



From the President

Written on my Nappy!

My father was in the RAAF in WW11 and flew Mustangs, Kittyhawks & Wirraways - he introduced me to the Aviation Drug at an early age.

My earliest memories were of the smell of Avgas, oil, fabric dope and covering. Those early Percival Gulls, BA Eagles, Avro Ansons, Tiger Moths all had one thing in common - fabric covering.

And I am now just completing the fabric covering on the flying surfaces of my 4th SeaRey. So I guess you could say that aircraft and flying were written on my nappy!

When I left school I worked in the family business in rural NSW. The first thing I did was my "formal" flying training for the PPL. After some "apprenticeship years" my responsibilities involved flying various aircraft around the state, which was a very sensible way to get around, especially as it satisfied my love of flying.

When we moved to Sydney my reason to fly evaporated, but the longing remained! Driving out to Bankstown for a circuit or two, really didn't do it for me.

Then I discovered seaplanes and the SeaRey in particular, and I fell in love with a whole new world of flying.

Recently I sold my 3rd SeaRey (VH-CRA) and am currently completing the building of my 4th (VH-UUY). But right now, for the first time in many years, I don't actually have a flying seaplane. Gosh I miss it!

Fair winds, gentle ripples and safe alightings.

Rob Loneragan (VH-UUY)

From the Editor

New dangers to consider?

Canada Geese have been blamed for the engine problems that caused the ditching of the US Airways jet in the Hudson River. They are certainly big enough to cause serious damage and there are many thousands in the vicinity of New York.

The Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University maintains a Wildlife Strike Database for the US FAA. (www.planestrikes.notlong.com) It covers the period 1990 to now and it lists 1,266 reports of Canada Geese hitting aircraft. But it also lists hundreds of other suspects, many of which you may not have considered a danger to aircraft.

In that period planes also hit 145 bald eagles and 15 black-capped chickadees plus a single endangered whooping crane.

Well fair enough you may think, they did learn to fly before we did! However, the site notes that aircraft struck 811 deer, 146 skunks, 80 turtles (did they run in front of the aircraft?), 17 armadillos, 6 moose and a single unfortunate pig. I assume these were take-off or landing incidents, rather than in cruise flight!

But there was one entry that left me wondering. It is a single entry for a collision with an Australian Pelican in Ontario Canada!

It took me back to my recent flight to Perth. It was just after dawn, no wind, dead flat glassy water on the south east coast of WA. I was skimming the water for the sheer joy of it, when a dolphin surfaced about 30 metres ahead and slightly to the right. It was a magic moment, and one I will remember for a long time. But I did later wonder if CASA has ever encountered "Dolphin Strike" as the cause of an aircraft incident.

Gear UP to "kiss the water" # #

Ross Vining (VH-RRZ)

AERO Friedrichshafen



The prototype of the HydroPteron LSA from the Hungarian company IDEA Aircraft. It has clean lines, uncluttered cockpit., and the most amazing specifications. But is not yet in production !



HydroPteron

The Amphibious HydroPteron was designed by Hungarian engineer Varga Zoltán, who has also designed boats and water bikes.

The prototype on display at Aero Friedrichshafen was manufactured by IDEA AirCRAFT Co. The first flight is planned for mid 2009.

The manufacturers say that the aircraft will have an epoxy-carbon hull for lightness; ballistic parachute for safety; Rotax or Sauer engine for reliability; detachable wings for ease of trailering; will seat 2 or 3 with luxury hand stitched leather seats, and have extendable wings to enable greater glide in case of engine failure. They also say that with a cruise speed of 180-210km/h and a range of 700-900km, it will be the world's fastest single engine amphibious plane.

The company's website says the aircraft is

Coming soon . . .



*Artists impression of HydroPteron.
Note, palm tree is an optional extra*

AERO Friedrichshafen (April 2009) is the showcase for new products for the European sport aviation scene. It is a trade show for aircraft manufacturers and their suppliers; a conference on the status of general aviation in Europe; an opportunity for prospective buyers to take a demo flight; and on weekends AERO attracts the public with an extensive air show.

This year, AERO highlighted electric propulsion, with the first-ever e-Flight-Expo, focusing on electrical, ecological and evolutionary flight advancements.

There were several Seaplanes on display, including

- The composite-based turboprop five-seat amphibian from Hungarian builder Avana Industries Ltd. It looks like a Seawind on steroids.
- At the other end of the scale was the German-made, two-seat, Rotax-powered Dornier S-Ray 007 that made a subtle appearance at Oshkosh in 2007.
- Also from Hungary was another amphibian, the two-seat HydroPteron LSA from IDEA Aircraft, with Rotax power and a ballistic parachute.

Hungary for new ideas

Hungarian manufacturers exhibited a string of world exclusives at this year's AERO, including helicopters, powered hang gliders, surveillance aircraft, electrical instruments, modified metal parts and design services.

The Hungarian aviation industry comprises 128 companies employing 2,100 people. In addition to development of small aircraft and component manufacture, Hungarian companies are increasingly involved in providing engineering services and making prototypes.

"ITD Hungary", the Hungarian investment promotion and trade development agency, has provided priority backing for the aviation components industry for many years, and it now looks like paying dividends. They are primarily looking for European and American buyers for their cutting-edge aircraft.

Wings Over Illawarra



marvelled at how they achieved this in an aircraft built by the pilot!

Dozens of people peered into the Renegade and asked me **"what's it like to land on the water"**. Of course we all know the answer to that **"INCREDIBLE"**!

My trip to Illawarra was mostly uneventful apart from the weather. Illawarra Airport is uncontrolled and was busy with dozens of aircraft converging.

Many aerodromes are miles from the nearest town and situated on the most boring piece of real estate in the vicinity; not so the Illawarra Regional Airport on the NSW coast 80 km south of Sydney.

To the east, the beautiful Lake Illawarra; to the west the spectacular ramparts of the southern highlands; and only a few minutes flying from the beautiful beaches of the NSW south coast. Each year the Shellharbour City Council, in conjunction with the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) host a Fly-In called *Wings Over Illawarra*. The 2009 event was on Sunday 22nd February and the SPAA was there in force.



Hundreds of people visited our stand, bought merchandise and looked at our aircraft. We were right in the heart of the action next to the HARS Catalina and near their huge Neptune aircraft.

I flew Lake Renegade VH-WMW down from Warnervale (pictured above). Pete and Trish Stuart-Smith flew their Searey VH-PAZ from the south coast (pictured under the wing of the HARS Catalina), and Jim Moline brought his Searey, battling murky weather from Bankstown.

No SPAA stand would happen without Ben Hunter's enthusiasm for the merchandise sales and our fabulous SPAA "tent" (pictured). Ben and his partner Di had everything organised with our great SPAA banner and a table full of hats, T-shirts and other merchandise ready for all those interested. And interested they were!

We sold lots of merchandise and talked to hundreds of people. Many were fascinated by Pete & Trish's "In the Steps of the Black Cat" adventures from their trip around Australia and

I was amazed to see several straight-in approaches conducted, which given the amount of traffic arriving, I thought was not the most appropriate arrival procedure.

Taxiing to the SPAA location I had to shut-down and Ben, Pete and I had to pull the Renegade about 400 metres through the early crowd to the stand, so we all had a workout before we'd even started! Once we were in position all was well and our setup looked tremendous.

My flight home was delightful. Of course I took the opportunity for some water landings and step turns on Lake Illawarra and then brief stops along the way at Palm Beach, Woy Woy and Gosford. This was some of the best "late afternoon/glistening water" work I've done and the Renegade (and I) just loved it. When I think of the other aviators flying regular aircraft home from Wollongong and compare their trips with mine, I know we have something very special. Let's all work to keep it that way.

The event was a great flag-waving exercise for SPAA. There were many pilots who talked with us; most with little or no seaplane experience. We also enjoyed each other's company and, although not a splash-in, it was a great day of sharing our love of seaplanes with hundreds of people and telling them a bit about our organisation and what it stands for.

The HARS organisers are keen for us to come back next year.





**Is it a Bird? Is it a plane?
No it's WIG!**

Craft that depend on Wing-in-Ground (WIG) effect are a hybrid between a boat and an airplane. They skim very low over the water, typically at a height of 10% to 50% of their wing span. Due to the pressure increase under the wing at these low altitudes, greater lift is generated than when the wings are out of ground effect, and aerodynamic drag is reduced. This makes wing-in-ground effect craft more fuel efficient.

The Sea Eagle is a 6 seat WIG craft developed by Sea Eagle International Pty Ltd. This company was started in 2005 in Australia by Chris Holloway, a shipbuilder and an initiator in Australia for wing-in-ground effect development.

The United Nations International Maritime Organization (IMO) calls the Sea Eagle a WIG Craft Class B.

A number of military WIG craft have been developed in Russia, including the 550 ton Ekranoplan, known as the Caspian Sea Monster and the 125 ton A-90 Orlyonok. However the Sea Eagle is one of only a few commercial types. It is designed as a commercial ferry and also as a private plane alternative.

The Sea Eagle typically "flies" at about 10ft ASL but can "jump" up to 150 feet ASL. It is being produced in China under a global marketing and manufacturing agreement and is ready to go to market. The company is exploring the potential for building a 20 seat craft in Australia, possibly in Geelong and are currently seeking investor support. Detailed information regarding the technology, the craft or the investment opportunity is available from Chris Holloway

Ph 03 5977 4434 Mobile 0414 819 723

chris@seaskimmers.com

See www.seaskimmers.com and the sister site www.sea-eagle.org for more details.



Sea Eagle WIG Craft

Payload = 700 kg, Max T/O wt = 2,000 kg
Length 12.5 m, Wingspan=11.50 m Ht= 3.5 m
Cruise = 180 km/hr, Range = 400km





Have You Flown with the Gulls?

Nancy Bird Walton said that she first became entranced by seaplanes after flying with the Powder Puff Derby Girls in the USA (The Ninety-Nines).

One of the Ninety Nines, Inis de Flores wrote the lyrics to a short song called **Have you flown with the Gulls?** set to the tune of John Peel.

Apparently it was always sung during the Seaplane cruise after the Powder Puff races.

The cruise and the song got Nancy "hooked" on seaplanes and hence her love affair with our Catalina.

P W Dulhunty OAM

*Do you know the wash of the driven spray,
The pound of the hull and engine's bray
Have you lifted clear of cove and bay?
Have you flown with the gulls in the morning?*

*It's the song of the sea, the song of the sky,
The song of the ship as the tail rides high
It's the song in our hearts when the seaplanes fly
To the cry of the gulls in the morning.*

*Now glasses up and a rousing toast,
To the seaplane cruise and our gallant host,
And we'll drink all night on this friendly coast
'Ere we fly with the gulls in the morning.*

Inis de Flores

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Icon A5

Kirk Hawkins flew the prototype A5 as part of the user-trials. Prior to that, only the Chief Test Pilot had flown it. Kirk comments: The water handling was superb. The A5 climbed onto the step and accelerated quickly to takeoff speed. This is NOT typical for many seaplanes which often require pilot finesse as the hull transitions from displacement to plowing to planing modes.

In the air the A5 responded just like you'd expect a "sport" plane to respond - light, predictable and fun.

The A5 cockpit is designed to maximize the flying experience. With an intentionally small dash and large windows the outside view is superb - unlike many conventional aircraft.

I think you're going to love the A5. So far it's proving itself to be a very special aircraft.

Kirk Hawkins - more info at www.iconaircraft.com

SeaRey LSA

The SeaRey LSX prototype is also undergoing flight testing. Here are some comments from the LSX test pilots and observers:

Much lighter on the controls... easier to fly
Kerry Richter, President, PA

The swept V-hull cuts the water more smoothly than any seaplane I've flown. Dan Johnson, President, - Light Aircraft Manufacturing Assoc

Performance is great... very benign in the stall.
Walt Bates, ATP, 777 Check Pilot, 25,000+ hrs PIC

The airframe is obviously cleaner and faster with a higher glide ratio.
John McLeroy, ATP, CFI, 11,000+ hrs PIC

Flies beautifully! This plane does NOT want to stall! Lee Pflingston, Commercial Pilot, 7000+ hours PIC

More info at www.searey.com



Beach it or Drive it up

A new pilot asked for advice on whether, when confronted with an inviting beach, is it best to put the gear down and power out onto the beach or just nose up to the beach?

Dan Nickens, SeaRey pilot, wrote that there is an old poem about this...

*To beach, or not to beach: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the surf to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take wheels against a sea of troubles,
And taxi free of the waves and water that binds.....*

Who knew Shakespeare was a SeaRey pilot?

And Dan continued:
There are so many variables to consider...

- ▶ What type of beach is it?
- ▶ Are the sand grains uniform or poorly graded?
- ▶ Are the grains compacted by surf or loose in a stable, quiet interface?
- ▶ Is there groundwater saturating the sand above the water line?
- ▶ Are there possible hidden springs and associated liquefaction?
- ▶ Is the beach steeply sloped?
- ▶ Is there a tide?
- ▶ How heavy is the airplane?
- ▶ Are you carrying a passenger?
- ▶ What engine do you have?
- ▶ How big are your tires?
- ▶ How much air do you have in your tires?
- ▶ When was the last time you oiled your tail wheel?
- ▶ Is the water cold or comfortable?
- ▶ Can you secure the airplane if you beach?
- ▶ Does your wife/girlfriend mind barefooting?
- ▶ Do you have an audience?
- ▶ Will the audience laugh if you get stuck?
- ▶ Is there anyone in the audience who can help you launch if you get stuck?
- ▶ When was the last time you pumped iron?

- ▶ How much time do you have?
- ▶ Is there room to approach at an angle?
- ▶ Is there room to depart at an angle?
- ▶ Is there room to turn without hitting anything?
- ▶ What kind of landing gear do you have?
- ▶ How confident are you that the gear won't collapse?
- ▶ How cool is it to just taxi out of the water !
- ▶ Will the beachgoers be impressed if you blast them with sand?
- ▶ Are there kids that will run over and into the prop? Dogs? Parakeets?
- ▶ Are there crocodiles in the water?

It's like Clint said,

"Do you feel lucky, Punk? Well, do ya!"

I personally feel like a lucky punk. I like the challenge. If there is any reasonable way to do it, I'm taxiing out. And I've paid for it by getting stuck many times.

And there is just one more question: Do you know where you are? Years ago I was a frisky Florida flyer that flew a SeaRey to Maine. I was flying with the new owner when he asked about taxiing up on a beach. "No worries," I said. "Let's go do it right now."

What I didn't know was that Maine beaches are not like Florida beaches. There are a lot of different size particles, and they're not all sand. And sometimes the sand is just a thin veneer over a quagmire of mud.

It was a race against the tide and hypothermia for the two of us to work his airplane off the beach. And I learned something about "mire pots" and have a memory I'll not soon forget.

And I might just do the same thing next time.

Dan Nickens



News * News * News * News

SeaWind



The Hoverwing

The 19XRW Hoverwing is a ground-effect vehicle, designed first as a normal hovercraft, but with optional wings that can fly in ground effect up to 6 feet above the earth's surface.

The manufacturers say:

Flying in ground-effect enables you to clear obstacles and fly over rough water.

Operating in ground-effect does not require a pilot's license, and the craft is normally registered as a boat in most areas, bringing a wide range of new opportunities to the tourism industry.

The craft has a 135 hp 4 stroke engine and a lift off speed in ground effect of 89 km/hr

For more info see <http://www.hovercraft.com>

The Avalon Airshow

SPAA had a great showing at Avalon in February.

We sold more than a thousand dollars of SPAA merchandise, enlisted half a dozen new members and, incidentally sold a lot of SeaReys, though that was not what we were there for.

We positioned two SeaReys beside our booth to attract attention; and it certainly did. We had hundreds of enquiries, as a result of which I now know more about SeaReys than anyone else. Yes, they are supersonic, aerobatic, hurricane proof and can be put together in a split second by any old bush carpenter!

We owe a lot of thanks, if not sales commission, to our tireless toilers, Jack Peters, Rod and Leonie Gunther and Ben Hunter.

The weather was hot and cold, dry and wet – but still they battled on! Because of dwindling landing fields, particularly in the Sydney Basin there is a growing interest in seaplanes. We have to make sure we don't lose the privileges we now enjoy.

We spent a lot of effort convincing the RAA people to respect this and make sure their members join SPAA before they put their machines on FLOATS.

PW Dulhunty OAM, Chairman SPAA

The crash of the SeaWind test aircraft in what some people have speculated was suicide by the test pilot was a major setback. However the company has new investors providing the funds needed to resume operations and complete certification for the "over the counter" (OTC) market. Hopefully this will enable the completion of the development of this aircraft as a ready to fly, factory built model.

They also say they are negotiating with a south east asian distributor which will provide funds to ramp up the production capacity and explore improvements such as complete flight testing of IFR, autopilot and glass cockpit options plus implementing additional engine options, i.e. diesel, turbo-charged, FADEC or other promising power plants.

For more info see <http://www.seawind.net>

Collision Avoidance

I have just fitted a Zaon portable collision avoidance system to my Buccaneer.

What a great device. It is smaller than a pack of cigarettes, fits neatly on the dash with velcro pads and uses aa cells or a cigarette light plug. It has a built-in antenna so you just stick it on and plug it in. It also plugs into the com socket to give audible warnings through your headset.

It will detect any aircraft (with its transponder on!) in the bubble of air around you. You set the size of the bubble, up to 5 miles radius and 5,000ft above and below, or much smaller if you want. The unit indicates whether detected aircraft are above or below you and whether they are climbing or descending.

It has a ceiling of 22000' [higher than I want to go; not enough water up there for emergency landings].

At a price under \$800 I think this is the best toy so far and no I don't sell them.

For more info see <http://www.zaon.aero>

Footnote; When I sent my rego details to zaon in the USA I thought I would have a little fun with the computer geeks there; so in the remarks section I told them the unit was to be fitted to a Lake Buccaneer and asked if the unit could be calibrated to indicate underwater threats as well as we have a major shark problem in Australia. Haven't had a reply yet - maybe they have not been exposed to Aussie humour before.

Graeme Murphy



The people you meet in a seaplane

Ross Vining

photographed sitting in the plane. They were incredulous at the freedoms we take for granted.

At Cocklebidy Road House I parked the SeaRey in the caravan park and had dinner with a couple of blokes (Murray the brewer and Reg the accountant) who were driving from Perth to the horse races at Port Lincoln SA, just for the fun of it. It was their first car trip across the Nullarbor - pictured.

About 250 kms from Adelaide, Mt Ive Station in the Gawler Ranges, (SA) offers a selection of three strips close to the homestead, which

In the last newsletter John Daley wrote about the three seaplanes that flew to Perth for the Australia Day air show. I was one of them and in February I went to Perth to fly my SeaRey back to Adelaide. The 2000 km trip took 3 days, flying mostly over desert terrain, but I discovered that the desert is far from lifeless. Here's a brief account of the characters I met along the way.

First night was at Newdegate, a small town on the eastern edge of the WA wheat belt. As I rolled to a halt on the dirt strip on the edge of town a car pulled up beside the aircraft. It was the Principal of the local school, David Drabble, who is a flying enthusiast. David drove me around to get fuel and accommodation. He invited me to dinner with his family where we talked about the challenges and pleasures of providing education to rural communities and the joy of flying. Then because of some security concerns David arranged for me to land the SeaRey in a local farmer's wheat stubble field adjoining my caravan park.

Next stop Norseman (WA), where the airstrip is marked out on the bed of a dry salt lake which was like landing on dead smooth concrete. A local road worker gave me a lift into town to get fuel, then came back 40 minutes later "once I was fed and watered" to drive me back to the airstrip - just good honest country friendliness.

At the Balladonia Roadhouse I stopped for fuel and coffee and met Shelly, a geologist with a prospecting crew. We discussed our mutual fascination with the outback - she gave me a lift back to my plane.

At the Nullarbor Roadhouse I meet 3 young Serbian men who had bought a car in Perth and were driving over to the east coast on their Australian adventure holiday. They marvelled at the sheer size of Australia and the starkness and distances of the outback, but they were gob smacked when I pulled the SeaRey up to the bowsers beside their car. They all wanted to be

is tucked into a valley. "John the Roo Shooter" ambled over to meet me and invited me to join him for dinner in his camp. We talked for hours about roo culling and the devastating effect of the recent heat waves on the kangaroo population.

Toby is a 7-year old boy who lives at the station and he was mad keen to learn all about the dials, and how the rudder and ailerons worked. He attends School of the Air and he showed me his little desk and computer. He was one of the smartest little boys I have met and when he learned I was a scientist, he bombarded me with questions for hours. He said he wants to be a scientist, "because they know everything"!



Friends along the way - Toby's Mum Skip, Toby, a scientist in the making and "John the Roo Shooter"

Then there was Laurie, a truck driver I meet at a roadhouse en route. Laurie drives a huge B double rig that transports high explosives to mines all over Australia. We found we had a lot in common. He loves the long outback hauls such as the Tanami Desert Road which is often so bad it can take him 10 hours to drive a 280 km stretch. He said he didn't mind at all. "With 15 tons of high explosive on the back, you take it easy over the bumps," he said. "And on the outback tracks, the scenery, the bush and the wildlife are right there beside you. Going slowly you get to see things folks don't see, from a highway at 110 km/hr".

I could identify with that. The trip from Adelaide to Perth had taken 3 hours by Boeing at 35,000 ft. I had seen nothing and had no conversations worth remembering. The trip from Perth back to Adelaide took 3 days, mostly at 500 ft and was marked by amazing scenes such as The Great Australian Bight, forests, vast salt lakes, wildlife, and a variety of conversations that gave me insights way beyond my urban existence.

SPAA Profiles a Commercial Operator

Melbourne Seaplanes



If you are in Melbourne and need a Seaplane "fix" there is no better place to get it than at Melbourne Seaplanes, operated by local husband and wife team Rod & Leonie Gunther. Rod with over 27 years flying experience is chief pilot taking care of flying and training while Leonie manages the terminal and bookings.

Rod says seaplane flying is a combination of boating and flying, two of his life long passions and the opportunity to share this with other people is fantastic.

They use a float equipped Cessna 185. With 300 horsepower it has enough grunt to handle 4-5 passengers. They operate from a purpose-built base at Gem Pier in Williamstown, and supply charter services to many tourism destinations along the Victorian coast.



Sorrento in Port Phillip Bay is an ideal spot for lunch

Sightseeing and Lunch

They have a number of great sightseeing packages over the Melbourne skyline, and picturesque Port Phillip Bay. But Leonie says their premier package is a longer flight tracking at 500ft over beautiful coastal beaches, along both the Bellarine and Mornington Peninsulas stopping for lunch at Sorrento.

History

Melbourne Seaplanes has operated in Williamstown since 1997, but they weren't the first there. Seaplane operations in Williamstown started in the 1930s and during World War 11 there were permanent moorings set up for Catalina flying boats.

Float plane endorsement

A floatplane endorsement is a great way to enhance your flying while enjoying the magic of taking off and landing on water. Its also a handy addition to your resume for work or just for fun

Rod Gunther has CASA approval to conduct Float Alighting Gear endorsements so if you are already a pilot you can do your float training with Melbourne Seaplanes. Trainees receive one-on-one instruction and briefing to ensure each individual achieves a good understanding of all facets of float flying.

Their comprehensive syllabus covers all key areas of seaplane operation to produce well informed, safe seaplane pilots with a sound knowledge of the

environmental and commercial aspects of the industry.

The course consists of six hours in the Cessna 185 floatplane with briefings before each sortie and debrief after. It generally takes 2-3 days to complete, depending on weather and can be spread over a longer period if desired. From \$3,600.00 inc. gst

Be a Seaplane Pilot for the Day

An idea for current pilots who don't want the full endorsement but would love to add a seaplane entry to your log book. Try the "Be a Seaplane Pilot for a Day" option.

You get a full briefing on basic Seaplanes operation (2 hours). Then 1 hour of seaplane flying with take offs, landings and water operations. Then a debrief & Certificate including logbook entry. Total time is 3-4 hours and cost is \$799.00

See their web site - www.seaplane.com.au

Contact Leonie or Rod:

Ph **0418 688 388**

or email info@seaplane.com.au

Operational sensitivities

Port Phillip Bay has many 5 knot areas near shore lines and several no boating areas. Hobsons Bay near the mouth of the Yarra has shipping channels. Beaches are busy over summer, take extreme care close to shore.

When operating in this area leave Rego and contact details with Harbour Control.

Visiting SPAA members are encouraged to contact Melbourne Seaplanes for a local briefing



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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.

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