

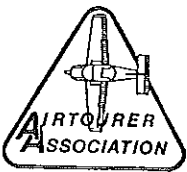
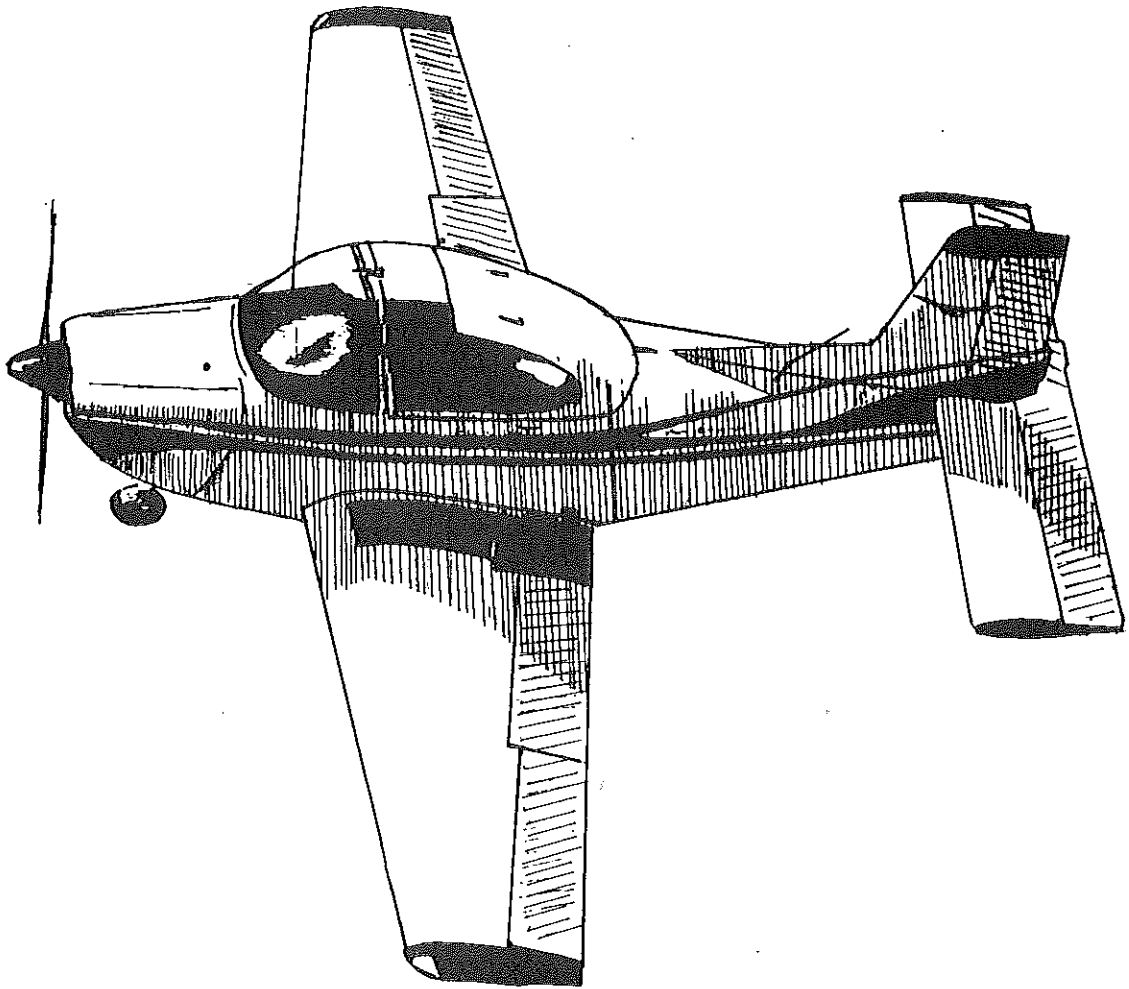
# AIRTOURER ASSOCIATION

NOVEMBER, 1991

Newsletter No. 60

PATRON:- *Dr. HENRY K. MILLICER (AIRTOURER-DESIGNER)*

Dedicated to the preservation and continued airworthiness of VICTA and A.E.S.L. Airtourer Series Aircraft.



# NEWSLETTER

AIRTOURER ASSOCIATION

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Articles for inclusion in the Newsletter should be submitted direct to the Editor.  
Please enclose payment for any advertisement.

The next Newsletter will be published February 1992. Contributions and/or  
Advertisements preferably close typed are to be with the Editor by 31.1.92

Advertising Rates

Small advertisement (3 to 4 lines) = \$10.00

Large advertisement = \$20.00

Cheque to be made payable to the Airtourer Association,  
post with copy direct to the Editor.

EDITORIAL

Thanks to all of you who wrote, visited or phoned to wish me well during my recent unexpected stay in hospital. Soon I hope to have recovered sufficiently to fly Hummingbird again. Maybe with the removal of part of my anatomy and resultant weight/balance alteration I will land on the Runway centre line for a change!

Received a follow up letter from the Shire Clerk at Moree, N.S.W. which says that - Until further notice we can all land at Moree and Mungindi free of charge. If our man in Moree Des Hurst has his way this will be a permanent arrangement.

Calling all Golden Oldies! (and the not so old).

According to Betty Rankin, in years gone by, Airtourer members used to put fear into the hearts of our enemies by loudly singing a tribal chant to the tune of 'A Gordon for me' or something similar.

Would anyone having knowledge of this ancient ritual or the words/music thereof please advise the Editor at your convenience.

This is our second year as Editors. It is very evident that without our regular contributors we wouldn't have a Newsletter.

How about putting pen to paper - tell us how your pet dog does Aerobatics in your Airtourer (supervised of course).

All reasonably sane contributions we will endeavour to publish!

Safe flying.

*John Plummer*

## 1991 PRESIDENT'S FLY-IN PARKES

Friday Sept 20th.

Early A.M. found us air-borne for Parkes and to our delight a strong tail wind so we averaged 140 kts+. The air was quite cool with an outside temp. of 0° and many co-pilots were feeling a trifle cold. Pilots were busy pulling out carby heat to prevent icing. One pilot however, was ignoring his wife's plea for a little warmth and didn't know there was another knob for cabin heat to make things comfy. But he won't be allowed to forget in future. Will he Jean M?

In anticipation of a great weekend 40 members and families sat down to dinner at the Leagues Club and after the meal John Treble did a great job of scraping to-gether over a \$1,000.00 to meet the bill.

Saturday Sept 21st.

Dawned sunny - fine with an expected temp of 17°. Filled in morning by exploring shops and Historical Museum all aboard bus at midday and out to airfield where we were treated to a delicious smorgasbord lunch supplied by Parkes Aero Club. Briefing for Nav. Trial at 2 p.m. and intrepid pilots covered 94 km's without a lot of trouble. Congrats. to Bob Peak who with local lad as navigator (very cunning) was the winner of 50 litres of fuel. During the afternoon we were treated to a most impressive display of aerobatics by Stan Tilley with a finale of inverted flight across the field. Also the formation team showed how well they can perform when appearing on camera. Finished day with another delicious meal supplied by Parkes Aero Club and much nattering.

Sunday Sept 22nd.

Bags packed, bills paid & aboard bus by 9 a.m. out to drome for refuelling etc. Then a most interesting bus trip around Parkes and out to visit the 64 M. diameter Radio Telescope known affectionately as "The Dish". We were lucky to arrive just in time for a most informative film to be shown. Here we learnt that the giant dish can best be described as "Listening To The Stars". It was opened in October 1981 and Parkes was selected because of the low recorded average wind speed. Even radio waves emanating from a galah can and do interfere with observations (we only hope it is far enough away from Canberra) hence any strong source of interference is known as a 'Birdie'. The number of stars in our galaxy is about the same as the number of rice grains it would take to fill the Sydney Opera House (how could you ever be proved wrong).

Finally back to drome, another meal, more chatter and up and away after another very pleasant president's fly-in. Thanks to Liz and Tony. The Plummers were sadly missed and we all hoped John would soon be back to his normal happy self.

Peg Jolly VH-BVV

### JOTTINGS FROM PARKES

Next A.G.M. will be at Loxton S.A. over the (Victoria) long weekend of 7, 8, 9th March '92. The idea being to arrive Saturday a.m. - probably have the Nav. Trial early p.m. (2 - 3.30) then have the A.G.M. at 4 p.m. - Dinner Sat. night. Sunday spent on the Murray River with a picnic barbeque lunch etc. Departure Monday (or Sunday).

My understanding is that daylight saving will still be in force in the Eastern states so even though it is a long way - the Easterners could plan to arrive Friday if necessary.

There was a lot of interest in acquiring G.P.S. units and Adrian Jolly obtained 4 or 5 quotes (to buy in bulk of at least 10 units). The best is for \$2300 for the basic unit (Pronav) and he wants replies and cheques by 25.10.91 for those interested.

I now have a list of members (who were at Parkes) who are interested in obtaining formation endorsements - there are about 10 on my list. It is hoped to be able to find instructors to hold a week-end somewhere convenient so that those who already have endorsements and those who want theirs, can get together and fly formation all week-end. At this stage we have no idea where we can get qualified instructors, where we can get together nor the cost to get the endorsement. I think it requires at least 5 hours but I may be wrong.

Tony Matthews.

ATTENDEES PARKES 1991

Andrew Ronald/Beatrice	LVB
Paul Cary	PCC
Doug Stott	CTM
Col Taylor/Marge	MRL
Tony Matthews/Liz	EQA
Stuart Oakley/Garry Antony	BWG
Des Hurst/Lola	MUZ
Mike Fisher/David Crotty	CND
Ken Bell/Jean	MRZ
Warren/Barry Kirkup	MOJ
Barry/Paul Gray	MOI
Adrian Jolly/Peg	BVV
Roy Riddel/Judy	OVV
Alan Wood/Merle	MUL
John Treble/Doreen	CRK
Bob Peak/Pat	MRE
Philip Usher/Graham Wood	MOA
Jerry Lawson	MTI
Ray Abernethy/Karen	RQG
Frank Murray/Jean	CKE
Stan Tilley/Bonnie	MTL
Stuart Hilsberg/Vicki	RQL
Ron Stiebel/Andy Frew	MOH
Jack Murray/Colleen	Astra Travel??
Clint Ashton-Martin/Barbara	MYN
Peter Roche/Hugh Knox	EUZ
Ray Wells/Nancy	WDV
Geoff Roberts/Jeanette	IOL
Hector Blemings/Wendy	Car
Bill Miller/Yvonne, William & Rebecca	Car

THE QUEENSLAND EXPERIENCE - JOHN and DOREEN TREBLE

Departed Melbourne 10.10.91 for a one hour flight and a planned one night stay at Deniliquin, but with the weather being so nice we stayed four nights.

Monday 13th on our way again in perfect flying conditions for a refuel at Parkes 1 3/4 hours later. Our friendly Parkes re-fueler Paul Tomlinson (whom most would know by now) was on hand and 20 minutes later airborne again heading for 1 1/4 hour hop to Gunnedah for a final top up of fuel and tummy. Same quick service and on our way again for Surfers Raceway, Surfers Paradise, a 2 1/4 hour flight. Eight octas of cloud at 7000 feet all along the coast which we entered at Casino, following Radar Vectoring we became visual at 2600 feet at Burleigh Heads four miles from touchdown, the wonders of Radar. Flying time from Deniliquin to Surfers Paradise was 5 1/4 hours.

Surfers Paradise is without doubt the holiday capital of Australia with so many entertaining things to see and do for people of all ages, with many eating houses to suit all pockets. Can't help but notice the overseas visitors of various nationalities everywhere, it is certainly one of the nicest Japanese towns you could wish to visit. Spent one week at Surfers doing all the usual tourist things except swimming, although the temperature was good it needs to be real good these days for us to venture in.

October 21st saw us on our way to Hervey Bay (ETI 1 3/4 hours) for two nights, certainly swimming climate here in a lovely low key area. A place we will surely visit on another occasion.

October 23rd off again for a 20 minute flight to Orchid Beach Resort, Fraser Island for a three night stay and enjoyed every minute of it. Approx. 16 guests at the resort so it made for a very relaxing time with the surf or resort simming pool surrounded by well kept lawns, right at our doorstep. Visited the rainforest plus crystal clear lakes on one day then journeyed along the beach to Sandy Cape Lighthouse (all 4 wheel driving) to thoroughly enjoy our time on wonderful Fraser Island.

October 26th departed for a pre-arranged visit with John and Leonie Plummer a one hour flight down to Caloundra. By coincidence Peter and Marjorie Roche, Hugh and Maureen Knox were in Caloundra attending a wedding on the same week end so a barbecue gathering for lunch on Sunday (supplied by the Plummers) was a great surprise. Unfortunately we had to leave around 2 p.m. to keep to schedule heading for an overnight stop to Gunnedah a journey taking 2 3/4 hours.

Pleased to advise that our Editor John Plummer who was unable to attend our recent President's Fly-In because of a Gallstone operation is now (after some complications) well on the way to a full recovery.

Early next day off for a quick visit to Mark Leech at Quirindi for a maintenance query then onto "Yarandale" for lunch with Betty Rankin whom I'm sure you will all be pleased to know is very well and bright indeed. A short hop to Griffith for fuel and on take off a quick wave to Barry Kirkup who had just landed after a crop spraying sortie. Our last leg home on a lovely Victorian afternoon saw us clocking 4 3/4 hours for the day.

All in all, an easy trip to a beautiful part of Australia with a total flying time of 17 1/4 hours over 19 days, plus a catch up with Association members.

A catch phrase Queenslanders like to say is:- Queensland, beautiful one day, perfect the next.  
or should it be:- Queensland, beautiful one day, Japanese the next.

Cheers

John & Doreen Treble - VH-CRK

#### NEWS FROM THE AIRWORTHINESS SUB-COMMITTEE.

A last minute attack by computer Gremlins has delayed this committee's report until the next issue of the newsletter. However Stuart Hilsberg would appreciate receiving any outstanding AD/VAT/28 Amdt 6 surveys together with any other items related to the airworthiness of Airtourers.

# Dougal flys the nest

## A CASE OF: 'DAD, CAN I BORROW THE PLANE?'

By MICHAEL SMITH

WHEN Tasmanian Dr Doug Dow decided to help his son get his licence, the outcome was far from normal.

Instead of asking dad for the keys to the car, Dougal, 17, now pesters his father for the keys to the family plane so he can take his friends for a spin — several thousand metres up.

The student has just received his restricted pilot's licence and has also become one of only two Tasmanians to earn an Australian Air Force scholarship to complete his Higher School Certificate.

Dougal said flying was in his blood after being encouraged to take to the skies by his father, who is well known in the state for his aerial acrobatic displays.

"I have been interested in planes since I was young," said Dougal, of Burnie.

"It is a fascination for me and I think it started from looking at Dad's plane magazines.

"I have had a lot of experience going up in our plane with Dad when I was young. Sometimes he would let me take the controls and I became hooked then."

Both of Dougal's grandfathers were also involved with planes after serving in the Royal Air Force as



● Dougal Dow in the family aircraft. Dad, Dr Doug Dow, is forced to look on

mechanics during World War II.

"Both my father and my wife's father were mechanics in the RAF so I don't know if that had anything to do with it," Dr Dow said.

"I used to let Dougal take the controls sometimes when he was young but I didn't really teach him at all.

"In fact I hardly flew as a passenger with him until he received his licence."

Dougal, who is also on his P-plates, now has to fight for the driver's seat both in the car and the family's two-seater 1965 Victor Air Tourer.

He began lessons last January and was selected as Student Pilot of the Year at the Wynyard Aero Club.

Still finding time for football, shooting and motorcross riding, Dougal said flying was his greatest passion.

"People at school think

it's pretty unusual and I have got a long list of people I have to take up flying," he said.

Dougal plans to train as a pilot at Canberra's Defence Force Academy after completing his HSC.

A third Dow could also be preparing to take to the skies with Dougal's 15-year-old brother already showing a keen interest.

"I reckon my younger son will fly too when he is old enough," dad said.

*Sunday Tasmanian 29/9/91*

### HANGAR BARBECUE AT BACCHUS MARSH - 8.12.1991

After spending a few years at Essendon, VH-MKL (Ian Donovan) and VH-CRK (John Treble) have re-located the Airtourers in their new hangar at Bacchus Marsh, and will co-host a barbecue on Sunday 8.12.1991 from 11 am onwards.

The aim being to have a look where we are and possibly our last gathering for 1991.

Anyone wishing to arrive on the Saturday, making a week-end of it, check your ERSAs for special procedures. For catering purposes please ring Doreen on (03) 336 2056 by 6.12.1991.

Ian Donovan & John Treble

## You need more than cotton balls

What a magnificent aeroplane. 1230HP engine (even more than the first Spitfires) and a beautiful big five bladed paddlewheel propeller hanging on the front of a smooth business like fuselage sitting on a very fat 'no nonsense' wing.

This was the Ayers Turbo Thrush S2R - T65, perhaps the ultimate in agricultural aircraft and I was fortunate to be sitting in the jump seat as it swept just a metre above the cotton crop at over 130 knots delivering its load.

Expertly handled by pilot Ken Hazelwood, this flight demonstrated the precision and skill of the 'croppies' as he flew an exact pattern across the field, pinpointing on the markers constantly positioned by the ground crew. Trees, power lines, dam levees all swept past **above** us, each pass finishing with a beautifully balanced procedure turn reversing direction then down again to the next pass. No doubt all very mundane to Ken and his fellow pilots but even though I pride myself on my precision aerobatics down to 500ft, I could not have been more impressed if you had handed me a million bucks!

A million dollars is probably what this beauty costs - but it sure is some aeroplane.

Developed from the Snow S2A designed in the 1950s the design was acquired by the Aero Commander division of Rockwell, who continually improved the aircraft. In 1977 Fred Ayers took over the production of the Thrush when Rockwell decided to concentrate on the Space Shuttle and hence the Ayers Thrush.

As early as 1975 Ayers had been converting the Wright radial powered aircraft to turbo props using the Pratt and Whitney PT6 500 HP. The requirement for the big motor came from the United States and other Governments for a fast, big load carrying ag plane that could be used to destroy illegal drug crops.

Owned and operated by Gwydir at Moree, the Turbo Thrush represents the very best in aerial agriculture as it carries 2,400 litres in the hopper, with a typical take off weight of 12500 lbs. At maximum weight the Thrush will cruise at its VNE of 138 knots at only 50% power.

Fuel, well at idle it only uses 70 litres/hr, but at full throttle more like 370 ltr/hr. Normal working fuel flow is 265 ltr/hr and surprise, surprise, whilst this engine will run on jet A1 in fact good old diesel is used!



Like all turboprops starting seems easy with the 'start' button pressed then a wait for 10% gas generator RPM to appear. The propeller lever is then moved out of its fuel cut off position, with fire up confirmed by a rise in the turbine temperature gauge.

With the prop turning at only 1700 RPM maximum the aeroplane is incredibly smooth and quiet. This is a tremendous feature as most of the cotton spraying is *DONE AT NIGHT* to catch the 'bugs' out and about. (135kts 1 metre above the crop at night )

Needless to say very good lighting is needed, so the aeroplane has extremely powerful retractable work lamps as well as landing lights. However, I'm happy to take Ken's word for it that night operations are actually safer as power lines show up as a silver streak.

As with most heavy duty working aeroplanes the undercarriage is massive with large 29" balloon tyres on the main wheels and a tail wheel. Dual caliper Cleveland brakes take care of the stopping.

Thanks Ken for a great demonstration. By the way, it was good to note that you had no trouble remembering how to loop and roll when we found ourselves in an Airtourer a little later in the day.

Stan Tilley.

#### WINERY WEEKEND

*We are planning a weekend trip to Echuca and Wangaratta (Victoria) with the intention of investigating some wineries and tourist points of interest. The proposed date is early February 1992.*

*At this stage, the plan is to meet near or at Echuca and spend the afternoon exploring the town and seeing what Tisdall Wines have to offer. We will stay overnight, probably at a Pub, and have a (very) social dinner.*

*Sunday morning we will fly to Wangaratta for morning tea and take the opportunity to look at Drage Airworld. We then fly to Milawa (8NM east) to investigate Brown Bros. and WALK (!) 1/2 NM into Milawa for lunch. After lunch, we fly to Markwood Estate and visit this small winery, which is 100ft from the end of the airstrip. After that it's off home.*

*If you want to be in this trip, contact Andy or Jane Morris (VH-DDZ) on (03) 803 2720 AH and put your name on the list. Because accommodation in Echuca is always at a premium, we will have to finalise the dates and book our accommodation by mid December.*

*If you have any suggestions as to where to meet so that we can arrive at Echuca en masse, we would be very pleased to hear them.*

Andy and Jane.

## Free Flight

*or the ups and downs of visiting the Plummers.*

The wind roared in my ears and the skydiving suit flapped at some 170 klms an hour as I fell - fully kitted out not only in the suit, but with helmet, goggles and special shoes. Ducking diving and swooping as I vainly tried to introduce some form of control. WOWEE!

So this is skydiving!

How on earth (or rather off earth!) did I get talked into this - with only one short lesson and a video as introduction. But I was not the only one. There was Bonnie too and of course John and therein lay the problem.

A harmless social call to John and Leonie as we were passing through Brisbane on return from a trip to Cairns in MTL resulted in 'Hey! Come on up we have quite a day for you' Little did we know!

Mind you, it wasn't quite **real** skydiving but a thing called a vertical wind tunnel. A glass tube about 3-1/2 metres diameter and about 6 metres high. A *bloody* great DC3 propellor thrashing about in the bottom causes an almighty draft so needless to say when you are tossed into this - you fly.

Yes there is a sort of trampoline net between you and the propellor and another at the top so you don't pop out!

Five of us fronted up - but Leonie rather wisely decided that it could be disastrous for her bad back and the other member of the party, John Fergusson had a grin that stretched from ear to ear when he sadly announced that he was some 5kg over the maximum all up weight!

What an adventure.

John came out limping slightly after a cross wind landing. Bonnie seemed to be very overawed and somewhat stunned and I could hardly talk as it seems I flew around with my mouth open all the time looking like a demented goldfish.

Very stiff arms the next few days and a few funny bruises. What about you John?

But were the Plummers finished with us? No sir!

Not having heard that it is not good practice to go skydiving and scuba diving on the same day (causes the bends) John next had us underwater.

This time it was a bit further up the coast to Mooloolaba and Underwater World.

A beautifully set up aquarium display with an almost unbelievable range of both fresh and salt water fish and crabs and turtles and even crocodiles. Even fish from other parts of the world.

Nearly lost Bonnie who of course likes the water but when she saw the seals playing and cavorting with such obvious pleasure. it was love at first sight and we had to physically restrain her from joining them !

John of course left the highlight to the end when he took us down into the depths of a glass tunnel where the fish and sharks swam past and looked at us ! Fascinating and so natural.

So be warned you unsuspecting Airtourer people - this could happen to you. But thanks John and Leonie for a great day. By the way, it must be time for you to crank up that little Humming Bird and get down to Tassie again ? I'm just sitting down here plotting dastardly deeds You just wait enry iggins you just wait !

S. T.

#### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

9th/10th Nov. '91	LAKE MUNGO	N.S.W.
	Contact H. Blemings 056-342421 or 03 8595793 or D. Stott 050-212614	
8th Dec. '91	BACCHUS MARSH	VIC.
	See article this Newsletter	
Early Feb. '92	ECHUCA and WANGARATTA-WINERY WEEKEND	VIC.
T.B.A.	See article this Newsletter	
7th 8th 9th March '92	A.G.M. LOXTON	S.A.
	Details in February Newsletter	
T.B.A. '92	CARNARVON GORGE	QLD.
	(Post poned from October '91 due to drought, fires, etc.)	

#### STOP PRESS

The following invitation was received just as we were going to print.

McIntyre Aero Club at Goondiwindi invites members of the Airtourer Association to attend the official opening of their new clubhouse by Sir Joh. Starting 9 a.m. Saturday 30.11.91 250 tickets only - must be paid for by 15.11.91.

Accommodation - tents. Shower available. Just bring sleeping bag.

\$25 per head incl. 3 course dinner.

Phone 076 711295

P.O. Box 306 Goondiwindi.

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Any takers? Unfortunately I will be in Sydney that weekend. Sounds like fun. Lucky Des Hurst and Lola!

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#### FUTURE ARTICLES - FEB. NEWSLETTER

1. How long is 90 days?
2. Battle of Britain Heroes Honoured in Hobart.
3. Too Far to Cairns by Airtourer?

*On the fifteenth day of October, a large container arrived at Archerfield.*

*I cannot say that it's appearance was entirely unexpected as considerable correspondence had passed between members of the Airtourer Association Committee and the Consignor of the container.*

*briefly, Dr. Johnson, an Australian and a Member of our Association, who has been residing in New Zealand, decided some time ago to ship his Airtourer to Australia so that he would have the benefit of its use when he returned to Australia to take up his position as resident Doctor at Mt. Isa Base Hospital.*

*I hope to be able to persuade David and his wife, Jill, to provide details of the procedures that they had to go through and those details will, I hope be available for our next News Letter.*

*Suffice it to say that Victa Airtourer, serial No. 52, built in Australia and sold to Southland Aero Club where it was registered as ZK - CGM, is now back in the land of its birth, soon to become V H - C G L.*

*At present it is in Ian Aviation's Hanger at Archerfield and with such assistance as local Association members can give, is being assembled and checked to satisfy the requirements of the powers that be, before being granted an Australian C of A.*

*From the appearance, as seen by those members who have had the chance to look at it, the plane is a very neat little craft and no doubt will grace some of our Fly-ins at some future time.*

CABLE.

AS THIS WILL BE THE LAST NEWSLETTER FOR 1991, OUR PRESIDENT TONY MATTHEWS WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE COMMITTEE AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THEIR ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT DURING THE YEAR AND TO WISH YOU AND YOURS A-

MERRY CHRISTMAS, HAPPY NEW YEAR and SAFE FLYING