetBlue and using her downtime to travel to exotic places in Asia and Europe. She says 'As long as I had the keys to an A320 and could fly to exotic places in my downtime I didn't really feel the need to fly GA at home.' With a crazy travel schedule and not spending much time at home she decided to sell the CT210 in 2007. But, of course, immediately after selling her CT210 she started thinking about what she should fly when she retired in 20 years' time (some serious forward planning here). She had clear requirements for her 'retirement plane'.

It should:

* be something with a 'modern engine' rather than the traditional Lycomings or Continentals. 'It had to start and run like my car'. So, a FADEC engine like a Rotax came to mind.
* have modern avionics
* be affordable to own and operate in her retirement
* be IFR rated
* fit four adults plus fuel and some baggage
* go reasonably fast
* be a turbo
* be a high wing with unobstructed view like her CT210. As husband Gordon was prone to airsickness, she reasoned that the pendulum effect of a high wing would mean less sickness inducing movement in turbulence.

Visiting various factories, she considered various aircraft and talked to lots of people. The Glasair Sportsman was a possibility but was not a true four-person plane so failed one of her requirements. Her voyage of discovery led her to a variety of experimental aircraft including Vans RVs but while at Sun and Fun in Florida in 2016 she heard about the Sling that was being built in South Africa. They'd just brought out the Sling 4 and she went for a flight in it. 'I liked it but the wing was still on the wrong side of the fuselage, so it wasn't quite my ideal aircraft - but hey, I wasn't in a hurry so I waited.'

The High Wing Sling

In 2019, hearing a rumour that Sling may be developing a high wing version, she immediately knew that she wanted one and landed the slot as the first customer. In 2021, as soon as prototype HWs were flying, Linda boarded a plane for South Africa so that she could fly one of them. She was impressed and, given her experience as an aircraft mechanic, she decided to import a kit and build her Sling herself in an industrial building she bought in Naples, Florida. However, there was a speed bump. Shipping disruptions in the aftermath of Covid meant the kit wouldn't be delivered to the US for many months. Once again, not accepting NO for an answer, she changed plans. Her seniority at JetBlue and her flexible roster meant she could travel to South Africa to build the plane while keeping her full-time job, and in November 2021 Gordon accompanied her to Johannesburg to start the build.

Originally, she'd planned to have the completed plane shipped in parts to the Sling base in Torrance, California, where it would be assembled, but when Sling founders Mike Blyth and James Pitman told her they wanted to fly HWs to Oshkosh the following July her eyes lit up. And when they asked whether she'd like to join them on the adventure you can imagine her response. So, with the aim of having the plane ready to fly into Oshkosh in July 2022 they got to work. A tall ask you may say, but hey, who doesn't like a challenge? Over the next eight months Linda and Gordon flew back and forth to South Africa five times, allowing four months to work on the construction and have the plane ready to fly by early July. Being present on site at the Sling factory while assembling her kit/factory-assist aircraft, Linda was able to provide feedback during the development of the model. In addition to an in-frame ballistic parachute and a third alternator she installed a smart oxygen system to all four seats, a state-of-the art braking system, and extra navigation instruments with full back-up instruments. Other additions were reclining seats and adjustable headrests.

Linda also wanted to have it 'N registered' before leaving South Africa so arranged for a friendly FAA designated examiner to meet them in Johannesburg to carry out the necessary inspections prior to departure. By 3rd July 2022 three High Wing Slings - one taildragger, the original prototype and Linda's aircraft - were ready to embark on an epic flight across the Atlantic to AirVenture 2022 in Oshkosh.

On arrival at OSH 2022 Photo courtesy of David Tulis/AOPA

The SHW Maiden Odyssey

The three aircraft flew in company on the 'great adventure' that has been documented in a film called SHW Maiden Odyssey - Oshkosh and Beyond (see link and QR code below), Linda flying her plane with Mike Blyth as her copilot.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VW8eGGrmW7Q&t=490s

Each aircraft was fitted with extra fuel tanks in the back seats, giving them approximately 17.5 hours of endurance. Their journey took them first via Angola and Ghana to the Cape Verde Islands off the west coast of Africa, then across the Atlantic to Barbados and via the string of Caribbean islands to Nassau in the Bahamas and Florida. From there it was a short hop to Oshkosh in Wisconsin. Although they had hoped to arrive in Oshkosh in time for the start of AirVenture they were delayed a few days and arrived on the Wednesday. Plans to arrive early in the day were also thwarted by weather so they ended up arriving just before the afternoon airshow. But they'd made it.

From top: HW Sling cockpit; optional ballistic parachute; route taken on the 'great adventure'

Winding up, winding down

In a couple of years, Linda will reach the mandatory airline pilot retirement age of 65 so will wind up with JetBlue. Gender discrimination she experienced in her early days of flying although not completely gone, is not nearly so prevalent anymore. Early on in her airline career passengers were known to have disembarked because they didn't want to fly with a female only flight crew. More recently however, when joined by an all-female crew, Linda announced to her passengers, 'Today we have a completely 'un-manned' flight'. This time, there were cheers and nobody walked off the plane.

Drawn to Florida by its active aviation community, Linda currently splits her time between work in New York, a home on a runway in the North Carolina mountains and a hangar home in the Spruce Creek airpark near Daytona Beach, Florida.

An important step along her journey was her time in Naples, Florida, where she has a condominium and had purchased the industrial space. The idea was to build her Sling there but with the Covid speed bump it was no longer needed so she leased space at 'Gallery 206' to jewellery designers, painters and photographers. As a sculptor herself (another life skill she picked up along the way), Linda has donated some of the figures she's created to charity. She also actively supports and promotes the Naples Youth Aviation Project, a not-for-profit organisation where aviation-minded youth can build an aircraft under the guidance of experienced mentors from the local EAA Chapter. She actively promotes the project and hopes to find the time to mentor budding pilots in future.

https://www.facebook.com/NaplesYouthAviationProject/

Through her active mentoring and the build and journey in the Sling, she has found herself to be an 'unintentional influencer' and is answering the call to tell her story through speaking all around the world and is also writing a book. Having visited Australia only once in the past she has the great southern land firmly in her sights and plans to visit soon. She'd like to learn a foreign language so maybe Australia will be her first port of call when she hangs up her keys at JetBlue and her first linguistic challenge will be mastering the art of the local vernacular. With Linda anything could happen and probably will.

https://lindasollars.com/

Don't be surprised

by Rob Knight

Rob Knight grew up in New Zealand in the 1950s and 60s with a crazy urge to fly. He became a flight instructor and worked in the industry for many years, eventually as Chief Pilot/Chief Flying Instructor for the Wellington Aero Club. Rob is now retired and living near Amberley. He is the editor of the BVSAC Flyer, the magazine of the Brisbane Valley Sport Aviation Club at Watts Bridge.

When a person is surprised, like any other animal, their reactions may not always be ideal, correct, or even considered, appropriate, or desirable. In fact, an ill guided, and/or inappropriate reflex action can cause exactly the result the surprised party is attempting to avoid.

But this is not the only adverse result from a surprise. There is also the time it takes to:

1. Gather your thoughts and make sense of a surprise event
2. Decide that the event requires your attention
3. Assess the event situation
4. Decide if remedial actions are required
5. Consider all various remedial options
6. Decide on the best or most appropriate remedial action option
7. Command one's body to make the required control inputs
8. Have the aeroplane respond to those inputs

But wait - there's more. The times for each of the listed segments above can be substantially aggravated by:

1. A high ambient noise environment
2. A stressful environment
3. Personal safety issues
4. The degree of unexpectedness of the event

For a piano tuner, being surprised by breaking the piano string he is tuning, this list of items in the action process of resolving the cause of the surprise is no issue whatsoever. He/she has all the time in the world. But for a pilot, surprised by a sudden and total silence at 150 feet AGL just after take-off, it's an entirely different thing. In aviation, there is simply no time to spare, and the lack of time necessary to process and sort the unexpected issue in itself, can be as dangerous as the cause of the surprise. For me, and I'm sure, for all pilots, a headstone statement of, 'I died because I followed due process', is unacceptable.

This has long been recognised in aviation training and here, using the example of an Engine Failure After Take-Off (EFATO) as above, student pilots are taught a mantra checklist of remedial action to be carried out ONLY AFTER the nose has been lowered, to keep the aeroplane from losing airspeed and a potential stall. Even now I can hear my old instructors blasting my ears with the mantra - 'Engine Fails - STICK FORWARD, then carry out trouble checks as time permits'.

This makes a pilot's vitally necessary reactions to an EFATO much quicker. It doesn't matter at all how good or thorough a set checks or drills is if the aircraft crashes whilst they are being carried out.

For any pilot - FIRST, CONTROL OF THE AEROPLANE MUST BE MAINTAINED. ABSOLUTELY. NOTHING ELSE MATTERS IN THAT FIRST INSTANCE.

This can be an important factor in general flying as well, especially where stress is involved. Checking out a pilot in a Mooney M20C one day, we were returning to the circuit for some practice. He was loving the crisp feel and power of the aircraft, and was enjoying the sensations too much rather than being a pilot in command of the aircraft. In other words, he was setting himself up for a big surprise.

Cleared to make #3 behind a Grumman AA1B ahead, he trundled downwind, not immediately carrying out the downwind checks. Late downwind, as he was about to start them, the Tower changed our clearance to make us #4, behind an additional charter aircraft joining straight-in for our runway. Whilst my student was answering and acknowledging the Tower, he suddenly realised where we were and how little time remained to maintain a correct circuit. He had stopped flying and became deeply involved in confirming with the Tower that he had #3 in sight to follow. Suddenly he realised we should have turned base, so he yanked the aircraft around, no checks, gear still up, flaps likewise, and prop still in cruise pitch, airspeed still around 130 KIAS. His hand slammed back, reaching for the undercarriage lever between the seats. But my hand was there first and stopped him: our V_{LO} was only 104 knots. Then he attacked the flaps (which were hydraulic and had to be pumped) but again my hand beat his to the lever. We still held 130 knots and our V_{FE} was a mere 84 knots.

He shoved the prop control fully forward and the propeller RPM rose close to the red-line as the pitch moved towards the fine stop and then yanked the throttle closed. I took over and restored power to maintain engine temperatures and prevent the pitch control hitting the full-fine stop.

He had completely lost control of the aircraft and his situational awareness. Had he been the PIC, with passengers, he could easily have set up his own and their demise. He had set himself up to be surprised and that surprise robbed him of his ability to fly AND operate the aircraft. Being in a traffic patten, with

several other aircraft with lower approach speeds, he was a danger to all as his lookout was, by then, non-existent.

I instructed a go-around from mid base leg. It was the only way I could reduce the stress and overload, and get him to reset his mental defaults and get his thinking straight so he could again fly safely.

By the time that we had again reached downwind, abeam the upwind end of the runway, the pilot had got the speed under control and lowered the undercarriage, the pitch had been set into full fine and the aircraft was stabilised and trimmed at 100 knots ready to slow down to lower the flaps in the base turn, and make a totally normal approach and landing.

When mental overloads occur, a pilot cannot manage everything and so manages nothing. In the situation depicted, the pilot should have:

1. flown the aircraft,
2. sorted the circuit pattern and
3. then spoken to the Tower.

But, because he tried to do everything at once, he actually achieved nothing.

First, you must AVIATE. Then, and ONLY when aviating safely, you may NAVIGATE. Then, lastly and ONLY, WHEN both aviating AND navigating safely, may you COMMUNICATE.

So important is this issue of avoiding surprise in the cockpit, many aviation companies implement a special cockpit management scheme. Called the 'sterile cockpit rule', regulations specifically prohibit crew members from performing non-essential duties or activities including idle and non-relevant or non -essential chatter while the aircraft is involved in taxi, take-off, landing, and all other flight operations conducted below 10,000 feet MSL, except cruise flight. Crew members are even prohibited from talking about non-relevant issues during these times, so all members can concentrate on their roles in maintaining aircraft and position control without cockpit distraction. Imagine having a detailed discussion on the pleasures of an encounter last night when something unexpected and serious occurs to the aircraft. There is little enough time to cope anyway, and the time lost in such a pilot getting up to speed with his/her flying could be the difference between a successful arrival or a disaster for all on board.

But this is not restricted to heavy aircraft. When I was a junior 'C' category instructor, I had a student who was a lively character, filled with jokes and good humour and not so much common sense. One hot, mid-afternoon flight we were returning to Ardmore after his first lesson on basic stalling. On short finals, I was pattering the end of the lesson by describing how I was going to land by actually doing a stall so the Victa we were in would land as it stalled. Suddenly, when he saw an aeroplane joining on the crosswind leg 1000 feet above us, and taking his cue from the multitudes of war movies he watched avidly, he screamed 'Bandit, 12 o'clock high!' With his abrupt and extremely loud shout, I nearly died.

As required, I had explained the use of the clock face for indicating relative aircraft positions but his screaming shout was so totally unexpected that I lost my concentration. I went around and used the circuit time to prepare a speech for him back in the briefing room when we got back to the club.

For any pilot carrying passengers, regardless of whether they are friends on a jolly, or charter passengers, they should be asked to remain silent during critical periods unless something serious is occurring. They should also be advised on how to bring a situation to your, their pilot's, attention.

The special times for this restricted action are:

- On taxi
- When doing the run-up
- On take-off and climb out to 1000 feet
- On the circuit rejoin
- Throughout the approach and landing, and
- During taxi back.

These are the times when you, as a proficient pilot, really don't want to be surprised.

Happy flying.

The long table revisited

by Bryan Galvin

Saturday, September 8th was the annual Chinchilla Long Table which was well attended by members of our Club. The Club attended the inaugural Long Table in 2019 and we have since made it an annual event. We were not disappointed this year and had a great flight and a great time at the event.

The weather was fine with there being minimal cloud and not much wind. Four aircraft and fourteen people from the Club attended. We arrived early Saturday afternoon and, after a catch up at the motel, it was a short walk to the event.

For those who do not know about the Chinchilla Long Table, the town closes off the main street and places a series of long tables and chairs along the length. There are also dozens of food and drink vendors so that there is a great choice of food. The emphasis is on multi culturalism so there was a wide range of choices to sate the appetite. Entertainment was on the stage throughout the night with other entertainers mingling through the crowds. We had stilt walkers and even a Scottish Pipe band playing throughout the evening. As well there was a 'sideshow alley' for the younger ones with rides and fairy floss and all the things youngies like. Even better the weather was fine and mild and not too hot nor too cold. Last year about 3,000 people attended and it was probably a similar number this year.

Sunday morning was a walk across the road to the RSL who put on a buffet breakfast which most of us tucked into! After that we all wended our way home.

As a flyaway, it is definitely one to do at least once to have the experience. The flight is about an hour each way. Chinchilla is a good airstrip with proper facilities and close to town. It is on in September each year and the Club always puts the date in the calendar. This year the planning and accommodation was organised by Vice President Paul Smeath, who did a great job making sure we all had the right information and good accommodation.

https://www.facebook.com/onelongtablechinchilla/

Noosa flyaway

by Sam Keenan

After weeks of crystal-clear blue skies, we awoke on 'flyaway day' to a high, grey, overcast ceiling. Despite the initial disappointment, we were rewarded with delightfully smooth flying conditions all the way to Noosa.

Three RAC Cessna 172s (RAQ, SPP, IVW) set off for Noosa Airfield around 9:30-10:00 am, with my Cherokee 180 (BHN) departing Redcliffe around 11:15 am (daughters). I had lodged a direct plan at 2,500ft, and received a clearance from Sunny Coast Tower for the same. It made the flight a very quick and easy 24 minutes – try that in a car on the Bruce Highway!

The Noosa Airfield is surrounded by timber to the west, and the eastern end of the runway is literally the shore of Lake Weyba. Landing from either direction is no problem. A drop-in over the trees is needed from the west to get on the ground in good time, where you're met with a hard, fine gravel surface mostly covered in well-maintained short grass.

Despite what you may have heard, the owner Bob welcomes GA visitors to his airfield, which is constantly under various shutdown pressures from the local council. Prior permission is required and can only be obtained by phone call to Bob (not by text/email). He is hard to get hold of, so do this days before and you will eventually reach him. A landing fee of $35 is payable upon arrival, placed in an envelope slot on the deck of one of the timber buildings on site.

With a swiftly timed Uber pickup upon arrival, we arrived at the lunch table right on time. Bistro C has been a flyaway lunch spot in the past but has undergone a major remodel and had a new menu since our last visit. I highly recommend the view and the meals to anyone visiting Noosa.

Following lunch, the others headed off to the airfield, having completed their tourism prior to lunch. Jac, Ava, Georgie and I elected to spend a couple of hours wandering around the various shops and cafes of Hastings Street.

Upon returning to the airfield, the wind was very slightly favouring take-off to the west. However, a couple of past visits to Noosa have made me wary of westerly launches - the trees shielding the strip and the turbulent impact they can have on the westerly breeze can make take-offs a little hairy. I proceeded to make an uneventful easterly take-off with a small amount of tailwind, keeping the aircraft on the ground a little longer and maintaining a higher climb speed than usual to absorb any wind speed changes. The eastern direction is completely free of obstruction, so there's no need to worry about clearing tall trees and handling the gusts and sink associated with the breeze flowing over them.

Once airborne, I sought and received an immediate direct clearance to Redcliffe and arrived 34 minutes later to a busy circuit of five. Just as I arrived, everyone in the circuit seemed to be finishing their day and going for full-stops, meaning the base and final legs were progressively extended to avoid go-arounds. I ended up turning base overhead Castlereagh Point behind RAC's YRE. After a final leg fit for a 737, I greased my trusty Piper onto the freshly resurfaced YRED runway and called it a day on another successful day of pleasure flying.

So you want to try some low flying?

by Jim Davis

Definition: **Low flying is flying below 500ft AGL**

The regulations in most countries say that low flying must not cause a nuisance or danger to persons or property on the ground - or words to that effect. This means that if anyone complains, then you have been a nuisance, you have contravened the regulations. You can be fined, have your licence put through the confetti machine, be chucked in prison, or all three! In countries where low flying forms part of the PPL course, it's dual only. Solo low flying during training is prohibited.

There are three main reasons for low flying:

- Because you want to - sightseeing, game-spotting, mustering, and so on.
- Because you have to - normally due to bad weather, low cloud etc.
- Tactical - military flying only.

You would use slightly different techniques for each of the above.

If you are doing low flying simply because you want to, it's important to maintain plenty of airspeed - at least normal cruise speed. This gives you good maneuverability. Low and slow is looking for trouble.

If you have been forced down by bad weather and the visibility is poor on the other hand, then fast is not good. You don't want obstacles appearing out of the murk too quickly. It's best to use your normal climb speed, and set your flaps to the take-off position. This gives you a decent view over the nose, reasonable maneuverability and a better chance of seeing what you are going to hit!

Ground Briefing

Prior to your flights your instructor will brief you on the following points:

- The legal implications of low flying
- The choice of a good area for low flying
- Considerations before descending to do low flying
- Position of the sun
- Wind strength and direction
- Density altitude
- Passenger briefing
- Fuel selection and pump
- Trim
- Possible conditions for carb-icing
- Power and mixture settings
- Engine cooling
- Poor VHF range
- Location of birds (lakes, rubbish dumps etc)
- Avoidance of birds
- Rising ground
- Loose articles
- Harnesses
- The dangers of wires
- The dangers of valleys
- The dangers of open water
- The dangers of large expanses of sand
- Airspeed/groundspeed relationship
- Apparent skid and slip in turns
- Keeping your hand on the throttle
- Lookout, particularly ahead
- Distractions - inside and outside the cockpit
- Low-level navigation

Air instruction

After carrying out the safety precautions and selecting a suitable area, your instructor will take you down to a low but safe height and point out what she is doing. For instance she will keep one hand on the stick and the other on the throttle all the time. If she needs to change tanks, change frequency or do anything else she will climb to 500ft before taking her hand off the throttle or dealing with the distraction. She will have the trim set nose-up so that she must positively hold the aircraft down. She will only look ahead, and will not be tempted to join in the sightseeing that the passengers may be doing.

A major part of your low flying training will cover the effects and illusions of wind while flying low. Your instructor will start off by flying into wind at cruise speed, or a little more - say 120kts on the airspeed indicator. If there is a decent wind this might only give you a groundspeed of say 100kts.

You soon get used to the speed that the ground is going past, and you can feel that the controls are firm and effective (in case you have to maneuver suddenly).

Now she will do a 180° turn, say to the left. During the turn the wind will carry you to the left and you will feel as if you are slipping into the turn. You will be tempted to try and rectify this by using large rudder inputs. Don't do it! A quick glance at the ball will tell you that all is well, give or take half a ball - and there are far more important things going on to worry about.

When you roll out of the turn you will be flying downwind. You will still have 120kts on your ASI but the ground will be rushing past at 140kts.

Remember that on the into-wind leg you got used to a groundspeed of 100kts. So 140kts is going to seem terrifyingly fast. You will be tempted to throttle back and reduce airspeed until the ground is going by at a familiar 100kts. If you do this then you will have a very soggy and dangerous 80kts of airspeed. So don't reduce power when you are going downwind - no matter what it feels like.

Now you are going to do another 180° turn to the left. During the turn you will seem to be skidding and will once more be tempted to play with the rudder. Again - don't do it.

Racecourse pattern summary

Into wind: IAS 120kts and groundspeed 100kts. Good control response.

First turn: Apparent slip. Don't try to correct it with rudder.

Downwind: IAS 120kts and groundspeed 140kts. Don't be tempted to throttle back.

Second turn: Apparent skid. Don't mess with the rudder.

Moral: Keep your eyes outside - the power setting will look after your airspeed, and the ball will look after itself.

Jim Davis has been training civil and military pilots for over 50 years. That includes 15,000 hand-flown hours on 130 aircraft types, of which the majority were instructing. He also has a passion for writing and has columns in flying magazines on three continents and is the author of the best-selling training manual 'PPL' (with the intriguing sub-title 'A practical book about flying safely') as well as the very popular 'Flight Tests' booklet (reviewed in the Summer 2023 AirChat). You can find him at www.jimdavis.com.au.

OSH24

by Mike Cahill

It's been five years since I attended EAA Oshkosh so Philip Arthur, Brett Silvester and I decided that we would make it happen this year. I flew into Appleton, via Chicago and San Francisco while Brett and Phil had about 10 days head start on me after electing to do a scenic drive/fly through the US. Part of their time was taken up with some mountain flying in Colorado out of the Rocky Mountains Airport in Denver and scenic flying along Lake Michigan out of Milwaukee.

We all met up in a small town called Neenah, located just 20 minutes north of Oshkosh. We had an AirBnB which suited us for the eight nights there. With it being summer it was still light around 9pm so it was BBQ's most nights, drinking a beer and checking out the odd back yard rabbit and squirrel darting all over the place.

Sunday evening was the start of our week's aviation injection with invites to the Cirrus OSH24 Sunday Night Kickoff Party. We were with about 1000 other guests, all having previews of what Cirrus would be showing off to the world for the next seven days. Cirrus proudly unveiled their 10,000th SR20/22 series plane. A pretty good achievement since the first SR only came off the line in 2000.

Oshkosh didn't disappoint in 2024. Organisers of the week-long event really know how to turn it on for their many different and diverse customers. Some people come just to see the aircraft flying, others for the many forums that cover every sphere of aviation and then there is the avid photographer who carries not one but two and sometimes three cameras, all with varying lenses which swing from their hip belts with quick release gadgets so they can interchange and snatch that elusive photo (BTW that's not me).

Stand outs for me this year in the flying displays were the heritage flights. This is a salute and tribute to the many men and women who have served or are currently serving in the USAF. The type of aircraft that perform are mainly the current fighter and attack aircraft being used by the USAF alongside WW2, Korean War and Vietnam War era aircraft.

Aircraft used in the displays over the week included the P51 Mustang, A10 Thunderbolt, F16 Falcon, FA18, F22 Raptor and F35 Lightning. Consequently, there is a lot of skill required by all pilots in maintaining speed and formation with such differences in performance between aircraft like a F22 Raptor and a Mustang P51. Typically, at the finish of this display the fast jets broke off and generally went ballistic within the show arena, showing off what that particular plane could do. Ear plugs were required.

This year we saw multiple flybys from both the USAF Thunderbirds (F16) and the US Navy Blue Angels (F18). Neither were on the official flying program and the crowds were only given short notice to prepare as the formation teams were enroute to other destinations and made slight adjustments to their routes so they could be crowd pleasers at Oshkosh.

What was on the program though was the Italian Air Force's Frecce Tricolori demonstration team and the Royal Canadian Air Force Snowbirds demonstration team. Up until that week I had witnessed formation groups displaying six ship formations, like our own RAAF Roulettes, Thunderbirds and Blue Angels but Frecce and the Snowbirds have taken that to the next level with a 10 and 9 ship demonstration formation team respectively. Without taking anything away from the Thunderbirds and the Blue Angels the Italian and the Canadian teams were a touch better. The only thing missing though was the sheer noise of the F16s and F18s that's found in the US teams.

Cirrus, Piper, Cessna, Pilatus, Beechcraft, Sling and Epic to name a few were all present again flying the flag to attract the all-important buyer. After all that's what it's all about, the future of aviation and without new sales, well you know the answer.

Static displays were a dime a dozen. Everywhere you looked there was a company promoting its wares. There were dozens of booths located in the four main hangars selling everything from aircraft lights to avionics to polish and oil filters. If you wanted something to do with a plane it was here - you just had to navigate yourself to find it. When you ventured outside the main hangars there were more, smaller booths.

The centre show piece, and I guess ground zero, is where the main walk-in concourse fans out to what's called 'Boeing Plaza'. This is the main display of the big stuff. Not necessarily new, but more so big, eye opener exhibits. For example show centre for the week was a B52 Bomber, a plane used back in the 1950s at high altitudes to perform blanket bombings of enemy sites and for reconnaissance during the Cold War era. We were also able to walk around beauties like Fi Fi the B29 and a Lancaster Bomber as well as a F18, F16, F35 and F15 just to name a few.

To the left and right of show central were thousands of display planes, all of which flew in for the occasion. Homebuilts, kit planes, vintage planes, warbirds, STOL planes and even a sea park to visit and watch sea planes arrive and depart. All of these added up to about 10,000 light planes attending OSH. It is the world's busiest control tower for the week.

The grand finish though was the fireworks, the best I have ever seen. They combined a blanket of drones, lit up so they threw an image on the blanket to the crowds. Each image was different and as the fireworks display went on with each theme the actual display changed with it or enhanced it. Finally came time for the wall of fire and the drone blanket lit up with a note of thanks, then boom!!!

So, the time had come to make that long walk back to the car park and find the car. Average steps per day could reach 20k. It's a big show, 100,000 people on average per day, but it's worth it.

If you haven't done OSH yet then add it to your bucket list, you will be hooked.

Mountain flying in Colorado

by Philip Arthur

After doing a few days of mountain flying in New Zealand last year I was keen to do some more and learn a bit more about what to do and what not to do when flying at altitude. I also wanted to make the most of my trip to the US for EAA AirVenture so decided to add a couple of days of mountain flying training out of Denver prior to arriving in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. I contacted a few flight schools in Denver by email to find out pricing and the types of aircraft they used and decided on flying with Matt Beyer who is based at Rocky Mountains Metro Airport, about 30km north of the city centre. Matt had three days available in the week before AirVenture so I booked two, with the third held in reserve in case of bad weather.

Matt is about my age and grew up in Denver where he's spent most of his life. He's flown since about 1990 so knows the area really well. And he's survived that long in the mountains so I reckoned there'd be a good chance he'd be safe to fly with. As it turned out he's also the chief safety officer for the Rocky Mountain Flight School.

I'd originally planned to fly commercial from LA to Denver but after telling Brett Silvester of my plans he suggested we do a road trip. As a result, we drove the 1,600km over four days, arriving in Denver the afternoon of the day before the first flying day. That gave us the advantage of getting over jet lag and seeing some amazing country that we'd otherwise never experience.

The first lesson for flying in the mountains is to fly early because the weather often deteriorates in the afternoon and storms build up, so we'd arranged to meet Matt at 6:30am on Day 1. He had the C182 fuelled up and ready to go so after a quick preflight I climbed into the left hand seat with Matt in the right and Brett in the back.

Situated at 5670ft AMSL (or MSL as they say in the US) the air at Rocky Mountains Metro has a fairly low density, even on a cool morning, so after taxiing to the runup bay I had to lean the mixture to obtain the maximum RPM. This is to ensure the maximum power for takeoff. If it's too rich the power will not be there.

We took off to the north west into the clear morning air and climbed slowly to about 12,000 feet. You could tell the 182 was struggling a bit to climb in the thin air with the three of us on board. We had to climb that high to cross over the main peaks that run down the eastern side of the Rockies so we could reach the vast array of mountains to the west.

Short final at Steamboat Springs

Surrounded by beautiful mountain scenery we descended into the ski resort of Steamboat Springs, passing over a number of chair lifts that service the ski area. The airport had a pleasant FBO (Fixed Base Operator) where I actually had a good coffee that was even free. The FBO's are of varying qualities but all have great facilities for itinerant pilots.

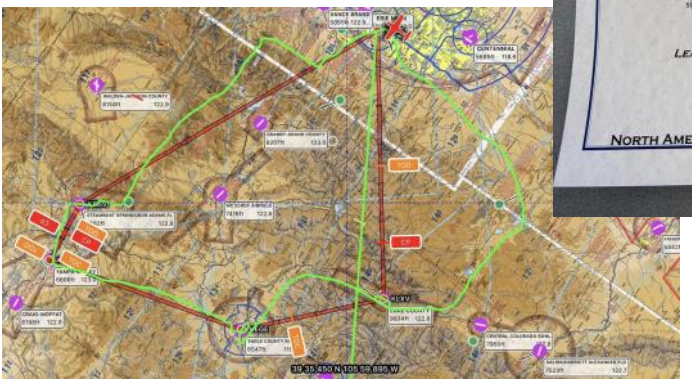
After our break at Steamboat we flew over amazing mountain scenery to our next destination. Eagle County airport (below), that services the Vail ski resort, nestles in a valley next to the trans Rockies interstate highway. I did a touch and go on the incredibly long runway.

From there it was a short hop over some more mountains to Leadville for another full stop. Leadville is North America's highest airport at 9934ft MSL and was the site of a lead mine and smelter in earlier days, so two points of interest for a metallurgical engineer turned pilot like me.

I was amazed at how vast the mountainous area is and how much wilderness there is. There are certainly a few towns and ski resorts scattered around and some farming in particular areas but the vast majority is pure wilderness. Amazing!

After obtaining my commemorative certificate for flying into the highest airport, and buying the mandatory t-shirts we made our way back to Denver, passing over more wild country and also some grazing land where one of Matt's friends has a farm with its own strip, landing just before noon. It'd been a great morning. The clouds were forming over the mountains as we tied down the plane and by 3pm that afternoon a major thunderstorm hit with some torrential rain. We were glad we were back out of the mountains.

Left: Short final at Leadville



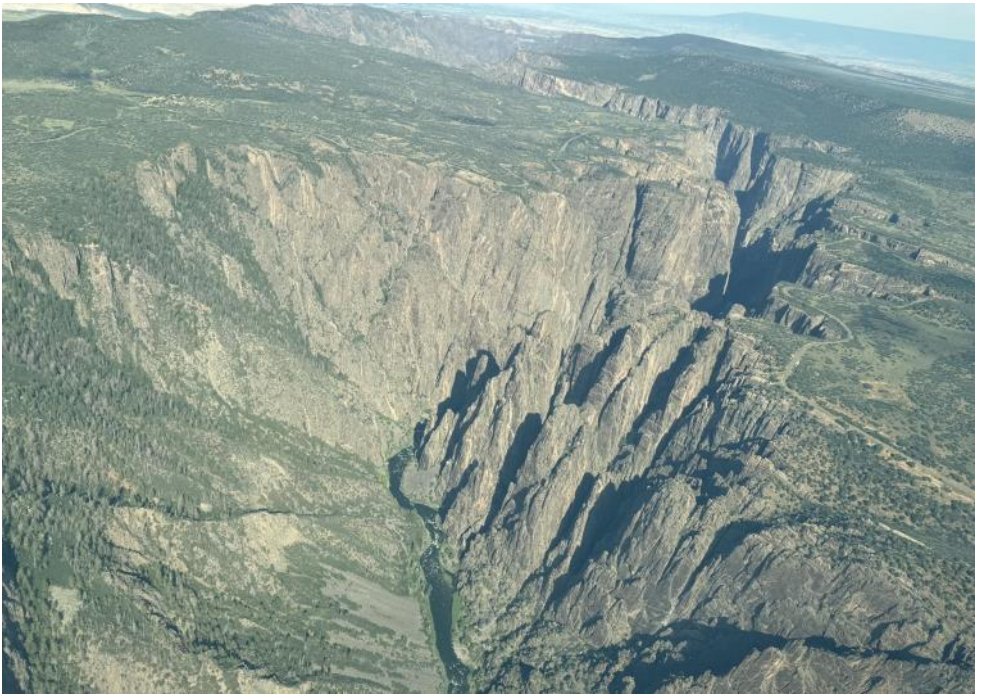
The next day we met Matt again at 6:30 and took off to the south west this time, once again climbing to about 12,000 ft to make it over a different pass for a flight into Aspen. Now Aspen is really where all the rich and famous hang out and as I did a touch and go we could see all the private jets lined up along the apron. It was really quite a sight. From Aspen it was a short hop over to Glenwood Springs where we did a full stop to check out the facilities. On descent our course took us around one mountain and I had to turn to avoid another, negotiating our way down through a valley, and flying past a theme park that was perched high on the side of the mountain we had to avoid. Wouldn't be good to park the plane in a ferris wheel on a mountain side would it?

From top: Final at Aspen, Glenwood Springs, Paonia, Aspen apron

The next leg took us over some real wilderness country and another pass towards Crawford, a 'one way' short grass airstrip that belongs to the owner of a private bed and breakfast. On the way Matt suddenly suggested we do a touch and go at Paonia, a short runway plonked on top of a mesa (or jump up), that happened to be on our way. I had to orbit a couple of times to descend a few thousand feet a bit earlier than expected and then headed for the mesa. It was a great experience and what was really interesting was that the runway has a slight kink at each end to enable it to be as long as possible on the surrounding topography.

From Pionia it was about 10 minutes to Crawford, where the 'piano keys' of the grass strip are located on the edge of a small canyon, making for interesting updrafts on short final. Touching down it was a slight uphill to the BNB at the end. We didn't have time to stop and chat so turned around and barrelled back the other way to take off over the canyon.

Our route then took us over Black Canyon, a smaller version of the Grand Canyon in Arizona, where Matt had taken his family hiking in the past. There were impressive views down the sheer cliff sides to the river below and I could imagine it being a great place to explore on the ground.



Above: Crawford Below: Black Canyon

The last stop for the morning was Gunnison, where we checked out the impressive FBO and had a chat to a young refueller who was attending university there. It's a very outdoorsy university with lots of courses in sports related activities and environmental science etc.

On our return to Denver there was lots of traffic in the 'pattern' (ie circuit) so we made a snap decision to do a 10 minute detour around the CBD to kill some time and have some great views of the city centre.

Approaching the Rocky Mountains Airport again the traffic situation hadn't improved so I had to fly an incredibly long downwind waiting for a 'slot' to fit in. The controller sounded like a race caller, issuing non-stop directives to numerous planes taking off and landing. An incredible feat of professional air traffic controlling.

Just as I thought we would have to turn to avoid the mountains ahead he told us to turn base and we followed three other planes in on final. It turned out that the controller had been one of Matt's students in the past and Matt congratulated him on a job well done after we'd landed.

We taxied back to the flight school and paid our bill, noticing the variety of aircraft for hire and the surprisingly cheap rates. But they were generally a lot older than the RAC fleet.

From top: Heading to Gunnison, Final at Gunnison, Denver downtown, Aspen ski slopes, Rocky Mountain Flight School whiteboard

Before heading off on our two day drive to Wisconsin we reviewed what we'd learned about flying in the mountains. The following are the main tips I brought away.

Weather is even more critical in the mountains. Conditions can deteriorate rapidly. It helps to fly early in the day. On both days we flew we had clear blue skies when we arrived at the airport. We took off before 7am both days and although we flew for over 4 hours each time we were back before 12 o'clock. The weather forecast clouds and storms in the afternoons and sure enough on Monday about 3pm a thunderstorm hit Denver. As we returned from our flight the next day we could see the clouds building in the mountains behind us. You don't want to be in the mountains once storms start to develop.

Fuel planning is, as always, really important. Matt told us of one recent experience of a pilot who hired a plane from the flight school for a 'short flight' that ended up being extended due to weather. The diversions meant he burned a lot more fuel than he expected. By good fuel management he was able to make it back to the airport but only had about 5 litres left in one tank and basically nothing in the other tank when he did touch down! Matt filled up with fuel on both days so we had plenty plus some more for our flights.

Density altitude becomes critical at high altitudes. You need to consider what actual lift you can achieve given the ambient conditions. Both the measured air pressure and air temperature affect the amount of lift you'll achieve. At higher temperatures the air is less dense so you lose lift. In summer you won't get as much lift as in winter. You need to calculate whether you will be able to take off from a runway that may be fine on a high pressure day in winter and may not be long enough on a hot day in summer. It may be fine to land but will you get out again?

Lean the engine for best performance prior to take off at high altitude. Denver is at about 5700 ft above sea level so the low air pressure means that there's not as much oxygen available as at sea level. At full rich mixture it'll be over rich and the excess fuel will reduce the power delivered by the engine. So, during your run ups lean the mixture and watch as the RPM increases to a point where there's maximum RPM then enrichen it a couple of complete turns to get it a bit rich of peak RPM. This process ensures you can take off in the minimum distance. Not so critical on a long runway like at Rocky Mountain Metro or Aspen but certainly at short strips like at Crawford.

Recognise pockets of air that have the best lift to help you climb. You need to fly at maximum power the whole time anyway but the higher you go the slower you climb. So, just like in a glider, you need to hunt for those spots with maximum lift and stay away from areas with sink. Work out which way the wind is blowing (from the forecast, looking at the surfaces of lakes, smoke) and then stick to the upwind side of the mountain where the air is rising. If you're flying along a valley don't fly up the middle. Fly as close as practical to the upwind side to take advantage of the lift. It will also allow you the maximum radius for a turn if you need to return back down the valley - just in case you can't make it over the pass at the end.

Approach passes at 45 degrees so that if you can't make it you have only a 90 degree turn to get away from the mountain. You don't want to have to negotiate a 180 degree turn in a tight spot.

Joining the long downwind at Rocky Mountains Airport

Watch out for downdrafts and mountain waves. We had minimal wind on the days we flew so there were no major downdrafts and certainly no mountain waves and minimal turbulence. The downside was that there was also minimal lift but that just meant we had to hunt a bit harder to find the lift we needed to get over the high passes.

There is a limit to how high you can fly with a given engine. At high altitude the 'thin air' (low oxygen partial pressure) results in lower engine performance. A Cessna 182 at maximum weight has real trouble climbing when you get up over 13,000ft like we did.

Keep an eye on your airspeed and decide on the minimum speed you'll accept to stay above the stall speed. Matt specified 70 knots for the 182. If you can't climb over a pass without reducing the speed below that then turn around and try another pass (or go home).

Know your aircraft. A Cessna 152 has much less power than a 182 or a 172 so is not really suited to mountain flying. They are cheap to buy and operate however, so flight schools still use them for routine training. Rocky Mountain Flight School owns one C152 in which the second seat has been taken out to minimise its weight so student pilots can build the 1500 hours minimum they require to apply for jobs at the airlines as cheaply as possible. But it's not intended for flying in the mountains. Matt told us the story of one student pilot who did take it to the mountains on 4th July this year (just two weeks before our flights) and very nearly killed himself trying to fly over the continental divide near where we flew over it. The location was where we were but we decided to fly over a different pass a bit further to the north as we couldn't get enough lift to get over that particular pass in our 182. The student's resultant stall and nose dive followed by miraculous escape were captured on mobile phone video taken by a family that was hiking nearby (see screenshot below right) and went viral on the internet. Matt shared with us a video posted by one of his 'favorite YouTube people' that you can access via the QR code or the link below. He analyses the video and talks about the incident. As Matt said, 'It's just nuts.'

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fcM7O9JYXKU&t=28s

Another useful hint Matt gave me that's unrelated to mountain flying is keep to one side of the centreline of the runway when backtracking rather than taxiing down the centre. When you're off centre you're more likely to be spotted by any aircraft who may be on approach.

I can't recommend Matt highly enough. If you're in the US and want to improve your flying skills get in contact with him.

https://www.mattbeyer.com/files/Matts-MountainFlying.pdf

Instructor intro - Mick McLean

Mick joined the Club recently as a Grade 1 instructor. We asked him a few questions about his career to date.

AirChat: How did you become involved in aviation?

MM: My father worked for TAA and QANTAS at Brisbane airport for many years so I was exposed to aviation from a young age. For years prior to 9/11 airside visits were allowed. I went with Dad to work on several occasions and was able to meet pilots and crew. I was even able to jump seat in a 747 classic on an overseas trip in 1984.

Where did you have your first flying lessons?

My first flying lessons were with the Darling Downs Aero Club, Toowoomba.

What type of licence and endorsements did you gain and over what duration?

- PPL 2002
- CPL 2007
- FIR 2008
- IR 2012
- Formation flying 2007
- Tail wheel 2008

Where did the training take place?

Toowoomba, Cairns and Gold Coast.

Where have you worked as a pilot?

Cairns, Torres Strait, Toowoomba, Brisbane and Mt Isa.

What other aviation related roles have you been employed in?

- Aero Club Director/Club Captain
- BN2 (Britten-Norman BN-2 Islander) Line Pilot
- B200 (Beechcraft Super King Air) Line Pilot
- Fleet Captain / Examiner Cessna 208
- DHC-8-100 (Dash 8) First Officer

What attracted you to Redcliffe Aero Club?

I've worked for a few different organisations and realised that the most fun I have had working has been in the aero club environment and instructing. I felt a bit like I had been here before and very comfortable.

What do you love most about flying for a career?

Seeing the light bulb moments that students have when something finally clicks and they get it!

What are some of the challenges you've faced over the years?

Long periods away from home chasing hours and qualifications, so missing birthdays and events . Finding the money to pay for training.

What aspects of aviation are you especially passionate about?

Assisting those living in remote areas. Having flown the mail run all over the Cape and air transport operations in Torres Strait I know how much the bush and remote communities rely on aviation for pretty much everything - their mail, fresh food in the wet season, getting to and from medical appointments and school. It is generally our youngest, most inexperienced pilots that are doing this work. They need to be skilled, confident, possess good judgement and maturity. If some of my experience (and mistakes) can help them stay out of trouble then I am still providing a service to those communities as well the pilots I train.

Which aircraft do you like to fly most and why?

The B200 Super King Air; it's like the Cadillac of the sky.

What would you like to achieve in the future?

Flight Examiner rating.

What would be your dream job?

Not having a job and owning my own aircraft and flying when I want.

What advice do you have for people wanting to learn to fly?

Put in the work, be patient, follow the process and enjoy the ride. You will never know everything so keep learning.

What advice do you have for Club members who want to improve their flying skills?

Do what you can and fly whenever you can. I've seen lots of pilots get licensed and then lose confidence and stop flying because they didn't fly often enough.

Flyaway to Murwillumbah Aeroclub open day

by Paul Smeath

On August 8th 2024, a few Redcliffe Aeroclub members embarked on a flyaway to the Murwillumbah Aero Club in northern New South Wales, marking another event on our calendar. Not only did this flyway provide an opportunity for members to engage with fellow aviators, but it also coincided with an open day at the Murwillumbah Airport, enhancing the day's excitement.

The day began early as we gathered in anticipation for the flight down south. With a backdrop of clear skies and perfect flying weather the trip south was set to be a great flight. We departed Redcliffe Airport heading south via Archerfield, with amazing views of Brisbane city and suburbs. Flying past the Gold Coast via the Western VFR route, we were treated to breathtaking views of the coastline framed by the azure ocean and whales off in the distance. The clear weather allowed us to revel in the beauty of the surrounding landscape while navigating our way to the Murwillumbah airstrip, located in an idyllic setting with Mount Warning and the scenic rim on its doorstep.

Upon arrival, Murwillumbah club members welcomed us with warmth, hospitality and a hot breakfast. The gathering offered a perfect setting for networking and sharing experiences with fellow aviation enthusiasts. The camaraderie among aviators was palpable, as stories of past flights and adventures were exchanged over refreshments. Such gatherings play a crucial role in fostering community spirit and encouraging new friendships amongst club members.

The open day itself was a great opportunity to share the adventure and challenges of becoming a pilot with our younger generation, with Murwillumbah club members, past and present students and professional airline pilots hosting fantastic presentations. I think there is no greater privilege as a pilot than fostering the dreams of the next generation of aviators.

The highlight of the day was the joint planning of, and the anticipation surrounding, the upcoming flying competition. The Redcliffe vs. Murwillumbah spot landing challenge on Saturday 9th November promises to showcase our flying skills and precision, and has been branded the 'Spot Landing State of Origin'. Pilots from the two clubs will compete to land as close as possible to a specified target. We plan to stay on afterwards and overnight in Murwillumbah to give us the chance to 'compare notes' about our flying prowess with our interstate rivals over dinner. The competitive spirit and rivalry in the air will add a sense of excitement and motivation for all involved.

As the morning concluded we wrapped up the open day experience. The flyaway was a reminder of the joys of flying - the thrill of take-off, the splendour of aerial views, and the bond shared among aviation enthusiasts. It not only allowed us to represent Redcliffe Aeroclub but also laid the groundwork for what promises to be an exhilarating competition in November.

The day was filled with exceptional flying conditions, new friendships, and spirited competition preparation. It was a day that reminded all participants of why we cherish our passion for flying and the importance of connecting with fellow aviators. As we look forward to the spot landing competition, the excitement among our club members continues to grow, ensuring that our aviation journey remains both thrilling and community-oriented.

The National Museum of the U.S. Air Force

by Garry Ayre

After attending Oshkosh AirVenture for the very first time in July this year, and on the recommendation of Ron Ennis, my brother, nephew and I took a seven hour drive from Oshkosh past Chicago, through Indiana and on to the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force. The museum is located at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, and first opened in 1923. It has grown to be the world's largest and oldest military aviation museum in the world. The once small engine collection now houses more than 350 aerospace vehicles and missiles. They are on display in over 20 acres of indoor exhibit space, together with an outdoor air display and memorial park. Thousands of personal artifacts, photographs and documents further highlight the people and events that comprise the Air Force storyline, from the beginning of military flight to today's operations.

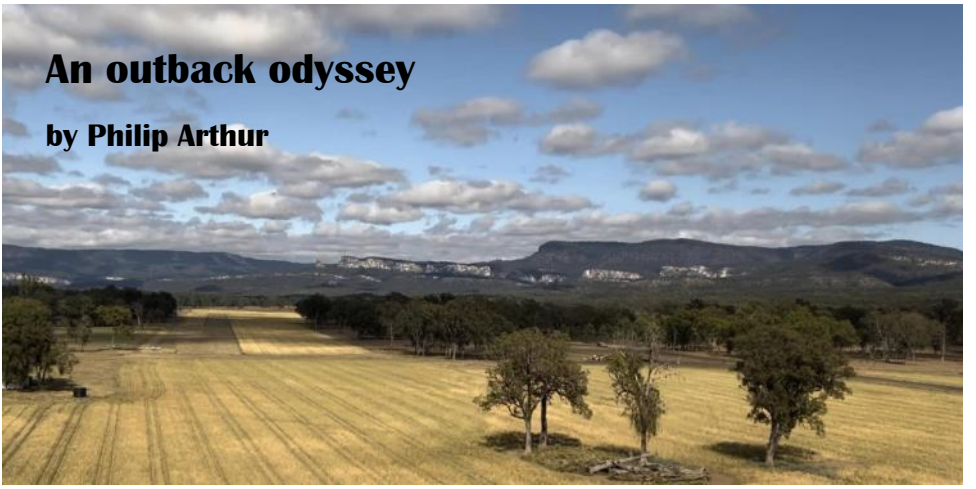
While entry is free a small donation is very welcome and in return for your donation you receive a'souvenir map' showing where all the exhibits are located. It's a big help to guide you around the four massive hangars that serve as the galleries, areas of which are focussed on particular eras or topics. They are'Early Years', 'World War II', 'Korean and Southeast Asia War', 'Cold War', 'Missile', 'Space', 'Research & Development', 'Global Reach' and 'Presidential'.

To walk through all the Galleries will take at least a day so be prepared for some sore feet. It is a very interesting and enlightening journey through over 100 years of flight, taking in the constant improvements that were made to the flight surfaces, engines and propellors as well as missiles, space shuttle and stealth technology. Given that it is a military museum the improvements were driven largely as they are today by a desire to be superior to any potential enemy.

From a Wright Military Flyer of 1929, Boeing B-17 Memphis Belle, F-22A Raptor, Titan II missile, Space Shuttle Trainer to the Boeing VC-137C (Air Force One) there is something for everyone.

For a detailed look at the museum I would recommend viewing a video by Paul Stewart Aviation on YouTube. Search for 'Guided tour around the National Museum of the US Air Force in Dayton OHIO - Part 1 & Part 2' for an in depth tour of the complex. It's definitely worth a look.

Dayton, Ohio, deserves a special mention as it is considered by many to be the birthplace of aviation as this is where the Wright Brothers, Wilbur and Orville, lived. While operating printing and bicycle shops, these two men, self-trained in the science and art of aviation, researched and built the world's first powered, heavier-than-air machine capable of free, controlled, and sustained flight. It is hard to believe that aviation is only just over a 100 years old all thanks to the remarkable insight and determination of such early pioneers.



An outback odyssey

by Philip Arthur

On Thursday 26th September my wife Sigi and I, together with Mike Cahill and Brett Silvester, took off in Mike's Cirrus MSF in company with four other aircraft for Carnarvon Gorge, the first stop on the Club's outback flyaway. Sam Keenan flew Piper Cherokee BHN with his daughters Georgia and Ava as passengers, Paul Sneath was accompanied by Lisa in C182 ROC and Bryan Galvin and Garry Ayre took turns at flying C172 RAQ. Originally planning to refuel in Roma at lunchtime, the group decided at a Teams planning meeting the day before departure to depart early and fly further north via Thangool. This route was taken to avoid a band of weather that would deliver significant rainfall to Brisbane over the following weekend. It was a good decision as all we saw was a bit of cloud and shows what a bit of forward planning can achieve.

After refuelling at Thangool we continued to Ingelara, a cattle property near Carnarvon, that has its own airstrip. On the way we passed over the Moura coal mine. At Ingelara we were met by Michelle from Carnarvon Gorge Ecotours and boarded her bus for the 30 minute trip to the Carnarvon Gorge Wilderness Lodge, a glamping resort where we spent two nights.

After a bit of rain overnight, the next day dawned as a blue sky day and Michelle took us on a 16km guided walk along the gorge visiting various scenic spots. She was a fountain of knowledge and great tour guide.

On Day 3 of the flyaway Michelle dropped us back at the airstrip after breakfast and we took off for Charleville. First though was a small incident with MSF's pilot door opening slightly as we lifted off. Cool as a cucumber the captain advised he was returning to land and after a perfectly executed circuit we touched down again gently, demonstrating that an unclosed door is nothing to be concerned about.

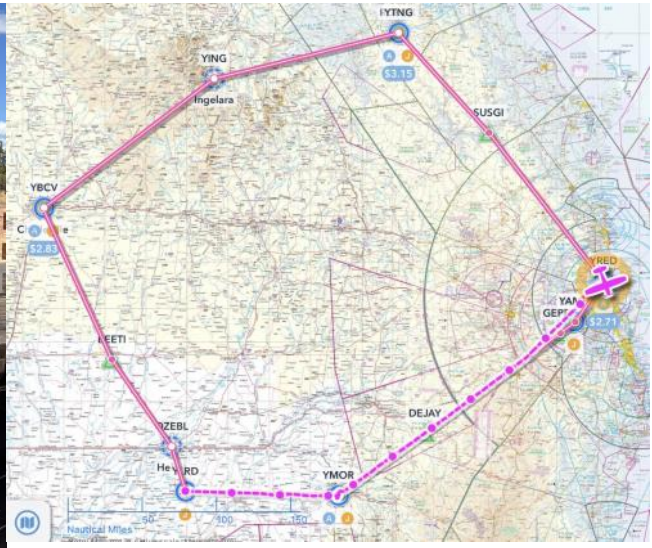
After ensuring the door was really closed this time we departed once again for Charleville, enjoying views of the ranges and making it there with no further incident. At Charleville we joined in on the 'Wings Over Warrego' celebrations and visited the recently completed WW2 secret base museum that tells the story of how 3500 USAF personnel were stationed in Charleville in 1943. After checking into the Mulga Country Motor Inn we settled into the famous bar at the Corones Hotel to watch the Brisbane Lions play a really skillful game against the Sydney Swans. We all know how that ended!

Day 4 of the outback flyaway saw us departing Charleville for Lightning Ridge via Hebel, a tiny settlement just north of the NSW/QLD border, where we had lunch. The owner of the Hebel Hotel and General Store went broke during COVID and shut it down but a local grazier bought it in 2022 and resurrected it, complete with new cabin type accommodation. They picked us up from the well maintained airstrip that's about one km out of 'town' and dropped us back again. Very atmospheric, great service and a good selection of food.

From Hebel it was a 15 minute hop down to 'The Ridge', home of the elusive black opal and not so elusive street art. We were picked up by Black Opals Tours, who provided our shuttle to the Lightning Ridge Outback Resort where we were to spend two nights. For dinner we walked up the road to the Lightning Ridge Bowling Club, an impressively large establishment with reasonable food and wine.

On Day 5 we were taken on a tour of the Ridge by Black Opal Tours. We visited various sites of interest around the town including a house made out of old bottles, a castle erected by an Italian immigrant nicknamed Amigo who didn't find much opal and turned his hand to stonemasonry, a cactus garden, and an art gallery owned by John Murray, who also painted a lot of the murals around town. We also learned about 'ratters', ne'er-do-wells who break in and steal opal from other people's claims and the horrible fates that they face if they're caught.

After a sandwich lunch we visited the Chambers of the Black Hand opal mine, where the owner carved 900 sculptures into the sandstone walls 12 metres underground by hand, using a single butter knife. We could then compare his artwork with a number of weird sculptures made out of scrap metal at the yet to open Puttputt place nearby. As the day drew to a close we relieved any muscle aches we had with a 10 minute dip in the very hot thermal baths before retiring to the pub for a drink and a decent feed.



Left: one potential fate for a 'ratter'

Day 6 saw us heading for home. After a quick breakfast at the Opal Street Cafe we were dropped at the airport by the Black Opals tour bus. With Sam Keenan leading the way we flew 40 minutes to Moree to top up with fuel. On the way MSF overtook RAQ, ROC and BHD. It's really difficult to spot other aircraft, even if they're only a couple of miles away but we managed to track them on OzRunways and AvTraffic so were able to maintain a safe distance while passing. Brett did an overfly of the Moree airport to check the runway for roos leaving it clear for BHD to land first.

From Moree it was 90 minutes to Redcliffe, passing over miles and miles of green pastures, a new wind farm still under construction, Texas, Warwick, Cunningham's Gap and Amberley. A C17 Globemaster was doing circuits at Amberley below us so, even though we were at 7000 feet, ATC guided us to the north of their airspace. There were great views of the city as we descended into Redcliffe where, as we put MSF away, we removed the last vestiges of the cattle that had been roaming around the runway at Ingelara. Thanks to Paul Smeath for organising a great trip.

Left: passing RAQ

Below: A C17 turns downwind below us

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