



Rod Harris with the recently acquired Pilatus after his 4 hour flight on 8<sup>th</sup> February.

# Mt Beauty Gliding Club, Inc

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## ALPINE FLYER

February 2006

President – Andrew Evans  
 Vice President – Mark Bland  
 Secretary – Mike Pobjoy  
 Airworthiness Officer – Manfred Rueff  
 CFI and Treasurer – Ian Cohn

Editor - Ian Cohn

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### PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Our AGM was conducted on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2006, with 12 members and a guest attending. At the meeting the previous committee was re-elected unopposed.

Your 2006 committee is therefore:

President:	Andrew Evans
Vice President:	Mark Bland
Secretary:	Mike Pobjoy
Treasurer/Public Officer:	Ian Cohn
Airworthiness Officer:	Manfred Rueff

Ian Cohn continues to be CFI, appointed by GFA, a role which automatically carries with it the role of TO Operations.

Congratulations to all committee members on their re-appointments.

A highlight of the AGM was the attendance by VSA Secretary Maurice Little, who provided a presentation on the activities of the VSA, and also presented a VSA "Living Treasure Award" to Ray Addinsall. Ray was unable to attend the VSA Annual Dinner on 17 September 2005 at Tullamarine where the other presentations were made. The opportunity was also taken to obtain a photo with Maurice, Ray and Manfred Rueff our other "Living Treasure" recipient.



Maurice Little, Ray, Manfred and Andrew after Ray had been presented with his Living Treasure award at the AGM.

The winner of our most active winch driver award for 2005 with 152 launches was Mart Bosman. Congratulations Mart and thank you for your very active contribution to club operations. Mart was awarded five free winch launches for his great effort.

Thank you to Ian and Susie Cohn for the use of your home for the pre-AGM party on Saturday 28 January and for the AGM on Sunday 20 January.

A syndicate of five members; Ian Cohn, Andrew Evans, Phil Glasson, Rod Harris and Mike Pobjoy has purchased a Pilatus B4, VH-GCD. It is encouraging to see this increased level of activity for MBGC. The syndicate has had preliminary discussions about the possible cross hiring of its glider to other suitably qualified club members, after they have given it a good workout. Another advantage of the formation of this syndicate will make the IS-28 more available to other Club members by providing another avenue of flying for some of the frequent flyer members of the syndicate.

The Pilatus has been put to good use by the syndicate members, including my Silver "C" duration flight of 5 hours 19 minutes on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2006.

Congratulations to Ian Douglas for soloing on the IS-28 on February 4<sup>th</sup>.

Welcome to new Social Members Peter and Ruth Wielinga who flew with us on 27<sup>th</sup> January.

Andrew J Evans  
President

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## Operations

### Keep off the runway when Taxiing

Recently we had an incident where the runway was occupied by a glider being car towed back to the hangar while another glider was approaching to land on runway 32. The airborne glider was forced to approach over the grass to the right of runway which also was occupied by the cable retrieve car returning to the winch making it very awkward for the glider pilot to thread his way through all the obstacles. In fact, it was a near miss.

All members of the Club are reminded that the runway is reserved for aircraft that are taking off and landing, and that these aircraft have absolute priority.

So:

- When taxiing (car towing) gliders the car driver should drive along the grass to the side of the runway.
- Before commencing a "taxy" the car driver must look, and listen (to the radio) to establish that his "taxy" will not conflict with aircraft taking off or landing.
- If the retrieve car or "taxying" gliders need to cross the runway, the drivers must establish that there will be no conflict with aircraft taking off or landing. **Look before you leap.**
- The retrieve car should not drive up or down the runway. Use the sides of the strip well outside the cone markers.
- Retrieve car drivers should ensure that there is no conflict with landing gliders using the grass along the cable path prior to driving along the cable when returning to the winch. **Look before you leap.**

This is very important especially because we are likely to have increased traffic with many gliders operating for the Labour Day weekend and for Easter.

### Pre Landing Checks

Occasionally, due to a lapse of concentration, the landing gear is not retracted after launch, or is extended during flight for some reason and not subsequently retracted.

So when you come to do the pre landing safety check – FUST – the undercarriage is already down. Don't just change the position of the landing gear lever. Remember, do the required actions and then do the FUST check as a positive check on landing gear lever

position and not as an action list. If you don't follow this procedure, one of these days you will be severely embarrassed and may damage your glider. As aviation folklore has it – There are two types of pilot – one has landed with the gear up, and the other is going to (but please postpone it as long as possible).

### Preflight Checks and Departure Call

I wrote about this issue in the last "Alpine Flyer" but have noted that some pilots still have not done a "Full, free movement of controls" check just before hooking on. This is a mandatory check. Don't omit it. This check is specifically required to detect whether any obstacle has fallen into the control circuit and caused restriction of controls immediately before flight. Omitting this check could have very severe consequences. You don't want to detect a restriction in the controls just as you transition to the Full Climb on a winch launch. So I will repeat my message from the last newsletter:-

Pilots are reminded that the final "C" in the CHAOTIC pre flight check includes **Full free movement of Controls** after the **Canopy** is closed. Don't let a launch assistant hurry you along so that you miss this check.

Likewise ensure that you give the standard departure call before allowing/instructing the launch assistant to advise the winch to commence the launch.

Launch assistants should also not hassle the pilot and, if the pilot misses this check, gently query whether the pilot has checked controls.

### Daily Inspection Certification

All pilots are reminded that it is their responsibility to check the maintenance release for daily inspection certification for the day that the aircraft is to be flown. It is all too easy to just "jump in" without checking this. If the aircraft has not had its daily inspection certified, it is not legal to fly.

Ian Cohn  
Chief Flying Instructor

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## Editor's Epistle

### Distribution

"Alpine Flyer" is available for download from our website at [www.mtbeauty.com/gliding](http://www.mtbeauty.com/gliding) and also from our alternative site at [www.exalander.com/mbgc/mbgcnewspage.htm](http://www.exalander.com/mbgc/mbgcnewspage.htm).

### Contributions to Alpine Flyer

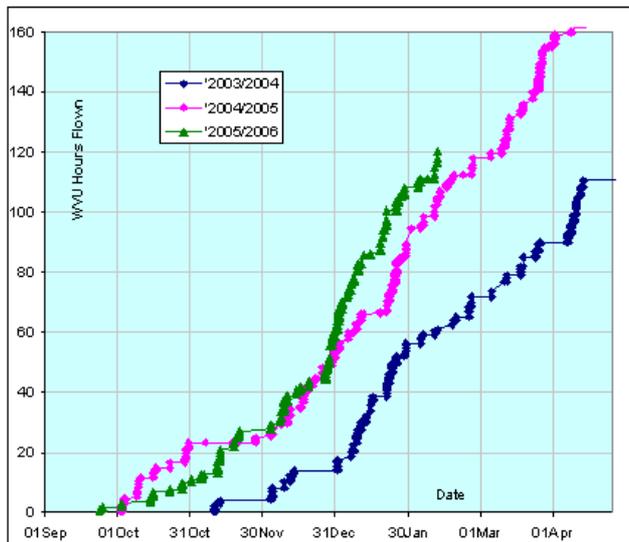
This is your Newsletter, so let's have your contributions. Send them to the Editor at [gliding@mtbeauty.com](mailto:gliding@mtbeauty.com). Photographs, stories of your gliding/aviation experiences, equipment reviews, and "how I learned about flying from that" stories are all welcome. If you can't use email, send contributions to the Editor at Box 486, Mt Beauty, VIC, 3699.

## Treasurer's Talk

### IS-28 hours

At press time we had done 120 hours on the IS-28 so far this season, and we are 15 hours ahead of last years total at the same date. The benefits of a high utilisation rate are that the club remains financially viable and members get plenty of flying.

During January, we flew on 19 days out of 31, and the IS-28 flew for 47 hours. Other gliders we launched flew 87 hours. Our total number of launches was 133.



IS-28 Hours as at the 12<sup>th</sup> of February

### Our Finances

The club requests that all members ensure that their accounts are in credit. If you owe the club money, it is a real drag on our ability to provide members with low cost and reliable flying and a burden on the Treasurer in terms of the extra administration time required to chase up debtors. So get organised. It's your responsibility to get your account in credit and keep it that way.

### Payments

The best way for members to deposit money into their MBGC accounts is via internet banking or by direct credit. This saves the Treasurer a trip to the bank to deposit cheques and cash. When doing this please remember to add your name to the deposit details so that the Treasurer knows which account to credit with the money. The Club's bank account details are listed on your account statement sent out by the Treasurer.

### Mt Beauty Foodworks "Spirit of the Community" fund



Mt Beauty Gliding Club points for the current period were 8259 as at 11<sup>th</sup> of February.

When purchasing any items from the [Mt Beauty Foodworks](#) supermarket make sure that you put your points to the Gliding Club – code 1060.

## Books

We have a supply of the GFA's basic gliding text "Basic Gliding Knowledge" available at the same price as offered by the GFA at \$27.95. To get your copy contact the Treasurer. Glider pilot logbooks are also available at \$5 per book.

## Annual Fees

Members are reminded that Annual fees were due on the first of January. That is Full - \$100, Associate - \$50, and Social - \$25.

Ian Cohn - Treasurer.

## Maintenance Matters

### IS-28 50 Hour Maintenance

**Manfred** has completed the second 50 hour maintenance on the IS-28. This requires cleaning and lubrication of the "Hotelier" connectors in the control circuits. Thanks Manfred.

### Camira

**Phil Glasson** has modified the towbar of the Camira to allow "automatic" release of the winch cable when a turn is commenced at the launch point. However, retrieve car drivers have to positively confirm that the parachute has come off the boot tray without jamming when using the auto release feature. Thanks Phil.

### Old Winch Wire

**Gwyn Morris** was passing the airfield on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> February and picked up and disposed of the old winch cable. Thanks Gwyn. We have now run out of new cable and at some stage need to obtain another supply.

### Winch Alternator

The winch alternator still needs to be overhauled to allow the winch to charge the battery at a suitable rate so that we can avoid having to use the battery charger after each flying day.

### Winch Wire

Our winch cable now has a few knots. Winch drivers and retrieve car drivers are requested to take all required steps to ensure that we minimise further breaks and knots.

### Windsock

The northern winsock attachments were recently damaged by strong winds at Mt Beauty. **Mark Bland** repaired the windsock attachments on 12<sup>th</sup> February. Thanks Mark.

### Cone Markers.

A consultant appointed by Alpine Shire recently surveyed the airport and found that the cone markers were sited too close to the runway centreline. On 12<sup>th</sup> February, **Mart Bosman** moved the markers further out from the runway centreline in accordance with the consultant's recommendation. Thanks Mart.

## Members and Friends News.

Flying his LS-1F glider, member Alan Barnes took part in the Club Class Nationals held at Benalla during late January and came in a very creditable 11<sup>th</sup>

out of a field of 60 competitors after 8 contest days. Alan won the 4<sup>th</sup> day of the contest. The Editor is hoping to get Alan's exclusive story of the competition into the next edition of "Alpine Flyer".

Life member, **Ray Addinsall**, is recovering well from a minor health problem. Keep up the good work Ray.



A foreign Ka2 two seater glider.

Friend of MBGC and GFA CTO Airworthiness, **John Ashford** will be visiting Mt Beauty for the Labour Day weekend from Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March to Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March bringing his recently restored Ka-2 wood and fabric construction two seater glider. The Club has also invited Geelong Gliding Club members to visit Mt Beauty for that weekend.

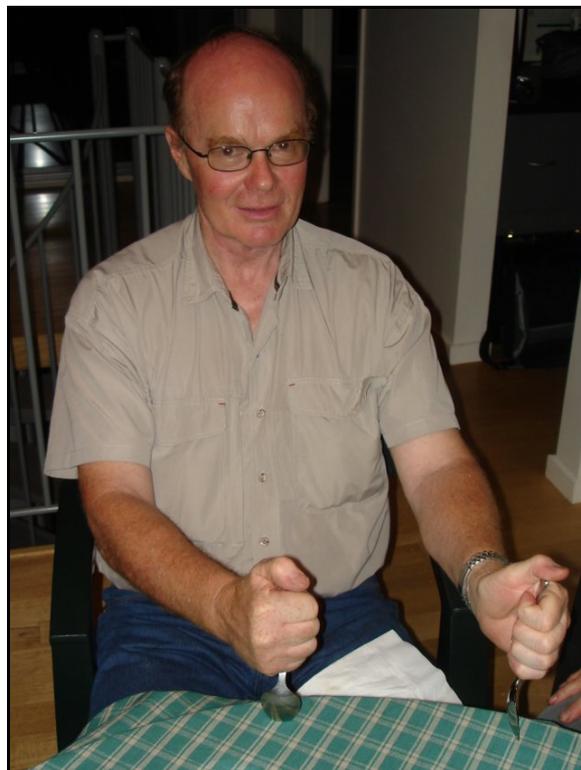


Most prolific winch driver for 2005 – Mart Bosman.

The winch driver statistics from November 2004 (when we first started recording who drove the winch for each launch) until the end of 2005 are:

Winch Driver Stats	NOV04 – DEC05
Name	Winch Launches
Mart Bosman	152
Mark Bland	140
Mike Pobjoy	103
Ian Cohn	96
Manfred Rueff	62
Rod Harris	58
Andrew Evans	32
Phil Glasson	11
Jeremy Dewar	9
Adam Bland	3
Nathan Johnson	2

Congratulations to **Mart** for being the most prolific winch driver and thanks to all other winch drivers for their efforts during the period. Without winch drivers gliding would be very difficult.



Social Member **John Lyons** demonstrating his glider go-around technique at the Annual General Social evening.

## Mt Beauty Gliding Club Diary

**Sunday 12th February 2006** - MP, MBd, MBn, MR and IC flew the IS-28, Blanik, and the Pilatus. Conditions were warm and sunny with hardly any cloud at 9,500 ft. Winds were 5 to 10 kt north westerly. Total flight time was 10h 7m from 5 flights. Max height was 9,500 ft.

**Saturday 11th February 2006** - MP, MBd, MBn, and IC flew the IS-28 and the Pilatus. Conditions were warm and sunny with hardly any cloud at 9,000 ft. Winds were calm to 5 kt north westerly. Total flight time was 9h 10m from 4 flights. Max height was 8,500 ft.

**Wednesday 8th February 2006** - RH flew the Pilatus. Conditions were warm and sunny with hardly any cloud at 8,000 ft. Winds were 5 kt north westerly. Total flight time was 4h 11m from 1 flight. Max height was 8,000 ft.



Andrew after his Silver badge qualifying 5 hour flight in the Pilatus.

**Sunday 5th February 2006** - AE, IC, and Susie flew the IS-28 and Pilatus. Conditions were hot and sunny with 1/16 cumulus at 8,000 ft. Winds were 5 kt north westerly. Total flight time was 5h 59m from 2 flights with a maximum flight time of 5h 19m by Andrew thus qualifying for the duration requirement for the FAI Silver Badge. Max height was 8,500 ft.

**Saturday 4th February 2006** - PGn, MP, ID and MBd flew the IS-28, Blanik and Pilatus. Conditions were hot with a high overcast for much of the day. Winds were calm to 5 kt north to north westerly. Total flight time was 4h 29m from 7 flights with a maximum flight time of 57m by Mark and Ian. Max height was 8,000 ft. Highlight of the day was Ian Douglas' first solo on gliders.



Ian Douglas being congratulated by Instructor Mark Bland after his solo flight.

**Sunday 29th January 2006** - AE, IC, Maurice and MBd flew the IS-28 and Pilatus. Conditions were very hot and humid sunny with 1/8 cumulus. Winds were calm to 5 kt north westerly. Total flight time was 8h 57m from 7 flights with a maximum flight time of 3h 7m by Mark and Maurice. Max height was 8,000 ft.

**Sunday 29th January 2006** - Annual General Meeting at Mt Beauty.



Members at the Annual General Meeting

**Saturday 28th January 2006** - Annual General Social evening at Mt Beauty.

**Saturday 28th January** - AE, PGn, and MBd flew the IS-28, Libelle, Blanik and Pilatus. Conditions were very hot humid and sunny with 1/8 cumulus. Winds were calm to 5 kt north to north westerly changing to southerly mid afternoon. Total flight time was 8h 15m from 7 flights with a maximum flight time of 2h 56m by MBd. Max height was 7,000 ft.

**Friday 27th January** - AE, IC, and MBd flew the IS-28 and Pilatus. Conditions were very hot humid and sunny with 2/8 cumulus developing later to Cumulo Nimbus. Winds were 5 kt north to north westerly.

Total flight time was 4h 30m from 6 flights with a maximum flight time of 2h 07m by IC. Max height was 7,000 ft.

**Thursday 26th January** - RH, AE, PGn, MP, IC, and MBd flew the IS-28, Libelle, Pilatus, and Blanik. Conditions were very hot and sunny with 2/8 cumulus and 5 kt north to north westerly winds. Total flight time was 11h 28m from 13 flights with a maximum flight time of 4h 48m by MBd. Max height was 8,000 ft.

**Sunday 22nd January** - RH, AE, MP, IC, and MBn and Heather flew the IS-28 and Blanik. Conditions were very hot and sunny with 2/8 cumulus and 10 kt to 5 kt north to north westerly winds. Total flight time was 8h 18m from 9 flights with a maximum flight time of 2h 42m by MBn. Max height was 11,700 ft.



Mart Bosman and Heather enjoying their descent from 11,700 ft in the evening of the 22nd of January.

**Saturday 21st January** - MP, IC, and MBd flew the IS-28 and Blanik. Conditions were sunny with 2/8 cumulus and variable to 5 kt north to north westerly winds. Total flight time was 6h from 4 flights with max flight time of 2h 13m by IC. Max height was 9,600 ft.

**Friday 20th January** - RH, IC, and MBn and Heather flew the IS-28 and Blanik. Conditions were sunny with 2/8 cumulus and wave cloud and 5 kt north to north westerly winds. Total flight time was 6h 40m from 4 flights with a maximum flight time of 2h 30m by IC. Max height was 7,600 ft.

**Thursday 19th January** - IC, and MBn flew the IS-28. Conditions were alternatively sunny and overcast with variable light winds. Total flight time was 3h 16m from 4 flights with a maximum flight time of 2h 20m by MBn. Max height was 8,000 ft.

**Sunday 15th January** - IC, MR and MP flew the IS-28 for Ian, Michelle and Peter. Conditions were overcast with variable light winds. Total flight time was 37m from 4 flights with a maximum flight time of 19m by IC and Michelle. Max height was 3,400 ft.



Happy 40th Ian.

## MBGC Current Fees and Charges

Member Category	Full	Assoc-iate	Social	GFA Visitor
Debuture	\$500	\$250	Nil	Nil
Joining Fee	\$100	\$50	Nil	Nil
Annual Fee	\$100	\$50	\$25	Nil
Winch Launch	\$10	\$13	\$13 <sup>1</sup>	\$15
IS-28 Flt Fee Per Minute	\$0.40	\$0.50	\$0.50 <sup>2</sup>	\$0.60

<sup>1</sup> 5 launches per annum only - \$15 per launch after 5.

<sup>2</sup> 2 hours per annum only - \$0.60/min after 2 hours.

For MBGC members, flight time charges cease for flight time beyond two hours.

TIF fees are \$100 for winch launch and \$150 for Aerotow launch for up to 30 min flight.

### GFA membership fees

Annual	\$176	Three Month	\$60
Family Annual	\$140	Three day	\$10

## The Tail End

### The Longest Retrieve

by Phil Glasson

The launch point at Mt Beauty airfield is usually a place for flying related idle chat, but the few days before and after New Year something new happened. Well, new to me. I've been flying for 15 years at various clubs in the Northeast of Victoria, and have usually had access to at least one single seat aircraft, but Mt Beauty has just one club glider; a beautifully kept example of the IS-28. The growth of the club over the past few years has put considerable pressure on scheduling the aircraft for flights by club members. Now that's unusual!

I approached CFI, Ian Cohn, with a question : "What do we do to keep the interest of our pilots who should have graduated past the two-seater stage?" A brief discussion ensued the outcome of which was that we will probably maintain just one club aircraft, and have several privately owned sailplanes. There are already three such machines kept at Mt Beauty - a Cirrus, a Libelle, and a syndicate owned Blanik.

"Right" I said to Ian, "how would you feel about forming a syndicate to purchase and fly a nice and friendly single?". Ian leapt at the opportunity, as did President Andrew Evans. Mike Pobjoy joined as the 4th member so that he could boast about having a "private airline" consisting of 3 aircraft; Cirrus, Blanik, and another. That begged the question - What could we buy?

I don't usually read the classifieds in Aus Soaring, but a Pilatus B4 hangared at HMAS Albatross (the Nowra Naval base) caught our eye. I had flown a B4 at Corowa several years before, and found it to be a gentle aircraft to fly. In fact I achieve my Silver "C" 5hrs in it.

It took little effort to collect a kitty to cover the advertised price, plus a little more for "incidentals".

With all the other syndicate members otherwise engaged, the Friday 13<sup>th</sup> of January was the day Mark and I took the 570km drive up to Nowra. Leaving at 13:00, we had an uneventful drive, punctuated with regular rest, revive, survive breaks (aka Macca Stops) along the way.

Approaching Nowra, cloud base met the ground. Persistent light rain all the way down Kangaroo Valley to Nowra. The weather put paid to any ideas we had for pitching tents, so we hired a cabin. I can thoroughly recommend the Ex-Servicemens' club for dinner, but cannot say the same for the <deleted> caravan park. A fitful sleep, and early rise with the sun boring holes in my eyelids.



Phil at Nowra

Mark and I found HMAS Albatross and waited for our escorts to arrive. David Smith, Graham, and another arrived at the appointed time. With the formalities at the gatehouse complete (including photo ID!), we almost circum-navigated the airfield to find the place where the Pilatus was hangared.

Almost hiding down the back of the hangar, behind a pair of Blaniks, and a wingless Super Cub was an open trailer with Golf Charlie Delta on board. We heaved the trailer up to the front of the hanger, attached it to my car, then watched intently (and asking many questions) as the practiced hands of the Nowra crew removed Charlie Delta from the trailer and began to rig. Rigging was completed in short order. Pilatus wings are a mere nothing in comparison to manhandling Blanik or IS28 wings. What a joy!



Mark in the Nowra Hangar

With the wings and tailplane in place, Mark and David filled buckets and began washing off nearly three years of accumulated dust. With a (relatively) clean aircraft, Mark performed a rigorous DI, while I perused the logbooks, and struggled with replacing the trailer plug. The sun was beating down fiercely and the humidity was approaching 80%. It didn't make for pleasant working conditions.

I gave up on getting the tail light of the trailer to operate when I discovered the tail lights of my car weren't working. We'd have to make do with blinkers and brake lights only.... Graham and I took the trailer into the RTA for temporary registration, which thankfully does not require the RTA person to actually look at it.

Back to HMAS Albatross, and enter "Negotiation Phase", which was completed in good time, with both parties happy with the outcome.

We loaded Charlie Delta onto the trailer, bid farewell to our hosts. Charlie Delta trailered very well, but we were pretty close to the limit of the tow vehicle. 2000cc really is at the lower limit when towing. If the trailer had been a couple of hundred kilos heavier, it would have been a truly epic towing feat!

The trip up took just under 7hrs. With the extra load and my unwillingness to go home up through Kangaroo Valley, the trip home was always going to take an extra couple of hours. Little did I know that at about 10km north of Tarcutta the right trailer tyre would completely delaminate. While I've seen plenty of truck treads littering the highway, I've never had it happen to me. It's quite a sight to see one continuous length of tread go shooting 20 metres into the air. The trailer proved very stable. No swaying. We stopped quickly, and checked the situation. The tread had damaged the mudguard and forced it against the tyre, and a clearance light had half a lens destroyed. The tiedown kit provided a 4lb hammer to "finely adjust" the mudguard into a position where it would not prove dangerous for the remainder of the journey. Changing the wheel would prove a tougher nut to crack.

Yep, the trailer came with not one but two spare wheels. However neither Mark nor I could find a wheel brace in the trailer. My Nissan wheel brace did not fit. The tyre was still inflated, so there was nothing for it but to tackle the 10km to Tarcutta at a snails pace.

The pub seemed the best option for finding someone with the requisite tools, and lo and behold, a gentleman standing at the bar obliged us. With the wheel changed and inflated, we continued.

Remember the problem with the tail lights? And the delay with slow travel with a treadless tyre?

The last 50 Km into Albury/Wodonga was completed with the hazard lights flashing to warn vehicles behind of a long vehicle without tail lights.

The last section from Albury to Wodonga was completed without further issues. GCD then adorned my carport, much to "The Minister's" chagrin.

But that's not the end of the story. On the way to work on Monday morning, my car developed a misfire. The misfire developed into a whiff of steam from the exhaust on acceleration. The whiff of steam developed into a high temperature condition. The high temperature developed into a full fledged smoke screen. Alas, my 1987 Nissan Pintara, workhorse for the past 18 years, could stand the strain no longer. She sits in the work carpark awaiting a final short drive to the vehicular boneyard. 2 litres really is too little to tow a glider.

Does anybody know of a good 1999-2001 Holden ute for sale?



The Pilatus landing at Mt Beauty.

### **Flying in the Middle East**

By Social Member **John Hillard**

Private flying is probably not the first thing that comes to mind when you think of the Middle East, but it does happen. My wife and I have lived almost six of the last ten years in Kuwait and Qatar and, during that time, I've held a PPL/IR in, first, the United Arab Emirates and more recently in Qatar. These are the only countries in the Middle East where, to my knowledge, it is possible to hire aircraft. Some other countries (e.g. Bahrain and Oman) tolerate private flying but others (e.g. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) don't permit it at all.

Flying privately in the MidEast is interesting and frustrating in equal measure. There are only three organizations that I know of that operate light aircraft and they are each based at international airports – Dubai, Doha and Fujairah. Dubai you probably know, Doha is the capital of Qatar (the small peninsula that sticks out from Saudi Arabia into the Gulf) and Fujairah is on the Indian Ocean Coast of the UAE. What they have in common is VERY long runways – Doha is 15,000' – and the full suite of nav aids and radar control. Where they differ is that Dubai is rapidly becoming one of the busiest airports in the world, Doha isn't far behind but Fujairah is at the other extreme with around 30 movements per day. At Dubai and Doha, you tend to do a power-on dive down base and final, a rapid slowdown on short final and then a very quick exit from the runway before an Airbus thunders in behind you. At Fujairah, on the other hand, you contact the tower a little ahead of time to give the controller time to take his nose out of his book.

The Qatar Aeronautical College has a fleet of 12 early 1990's PA-28 Piper Archers and two PA-34 Senecas that it uses for ab-initio training of pilots for various MidEast airlines. The College is a highly professional organization that teaches budding airline pilots up to CPL/IR and ATPL as well as training air traffic controllers and other aviation professionals. Most of the staff are British and the courses meet European

standards. The College has a flying club that you can join once you have a Qatari licence. You get this by showing your Australian licence to the CAA and then passing a theory and a flight test. The theory test is interesting in that they use the same one whether you are applying for a PPL or an ATPL so you can expect to have to answer questions on high altitude aerodynamics and pressurisation!

At Doha, you are sharing the runway with all manner of airliners and military aircraft. Just before the second Gulf war, the USAF has large transport aircraft (C-117 and C-130) based at Doha International until they all moved to the US base about 20NM to the West. There are also Mirages of the Qatari Air Force based there as well the Emiri (Royal) flight. One day while I was taxiing in a PA-28, the tower cleared first a Mirage and then a Gulf Air A320 to "follow the Cherokee". I wish I'd had a camera.

The length of the runways creates some interesting options. At Doha, the light aircraft apron is at the opposite end of the field from the normal landing point. If there isn't much traffic around, the tower will allow you, after landing, to avoid a four kilometer taxi by taking off again, flying a few meters above the runway and making another landing near the other end. Alternatively, you can practice engine failure after takeoff with four or five "bunny hops" along the runway.

One feature of life here is that it is VERY hot for most of the year. The tower won't give you a takeoff clearance if the temperature is 38<sup>o</sup> C or above. This is not done for the sake of the pilots (all the aircraft have aircon) but for the engines. If there is a lot of traffic, you can be waiting for quite a while for clearance to cross the runway and taxi. Even when the temperature is in the high 30s, the engine temperatures can be close to the red zone by the time you are cleared for takeoff. This rule means that, for at least half the year, you can only takeoff in the very early morning and evening.

Not surprisingly, the rules are pretty strict if you are within the 15NM control zone around the airport but, once outside it, you are free to do what you like in the training area covering the northern half of the country provided you stay between 500' and 5000'). There isn't much problem with self-separation when there are only 15 light aircraft in the country. Since the whole country is under radar coverage, I also like to think that Doha Approach would tell us if we were going to bump into each other. There are a few restricted areas (palaces, industrial palaces and military) in various parts of the country of varying degrees of seriousness. Flying anywhere near the US airbase is definitely not recommended. There is also another area down by the Saudi border that, when I was told to avoid at all costs, due to "automatically activated surface-to-air missiles". I'm still not sure whether the instructor was kidding, but I'm not about to find out!

There is the opportunity to do some international flights and it is a real buzz. From Doha, Bahrain is about an hour by PA-28, Dubai is about two hours

and Fujairah three. It is a surreal experience. First, you taxi to the international terminal and assigned a stand where you park your bugsmasher between a couple of airliners. A huge airport bus then takes you to the terminal for customs and immigration. Once you've found someone to stamp passports, another big bus returns you to the stand. We've even been asked by the tower whether we required a pushback. Since the tug was bigger than the airplane, we declined and simply turned 180<sup>o</sup> in the bay.



A Mooney MSE similar to John's aircraft.

We will be leaving Qatar shortly to return to Australia. I've bought a 1995 Mooney MSE in the USA and will be flying it across the Pacific in Early March. For those of you who don't know, the Mooney is four seat, low wing, retractable gear 160kt airplane with a tail that looks as though it's been put on back to front. It is white and US registered N923DH, so you can expect to see it hanging around YMBT from March. Sadly, I don't think that it's suitable as a glider tug!

Although currently a social member, I'm keen to learn gliding and look forward to flying with you folks in future. All the best.

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## Club Trip to Corryong

Vice President **Mark Bland** is organising a trip to Corryong to coincide with the "Man from Snowy River Festival" from Friday, 31<sup>st</sup> March to the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April.

Mark is planning to take the Blanik and the syndicate winch. We are currently negotiating with the Geelong Gliding Club to obtain use of their Super Cub Tug for this trip. If we can secure this, the plan is to aerotow the IS-28 as well and operate at least two gliders there. Members with single seat gliders would also be welcome to attend. Our President, **Andrew Evans**, was going to attend, but then remembered that he was booked in to get married on the first of April – bad luck Andrew, but good luck on the day.

Corryong is 70 km from Mt Beauty by air and the Mitta airfield is more or less on track.

All members are invited to come along and fly. Bring your family along for a change of scenery and a chance to absorb some genuine Australian traditions and culture. Festival information is available from [www.manfromsnowyriverbushfestival.com.au](http://www.manfromsnowyriverbushfestival.com.au).

Members interested in attending should contact Mark on 0417 565 514 or at [marklibelle@bigpond.com](mailto:marklibelle@bigpond.com) as soon as possible.

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