



On The Step
Issue 13 -
June 2008

From the President

Don't let anyone tell you that seaplanes aren't FUN

As we prepare for this Newsletter, Pete & Trish Stuart Smith have just departed on their epic adventure around Australia, circumnavigating the continent in their home built amphibian. This is a wonderful story of how Pete will retrace his father's WW11 footsteps, when he visits all the old Catalina bases that his dad operated from during the war. More on this fun adventure inside.

Tomorrow morning I depart for New Zealand to ferry a new SeaRey, with owner, from Barclutha way down at the bottom of the Southern Island (south of Dunedin) up to Motueka at the top of the Southern Island. This is my idea of fun.

Then there is Perry Taylor who will "duck across to Bali for the weekend in his Seawind" to do some surfing with his son Does it get any better? Me thinks not.

We love to hear about the fun you are having with your seaplane. It keeps the SPAA Newsletter lively, fresh & interesting, so send us your stories & reports on what is happening in your neck of the woods. Simply sit down at the keyboard & bang out a missive & email it off to Ross.

We need letters of support for Seaplanes. They are vital in our battle with the groups & authorities that threaten our freedom to operate on Australian waterways. Please ask your Seaplane friendly contacts to write a note of support for Seaplanes stating how they are environmentally friendly, safe & important to Australians & aviation"

Please forward your support letters preferably by e-mail in Word format, directly to me

Until next time Fair winds, gentle ripples and many safe alightings.

Rob Loneragan (VH-CRA)

From the Editor

Kissing the water

So much of what we read in the press and see in the media is sensational and focussed on the negative happenings in the world, so it was a delight to watch the ABC news item on Pete and Trish's round Australia adventure.

It is a quiet reflective piece that examines the motivation for the trip and the couple's preparations and intentions. The program really tried to look at the personal aspects, the challenges and the historical connections of the flight. You can see it at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/video/2008/06/10/2269831.htm>

I particularly identified with Trish's comments on her enjoyment of a good water landing. "It's like kissing the water," she said.

And isn't it so true.

A couple of weekends ago I had a spectacular trip along the lower Murray River with Stuart Beveridge, a Rex First Officer (and seaplane pilot) where we "kissed the water" many times. I must say, we were shocked by the low level of water in Lake Alexandrina (where the Murray enters the sea) and by the numerous ditches dug by desperate farmers trying to gain access to the ever-receding water line of the lake. Now even those supply ditches are without water.

But it was such a joy to experience the changing environment by seaplane and to see the grin on Stuart's face as my little SeaRey "kissed the water" of the Murray River. We would motor along, skimming the water for a few kms, then soar up over a bend or bridge and then descend again to view the scene from water level. "It's not like this up in the flight levels," said Stuart, with a wide smile all over his face.

Gear UP to "kiss the water" # #

Ross Vining (VH-RRZ)

One Man's Journey

*Ken Horlock from Sydney has two seaplanes.
This is the story of his love affair
with the Petrel Seaplane*



Like many pilots I have had a yen to try seaplanes for a long time but had not done anything about it.

Then I noticed a cute little open cockpit amphibian all covered in dust, looking totally neglected in the back of a hangar in Queensland.

It had been used for a Dugong spotting project with the University of Queensland. The project had finished and it had been sitting there acquiring hangar rash for several years. It clearly needed some serious TLC.

It was not exactly love at first sight, but after I returned home I kept thinking about it and my long held itch to fly off the water surfaced.

This little aeroplane was an early model Petrel (production # 18) built in France by SMAN in the early 1990's. An open cockpit, side by side, two seat, biplane amphibian, powered by a Rotax 582 65 hp two stroke engine was definitely not sophisticated but it looked like a lot of fun.

I investigated fitting floats to my Murphy Renegade biplane but the image of that cute amphibian won me over. After months of thought and discussions with the owner I agreed to buy it with lessons on how to fly it off the water.

In January 2007 I flew it home to The Oaks

(west of Sydney) stopping for fuel at South Grafton, Port Macquarie and Hoxton Park (better to top up too soon than too late), finally landing at home at about 5.30 pm. My forehead was a bright red between the top of my goggles and the leather helmet due to wind burn, but I was happy to have successfully flown it home in a single day and in perfect open cockpit temperatures in the 40s and with a following wind. How often does that happen!

I flew it around Sydney and into Jerusalem Bay, Pittwater, and other parts of the Hawkesbury for six months. Oh what pleasure. Then took it out of service for a thorough refurbishment. So far the wings and tailplane have been completed and covered and painted. Still to do is the fuselage.

If I have one predominant thought about seaplanes, it is, why didn't I do this sooner??

Meanwhile..... I had been looking with longing at the latest version of the Petrel being produced in Brazil by EDRA Aeronautica and after much correspondence agreed to purchase a demonstrator from them and to become their distributor in Australia.

Ken Horlock Ph: 0418 163 307

Email: wingsafloat@iprimus.com.au

Editors note: Next Issue will have an article on the new Super Petrel



Letters to the editor

Dear Editor

NL#12 had a story about the Lake/Colonial Skimmer - the Skimmer was used by Gary Richardson of Victor Lawnmowers to commute from his home in Palm Beach to Bankstown on a daily basis. He built a special hangar at Palm Beach which I now own. His original Skimmer is still around at Bankstown.

NL#12 also had a picture of a Sunderland at

Lord Howe Island. This aircraft was then owned by Bryan Monkton of Trans Oceanic Airways. The story of Bryan's alighting at Lord Howe at full tide is an interesting one and is documented in his book "The Boats I Flew". My brother and I used the same aircraft for the Port Macquarie Clipper service in 1949. You should buy a copy for your own book shelves.

Phil Dulhunty - Sydney

Sunny Side Up in Tasmania

*Tasmania has a new addition to its seaplane fleet.
Kyle Gardner, Tasmanian Coordinator for SPAA describes the new addition's heritage.*

SPAA member Tony Hill of Hobart, Tasmania has recently purchased the bright yellow Lake Buccaneer VH-MXU, pictured below.

A decade ago, Tony took a trip around Africa in a Catalina Flying Boat which got him interested in the concept of Seaplanes. Up until 6 years ago he lived in the UK where he did a lot of off shore sailing which is partly why he came to Hobart. Tony has been flying for about 15 years, starting with a hot air balloon licence in the UK.

He has been a dentist for twenty years and his



first introduction to Hobart was a stop-off in the around the world sailing race, The British Steel Challenge in 1993, he visited Hobart again while participating in numerous Sydney to Hobart races. Tony now has his own dental practice in Hobart.

Ironically, VH-MXU was purchased in Gympie through Air Noosa from a oral surgeon in Cairns and the aircraft also has a history of once being registered to a previous Hobart owner.

Tony has recently completed his water endorsement under Kevin Bowe (Australia's Bucky guru) and is now enjoying water flying around Tasmania's great coastline, pristine inland lakes and waterways.

Welcome Tony to the excitement and fun that Seaplane pilots enjoy..

A New Bird on the Block?

The ICON A5 — Amphibious Light Sport Aircraft looks like a dream machine.

Smooth lines, impressive instrumentation, cruises at 100kts, seats 2, amphibious, Rotax 912ULS, range 300nm, takeoff and landing distance 250 metres, easy fold wings for ease of trailering, optional ballistic parachute. Estimated Price: \$139,000 USD

Check out their web site @ www.Iconaircraft.com

The team developing it is huge: 10 directors and advisors + 5 senior management team + 4 senior engineers

I have seen quite a lot of skeptical discussion on the net suggesting that the

development & sales team are so huge they will not survive economically. Comments such as "I wonder how many aircraft would need to be sold, just to offset the costs of the "coming out party" shown in the video ?" abound.

Well - we will see - It sure is a good looking aircraft.



'In the Shadow of the Black Cat'

Pete & Trish Stuart-Smith embark on a 'Round Australia' trip...

Report by Ben Hunter

At 1500hrs on Saturday 7 June, SeaRey VH-PAZ alighted on Catalina Bay at Rathmines, marking the start of Peter & Trish Stuart-Smith's 'Round Australia' adventure by Seaplane.

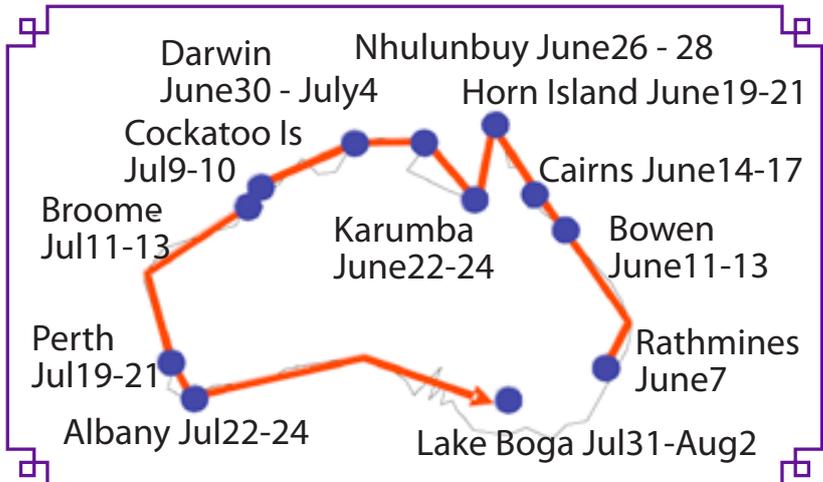
Official festivities for the occasion at Rathmines had to be cancelled at the last minute after a solid week of foul weather plagued the NSW East Coast. However the skies finally cleared early on June 7 and with assistance from a moderate southerly breeze, SeaRey VH-PAZ departed Goulburn for the 2hr flight to Rathmines. A large crowd undeterred by the weather & flight planning disruptions were on hand to celebrate Peter & Trish's arrival.

Commencing at Rathmines and finishing at Lake Boga in August, the eight week trip will take in all of the WWII operational bases and Catalina sites of significance. Peter also plans to raise funds for the Catalina Flying Memorial's PBY aircraft VH-CAT, which is to be housed at the WWII Catalina base site at Rathmines.

Keep a look out for them in the skies and on the waterways. The SPAA wishes Peter & Trish all the very best in their adventure.



Peter & Trish arrive at Catalina Bay, Rathmines, NSW



Editor's Note:

I will be joining Pete & Trish for their South Australian segment, meeting them at Ceduna and flying in company to Parafield Airport in Adelaide. I am arranging for Pete's SeaRey to share a hangar with my SeaRey. This hangar has special significance as it was built during WWII to support the pilot training scheme. We can be certain that some of the pilots who flew Catalinas during the war would have done their initial training out of this hangar.



The crowd gathers - Eager to see VH-PAZ up close



Newcastle & Sydney joined by seaplane

Two of Australia's largest working harbours are now connected by scheduled seaplane flights.

www.sydneyseaplanes.com.au

On 16th June, **Sydney Seaplanes** launched a service between Sydney and Newcastle, using a Cessna Caravan C208 to offer commuters premium transport between the two cities with four return flights every day.

For more information, please contact:
Sydney Seaplanes 1300 732 752 or 0417 201 582

Sydney Seaplanes Managing Director, Aaron Shaw, says, "The flight time is 30 minutes, with the convenience of landing moments from the CBD in both destinations. The aircraft is less than a year old and is licensed to carry nine passengers in air-conditioned comfort."

"Flight times and available seats can be viewed and booked via our website."



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Bits & Pieces

Stopping the Rot!

Philip Dulhunty writes: I have been testing anti corrosion products for 30 years starting with plain wool grease, Paralketone, tectyl, Ardrex & now COR-BAN 35.

COR-BAN35, (Zip-Chem products, USA) has proven to be excellent & long lasting. It penetrates and then dries to a light salmon colour and is non tacky. It is approved by Embraer, Sikorsky, Airbus and others.

I have purchased 12 aerosol cans @\$25 each and plan to use it in and on the PBY Catalina. If anyone would like a can, please contact me. philip@dulhunty.com



Lake (?) Boga

Lake Boga in northern Victoria was a World War II seaplane repair depot. Today the former Communications Bunker houses a museum commemorating this incongruous role. Brett Freeman sent pictures of the now completely empty Lake Boga.

Brett is the author of Lake Boga at War & is now publishing a new book called *Rose Bay Revisited*. You can contact Brett on ph 0408 575 845 catalina@hotmail.net.au



"Lake Boga"
June 2008



Flying boats Sydney's Golden age of Aviation

In 1938 Rose Bay became Sydney's first international airport, servicing luxurious, four-engine flying boats. An era when air travel was new, exciting and glamorous.

The Museum of Sydney is hosting an exhibition featuring photographs, posters, film, a recreated cabin, and travellers stories to celebrate the early days of transoceanic air travel & review this extraordinary chapter in Sydney's history.

When: May 10 to Sept 14

Where: Museum of Sydney, Cnr Phillip St Sydney

More info: www.hht.net.au/flyingboats

The Catalina Flying Memorial

The PBY CAT purchased by The Catalina Flying Memorial Ltd has suffered an engine failure in Portugal and is awaiting an engine change before being ferried to Australia.

It is hoped that it will be here by the end of the year and that our Chief Pilot and Captain will be a buccaneer by the name of John "Delay" Daley.

"Delay" will need assistants, co-pilots and helpers and we are hoping to recruit a number of SPAA members who may be interested to get an endorsement – so we can eventually do "Adventure Flights" as often as possible.

We are aiming at people like "Jolly Roger" Peters, Hal Griffiths, Graham White, Kevin Bowe, Peter Gash, Bill Lane, Gary Fenelon, Chad Boot and even the President Rob Loneragan.

In addition to aircrew we are going to need ground crew, water crew and engineers, so volunteers are asked to step forward with information on availability and capability.

Phil Dulhunty, 18 June 2008

Please fill in this form and send it to us at

The Catalina Flying Memorial Ltd, Unit 2, 35 Waterloo Rd, North Ryde 2113.

Name

Address

Availability

Phone.....

Email.....

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pilot | <input type="checkbox"/> Co-pilot | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Navigator | <input type="checkbox"/> Anchorman | <input type="checkbox"/> Ticket Seller |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cabin Crew | <input type="checkbox"/> Ground Crew | <input type="checkbox"/> Crashboat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tyre Kicker | <input type="checkbox"/> Beach M'shall | <input type="checkbox"/> Ground Ctrl |

Capabilities

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De Havilland's DHC-2 Beaver

Compiled by Ben Hunter
SPAA Merchandise Coordinator



The DHC2-Beaver VH-AQU: A Canadian Aviation Engineering Success

The versatile and ruggedly functional DHC2-Beaver has made history as an essential part of aircraft fleets in Canada and around the world. Whether flying deep into the wilderness of mountainous Alaska, across stretches of the Canadian Territories, or hauling cargo and soldiers into the Korean war, De Havilland's Beaver was, and still is capable of almost any mission. A small aircraft that held six passengers plus the pilot, the Beaver had maximum flexibility, being able to carry people, military supplies or quantities of freight as needed.

The De Havilland Canada company engineers found that a bush plane would be a great option to offer in their aircraft line, something useful for Canada's north. They concluded that the design needed to be tough and versatile, something like a "half-ton truck".

The early design crew of Fred Buller, Dick Hiscocks, Jim Houston and W. Jakimiuk, lead by Phil Garratt, was in place by September 17, 1946. They chose a strong airframe construction; steel from the engine to the firewall, heavy aluminium truss frames with panels and doors throughout the front seat area, lighter trusses toward the rear and all monocoque construction aft. After much testing, and with adjustments and improvements, the innovative airplane was ready for the sales

circuit – all it needed was a proper name.

De havilland airplanes were all named after animals, and the new bush plane was much like the hard-working 'beaver'. Hence the aircraft officially became the DHC-2 Beaver and the first plane was delivered to the Canadian Government in 1948.

A success in northern Canada, the Beaver was able to fly to remote villages and desolate, secluded vicinities, over thick, snowy forests and following rushing river canyons, something other transporters could not easily manage. A year later, the United States Air Force was looking for a bush plane that could carry a thousand pounds on difficult mission. Soon enough the Beaver became an integral part of the US military fleet and was nicknamed "the flying jeep"!



In Korea, the Beaver proved itself an essential piece of military equipment, flying thousands of sorties including medical evacuations, troop transport and supplies of all kinds.

The original Beaver had a wingspan of 48 feet, length 30 feet, MTOW 5100 pounds. It was fitted with a P&W Wasp Junior 450 HP engine & a two-bladed propeller. The modern upgraded Turbo Beaver is a little larger and has a 550 HP engine with a 3-blade propeller.



VH-SWB operates in the Sydney Area

A trusted and reliable airplane, the Beaver is loved by its pilots, whether fitted with wheels, floats or skis. Beavers have hauled almost everything, from military troops and supplies, to food, medicine, timber, and almost anything else one could imagine. From 1947 to 1967, De Havilland Canada built nearly 1,700 Beaver aircraft.

With its adaptable nature and proven success, the Beaver established De Havilland as one of the world's premier designers and builders of STOL aircraft.

While De Havilland's later owners stopped manufacture of the Beaver in the mid-1960s,



VH-AWZ operates in the Whitsunday Islands

the aircraft is still sought after around the world. Despite its age, demand has meant that recent numbers have increased as some older wrecks are restored and put back into work.

Various different models are still operating in countries such as the Canada, USA, UK, New Zealand, Australia, the Philippines and Finland, just to name a few.

Seaplanes & Emergency Services

In NSW we have offered our services during emergencies to the Water Police. We are also cooperating with Voluntary Marine Rescue organizations, Customs Watch and State Fisheries.

During discussions with these bodies we were asked what can seaplanes do and what can't they do so we have come up with an initial list.

You might like to consider and add to this list or give some thought to offering your services to local state authorities – on a voluntary or discounted basis.

It's a great way to establish our value with Maritime Authorities and the community in general.

What Seaplanes Can, & Cannot, do.

- ▶ They can search and observe offshore activities
- ▶ They can provide accurate GPS location of observed vessels in distress
- ▶ They can drop emergency items such as life raft, life jackets, torch, hand-held radio, medical supplies to boats in distress
- ▶ They are equipped with both aviation and marine VHF and can relay messages
- ▶ They can alight on enclosed waters (a continuous stream of which is present up and down the coastline)
- ▶ They can transport personnel, e.g. search masters up and down the coast from one base to another.
- ▶ They can evacuate sick or injured casualties from an onshore waterway to another.
- ▶ They can & have worked with authorities such as Rural Fire Services as an observation platform for fighting coastal bush fires.
- ▶ They (usually) cannot alight on the open sea
- ▶ They cannot operate at night or in cloud.

NOTE: Amphibious" seaplanes can land on the land and on water

"Straight" seaplanes cannot land on the land.

Phil Dulhunty

Chairman, SPAA



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VHF MARINE RADIO GX600 - A special deal for SPA members has been offered by GME, through dealer Hunts Marine at only \$239.00 ea. This allows you to communicate with all boats on the water and, most importantly, with land based VMR (voluntary Marine Rescue) bases up and down the Australian Coastline (RVCP, Coast Guard, Water Police etc). For installation Ben Hunter can advise you.



For enquiries or to order:
 Tel (02) 9870 7277, Fax (02) 9870 7299,
 philip@dulhunty.com

Seaplane Heaven?

Here's a fabulous destination for a seaplane.

Vikingsholm on the shores of Lake Tahoe was completed in 1929. It was inspired by traditional Scandinavian designs.

Vikingsholm is one of the finest examples of Scandinavian architecture in the United States. It is now a part of the Harvey West Unit of the Emerald Bay State Park. The house is open for tours in the summer months and the grounds and magnificent scenery may be enjoyed all year around by those wishing to visit this beautiful setting.

The picture shows John Spratt's Searey in the foreground. More info at: <http://www.vikingsholm.org/history%20of%20eb.html>

Vikingsholm on the shores of Lake Tahoe, California



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On The Step is produced bi-monthly by the executive of the Seaplane Pilots Assoc. of Australia and is available to members as part of their annual subscription.

Stories, articles, photos and news are welcome and can be sent to: editor@seaplanes.org.au.

Joining the Seaplane Pilots Assoc is easy, visit the website, click the **Join Here** button. Payment is via all the normal methods including PayPal.

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