



On The Step

THE OFFICIAL SPAA NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2021 SPECIAL ISSUE

SEAPLANER MAGAZINE

We take a look back at some classic covers and articles from SPAA's Seaplaner Magazine

THE NEWSLETTER ARCHIVES

We've selected some interesting articles from previous newsletters to see how far we've come!

SPAA TURNS 50!

Reserve the 19th of February 2022 for the upcoming event at Rathmines to celebrate an amazing 50 years of SPAA!

A TRIBUTE TO OUR FOUNDER

We celebrate the life and achievements of SPAA's founding member, Philip Dulhunty



SPECIAL RETRO EDITION

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A Word from THE PRESIDENT



Hi Members! We're finally wrapping up on a trying couple of years and I'm very proud of how we as an Association have progressed during this time. While we haven't been able to go on as many adventures as we might like, we've been hard at work in the background producing some very useful tools and features for our members.

With this vintage magazine, we wanted to take a look back at SPAA's history. We'd love for our members to be involved so please send in any stories or photos from the previous couple of years and we'll feature them in upcoming issues.

We hope you've got grand plans for Seaplane adventures over the next year and encourage you to make use of the Touring Guide in planning them out. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Hope to see you in 2022.

DAVID GEERS
Searey VH-XWW

The Original 1977 NEWSLETTER TEAM

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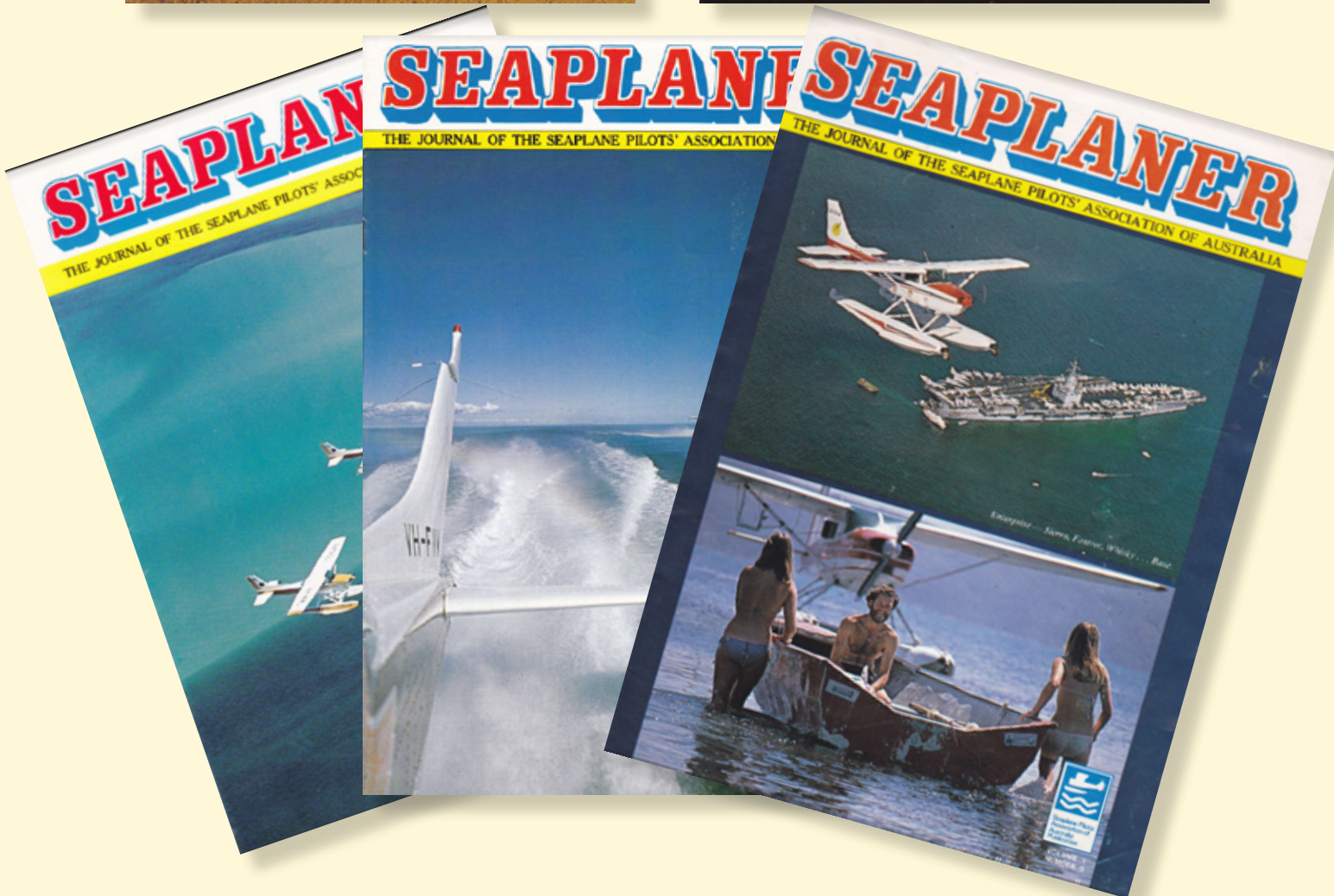
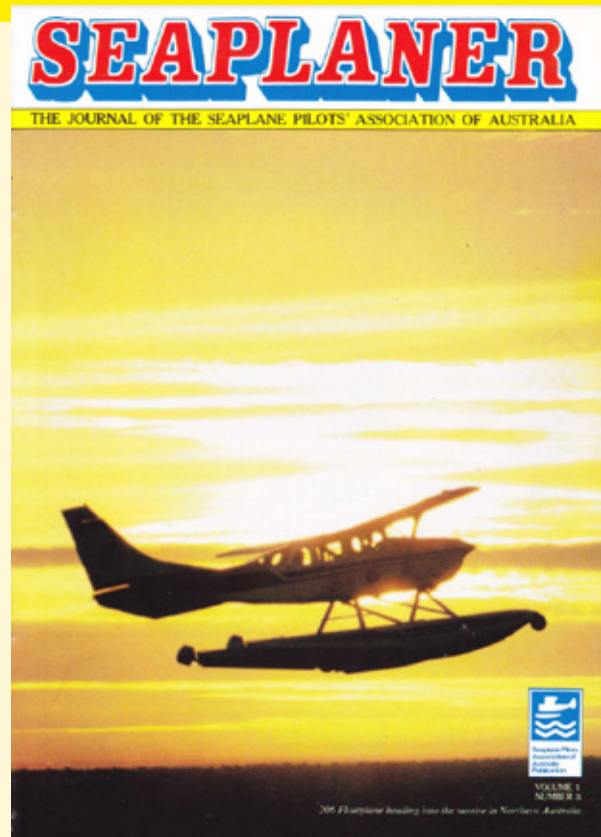
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Thanks to all who have contributed over the years to an amazing magazine filled with fascinating articles and news!

SEAPLANER

SPAA's Original Magazine





Channel Seven of Sydney sponsored Rescue Floatplane Color 7.

SPLASH-IN '77

On board the mother boat at meal time. From left to right, Phil Dulhunty, Vic Walton, Mrs Dulhunty.

Simone Ryder, Water Wings' attractive secretary, with the wife of a potential member.

The start of the display of formation flying for the public at Runaway Bay.

The President in bathers getting a helping hand.



Original Date: 1977

SPLASH-IN '78

It was unanimously decided that the Annual Meeting and Splash-In will be held at Happy Bay, Long Island in the North Queensland Barrier Reef in November 1978.

The details will be sent to all members shortly.

The manager of the Happy Bay resort, Mr John Montenay, is offering a special discount for seaplane members. The rates, when they are struck, will be all inclusive—that is, three meals, morning and afternoon teas. Accommodation and all meals will be paid for in a single payment at the conclusion.

There will be lots of exciting excursions for all the members. A new reef operation incorporating T.S.M.V "SAPPHIRE 11" will enable all the convention "Seaplaners" to be flown to the reef for extended periods. Up to 10 people will now be able to have overnight accommodation on these outer reefs. A scuba instructor will be on board and all equipment can be hired for special reef fishing.

It is noted that high tides will occur during the morning. It will be essential that flying activities are confined to three hours either side of high tide.



Swimming pool close to the cabins for those that want a freshwater dip.

Our host Kevin Bowe with some of the facilities that may be available at the Splash-In.



Aerial view showing the situation of Happy Bay in the Whitsunday Group.



Original Date: 1978

SIR CHARLES KINGSFORD-SMITH MEMORIAL AIR RACE 11th JUNE, 1978

Two seaplanes were among the 50 starters entered in this race, from Brisbane to Sydney. Kevin Weldon and Ross Horne flew Whisky Whisky Lima and in Whisky Whisky Hotel were David and Ursula Hooker.

It was a long, slow trip in the Cessna 172s with a refuelling stop half way at Hat Head on the Hastings River. For the seaplaners it was an historic event with the planes landing on the river right in the centre of Brisbane, beside the tall sky scrapers. The race for the seaplaners commenced from the Brisbane River and finished at Rose Bay in the centre of Sydney Harbour. The first time, we believe, in 25 years this has occurred.

The seaplanes finished 17th and 18th respectively with David Hooker's crew taking the honours. Some of the male members of SPAA feel Ursula Hooker has won far too many competitions—a swab will be taken in future.

WWH landing on the river. Brisbane-Sydney air race.



WWH in the big city on Brisbane River.



WWL on the river for fuel. Brisbane-Sydney air race.



Original Date: 1978

SPAA XMAS PARTIES 2021!

LAKE BOGA (VIC)

Approximately twenty members, partners and friends enjoyed a fabulous evening at the Lake Boga lakeside home of Mark and Raelene O'Halloran on Saturday 11th Dec. The weather and surroundings were superb, as was the food and the view over the lake at sunset. A huge thanks to Mark and Raelene for having us!



BBQ BEACH (N QLD)

An excellent evening was had by all at the (secret) Barbeque Beach XMAS party, despite a touch of rain in the afternoon. Attendees awoke to a stunning morning for a breakfast cook-up! Below is a photo of Kevin Moore and his Searey.



HECK FIELD (QLD)

The Jacobs Well/Heck Field XMAS party was held in conjunction with the Gold Coast Sports Flying Club. We only had one table of members at this party but we were in a room full of like minded pilots and all had a great time. Thanks to the GCSFC for an excellent night!



PELICAN'S PROGRESS

An expedition around Australia with 3 floatplanes.

The Channel 7 Network in Australia and The Paul Hamlyn Publishing Group have combined to sponsor a unique expedition using three seaplanes to make a bird's eye view series of eight one hour TV documentaries of coastal Australia. The expedition was officially launched on Friday 7th July from Church Point in the Pittwater area north of Sydney. The expedition will fly over and also land in some of the remotest parts of the crocodile infested Northern Territory rivers, Thursday Island, the Kimberleys in Western Australia, the Ord River Scheme, Great Australian Bight and the rugged coast of Tasmania.



Pelicans Progress Flight Commander, Vic Walton and Project Director, Robert Raymond, discussed the route before take-off on day 1.



The expedition members are as follows:

Flight Commander

—Vic Walton

Aquatic Air Pilots

—Ian Chessel

—John Smith

Engineer

—Greg Booth

Director/Producer Film Documentaries

—Robert Raymond

Photographer for Book Publishing

—Reg Morrison

Project Co-ordinator

—Steve Pierce

A complete daily log and camera record will be kept of the entire expedition, which will be of enormous interest to the Australian public now and for future generations.

All aircraft will be equipped with special inflatable rafts with electric motors to explore some of the more remote areas. Already there are indications that the eight one hour documentaries will be sold to the USA and UK. Special mounts have been fixed to the wing struts of each aircraft to enable remote control to be used with the camera to truly capture a pelican's eye view of this wonderful country. Full pictorial reporting will appear in future editions of SEAPLANER.

The crew, at the official launch of the Pelican's expedition at Church Point.



Aircraft and equipment assembled at the launch of Pelican's Progress.

INCIDENT REPORT

At SPAA we have been working hard compiling a comprehensive list of seaplane incidents. I found it fascinating reading through all the reports, all 130 of them. Something that is glaringly obvious is that most of the serious accidents were attributed to weather conditions. Your committee is looking at how best to share this information out with our members, a lot can be learnt from other people's mishaps. I for one will be a lot more cautious after reading all of the reports.

As this is our retro version of the newsletter I have found an interesting incident report back on 11/08/1990 Admiralty Gulf WA, Lake Renegade 250, Destroyed, VH-LAK, Minor injuries X3, private operations.

During the takeoff roll, the aircraft struck a wave causing it to bounce into the air. When it settled back on the water it yawed to the left and slid sideways into another wave. The sea state for takeoff was moderate with a 35 centimetre chop. The engine and its support pylon broke off at the fuselage and the aircraft sank shortly after coming to a stop. All occupants evacuated successfully. The pilot reported that the yaw was probably induced when the left hand float entered a wave and he was unable to realign. The rear left hand passenger was injured when the sash seat belt anchor point was torn from the aircraft. As the engine pod and support collapsed to the right, the left hand bracing wire and anchor block were pulled from the fuselage, tensioning the left sash belt and pulling the passenger's head into the fuselage structure.

Continued on next page...

Original Date: 1978

Incident report continued...

The main lesson here is to take extra care when taking off and landing in rough conditions. Think about it like trying to take off from a sealed runway with speed bumps every few meters! A lot of people think flying seaplanes is easy as we tend to fly in smooth conditions. It's when things go pear-shaped that experience and quality training kick in. We plan on making these valuable reminders a regular feature of our newsletters and will be launching the full database soon to our paid members.



FIRST AUSSIE ICON!

Rumours are that Australia will finally be seeing its first Icon A5 arriving early next year. We're hoping that such a classy looking Seaplane will usher in a new era of interested pilots. We know of one SPAA member who's expecting delivery in April 2022 and will update you on their experiences!



PROFILE

By PAUL COSTIN

VIC WALTON

A look at Vic's activities in the last year gives an indication of his commitment to flying.

- Continuing development of his company Aquatic Air.
- Nomad development flying at Avalon, Victoria with GAF.
- Farnborough Air Show.
- Nomad demonstration flying through the Himalays in India.
- Then on to Malaya, Singapore and Indonesia.
- Australian circumnavigation with three seaplanes for the film production 'Pelicans Progress'.

Vic is seen by his peers as a very thorough and professional pilot. Formal recognition being shown by his admission to full membership of 'The Society

erated by a thorough briefing and tight discipline. The challenge is the requirement to provide a maximum of pilot skill. He is very enthusiastic about the overall flying spectacle during the twelve days. This was his second year at Farnborough and Paris two years earlier.

Where did all this start?

A natural family progression. His father was in the air force. Vic obtained his licence in England during a holiday in 1949. He then gained admittance to the Qantas Cadet Pilot Scheme in 1951 which turned into a flight steward job on day 1 due to a surplus of pilots. His assignment: Sandringham flying boats out of Rose Bay. After four years Vic moved to Canadian Pacific and worked the DEW Line. Here he saw high seaplane utilisation. Then the South Pacific run based in Honolulu and Sydney. From Canadian Pacific to a job based in Sydney as a sales test pilot for Victa Aviation.



Original Date: 1979

of Experimental Test Pilots'. His dedication to flying is evidenced by his view that the time spent on the flight test line at Avalon is his leisure.

Development and test flying Vic approaches 'very carefully'. He does not see test flying as having an element of danger provided it is approached thoroughly. The Nomad project's successful sales have involved Vic in a busy calendar with very rewarding and challenging tasks; more recently the assignment as demonstration pilot to the Farnborough Air Show. The Show has a heavy competition environment resulting from the marketing pressures amongst similar types, this being mod-

Vic is now working on a long term goal to provide people travel along the Eastern seaboard.

Family involvement, a conservative financial approach to business, coupled with Vic's dedication and experience, is providing a steady growth for Aquatic Air.

Seaplane flying: Vic demands a high standard from pilots flying his aircraft. He enjoys seaplaning for its freedom, exacting requirements, and its rewards.

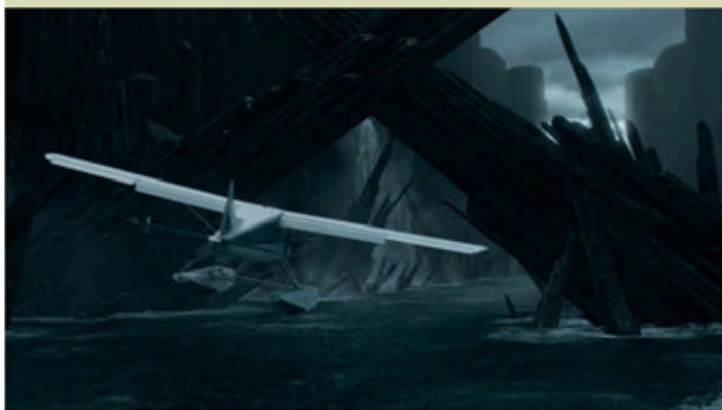
Leisure time: He doesn't appear to have any? It is mixed into his business. As Vic stated he 'still, gets a tremendous kick out of flying an aeroplane.'

On the next page:
SEAPLANES AT THE MOVIES!

SeaWing - Airways Saves Superman

Look! Up In The Sky Is It A Boat Is It A Plane..... No its both and its our Steve Krug in VH-SWB at the controls in one of this years blockbuster movies Superman Returns.

In the latest edition to the Superman series the showdown between Superman and Lex Luther occurs on Luther's crystal Island, during the sequence, superman falls off a cliff having lost his powers from Kryptonite, and is rescued by Lois lane in VH-SWB, Steve's flying skills are put to the test as he has to do a very rough water takeoff and climb at max angle to out fly the crystal island growing to swallow everything up.



Above. The Escape from Lex Luther's crystal island, a scene from the actual movie.

The Flying was "pretty demanding" says Steve. One sequence where the aircraft flies vertically down the cliff on Luther's crystal island, involved a helicopter hovering above Steve while he bunted VH-SWB and did a dirty dive, all this with partner Jenny Belfield as co-pilot.

Later after the rescue superman flies back, lifts the entire island out of the ocean, and tosses it into outer space....and couldn't have done without SeaWings help!!

Right. It's A Take. The crew wrap up after another day on the job. Photo courtesy of Rob Loneragan.

The filming took place around Palm Beach in Sydney and up to ten miles off the coast, over a 4-5 day period.

The seaplane became a focal point of the movie as Lois Lane's husband Richard White owned and flew it from where he kept it out the front of his home, and as one film critic commented "the 1950's period seaplane added a touch of class"

Richard played by James Marsden was given lessons at Fox studios in how to act out at the controls to simulate flying the aircraft, from Steve. Steve obviously did a good job as he was doing rough water landings shortly thereafter.



Original Date: 2006

Bond's the Name... James Bond

ZIPPING around the world to exotic locations is derigueur for special agent 007 – the suave James Bond. And when *Casino Royale* – latest film in the Ian Fleming series – hits our cinemas this month, the spy with a licence to thrill will continue that penchant for travel to amazing 'to die for' locations.

Casino Royale, the 21st James Bond adventure with Daniel Craig in his debut as 007, traces Bond's early career and his first mission which leads him to Le Chiffre – the banker to the world's terrorists.



Seaplanes feature prominently in James Bond movies and this one is no exception, this time Bond arrives by Twin Otter amphib at Paradise Island in the Bahamas.

In The Movie "The Man With The Golden Gun" even has James Bond (Roger Moore) piloting a Seabee himself to an exotic island in Thailand, the home of bad guy Scaramanga which destroys the aircraft with a solar powered laser, now that's *shaken not stirred*.

Bond in Paradise Island the Bahamas being chased by a sun-seeker boat.



Original Date: 2006

The First Seaplane!

Glenn Curtiss (1878–1930) was an American aviation pioneer and a founder of the US aircraft industry. He began as a bicycle then motorcycle builder, then manufactured engines for airships and in 1908 joined the Aerial Experiment Association (AEA), a pioneering research group founded by Alexander Graham Bell.

Curtiss rose to fame by making the first officially witnessed flight in North America, winning a race at the world's first international air meet in France, and making the first long-distance flight in the US. The Curtiss Aeroplane Co, built aircraft for the U.S. Army and Navy, and, his experiments with seaplanes led to advances in naval aviation. Curtiss civil and military aircraft were predominant in the inter-war and World War II eras.

*The picture shows the take-off of the first seaplane flight in the history. January 26, 1911
Glorietta Bay, San Diego, California.
Piloted by Glenn Curtiss*



Original Date: 2012

THE LATEST SEAPLANE!

Pictured below is Michael Smith's absolutely stunning, Russian built Sea-Bear which was on display at the 2021 SPAA Conference. Representing the pinnacle of long range seaplane technology, Michael has flown this beauty across the world and some of us were even lucky enough to get a ride in it at the conference. A special thanks to Michael for bringing the Bear along and inspiring our Seareys to visit the gymnasium!



SPAA Book Recommendation:

THE MAN WHO SAVED SMITHY

by Rick Searle

Patrick Gordon "Bill" Taylor was a pioneer of Australian aviation. As a fighter pilot during World War I, he was awarded the Military Cross and discovered a life-long passion for flight and air navigation. Returning to Australia after the war, he became a close friend of Charles Kingsford Smith: they went on to form an incredible flying partnership, setting records around the globe.

It was on a flight across the Tasman in Smithy's famous Southern Cross that Taylor earned the Empire's highest award for civilian bravery, the George Cross. With one engine out of action and another fast running out of oil, Taylor repeatedly climbed out of the cockpit to transfer oil to the stricken engine and keep the Southern Cross flying all this while suspended over the sea in a howling slipstream. The Man Who Saved Smithy is the enthralling account of his remarkable life and achievements.

—Summary from book listing on Amazon Australia



Available from all good book shops and online for e-reader or in paper-back from Amazon Australia

2021 WHITSUNDAYS CONFERENCE

by Ben Hunter & Di Becker

Our route to the Seaplane Pilots' Conference was a little different in this year 2021. We joined the 5 night East Coast Flying Boat Expedition on the historic Grumman Mallard, culminating in Airlie Beach.



The scene was set on the first night in Darwin when we met our Paspaley Crew over a picturesque sunset dinner on the waterfront at Pee Wee's. Our first flight over the amazing Kakadu was just a taste of things to come with ever changing scenery that made it impossible to look away. We took in excess of 1000 photos in 5 days!



Overnight stops included Banu Banu resort on Bremer Island in East Arnhem Land, where a refreshing swim made a great day even better and Undara with it's surprising lava tubes and Aussie campfire breakky. We were treated like royalty on our own charter yacht at Magnetic Island, then our last day flying over The Great Barrier Reef and an AMAZING afternoon at Whitehaven Beach was just the icing on the cake before the farewell dinner on the Pier at Airlie Beach.

The beautiful aircraft, the wonderful crew – Dan, Taiki, Chad and of course Jenna at home base.... an experience that is hard to put into a few words. Perhaps suffice to say that my first email after the trip finished was to Jenna to reserve 2 seats for us on a Kimberley Expedition next year. For me 'Once in a Lifetime' just isn't enough.



Rathmines Catalina Festival

23 Oct 2010

It was fantastic to see 10 Seaplanes attending the Rathmines Catalina Festival this year, the best attendance at Rathmines ever.

The festival is held annually at the ex RAAF Catalina Air Base at Rathmines, located on the western shores of Lake Macquarie in NSW.

There were a number of regular attendees and some first timers. It was great to see 3 x RAA Super Petrel aircraft at Rathmines interacting with the 'VH' machines. This was the first time RAA aircraft have attended a Rathmines Splash in and we hope to see more RAA friends next year.

A special thank-you also to Sydney Seaplanes for sending the 'big' Cessna Caravan Amphib for Joyflight duties.

Unfortunately the 'picture perfect' morning weather gave way for some rather ugly CB buildups, local storm cells and general rain periods later in the day. This meant most aircraft 'bugging out back home' prior to 1300hrs, but not before a Seaplane Flypast (line astern) thrilled the crowd with 2 low passes. . .

Our attendance was well received by the festival goers and event organisers, and the Catalina Flying Memorial benefited well from the festival overall.

Many thanks to the following 'Webbed Footers' that attended:

- Jay Laybutt - Super Petrel, RAA 19-5405
Wedderburn NSW
- Phill Lee - Super Petrel, RAA 19-7249
Wedderburn NSW
- Rohan Wittington - Super Petrel, RAA 24-7997
Jacobs Well, QLD
- Harvey Prior - Lake Buccaneer, VH-LAK
Central Coast NSW
- Bill & Donna Handley - Lake Buccaneer, VH-DQN
Wedderburn NSW
- Ben Hutchinson - Lake Buccaneer, VH-LUG
SE QLD
- Jim Moline - SeaRey, VH-DUX - Central Coast, NSW
- Keith Clarke - SeaRey, VH-ZRA - Bankstown, NSW
- Ben Hunter - SeaRey, VH-TAD - Bankstown, NSW
- Sydney Seaplanes - Cessna Caravan, VH-SXF
Rose Bay/Bankstown.

Hope to see you all again next year... more the merrier!

Ben Hunter (VH-TAD)

• • •

Rowan Wittington has recently been endorsed for water landings and flew his Super Petrel from Queensland to Rathmines for the festival - He had a great flight down and back and has written a detailed story about his experience. You can read that in Newsletter #25 which will come out in February 2011



The "parking lot" at the Rathmines festival



Phil Lee's Super Petrel at Rathmines



Sydney Seaplanes, Cessna Caravan at Rathmines



Keith Clark's SeaRey at Rathmines

2022 RATHMINES FLY-IN & SPAA'S 50TH!

Come help us celebrate in style!

2022 is going to be a big year for SPAA as we are turning 50 years old as an organisation. It makes me very proud to think that when Phil Dulhanty started this association so many years ago, he couldn't have imagined we'd be going as strongly as we are today with such a large roster of dedicated pilots. To that end, we are celebrating Philip's amazing life and achievements alongside the big milestone for SPAA at Rathmines on **February 19th 2022**, where we will be unveiling a commemorative bench commissioned by the committee, overlooking the Rathmines Waterways and dedicated to Philip. The commemorative bench, produced from sustainable materials by Australian company Replas, will provide a vantage point for future generations to sit and dream of adventures as we're sure Philip would have done (if you could get him to sit still for five minutes that is!)



We will be holding the 50th anniversary celebrations at this time so make sure you're able to get to Rathmines on 19th February 2022 to show your support! The event itself will consist of a Lunch at the Rathmines Bowls Club and we want to see as many of our members there as possible to celebrate. There will also be an informal dinner on the Saturday night.



We are currently organising pre-booking for accommodation so let us know if you intend to come for the full weekend. The booking page will be online at the SPAA website event page in the very near future. Scan the QR code to the right to be taken straight to the events page to register. Once again, thank you all for an amazing 50 years, here's to 50 more!



SPAA Events

– David Geers