

Newsletter No. 281 – June/July 2015



The Atherton Aero Club is an organization of aviation enthusiasts who promote the sport of aircraft building and flying.

The organization is associated with *Recreation Aviation Australia Inc.* The Club meets at Atherton Airport every third Sunday of the month. Food and drinks are available and visitors are most welcome.



Departing Chillagoe



..... On A Fine Sunny Day

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PRESIDENTS REPORT JUNE/JULY 2015

Hello Everyone,

My presidents report is more of a trips report.

Firstly thanks to Ian for chairing the meeting last month and to Ted for arranging the BBQ. Thanks also to Jon Collins for getting our grant submission in on time. I will keep you posted on any outcome.

Since my last report we have flown to a few fly-ins. The first trip we flew to old Station near Rockhampton. DJ took off early to pick up a mate in Home Hill. Connie and I departed after the boys from Innisfail. But we did not see DJ on the trip as he was still on the ground in Home Hill as we flew over. We stopped in Mackay and met up with Lloyd and Bruce. They took off while we had a coffee with a friend. Off again and cleared over Rocky and into Old Station. We had not landed long and set up our tents when DJ touched down. Camping together the parking area started to fill up with all types of aircraft. There was a westerly blowing which was cold as and the night became colder. Even the rum did not help and might I say we tried. Matt Hall was a guest speaker. Interesting to listen to such a fine aviator. Talking about the Red Bull Racing.

The next morning we woke to one very loud bang, and I mean loud as the ground shook. Not sure who loves explosives but they worked so up and off for a shower and breakky. The lions Club prepared our breakfast of bacon, eggs doing a wonderful job feeding the hungry bunch. We then wandered over to watch the tractor pull and look at some steam driven machines. We then walked up a nearby hill for a better view of the venue. Walking around looking at aircraft talking to various owners. After lunch everyone had to be on the northern side of the strip and the airshow started. With Mark McDonald showing a wonderful Ag display, the Super Stol showing how to land in 5 meters, Various war birds, Paul Bennet flying the Pitts then the Avenger, and the show finished with Matt Hall turning his aircraft inside out.

As the sun set, we had a feed and listened to some music, then they had fence post splitting competition, and the last years champs won again. Also there were cross cutting comps all in fancy dress. Following that the lights went off and there were fire works. they had large Bon fires around to keep us nice and warm. Going to bed earlier than the night before the loud explosions continued waking us around midnight and again at 6.30. After an shower and breakfast we started packing up and departed before the morning air show commenced. The boys flying home and Connie and I flew to the Sunshine Coast to catch up with family for a couple of days.

The boys had some weather to deal with on their way home but the amazing part of their trip was that DJ in his beautiful 150 actually made it home before Lloyd and Bruce in the RV. Go figure. Well done DJ..

Another trip we attended was the 100 dollar Hamburger fly in. About 18 aircraft from all over arrived at Greenvale We were then driven into town by the school bus. Lunch at the pub under the shade of the trees made for a relaxing feed and good to catch up for a chat. I understand the club are looking to run more of these trips and we can't wait.

Remember the spot landing is on soon with the NQ Aero club at Atherton so come and join in and land on the line to claim bragging rights for 2015.

Safe flying,

***Dave Graham,
President,
Atherton Aero Club***



EDITOR'S NOTE - by Bill Gronbeck

Hello and welcome to Newsletter No 281.

In this issue — A big dose of aviation history, early flying in Papua New Guinea, Rotary engines (Le Rhone not Mazda) and a great article on the Bert Hinkler Ring from Dave Maxwell.

Thank you also to Dave Graham and others who contributed to this edition.

Please contact me with your newsletter contributions on any of the following: (07) 4036 2868 or 0408 073 142 or by email at - billgron@bigpond.com

Keep an eye on the club's Facebook Page and Website Calendar for the latest on coming events.

Web Page <http://www.athertonaeroclub.org/>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/AthertonAeroClub?ref=hl>

Regards and safe flying.



Mexican Stand-Off



"Flight now boarding at Gate Number 1"

PHOTOS FROM THE OLD STATION FLY-IN

Fun in the sun at the Raglan Old Station Fly-In attended by far northern flyers Dave & Connie Graham, DJ, Lloyd and Bruce. Photos look great thanks Dave.

We understand there were a few weather difficulties getting there and back for some of our friends but that it was well worth the trip.



More PHOTOS FROM THE OLD STATION FLY-IN





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GREENVALE FLY-IN PHOTOS—The \$100 Hamburger

Another successful fly-in attended by our northern aviators.

Listen out for the next \$100 Fly-In.



Photos courtesy Dave & Connie Graham.

THE HINKLER RING—By David Maxwell

Recently while in Italy, we were able to visit Mt. Pratomagno, east Tuscany, to see the forced landing sight of Bert Hinkler. Hinkler was attempting his second flight from England to Australia in 1933 when his aircraft crashed at this site. Even though Hinkler managed to crawl away from the wreckage he didn't survive – his body wasn't recovered until months later due to the bad weather.



Left & Above: Crash site below the marker left in a tree in the 1970's by Kevin Lindeberg & the man who found Hinkler's body.



Right & Above: Cross marking position where Hinkler's body was found in 1933.



By the time you read this, an unveiling ceremony would have been held at Hinkler's actual crash site, (August 2nd), to reveal a one ton+ basalt boulder taken from Mon Repos beach at Bert's home town of Bundaberg. This was where he first flew a home built glider as a teenager. A memorial cairn situated on the crest of Pratomagno, was erected in 1968 to replace an original memorial in the same place from Mussolini's days – destroyed during WWII. It stands on the grassy ridge of Pratomagno in sight of the <cross of pratomagno>.

Continued/

THE HINKLER RING—Continued

Above: 'Cross of Pratomagno' from a distance
 Right & below: The original Hinkler Memorial after its repair in 1968.



The driving force behind the new monument has been Kevin Lindeberg of Brisbane. (Google [<hinkler ring>](#)). The monument is embedded in a circuitous bush walking track, (hence "Hinkler Ring") which includes the now forested slopes where Hinkler crashed, as well as the grassed crest including the first monument built to him and 'La Croce'. The walk of 8.5km could take 5 or 6 hours at a leisurely pace. There are two picnic areas accessible by car, as well as the 'Chalet Giocondo' where you can buy a beer and a feed, so you are not locked in to doing the lot if you are not so inclined.



Continued/

THE HINKLER RING—Continued

We were camped at a B&B outside Dicomano, a provincial town about an hour's drive E'NE of Florence. It took us just under two hours to drive to the Chalet even though the last 13km was on gravel which hadn't seen a lot of maintenance in places.

Chalet Giocondo was hand built in the traditional way by Giocondo Ciabatti, and is run by himself and his son Cesare, and their family. (Google info@dagiocondo.it) I cannot praise them enough for their hospitality towards us and their interest and work they have injected into the whole Hinkler project.



Above: *Myself, Giocondo Ciabatti & his son Cesare.*



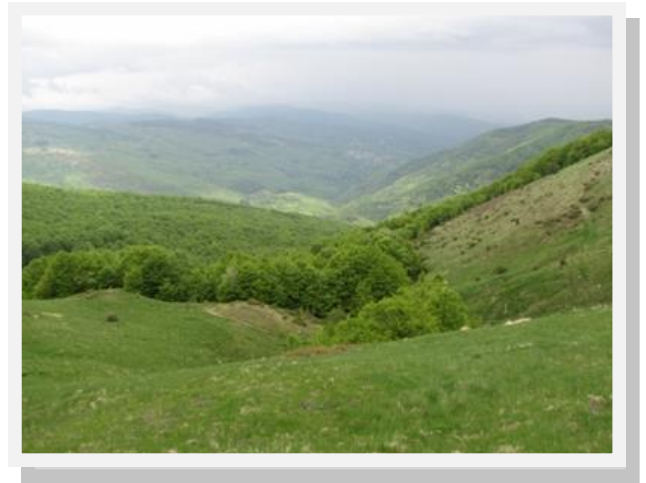
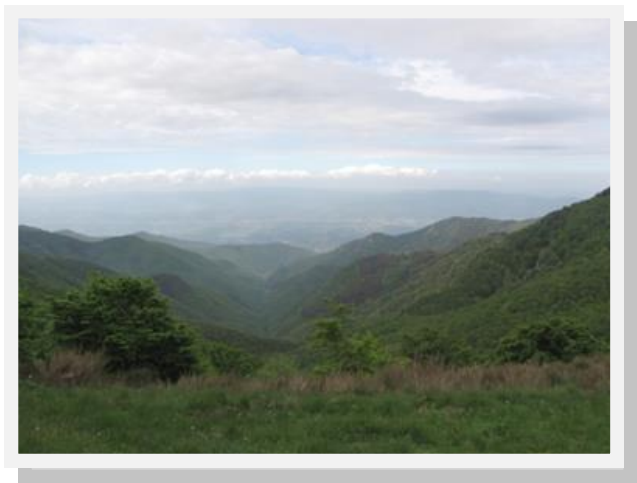
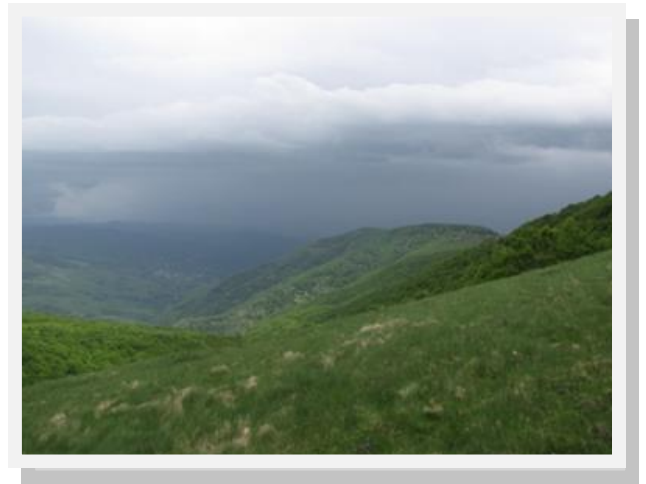
I had been in contact with Cesare by e-mail before leaving Australia and we agreed I would make contact again before our arrival. We had a couple of delays so I decided to just drive up and have a look, after all, it shouldn't be too hard to find. Well Cesare wouldn't hear of us going to find the site on our own, as the markers hadn't been put on the track yet. He dropped everything he was doing and personally guided us in to the site - and he was right, we wouldn't have found it! After the unveiling everyone will be able to self guide.



Continued/

THE HINKLER RING—Continued

We took a short cut up onto the road we drove in on and Cesare left us at the tunnel. He walked home along the road while we went up onto the crest of the mountain to see the original monument and the Cross of Pratomagno. We didn't get right up to the Cross as some cold rain was blowing in so we headed down to the picnic area for shelter and a banana. The drizzle soon stopped and we were the better part of the way back to the Chalet on the road when along came Cesare in his car to pick us up. After a hearty pasta lunch we were back in Dicomano by 5pm.



For aviation history and bushwalking enthusiasts, it is a great break from art galleries, cathedrals, castles, and museums. If you make sure the weather is fine, the views are spectacular.



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THE HINKLER RING—Continued

From: [Kevin Lindeberg](#)

To: 'David Maxwell'

Subject: National Broadcast - Alan Jones and The Hinkler Ring and New Memorial Monument

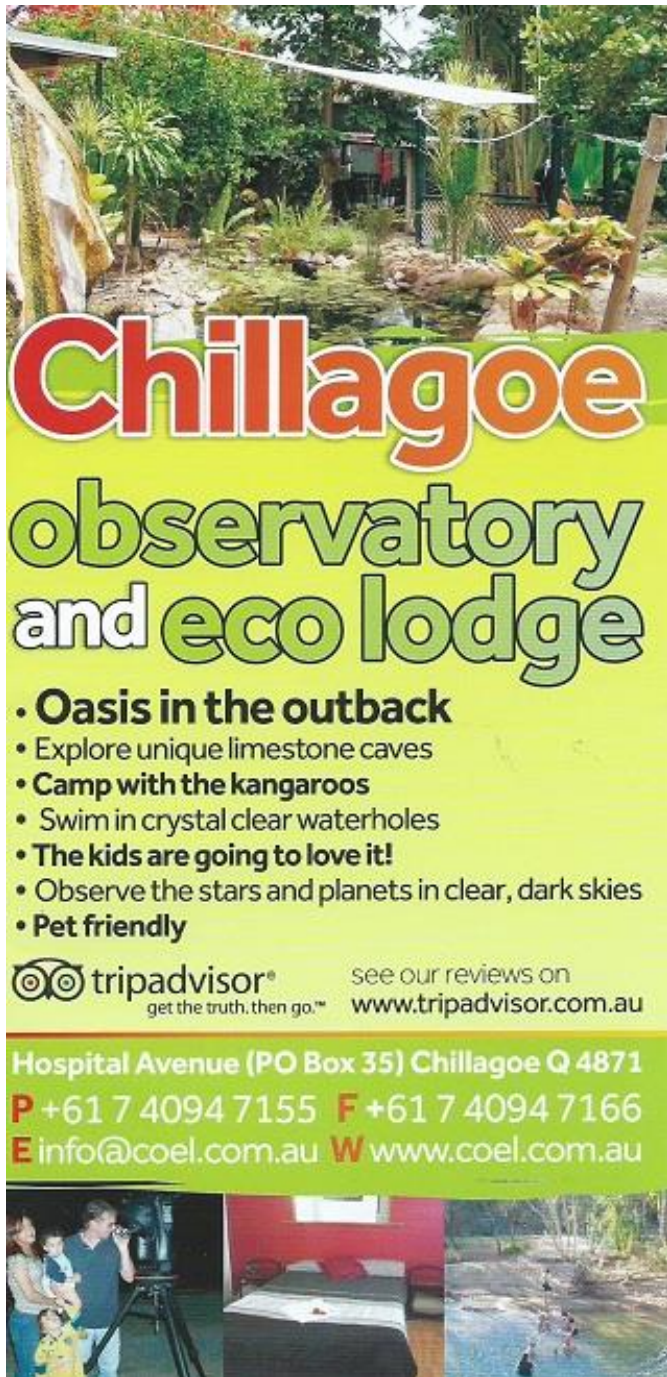
Dear David

Here is the latest interview (15/7/2015) between national broadcaster, Alan Jones of 2GB, and me regarding the Hinkler Ring and the new Memorial Monument on Mt Pratomagno, Tuscany Italy and its planned unveiling on Sunday 2 August 2015.

<http://www.2gb.com/article/alan-jones-kevin-lindeberg-0>

Regards
Kevin Lindeberg

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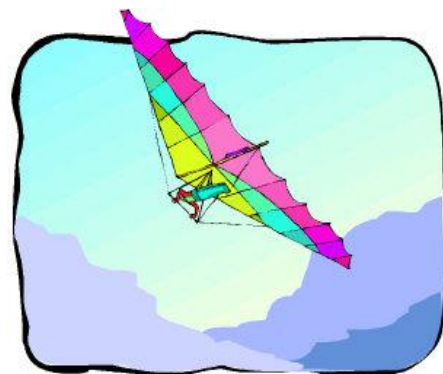


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ROTARY ENGINES by Martin Gregorie

Rotary engines were commonly used to power single engined aircraft between 1913 and 1920. During the 1920s they became obsolete as other types, especially radials, achieved better power to weight ratios and were easier to manage during flight.

Characteristics

Rotary engines were built 'backward'.

Where a normal engine has its crank case bolted to the aeroplane and the prop attached to its crankshaft, the rotary had its crankshaft attached to the aeroplane

and the propeller bolted to the crank case. The whole engine spun with the propeller. Rotaries were much lighter for their power output than other types of aero engine and could turn a very large propeller at fairly slow speeds: 1300 rpm was a typical maximum engine speed. This was beneficial because a large, slow turning prop is very efficient. By contrast most large inline and radial engines had to be geared down to match the engine to the most efficient propeller and this required a heavy gear box. An additional benefit was that rotaries are almost vibration-free in operation: they are the smoothest of all piston engines. The consequence of fixing the crankshaft to the airframe is that the pistons do not move in relation to the airframe while the rest of the engine just rotates. As a result there are no oscillating motions within the engine and so very little vibration is generated.

The biggest drawback of the rotary was a direct consequence of it's rotation. The engine weighed typically 320 to 340 lbs, or something like 25% to 33% of the entire airframe weight. This sort of mass rotating at over 1000 rpm makes a large and effective gyroscope. All was well in straight and level flight, but as soon as the pilot attempted to alter his aeroplane's attitude or turn it the gyroscopic forces became very apparent, forcing the nose down in a left hand turn and up if he turned right. In consequence a rotary powered plane could turn and dive extremely quickly to the left while a sudden turn to the right was likely to cause a stall and spin. With the rotating engine continuing to hold the nose high in a right hand spin recovery would be very difficult. Jumping out was not an option: the Royal Flying Corps didn't wear parachutes because their senior officers thought pilots would be forced to fight harder if they had no way to abandon the aircraft. It seems not to have occurred to these gentry that a pilot might have a genuine need to exit a disabled or burning machine.



Continued/-

ROTARY ENGINES—Continued

There was a single block-tube carburettor attached to the rear end of the hollow crank-shaft. Lubrication was a total loss system. Castor oil was injected into the carburettor by an engine-driven pump, with the unburnt residue forming part of the exhaust. The fuel/oil/air mixture flowed through the crank shaft and into the crank case, where it lubricated the bearings before being transferred into the cylinders.

Unlike a modern fuel lubricated two stroke, the crank case volume in a rotary does not vary as the engine rotates. As a consequence there is no pumping action to force fresh mixture into the cylinders. Instead, cylinder was filled due to the suction generated inside it as the piston travelled down after the exhaust stroke. As a result the power output per swept volume was low and so rotaries had an enormous swept capacity for their output. The volumetric efficiency was terrible, under 10 HP per litre, but they could be built extremely light and, after all, swept volume weighs virtually nothing! However, if you build a large capacity, low volumetric efficiency engine nice and light the first two factors cancel out and the engine will still have a good power/weight ratio.

Because the only forces moving fuel/air mixture through the engine were centrifugal force in the transfer passages plus suction generated in the cylinders it is likely that the carburettor itself didn't generate enough vacuum to suck petrol through the jet and atomise it, so rotaries used a pressurised fuel system to spray petrol into the carburettor. Pressure was built up before starting by using a hand pump in the cockpit. Once the plane was flying a small propeller-driven air pump kept the system pressurised. A careful look at photos of rotary-engined aircraft will show a propeller and pump attached to a wing strut near the fuselage where it can be spun by the slip stream.

No exhaust system was fitted: indeed it would have been impossible to fit anything like that to a spinning engine. In consequence the exhaust valve on each cylinder opened directly into free air inside the cowling. Normally an engine without an exhaust system is extremely noisy, with a loud bang (the *bark*) each time an exhaust port opens. This is because modern engine design requires the exhaust valve to open while there is still a lot of pressure in the cylinder. However, rotaries were very low compression and ran slowly. As a result they were relatively quiet in operation despite having no exhaust system because there is relatively little pressure in the cylinder by the time the exhaust opens.



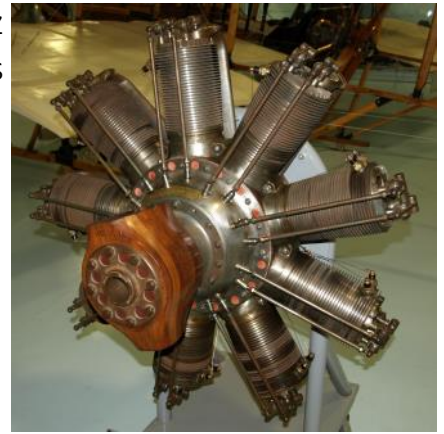
***Bristol D Scout powered by an
80HP Le Rhone rotary***

ROTARY ENGINES—Continued

The sound a rotary makes is a cross between a low frequency buzz and a compressed-air hiss. I've heard both scale model rotaries and the real thing running and they all have this unusual sound.

They were 4 stroke engines. The operating cycle was:

Cycle	Stroke	Piston movement	Action
1	1	downward	suck in new mixture
1	2	upward	compression
2	3	downward	power stroke
2	4	upward	exhaust



Clerget 9B FAAM

Assuming that the exhaust valve opens at bottom dead centre and stays open until top dead centre certainly explains the lack of any exhaust bark or crackle.

Engine controls

Rotaries were difficult engines to manage. Gross power control was handled via a 'blip switch' on the top of the control stick that switched the ignition on and off. Some types switched the ignition on selected cylinders, but on most engines the switch controlled all cylinders: the engine was either on or off and the aircraft either ran at full power or glided. It was possible to get reduced power settings for landing or to make the engine idle by pulsing the 'blip switch' slowly to give an average output somewhere between an idle and full power. The sound of a rotary flying round the airfield is quite distinctive. As the pilot uses the switch to maintain slow, level flight you hear a BZZZZZZZZZZT.....BZZZZZZZZZZT..... noise. A side effect of this power control was that when the aeroplane glided down, coming in to land for instance, oil and fuel was still fed into all the cylinders including those which were not firing. If the engine was off for too long it could be very slow to pick up again. Often as much as 30 seconds was needed to regain full power. This unused fuel was spewed out of the exhaust valves so that it collected in the cowl and on the fuselage as well as oiling up the spark plugs. Meanwhile the pilot got a major dose of castor oil. Switch on again... whoof!!! With any luck, the conflagration would be short-lived. Just as well, because World War I pilots did not wear parachutes.

Another way to incinerate oneself was via an engine back-fire, which was known to start a carburettor fire on occasion. This gave the pilot a case of hot-foot because there was often nothing between his feet and the carburettor.

Although the 'blip switch' was a simple, direct and light weight engine control and adequate for airfield and circuit operation it was tiring to use for formation flying or flying at cruise power for any length of time. None the less, some rotaries just made do with this switch and a fuel lever but others added a power lever in an attempt to make the engine more tractable.

The fuel lever controlled the amount of fuel entering the carburettor: it adjusted the strength of the fuel/air mixture. This is an important control because the fuel flow must be adjusted to suit the day's temperature and humidity as well as the altitude at which the aircraft is flying. An engine will only run if the mixture strength is within a suitable range: if the mixture is too lean or too rich the engine will stop.

Continued/-

ROTARY ENGINES—Continued

Engines that also had a power lever allowed the pilot to adjust the air flow into the carburetor, and hence the power output of the engine when the 'blip switch' was held closed. This made formation flying somewhat easier as well as easing the workload during a reduced power cruise. The range of adjustment was fairly small. Typically the minimum setting reduced the engine speed to just over half the full power value. This was not sufficient to cater for idling or landing approaches, so the 'blip switch' was still needed. The power lever was best thought of as a means of fine tuning the engine's output during normal flight. In any case, for reasons given below, it was not a good idea to fiddle with it when close to the ground.

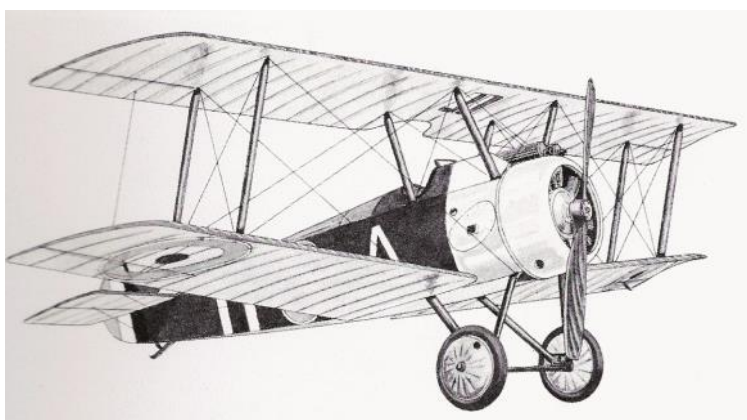
Each time the power lever was moved the fuel lever needed to be adjusted immediately to keep the fuel/air mixture within operating limits. There was no linkage between these two controls and they did not have a similar effect if moved by the same amount. So, if the pilot needed to alter the power setting he needed to make an immediate and correct change to the fuel setting. If he got it wrong, the engine stopped running though it would still be spinning in the slip stream.

If the power setting had been increased the engine would suffer a 'lean cut' because there was now too much air and not enough fuel entering the engine. The pilot recovered by closing the fuel lever and then slowly re-opening it until the engine restarted. This usually left the plane without power for 5 seconds.

However, if the power lever setting had been reduced the engine would suffer a 'rich cut' because there was too much fuel in the air stream for the mixture to burn. This time the recovery was to immediately close the fuel lever and wait while the engine blew the excess fuel out its exhaust. Once it had dried out the fuel lever was slowly opened until the engine restarted. This process took a minimum of 25 seconds. Hence it not being a good idea to fiddle with the power lever near the ground. If, at low altitude, the pilot suffered a rich cut or, worse, had a rich cut but tried to re-open the fuel lever too soon then he would suddenly find he needed to make an immediate landing without the benefit of an engine. There was also the possibility of an engine fire if there was still a lot of unburnt fuel inside the cowling when the engine started up again.

References: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gnome_et_Rh%C3%B4ne
 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clerget_aircraft_engines

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=atMn9s6m-j4>



NORTH QUEENSLAND AERO CLUB NEWS

The NQAC is on the move!

The challenges involved operating out of a busy International Airport combined with increasing lease costs has prompted the club to review its tenancy at Cairns. A recent meeting of members endorsed the NQAC committees proposal to move the clubs main base of operations to Mareeba Aerodrome. Work is now in progress to achieve the move before the current Cairns lease expires at the end of this year.

The level of flying training and private hire at Mareeba has been steadily increasing as members recognise the advantages and lower costs associated with operating out of an uncontrolled aerodrome on the good weather side of the coastal ranges.

An eventual seven day a week presence at Mareeba Base will be a further incentive to enjoy the pleasures of flying on the Tablelands.

SPOT LANDING COMPETITION Sun August 16th—See details next page.



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How sharp are your piloting skills? Can you land on the spot?



ATHERTON

Spot Landing

COMPETITION

Starting at 10am

Sunday 16th August 2015

RSVP ESSENTIAL

Save the Date • Watch this space for more details

NORTH QUEENSLAND AERO CLUB



Bring a Hat, Chair, Sunscreen and have fun

Lunch \$10 (includes morning tea) approx 1pm

2015

SPOT LANDING COMPETITION

\$80 per person in a club aircraft (includes lunch)

\$10 per person for lunch (those who are not flying)

Who will take out the trophy and be the 2014 Spot Landing Champion

Sunday 16th August 2015
ATHERTON AERODROME

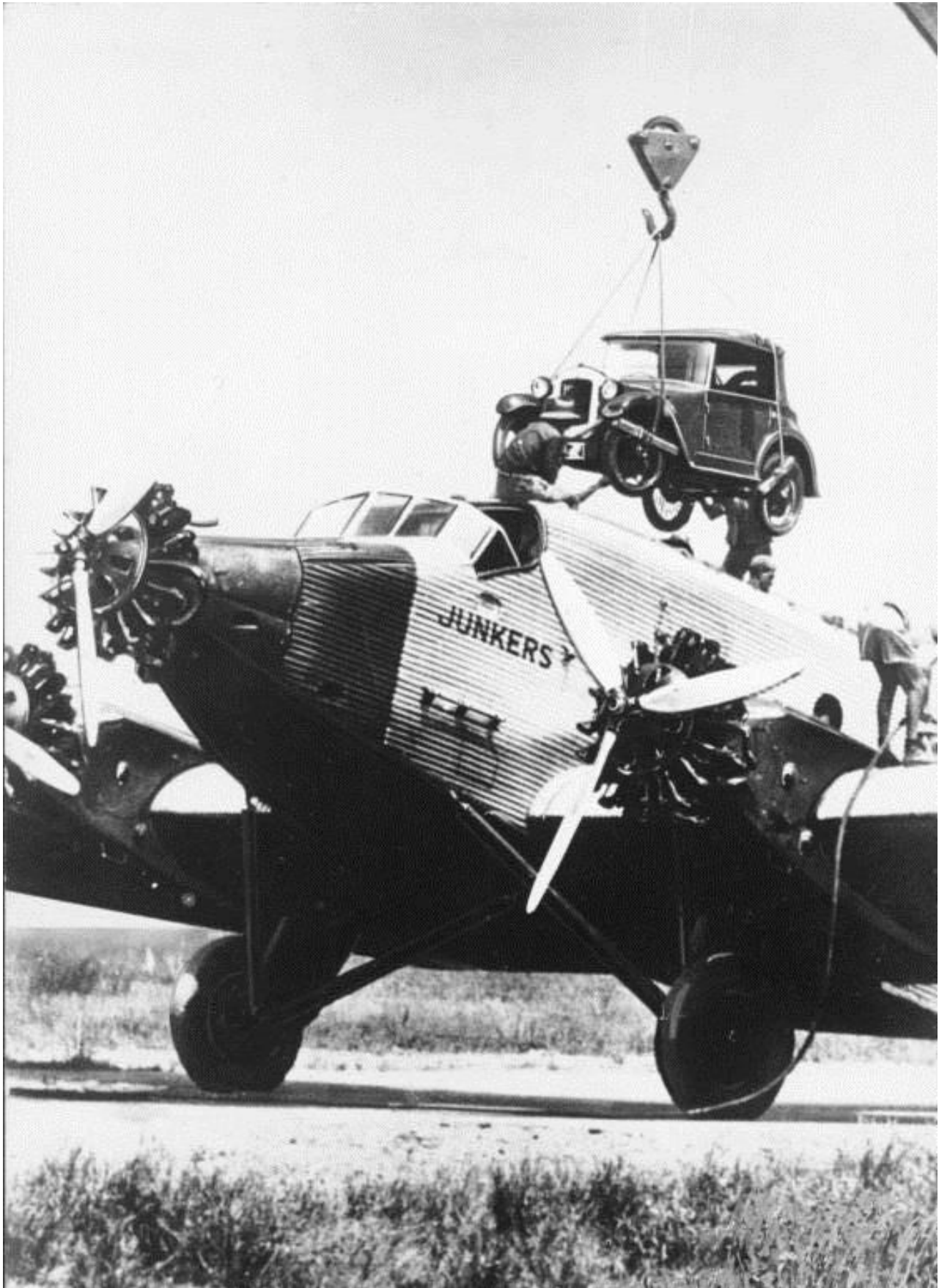
All welcome - whether your captain of an A380 or a student in a Cessna 152, we'd love for you to join us

This is a great opportunity to be part of the social atmosphere that NQAC is fortunate to have. A BBQ lunch will follow. This is a great family day in the peaceful surroundings of the Atherton Aerodrome

A LITTLE BIT OF PNG AVIATION HISTORY

An interesting read from an earlier PNG Aviator.

William John Robins passed away on 08 November 2012, aged 99 years. This article was scheduled for inclusion in the June 2013 Una Voce, but was inadvertently deleted from the final print edition. The article is printed with the kind permission of his family. [Editor



A LITTLE BIT OF PNG AVIATION HISTORY by Bill Robins

In 1937 two jobs became available and I applied for and was accepted for both. One was Assistant Instructor with the Aero Club in Sydney and the other with Guinea Airways in New Guinea.

I went back to one of my relatives who had been a mining engineer for Bulolo Gold Dredging in New Guinea and his advice was to take the Guinea Airways job as it would only be a matter of a year or two before I was on to large aircraft. His idea was that I would stay on small aircraft at the Aero Club.

I went by ship from Sydney to Port Moresby in 1937. In Moresby I was met by Jack Turner, a Ford pilot for Guinea Airways, and I sat in the cockpit of a Ford aeroplane for the first time as we flew from Port Moresby to Lae. The General Manager for Guinea Airways was Eric Chater who was also a pilot and had flown all their aircraft. I was staying at the Guinea Airways single men's mess and a very comfortable one it was too.

Every day I would fly with one or other of the pilots to study the terrain. Mainly I flew with Bertie Heath to Bulolo and occasionally in one of the big Junkers aircraft into Wau. There was no instrument flying in New Guinea in those days: the pilot had to know the mountains, valleys, etc., by sight.

The pay with Guinea Airways was very good. Once you got onto the big Junkers you were on top money. I started off in 1937 on £600 (\$1200) per year with a living allowance of £120 (\$240) p.a. and there was no taxation in New Guinea in those days.

My first flying in New Guinea was in the Gypsy Moth, the smallest aircraft we had. I had to do circuits and bumps and gradually flew out further and further. Then I was given a 100 lb (46 kg) bag of rice and told to fly it into Bulolo on a nice clear morning. I went around the Wampit and into Bulolo where I picked up some mail and some small items and flew back to Lae. That was the commencement of my New Guinea flying.

I really enjoyed flying in New Guinea. I flew the Gypsy Moth for a while, then the Fox Moth which had belonged to Sir Douglas Mawson who had it at the South Pole for a while. It had floats on it when it arrived and I eventually ended up with one of the floats as my canoe when we put land undercarriage on it. It was a wonderful aircraft to fly and I flew it for many months. It ended up in the Wau area, as a lot of flying was done out of Wau to the smaller outposts: Upper Watut, Slate Creek, Bulwa, Surprise Creek, Roma (a most difficult strip). I would do these runs day in and day out for many months. Guinea Airways had two float planes which used to fly between Port Moresby and places like Samarai, and different stations in the Papuan Gulf such as the Lakekamu River and Lake Kutubu.

I then graduated to the Stinson which was a bigger and more comfortable aircraft with a battery starter. In the Stinson you actually sat inside the cabin like a car. I flew Stinsons for some months and was then put on to the single engine Junkers with a Pratt & Whitney 550 h/p engine and eventually on the small Fords which had 3 Pratt & Whitney motors in them. From there I graduated to the bigger Ford which had three Pratt and Whitney motors and eventually, after another year or so, on to the three engine Junkers, the biggest aircraft Guinea Airways had flying in New Guinea.

By this time I had flown into just about every airstrip in our area of New Guinea. The single-engine Junkers flew to Mt Hagen, Benabena, Chimbu, Kainantu, etc.

Fortunately I had been able to manage without any communications, wind socks, etc. Very seldom did I have to stay overnight, with the exception of Mt Hagen which was much further away from Lae or Madang. If I had to overnight in Mt Hagen I would stay with one of the Leahy brothers.



A LITTLE BIT OF PNG AVIATION HISTORY (Continued)

At one stage I headed for Mt Hagen to pick up George Greathead, a Patrol Officer in the Bogadjim area, south of Madang. George had made a beautiful airstrip. On either side he had the natives dig drains and then planted yellow and green crotons around the strip: you could see it from miles away. Later on he did the same thing in Mt Hagen when he was stationed there. George Greathead would meet me in Mt Hagen on his horse. There were many private airstrips in New Guinea at the time. The Missions all had their own strips and aircraft and the Leahy brothers had a private strip outside Mt Hagen called "Mogai". It was not uncommon for me to get a call as I was arriving into Mt Hagen: "Kuta calling Gormus" (Mick Leahy calling me) "You must stay here overnight, make sure you bring up plenty of medicine". This is when Mick would call George.

Most of my flying was out of Lae but occasionally I would be stationed for brief periods in Madang from where I would take loads into Mt Hagen, Chimbu, and Benabena etc. On one occasion I had to fly into Wabag. There was a Patrol Officer there who was with the famous Taylor, Black expedition who had contracted beriberi or some such. We had to lift him in a blanket into the Junkers and take him to Madang to the hospital. All his skin was peeling off but he survived. It was our practice to airdrop supplies into expeditions such as that. I personally did not do much airdropping as Tommy O'Dea would normally go in with the Ford. The biggest problem was finding the patrol as they were not always where they thought they were. Anyway they would put up smoke and place out markers so we usually found them.

One of our big problems was with the loading of the aircraft. Each load was supposed to be supervised by an expatriate load master, but occasionally they would get distracted and the loading was not always right. One of the loads which always caused difficulty was the big slabs of steel going to Bulolo. They were very heavy: 6 to 8 feet long (over 2 m) and 4 to 5 ft wide (1.5 m). However they didn't look much like a load when you looked in from the back door and on a couple of occasions the natives came in with another load and placed in, on top of the steel. Funnily enough in the big Junkers it was not so noticeable on take-off but more when you were trying to sneak up say, the Snake Valley, between the mountains that you noticed how sluggish the Junkers handled. On more than one occasion when the airport staff at Bulolo jokingly asked me if I had any more weigh bills (2 loads on board) I would have to admit that the Junkers was a bit sloppy coming up through the gap at 6,000 ft. The big Junkers was a beautiful aircraft to fly.

Bulolo Gold Dredging must have made a lot of money in New Guinea. The first dredge flown into Bulolo was the smallest of the lot and Bulolo Gold Dredging paid for the flying in of the rest with the gold taken out by that dredge alone.



This JUNKERS G.31go, nicknamed "Bulolo 1 PAUL", was flown by Robins. It was destroyed in an air raid at Bulolo.

Continued/-

A LITTLE BIT OF PNG AVIATION HISTORY (Continued)



A partly dis-assembled car being loaded into a Junkers aircraft

I used to fly into Bulolo once a month and fly out a ton of gold to Salamaua on behalf of the Company. In August 1939 I came down on leave and was married. My wife was Flora Mitchell and her father was a well-known solicitor in Sydney, with one of the biggest conveyancing practices in Sydney.

We went to New Zealand on our honeymoon, and were half way across the Tasman in one of the larger passenger ships on its way to Los Angeles when Captain Davies announced that we had been pulled up by a small sloop and told that Australia was at war with Germany. I distinctly recall everyone looking at each other in amazement. Immediately crew came around the ship and closed all the shutters on the portholes for blackout purposes. Then the sloop escorted us into Auckland. We heard Mr Chamberlain say Britain was at war with Germany.

Even though the War had only been on for 3 days when we arrived in Auckland, there were tables out in the middle of the streets with men queued up to join the Forces.

I went straight back to Lae but had to wait a while to obtain married accommodation and then Flora came up. I only had to wait for a few weeks and a house came available at Salamaua so I took it. Flora made some lovely friends in New Guinea and really enjoyed it.

My job was then flying Junkers from Salamaua to Wau on a daily basis, up to six trips a day and, on one occasion, 7 trips. That day I flew more cargo in the big Junkers than the opposition flew in New Guinea with all their aircraft put together.

Life continued as usual flying out of Salamaua until late 1941 when the Administration decided to evacuate the women and children from New Guinea. My first evacuation flight to Port Moresby was on 21 December 1941, in VH-UOV, one of the Bulolo machines, and I could not get across the ranges into Port Moresby.

I landed in Kokoda with 51 passengers, all women and children. I then rang Port Moresby for Tommy O'Dea to come across to Kokoda and bring fuel with him, as, with the westerlies that were blowing at the time I would not have made it to Port Moresby with the fuel I had left. This was the first time that a Junkers had landed at Kokoda. From then on it was:

22 December 1941	Port Moresby - Bulolo - Port Moresby - Wau - Bulolo
23 December 1941	Bulolo - Port Moresby - Bulolo - Wau - Port Moresby
24 December 1941	Port Moresby - Bulolo - Port Moresby - Wau
25 December 1941	Wau - Port Moresby - Wau
26 December 1941	Wau - Lae - Port Moresby - Bulolo

Flora had left New Guinea earlier than this. She came down on a Carpenter's Plane.

Continued/-

A LITTLE BIT OF PNG AVIATION HISTORY (Continued)

On 3 January 1942, I had been asked to take a Ford across to Rabaul on a Government Charter. Unfortunately nobody had notified Rabaul we were coming in. We were lucky not to get shot down by our own soldiers. Actually the Aussie soldiers saw me flying over and told me how lucky I had been that they knew the old Ford.

The following day I flew back to Lae and that day went to Rabaul again twice, these trips without incident. I stayed in Rabaul that night and came back with a load of mail on 5 January. I had been advised to get out of Rabaul as the Japanese were bombing it at that stage and the aircraft was a sitting target on the airstrip. The Japanese were using a 'daisy-cutter' bomb which sprayed a lot of shrapnel and 20 people were killed in the attacks on 4 January. I dug out a couple of pieces of shrapnel from the angle iron on the corrugated sheds where natives had been accommodated and you could see pieces of copper and soft metal in the steel so that when the bomb exploded it would break up into small pieces.

Later in January it was known that the Japanese Navy was approaching New Guinea so I went to Madang and flew personnel, records and stores into Mt Hagen, Chimbu and Benabena. Much of the stores consisted of rice, bully beef, etc. which soldiers and Patrol Officers could be capable of living on. On these runs I would drop off at Mt Hagen first so the plane would be a bit lighter to get into Chimbu without falling over the edge.

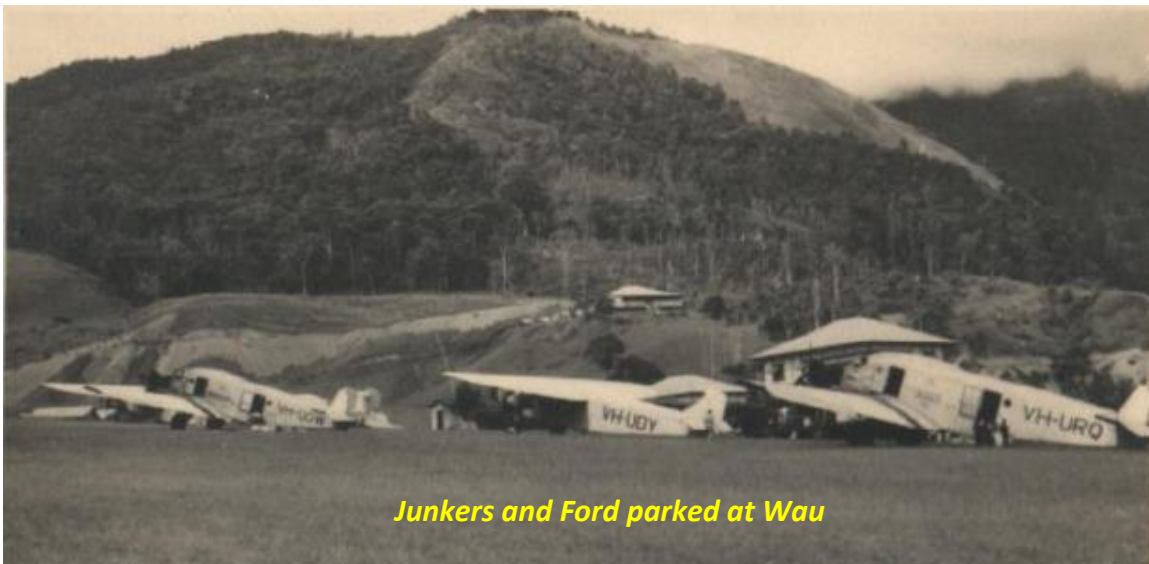
After a few days I was asked to go to Port Moresby and from there I did a few trips to Kokoda where there was a big experimental farm. When I came back from Kokoda one morning I noticed a few Lae chaps on the Moresby strip and asked what they were doing there. One of them said "Haven't you heard? The Japs have bombed Lae and Salamaua".

Guinea Airways had the biggest aircraft workshops in the Southern Hemisphere at Lae and it was destroyed completely in the air attacks. The Japanese concentrated on the hangars and workshops and left the airstrip relatively undamaged so they could use it themselves later on. One of our pilots, Fonce Parer, was killed while attempting to get his plane off the ground during the attack on Lae.



Guinea Airways Junker enroute to the Bulolo Valley (via Snake River Gap?)

A LITTLE BIT OF PNG AVIATION HISTORY (Continued)



I was then tasked to fly out of Port Moresby with a Doctor, 6 Nurses from Wau and 2 hospital patients for Australia. Our mechanic in Port Moresby at the time was McDonald and I told him to put a few small drums of fuel up front and a semi rotary pump above my head in the cockpit so he could pump fuel during the flight.

Bertie Heath, our Senior Pilot, was coming with me so we set off for Australia with no radio aids or any navigation equipment. I knew Daru, on the Fly River in the Papuan Gulf so we headed that way first, flying low because it was so stormy. If you flew high you would be lost straight away. From Daru we could see coconut palms on the islands south so we flew towards Horn Island. I circled Horn Island a couple of times but could not see a suitable airstrip, however the people on the ground were pointing across at another island, so we flew there. Sure enough there was an airstrip but it was covered with barbed wire, drums and all sorts of obstacles, so we had to fly around until the airstrip had been cleared before we could land. I flew the following day to Cairns with my passengers.

I had been flying for about a month now with a temperature above 100 degrees, but had not been able to take it easy because of the necessity for my flights. In Cairns at the Hyde Hotel the nurses told me I had to go to bed but they would stay with me. After about 4 or 5 days I felt a bit better but my weight was below 9 stone by now.

I then flew to Townsville where Wing Commander Bill Garing at Garbutt airbase came out and did a few circuits and bumps in the Ford and then I left for Adelaide.

I had account books and logbooks for Guinea Airways as I had been away from any of the main offices during the last month or so, so I had to get them to Adelaide where Guinea Airways was headquartered. When I handed in the information to Guinea Airways I was told that the Air Force wanted me back in New Guinea but Guinea Airways wanted me to fly the Adelaide-Darwin run.

Darwin was being built up at that time as a precaution against a Japanese landing and there was a lot of flying of personnel between the two places. Crews of bomber squadrons stationed at Fenton and Batchelor. I stayed in Adelaide on that run for the remainder of the war.

Flora came across from Sydney and we eventually purchased a house at St Georges. I did a few trips from Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Townsville, but most of my flying was in Lockheed Loadstars between Adelaide and Darwin. These were aircraft issued to Guinea Airways by the U.S. Airforce who wanted experienced pilots flying them while carrying personnel.

I was inducted into the Air Force Active Reserve and was issued with Air Force uniform. I had Air Force crews of navigators, radio operators, etc., but the pilots were Air Force Active Reserve. The aircraft I flew still had U.S. markings on them.

Continued/-

A LITTLE BIT OF PNG AVIATION HISTORY (Continued)

When WW2 finished, Guinea Airways were not granted a licence to fly again in New Guinea as it was claimed that they had flown out of the country and left people stranded there. This does not sit well with me after all the evacuation of women and children I did and those who were left in New Guinea when the Japanese landed had plenty of warning and plenty of time to have left before then. Most of the remaining aircraft were ruined on the dromes at Lae and Bulolo.

When the War had finished Flora said to me "You have been flying continually, without much leave for 10 years now, and during that time I have had to raise the children. It's time!" My reply was that the only other thing I knew was farming so we purchased a property of about 200 acres at Penwortham in South Australia which had been owned by one of the early settlers in South Australia and had a lovely two-storied home on it. Much of the land was still in timber and a beekeeper friend asked me if he could put 100 swarms of bees out near the stringy-bark trees.

We had three children by then with a fourth born later.

Tony born 4 August 1940 at Salamaua
 Timothy born 5 September 1944 in Adelaide
 Jonathan born 14 July 1946 in Adelaide
 Penny born 24 January in 1951 in Adelaide



In 1951, when the Korean War was on, I was called up for the Air Force Reserve again. I went to East Sale for a refresher course, not knowing what I would be doing. I had been asked to bring in my log books which I did and, after a few weeks was told "You have a family and are a bit older than most of the chaps here. It's a bit risky in Korea so we are posting you to Woomera (where there is a drome being constructed)." 5 Construction Squadron had just returned from Cocos Island in the Indian Ocean where they had built an emergency airstrip for Qantas flights between Australia and Colombo. On their return to Australia they had been tasked to build an airstrip at Woomera so I then flew Bristol Freighters and Dakotas between Adelaide and Woomera. At the time we were stationed at Mallala and had to fly down to Parafield, which was then the main Adelaide airport, and then on to Woomera. We flew freight and passengers.

Any call up into the Active Reserve is a two-year call up, in my case from March 1951 until 25 November 1952. I became a bit of a Jack of All Trades after getting out of the Air Force. One particular job I had was being an Inspector of orchards for the Department of Agriculture. Fruit fly was pretty bad at the time and I had to supervise a gang who went around the orchards carrying out inspections.

I also went back flying for Guinea Airways as a First Officer for some years. We only flew in South Australia and had Convair 440, a nice aircraft which carried 50 passengers. The only times we flew outside South Australia was to Proserpine in Queensland where we would take charters of people who wanted to go to the Whitsunday Reefs. We would go there every two weeks or so. We also used to fly to Alice Springs when the Todd River was in flood to transfer people from Alice Springs to Oodnadatta and would make two or three trips a night. On a moonlight night it was a great sight to see so much water over the countryside.

When Guinea Airways were taken over by Ansett it looked as though a number of pilots would be retrenched so I went up to the Operations Manager, who I had known for years, and told him that, rather than have one of the young pilots retrenched, I would retire. It was a pleasure to go to a Guinea Airways reunion some years later and see this young chap who had been kept on then a Captain of an Ansett jet.

In 1973 I had a major lung operation. In 1974 my daughter Penny was married in Johannesburg in South Africa so Flora and I flew over there with Qantas. We had a lovely time and went from Johannesburg to Durban and Cape Town and generally had a great trip around the country.

We lived in North Adelaide for some 20 years.

Flora passed away on 6 July 1986, after suffering from Alzheimer's for several years.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXrU2dyLgQA&feature=youtu.be>

Bob's Flight Rex to Port Douglas 24th May.

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Venue: To be advised.





Atherton Aero Club

AAC—2015 EVENTS CALENDAR

August *Sunday 16th—See NQAC Spot Landing Competition*

OTHER AVIATION EVENTS

(Check the RAAus Web site for other 2015 Events)

North Queensland Aero Club

NQAC—2015 EVENTS CALENDAR

August *Sunday 16th—Spot Landing Competition, Atherton.*

October *Sunday 4th—AGM.*

November *Sunday 15th—Fun Night.*

December *Saturday 5th—Wings Night, Cairns Casino.*

Other regular club events: Held off pending the clubs relocation to Mareeba



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Telephone	ah	bh	mobile

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<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35.00	Associate Member	Single member with NO voting rights
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PAYMENT

Forms to be sent to: *The Treasurer* or email to: treasurer@athertonaeroclub.org
Atherton Aero Club
PO Box 227
ATHERTON QLD 4883

Payments can be made by: *Cheque, cash, EFT or at the Bendigo Bank*

EFT Details: *Atherton Aero Club BSB 633108 ACC 114331796 (Ref - Your Name)*

I hereby apply for membership to the Atherton Aero Club and agree to abide by the Constitution and any rules and regulations thereof. I further agree that my contact details may be made available to other members of the association as the Management Committee deems necessary.

Signed _____ Dated _____

Print name: _____ Print name: _____

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Membership type		Receipt No		Fee Paid	\$
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