

On The Step



The Official Newsletter Of The Seaplane Pilots Assn Of Australia

Lord Howe Island—WOW !! Splash-In 2006 A Huge Success

On Behalf of the visiting seaplanes and our friends a BIG thankyou to Clive Wilson the creator, Andrew Wilson and Suzie Wells, the organisers and the residents of Lord Howe Island, for a wonderful venue and very worthy cause for celebration, Splash-In 2006, Lord Howe Island.

The armada of aircraft flying into Lord Howe Island that beautiful Monday morning had every resident and visitor on the island perched on the lagoon foreshore to witness the buzzing of not only the lagoon but, Mt Gower, Balls Pyramid and the island before landing. Cyclone Wati had traveled East of Lord Howe Island toward NZ as a severe depression, bringing 3-5 meter swells and very strong SW winds leading up to the event, the swell was still pounding the reef as we arrived and pouring into the lagoon even at low tide, coupled with the chop, not good small seaplane conditions at the start.

The true spirit of seaplane flying was with the crew of the straight float Cessna 180, Philip Dulhanty and Graham white, departing from the river in Port Macquarie to a water landing in the lagoon on Lord Howe Island. We over rode the harbour masters instructions to only use southern end of lagoon, as Philip and Graham executed a beautiful curved approach over high terrain to land in Hunter Bay, in conditions that the rest of us could not handle, EXACTLY where Sir Francis Chichester landed EXACTLY 75 years before, this time witnessed by Giles Chichester, Sir Francis's son.

The arrival function, turned the normally placid Neds Beach, from the hand fish feeding of giant kingfish and people swimming with Gallapagos sharks, into a beautiful soiree hosted by the business people of Lord Howe Island, into the biggest event in the island history (source: about 75 locals)

Tuesday morning we awoke to what Clive described as "visible Thunder??" anyhow there was definitely lightning, torrential rain and loud thunder and strong gusty winds (again, exactly what happened to Sir Francis, 75 years earlier.) So the organizers had to change the venue from airport to town hall for official function, but gave us time to see the RAAF Hercules make 3 approaches before landing with some officials with mustaches. Official function, well lots of speeches and Giles Chichester told us of his father's flight and mentioned his lasting legacy to navigation, as did a couple of other speakers, BUT NO ONE could explain this lasting legacy to navigation. The fact that Sir Francis actually devised the method we use to this day, of tracking

to a point that has been offset, or inbuilt "error", so when you get there, you know which way to turn? Couple this with celestial navigation, that is with a sextant (Jack "pirate" Peters says is a camping manoeuvre.) Sir Francis's almanac ran out the day before his flight, so he interpolated, adding to the pain of having to take shots through the wings at various bank angles when he could see the sun and horizon.



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Splash-In 2006 cont.....

Sir Francis was heading west from Norfolk, it is "easy" to find your latitude, especially on a westerly heading Longitude, however is much more difficult to calculate without a gyro stabilised sextant in an astrodome and a big chart on the flight navigator's table along with a giant chronometer and 2 hours reserve fuel, try that now!! Sir Francis's actual flight log is in the island museum don't miss it.

Guest of honour, Bob Ansett, presented the people of Lord Howe Island, a float from one of the Ansett Sandringham flying boats that serviced the island for some 30 years. This particular float was off an aircraft which broke up in heavy seas on the beach of the island after it broke its mooring in a storm with visible thunder and was later scuttled 5 miles east of Lord Howe. Bob dedicated the float to the island and described the remarkable similarities between his father Sir Reg Ansett and Sir Francis Chichester. In 1929 Reg Ansett acquired a pilots license #419, at the same time Chichester obtained his pilots licence. Both almost immediately purchased Tiger moth aircraft and took passengers for joy flight. Both went on to become aviation legends, one was recognised as the "greatest single handed navigator of his age" and the other built Australia's largest domestic airline and ultimately the countries largest transport company. Both competed in air races, with Ansett winning the inaugural Brisbane to Adelaide race, with the prize money used to buy his first commercial aircraft. Both were to lose aircraft on Lord Howe Island, both were knighted in the 60's and both died at the age of 71. Interestingly, both began their working career in the timber industry. Chichester acquired a timber plantation in New Zealand in the early 20's and Reg worked as an axeman in the Northern territory for two years during that same period. What a shame Bob did not take over Ansett, Bob did a great job of flying the Seawind to Lord Howe Island.

Just as Bob finished his speech, Steve Macintyre from the kiwi Seawind, called a break in the weather "Let's hit the lagoon!!!" so we all dashed off by pushbike to the airport and we created havoc in the lagoon thrilling the whole Island population perched on every vantage point and beach.



Continued Page 3.....

Shattering The Mold of Float Design!

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Splash-In 2006 cont.....

The 30 minute break from the torrential rain and 40 knot Nor Westers was actually a wind shift to 40 knot South Westers, but we all got a few water landings in under the low cloud until the lagoon ruffled up again, so all aircraft back on deck then back to the town hall for drinks and food provided by the Islanders again.

Next day Wednesday, saw a break in weather and Thursday was looking VERY bad with 50-60 knot Nor Westers forecast so most aircraft departed Wednesday morning for the mainland. The two Seawind's and Rhys Richard's Renegade

stayed and we planned a mission to Middleton Reef, over double shot latte's and Cappuccino's at Arajilla, but thickening cloud to the North, ruined the photo experience so we all did multiple trips to Balls Pyramid taking as many passenger friends as possible and a few water landings before the swell broke over the reef on the incoming tide and visible wind increased.

Forecast was right, Thursday saw 50 knot Nor Westers at surface, low cloud, rain, trough with thunderstorms between island and mainland, Qantas had 120 knot headwind on return, so we elected to have more Cappuccino's and Skinny Lattes at Arajilla, (sorry Janne and Emma) and organise a big hike over north of island with a picnic lunch of Jerusalem artichoke, chive and goats cheese sandwiches from Pinetrees, to end up feeding the fish (Jerusalem artichoke, chive and goats cheese sandwiches) and swimming with the shark's at Neds Beach and leave Friday, after another wonderful meal at Pinetrees. Friday turned out really nice and only 15 knots on the nose to Cooly, so 2 hours of formation flying relieved the boredom of Robbie Williams DVD's, 3 amphib's formatting over the Tasman would have been a sight to a cruise ship.

We really appreciate the EFFORT, time and commitment that you all showed flying to Lord Howe Island, the Barefoot Pilots and Seaplane crews are: Phillip Dulhunty and Graham White in Cessna 180 Floatplane, Harvey Prior and Greg Wright in Lake Buccaneer, John "Delay" Daley and Jack "Pirate" Peters in Lake Buccaneer, Greg Taylor in Lake Renegade, Mandy and Rhys Richards in Lake Renegade, Karen and Bill Day, Jude Anderson and Steve Macintyre, Diane and Cliff Marchant in New Zealand Seawind, Bob Ansett, Viv and Perry Taylor in Noosa Seawind.

Land aircraft Chad Boot and Ben Hunter in Sundowner, Gail and Graham Henry, Hal Griffiths and Orm Grace in Cessna 185, Jo Grady, Ryan Taylor and Tony Kerr in Cessna 182 and Pip and Dick Smith in Cessna 208.

Other guests at Lord Howe for Celebration, Josie Ansett, Noosa, Brett Freeman, Penny and Rod Sykes, Noosa, Sue and Kevin Bowe, Noosa, Marsha Marsh and Ross Finney, Noosa/ Sydney, Marilyn and Frank Moes, Brisbane.

Thanks again to Pixie, Ed, Kerrie and Bruce from Pinetrees, who accommodated Bob and Josie Ansett and of course Suzanne Wills and Andrew Wilson, Jude and Pete from Leanda Lei who provided fantastic accommodation for Philip Dulhunty and Graham White and Tony Kerr.

Clive Wilson, "Lord Howe Maritime", you did it Clive and what a great job you did as MC, Thanks.

Special Thanks to the New Zealand Seawind crew, you came a long way, partied hard and were a pleasure to be with, I hope SPAA provide you all with complimentary SPAA membership??

Next one? Suggestion that Lord Howe Island splash in becomes bi annual, does that mean twice per year??. From the positive comments, safe flying and copious visible laughter, maybe it IS an Annual caper?

Next mission from Qld Chapter of Seaplane Pilots Assoc:

Rote Island Indonesia, surfing trip end May just after trade winds start, Rote Island is where Japanese based their aircraft for attacks on Darwin, Broome and Port Headland. Longest sector is Darwin to El Tari, (Kupang) 444 nm over water, Bali only 500 West for a side trip.

September: Aitutaki Atoll in Cook Islands, where the Solents would land en route to Hawaii on The Coral Route, slightly bigger distances, but worth the trouble.



Perry Taylor

SPAA QLD Coordinator



The Honor Roll Presented By Philip Dulhunty and Andrew Wilson



ZK-SWK Team New Zealand and Kevin Bowe



VH-DSU Ryan Taylor, Joanne Grady and Tony Kerr not in photo.



VH-ETY Jack Peters and John Daley



VH-LAK Greg Wright and Harvey Prior



VH-VIV Viv and Perry Taylor



VH-LKA Rhys and Mandy Richards



VH-JKD Graham Henry, Gail Henry, Orm Grace and Hal Griffiths not in photo



VH-AIO Chad Boot and Ben Hunter





VH-WMW Greg Taylor



VH-BNJ Philip Dulhunty and Graham White



A sundowner or two at Ned's Beach



Giles Chichester



VH-ETY on Arrival Lord Howe



RAAF C-130



VH-BNJ Landing exactly where Sir Francis Chichester did, exactly 75 years ago.





From the News desk.....

Application for Seaplane Base Accepted

The Sydney Harbour Federation trust has accepted the Seaplane Pilots Assn of Australia's application for a Seaplane Base on Cockatoo Island in Sydney Harbour. This advances SPAA's application to the next stage whereby SPAA is required to submit a detailed proposal setting out the proposed use, and fit out or changes to the existing infrastructure.

It is SPAA's intention to have a place where Seaplane's can come out of the water, for wash downs, maintenance and storage.

Cockatoo Island is the largest island on Sydney Harbour containing over 100 buildings. It has two dry docks, historically significant convict buildings and shipbuilding facilities, large industrial sheds, and workshops.

The trust is currently finalising arrangements with Sydney Ferries to operate peak hour services between Cockatoo island and Circular Quay. The trust will also be organising regular ferry shuttle services to Woolwich and other parts of the western harbour.

Cockatoo Island will open to the public in early 2007



SPAA On Show at NATFLY 2006

Every Easter around Australia there is always a swag of aviation events on, however the one that's not to be missed is the Recreational Aircraft Associations NATFLY held in Narromine NSW. An event based upon the common passion for aviation, bringing together everything from the fundamentals of do-it-yourself aircraft construction and grass-strip takeoffs to the latest technology.

An estimated 5000 plus people attended and SPAA was there to represent the web-footed aviator. Many seaplane designs were on show including the Aventura, Storch, Airborne XTC, Allegro 2000, X-Air, even the very popular Australian made Jabiru is being converted to floats.

Common questions asked in the past centered around float or hull training, and waterway restrictions, however the most common question this year was: Can I convert my aircraft to floats, how do I do it, and doing it on a RAA license, the most common reason given is due to the closure of airfields and increasing CASA charges.

It has to be seen to be believed but there's no doubt the future direction of GA is headed in the RAA's direction with an increasing proportion in seaplanes. Here's to NATFLY 2007.....



Certified Seawind's Becoming a Reality

In the last quarter of 2006 Seawind hopes to complete VFR certification.

The Pennsylvania based company plans to begin certification flight-testing of the first production 300C in May in Wichita, Kansas. During the VFR testing period, the second prototype will be assembled. It will fly with full deluxe IFR moving map, S-TEC 55X autopilot and the Continental FADEC engine.

The 300hp Seawind 300C will cruise at 165kts at 8,000ft and 65% power. A VFR version is currently priced at US \$309,900 and expected to rise.





From the News desk.....

ACT State Coordinator Appointed

Richard Holgate from Giralang in North Canberra ACT, has joined the SPAA Executive as the ACT state coordinator. Richard, is a company director with DDW Consulting, which is a risk mitigation and contingency planning company specializing in major events (Olympics, Commonwealth games etc), Aviation and Maritime Security. "Needless to say, business is booming at the moment - too much work and not enough time to fly!"

In Richard's role as state coordinator he will be liaising with local maritime and aviation authorities when the need arises, and generally foster the development of water flying through established codes of practice made available from SPAA, and of course organise a local Splash-In (No Pressure)!

Richard has a SeaRey Amphibian VH-CHI which is expected to make its maiden flight by the time this goes to press. The SeaRey is based at Polo Flat in Cooma which will be its home for the land testing phase and then we will move it to Moruya for the water operations testing phase. "I built my SeaRey with my father in Cooma which has been a real revelation and something that has brought us a lot closer together. He is 75 years old and now thinking of learning how to fly."

I have always loved the water and a new interest in flying has merged the two interests into a seaplane. It is truly an adventure and it will be a great to fly out of the lakes in the Snowy Mountains and the South Coast waterways of Wagonga Inlet, Moruya, Wallaga Lake etc - it just cannot be done in a land plane! - We hear you Richard, welcome on board!!



For Sale— EDO 89-2000 Floats

- Never used EDO 89-2000 floats with attachment kit.
- Very Good condition, includes Pump, and Bungs
- Attachment kit believed to be for C172
- Located Bankstown Airport
- New from factory price is USD\$26000
- Only A\$15500
- Contact chadboot@bigpond.net.au





From the News desk.....

Mermaid Amphibian Update

By Perry Taylor

2 weeks ago we shipped a NEW Jabiru 3300, motor to Danny, new as in hydraulic lifters and new design head giving 40% more cooling.

Danny wanted to install the motor and test it so we got no surprises.

Result from Danny today: "Excellent"

He is finishing off cowl moulds and Prop testing is continuing, but this is really just fine tuning.

Production schedule is being drawn up, engine mounts have been produced, basically waiting for final cowl moulds to hit factory.

Performance results are "secret" until third party verification and MAJOR press release.

"When can I get one?" we should know the answer within 4 weeks, I have 2 confirmed in first production run.

"How much ?" Factory price is US\$91,000, add freight, insurance, PLUS some Extras that we think are Essential, say US\$100,000, u can add auto pilot, GPS etc, we will send Factory price and options list when current. So, sell your BHP shares and send proceeds to your bank in States, get some \$\$ over IF you think the A\$ will fall further.

We will advise announcements immediately, as we are getting close now to shipping.



Rest of the news is From Danny.

<http://www.sportaircraftworks.com/mermainmain.html>

[New Jabiru engine](#)

First the good news (don't worry there won't be any bad) - JABIRU released new 3300 engine at Sun'n Fun. This engine has the same horse power but it's heads and cylinders have twice the cooling fin area. It also has hydraulic lifters which should reduce the maintenance on the engine. The main reason the installation of Jabiru on the Mermaid has been dragging was cylinder head cooling problems. We were able to fly with this engine (the old version) for 20 hours accomplishing much of the design work for production, but the cooling was never adequate to meet our goals.

We were able to beg this new style engine from Andy Silvester from Suncoast Sportplanes Inc. (Florida Jabiru dealer). I installed this immediately after the show and have been flying it for four days with much better results. With the cooling temperatures all within limits and with our secondary cooling fans we are able to step taxi and play on the water with positive cooling.

Only a few minor details need to be completed as we go into full production on this engine installation.

[Even more good news - the exemption](#)

Our exemption was granted by the FAA to allow the Mermaid to be registered as an S-LSA with no limitation on gear position or changing gear position in flight.

[Production increase](#)

We are in the early stages of extending our factory, we plan to quadruple our facility within the next 6 months. This will substantially increase our ability to produce more Mermaids and quick-built kits and reduce our order back log.

Clear skies!

Danny





Vale: Ron Bertram—Friend Of GA

It was indeed very sad to hear the passing of Ron Bertram the president of AOPA Australia who tragically died in an aircraft accident at Bankstown airport on April 6.

Ron, known and respected by many was instrumental in spearheading a campaign in bringing a halt to the destruction of GA. Ron was certainly an individual who motivated those around him, to act, take a stance and work hard at saving the industry we all love and enjoy.

I was actually driving home from Bankstown airport when the accident happened, having just returned from our fantastic Splash-In at Lord Howe Island, and on the car radio came a newsflash about the accident. While not downplaying the tragedy of the accident I couldn't help but notice the intent of the media when reporting this story, the response they wanted from the listener is the same many of us demonstrate when we encounter a snake, raw primal fear. And it matters not that within hours of Ron's tragic accident there was a head on collision on the Hume Highway with multiple fatalities the facts pale in comparison when we are talking emotion.

With regard to seaplane operations in Australia and in particular Sydney, we are faced with a curtailment on our operations based on this very same emotion rather than fact.

So where does this fear come from why does an aircraft accident get the attention a car or boat one doesn't. It comes down to one thing, - Familiarity.

To illustrate this point consider the difference in response from the public in an area where seaplane operations are regular, and an area where they are never seen, The first one will get a cursory glance the second can induce the same hysteria, had a spaceship full of martians just landed, but its this primal fear, the fear of the unknown that not only is destroying GA but could eventually lead to a curtailment of seaplane operations.

The big picture issues for the Seaplane Pilots Association Of Australia in the next few years are not only to align and work with our fellow land based aviation associations in doing our bit to stop the decline in GA, but to increase the familiarity of seaplane operations and thereby reducing the fear.

At the SPAA we educate the public as best we can with the limited resources that are available, articles regularly appear in boating and aviation magazines and publications.

However without a doubt the best way to educate the authorities and public in seaplane operations is to get out there and FLY!!! !!!!!

Everyone loves watching an aircraft takeoff or land, flyer or non-flyer, but its also the personal touch that will breed familiarity, talking to people, taking them for a ride, taking their photo with the aircraft, pointing out how much fun, not to mention how easy to learn water flying is.

My efforts as secretary of the Seaplane Pilots Assn over the next year, will be focused on increasing that familiarity by supporting an increase in seaplane activity, in turn doing our bit to stop the decline in GA and assist AOPA carry on with Ron's good work.

Chad Boot

Secretary

SPAA Spray Jacket Keeps you looking Good This Winter

Stay warm and dry this winter with the latest edition to the SPAA Catalogue, the SPAA Spray Jacket.

This Nylon jacket is water resistant, and has a polymesh inside lining, It also features a rain hood inside the collar, and drawstrings around the waist.

This is a high quality jacket and has the SPAA logo embroidered on the front left hand side.

Ordering is easy, simply visit our website <http://seaplanes.org.au/catalogue.htm> and order online. Payment is made using your credit card via PayPal or email shop@seaplanes.org.au, a bargain at only \$55.00.

The jacket is also available at **Concept Aviation Supplies**, Bankstown Airport .

Phone: (02) 9791 0222 or visit <http://www.conceptaviation.com.au>





Places To Visit — Port Macquarie NSW.

Magnificent surfing beaches, quiet coves and tranquil lakes, the stunning shoreline is backed by a hinterland of mountains and rainforests. - It sounds like the Port, Port Macquarie that is on NSW's mid-north coast.

There is one Seaplane Operator in Port Macquarie and that is Akuna Seaplanes run by ex Virgin Airlines pilot Ian Wilson.

Akuna Seaplanes have a C172XP in the Port, and operate it downtown at Town Green during the day, and retire to the adopted Port Macquarie Seaplane base, run by John and Sharon Raymond during the night.

John and Sharon are only too happy to help out Seaplane Pilots with anything from aircraft wash down and overnight facilities, to Fuel, accommodation a run downtown and maybe even a beer or BBQ.



John and Sharon are located in a canal just off the Hastings River, they have a pontoon out the front for aircraft parking, a Seaplane trailer and winch that Akuna Seaplanes use to bring their aircraft out of the water on, for daily ablutions.



1. The entrance to the canal from from the Hastings River



2. The Canal, turn next left



3. John Raymond's Pontoon on right

Avgas is available from Akuna Seaplanes, via the refuelling van, alternatively Port Macquarie airport is 5 mins away.

Ian and the team at Akuna also carry out Float Endorsements on either C172XP or C206 Amphib. They can be contacted on tel: 0412 507 698 or visit the website www.akunaseaplanes.com.au.

John and Sharon Raymond can be contacted on Tel: (02) 6583 2005



Ian Wilson—Akuna Seaplanes



Two Fantastic Hosts Sharon and John Raymond





E-Shots

***"It's a lifestyle. A love of adventure a passion that pervades every pursuit.
It's a passion for life, people, the things around us, and our unique freedom."***

The Purpose of E-Shots is to capture the thrill and excitement of Water Flying, it could be the solitude of taxiing on an inland lake, heeled up on a pristine beach, or that hearting pounding moment on the step right before lift off. Each month we will feature a contributors picture that best represents all that Water Flying has to offer. Everyone who sends a photo in will receive a Pilot In Command T-Shirt courtesy of Concept Aviation, Bankstown Airport . Email your photos to editor@seaplanes.org.au



"Lord Howe Island Here We Come".

Seawind VH-VIV Piloted by Perry and Ryan Taylor, and VH-BNJ piloted by Philip Dulhunty and Graham White. Taken by Chad Boot in Sundowner VH-AIO, approx 70nm from Lord Howe Island.





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