



**I F F R**

**THE ROTATING BEACON**

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**SUMMER 1993 BULLETIN**

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of the

**INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP OF FLYING ROTARIANS**

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**United Kingdom Section**

## **THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN FLY-OUT or "A BIT OF A SPLASH"**

THE 1993 Australian IFFR Fly-out was full of surprises, as much for the organisers as for the participants. In fact, because of the nature of the main problem, it was probably less of a surprise to the visitors from the UK Section, since we are used to the weather turning sour. UK was represented by Vice-chairman **Feroz Wadia #3446**, who would fly with Secretary-Treasurer **John Ritchie #2767** and **Mary**; Past World IFFR President **Charles Strasser #652**, who would fly with **Carlo Vanoni #2631** from Switzerland; and past UK Chairman **David Rowe #1765**, who would fly with **Tony Nicholas #4380**, accompanied by their wives **Gillian** and **Christine**.

Advance publicity had stressed the reliability of the winter weather pattern in the Red Centre of the Island Continent; a persistent "High" ensures sometimes years without any rainfall at all.

Those who had enquired about getting their Instrument Ratings validated were gently told it would be quite unnecessary; indeed we were told that many Australian Commercial pilots do not hold an IR, so seldom would they get a chance to keep in practice! Thus assured, we all duly validated our licenses for "Day VFR Only", which is very simple to arrange, and turned up full of eager anticipation.

Melbourne was cold and wet when we arrived. The locals assured us that it had been fine and sunny for weeks and would clear up by the time the fly-out was due to start. They kept on telling us this at the very enjoyable IFFR Dinner.

We all met in the Royal Victoria Aero Club (RVAC) at Moorabin airfield on the Sunday morning of the Convention, where we were welcomed by RVAC President **Garnet Robinson**, who then handed over to Flying Committee Chairman **Bob Gower**, Treasurer **Rex Hobson** and CFI **Ian Brown** for a very comprehensive briefing, which was mostly about navigating very long distances with few landmarks, the vital importance of holding an accurate heading and the legal requirement to make a positive fix every 30 minutes under VFR.

We were also told about desert survival if it all went wrong. We were urged to acquire wide-brim hats, factor 15 sunscreen and two-litre plastic containers of fruit juice ("just in case").

Those of us who had brought along GPS sets looked a little less apprehensive than those without. Nevertheless, some of us were beginning to feel

distinctly nervous with all this talk of getting lost, and of the need to have Emergency Location Transmitter (ELT) Beacons and the importance of adhering to the SARWATCH procedures, to avoid having the Search and Rescue services come looking for us, at great expense, should we forget to notify termination of our flights. A black picture was being painted, possibly for the benefit of the more gung-ho types among us. "Survival kits", consisting of a simple solar still and a sheet of aluminium foil to enhance propagation of portable ELT beacons were made available.

Tony Nicholas and David Rowe hardly knew each other, nor the Piper Saratoga aircraft they were due to fly. They had each gained some very brief introductory experience in a very nice example of the type in England, just before leaving for Australia; but the aeroplane allocated to them was nowhere near as well equipped or turned out. There was no intercom fitted, and they wouldn't be able to use a portable one since they would need the cigar lighter, the only power source available, for the Trimble Flight-mate GPS that Tony had borrowed. Tony said he was unhappy with the prospect, there being too many unknowns and loose ends. David agreed, but decided to go ahead with his check-out on the Saratoga, while Tony would talk to the organiser, **Ern Dawes #2827**, about possible alternatives.

David's check flights went fairly well; the Saratoga is vastly different from the Robin Regent he usually flies and although he had a lot of instrument time on Piper Archers, which made the cockpit layout familiar, she was a real handful and getting to grips with her in the short time available was a daunting task. He eventually learned how to fly and land the beast, but did not feel very confident about taking her off on 2,500 mile trip into the "GAFA" (Great Australian er, emptiness). His doubts about the aircraft were not helped by the emergency undercarriage-drop check, which every time failed to deliver a nose-wheel!

Fortunately, **Ern Dawes** was able to put Tony in touch with a very experienced Instrument Rated Australian pilot, **Graham Mockridge #2836**, whose original companions had cancelled their trip; he said he would be happy for Tony and David and their wives to fly with him in his Cessna 210 Centurion, VH-XNH; so, in view of their multiple anxieties, they decided to accept this offer and it turned out to be a very good arrangement, with **Graham's** local knowledge and experience and a far nicer aeroplane.

They were not the only ones having problems; **Charles Strasser** completed his checkout in a

Seneca, only to have it grounded by the engineers when the tail-plane was found to be unacceptably loose, and with no prospect of replacement parts arriving in under a week or so.

Feroz Wadia arrived at the last minute and was checked out in an Arrow that used almost as much oil as fuel; whatever problems he and John Ritchie might encounter would almost certainly not include a seized engine!

Departure day dawned as wet and miserable as all the others; Tony and David and their wives were due to meet Graham at 0815 at Essendon, the old Melbourne international airport, for departure at 0845. VH-XNH was already fuelled, so after greetings and introductions they walked round to make sure it was all there, noting the presence of a radar pod under the starboard wing. They put their restricted luggage in the deceptively capacious locker and climbed in.

#### *-XNH's Trip*

The original plan for the first leg had been to fly south-west from Moorabin, across the mouth of the harbour and then head round the coast in a Westerly direction in order to see the Ocean Road, a spectacular series of rock-stacks rising sheer out of the sea; then to turn north at Hamilton and fly inland to Mildura, our first night stop. In view of the weather Graham had filed IFR from Essendon and so we took off into a low over-cast, which continued up to about 3,000ft. On top, we could see that there was cloud clinging to the tops of the range, but it all petered out to the north. "I expect that's the last cloud we'll see till we get back to Melbourne." said Graham.

How wrong he proved to be!

The ground under us was agricultural, but gradually became more and more barren the further north we flew; green gave way to grey and then to the red that became so familiar over the next few days. We were navigating primarily by GPS, with inputs from the few VORs and rather more numerous ADFs, backed by DME. There are two sorts of DME in Australia: the International DME, with which we in Europe are familiar and Australian DME, which operates on lower frequencies and thus has greater range at low levels than the international sort; it is often co-located with ADF beacons, many of which have 100 to 150 nm range. It was nice to find that these aids and the GPS agreed with each other. This was of course Graham's GPS, installed in -XNH; Tony's borrowed one refused to work, and was found to have a broken antenna lead. We felt we had made the right decision to fly with Graham.

After a while we saw some green in the distance and a glint of water; it was the Murray River,

snaking its way between Victoria and New South Wales, where it forms the border and also irrigates the land on each side. Mildura came into view, spread out, as so many Australian towns are.

It was surrounded by enormous fields of grapes, which hereabouts produce mostly dried fruit - sultanas.

We were the first to arrive and we listened and then called on the MTAF to say who we were, where we were and what we planned to do. Very few Australian airports have towers; of the rest the bigger fields have a Mandatory Traffic Advisory Frequency (MTAF), which must be listened to and called upon within 15 nm up to 5,000ft agl, and the smaller ones a Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (CTAF), which covers a radius of 5 nm up to 3,000ft agl, which should be called by passing traffic and must be called by arriving and departing traffic. We also terminated our SARWATCH with Adelaide Centre, on HF, just before making the mandatory minimum three legs of the circuit before landing. This system allows large jets and small aircraft to mix safely in a self-regulatory fashion; it seems to have much to recommend it.

The Mildura Flying Club and local Rotarians, led by Viv Elliott #2820 had prepared a soup and sandwich brunch and we spent a convivial morning waiting for the other aircraft to arrive.

In a display cabinet was a photograph of Viv and Graham when they won the Kingsford-Smith Trophy race in nineteen-hundred-and-ages-ago; a prestigious event, similar to the King's Cup, but over vastly greater distances.

When all were safely down and fed a coach took us for a brief tour of the local area and to our motel; then after a quick smarten-up we were coached to the Town Hall for a Mayoral Reception and cocktail party. George Chaffey #4270, from California found himself to be something of a celebrity, since he is a member of the same family of Chaffeys who came from the USA last century and largely built and developed Mildura and, in particular, had engineered the irrigation system.

We divided into two parties for dinner, some in the Motel and the rest at a winery, where we ate and drank so well that we never noticed we hadn't had the tour of "les caves"!

The coaches arrived early next morning to take us back to the field. We were first away, as became our habit on this trip, since Graham didn't like "stuffing about", so planning was all done and filed in good time, and we became expert in packing the luggage locker quickly.

Our route for the flight to Coober Pedy was direct, being IFR, whereas the VFR crews took a dog-leg

over country that gave more visual clues for fixes. From 8,000 feet (Flight Levels start at 10,000 feet in Australia) we could see for miles, and all the miles looked pretty much alike! There was the occasional Station, with nearby airstrip standing out as a red stripe against the red and scrub background; there were several salt lakes, mostly dried out and shiny white against the prevailing red and a few oddments like repeater stations for various types of radio and telephone linkages. Roads were rare, and traffic on them rarer still. Dried out river beds, or "creeks" were numerous. It looked like exactly what it is, the bed of a dried out sea, with just a few puddles here and there; I found it interesting that the vegetation grew on top of the sand dunes, with just red sand in between.

We passed over Leigh Creek, a coal mining town with brownish-black open-cast diggings that could be seen for miles. Graham said the airfield here was new; the old one was found to have good coal under it so it was just dug up, and a new one built nearby! A railway line leads west from here to Adelaide, some hundreds of miles away, where the coal is burnt in power stations.

Most of the IFFR aircraft were due to land here at Leigh Creek for fuel, but we had enough to continue on to Coober Pedy, with only a slight detour to avoid a danger area.

Eventually the red ground was speckled with what looked from altitude like white clusters of ants eggs; they were the spoil from Opal mines and a sign that we were getting close to our destination.

When we landed at the sun-baked aerodrome we were surprised to see an immaculate Rolls-Royce with police escort standing by the ramp; very shortly afterwards a corporate jet landed, taxied in and whisked someone away. We were told the State Premier, or some similar dignitary had been visiting the area.

Fortunately there is not a lot of traffic on the roads in Coober Pedy, so it didn't matter that the coach had little in the way of brakes and rather wayward steering! It took us to the Underground Hotel for lunch, where some of us had our first taste of kangaroo meat. Then we had a coach tour of the town and a visit to a working opal mine. One young lad found a piece of opal while "noodling" on a waste tip. We visited the underground church and an underground museum with combined opal show-rooms and a dwelling hewn out of the rock. These underground premises, known as "dug-outs" are cut into the sides of the numerous hillocks that abound; they are cool in summer, but warm on winter nights, when lack of cloud cover allows heat to radiate away, leaving it very cold indeed.

After a very good dinner we turned in early; we

had an early start next day. Early rising seems to be the norm hereabouts, the place was very busy and after a very good breakfast we were away to the field and airborne not long after eight.

Our next destination was Ayers Rock, or Uluru as it seems to be called these days, in deference to the mystical esteem in which it is held by the Aboriginal or Anganu people. There was some excitement and much radio traffic this morning since IFFR President Don Bymaster #1645, flying a Mooney, was unable to retract the landing gear and would need to make a fuel stop. This is not easy in the GAFA, where there are not many places to stop at all, and fewer still with fuel to spare. Long distance VHF radio communication can exist only where there are relay or repeater stations; elsewhere one relies on HF, which is subject to all the usual problems of fading and distortion, so it took quite a bit of to-ing a fro-ing between several aircraft on a number of HF and VHF frequencies before the message that there was fuel at Ernabella was finally relayed from Adelaide Centre to the stricken Mooney. We were able to see Ayers Rock from about 50 miles away, beyond a range of small mountains, after some premature excitement when we mistook Mount Connel for its famous neighbour. So common is this error that it is also known as "False-Ayers-Rock". Passage over the Peterman range gave us the roughest turbulence of the entire trip; filming was impossible and we had to tighten belts and hang on. This was soon forgotten as we approached the Rock and joined in the procession around it and the Olgas, another out-crop of rock about twenty miles away. We had to monitor the MTAF and keep a sharp look-out to avoid collisions, especially as the official routing prescribed in the ERSA (En Route Supplement, Australia - a cross between Pooley and the Air Pilot) seemed designed to bring aircraft into conflict with each other! It was safely accomplished, however and we got some very good photographs and video footage.

Ayers Rock airport is new, with a very nice air-conditioned GA Centre etc., but before we could get to the refreshment counter and the shop we had to go through the electronic security procedures and have all our belongings X-rayed!

The next morning all this equipment was unmanned and switched off, so we had free access to the bar; then the security staff arrived and turned us all out and would only let us back in again after we had submitted to their laborious procedures!

Luxury coaches took us to our luxury hotel, "The Sails in the Desert", where we had a good, though expensive snack lunch at the pool side. Despite the

sun beating down the water was icy cold and only Bob Snider #3642 from Anchorage, Alaska took a dip. We had a free afternoon and evening, for wandering around, shopping, drinking or just lazing.

Next morning we had the early call in order to catch the coach that would take us to the Rock before sunrise. Several of the party were to climb to the top, while one or two others preferred go round to the east side to watch the effect of the sun's rays striking the monolith, making the red sandstone glow almost incandescently.

After the climbers had descended, we had a guided tour of the several sacred and historic sites around the base of the rock, some of them decorated with very ancient cave paintings. The many markings on the surface of the rock have all been endowed with meaning, or incorporated in Anganu stories of the dreamtime. This aboriginal culture, or Chapoochka is little known or understood by other than the aboriginals themselves.

After lunch we had another tour of the area, this time including a visit to the Olgas. These outcrops are of a totally different type of sandstone from Ayers Rock; it is known as conglomerate, and includes many boulders and stones and pebbles, so that it resembles a form of natural concrete. Whilst we were at the Olgas it began to rain, ruining our sunset sightseeing and totally upsetting the plans of the Ayers Rock Rotary Club, whose members had arranged a barbecue for us in the desert. It was just like home really, we were cold, wet and making the best of it. This mixed Rotary Club is small, and became even smaller when the recession hit the tourist industry and many of the hotels and tour companies amalgamated or went under, leaving some members of the Club without job or classification, while others were transferred elsewhere. We had the opportunity to try several new tastes such as kangaroo, emu, buffalo, camel and crocodile as well as the more commonplace beef and sausages; surprisingly (or not) the beef was by far and away the toughest and least tasty. There was some confusion as to what drinks were included in the already high cost of this meal. I hope the Club's charity fund benefitted from our visit.

The next day we were due to fly to Alice Springs, but there was a delay while a thunderstorm passed over us. Only Brian Parosien #3577, a pillar of Ern's organising team, managed to get away, IFR, in his Seneca; he telephoned to say that shortly after he landed The Alice became socked-in down to the ground and was likely to stay that way. So much for permanent VFR! The coaches were hastily summoned and we all checked back into the "Sails" for another night.

Some of us decided we would try out the "Tavern" an allegedly typical Australian Pub, for lunch. We found that it didn't serve food after 2.30pm, but the people who ran it had no objection to our buying a take-out from across the way and eating it in their bar area, indeed they told us where we could get food and which items were the best on the menu! In fact the food was very good and the beer excellent; the company was somewhat bizarre, but you get to expect that sort of thing after a while. After lunch we wandered round to the Royal Flying Doctor Service centre, where we visited the museum and saw a video about the history and present activity of the RFDS. There were the usual Tee Shirts and other items to buy.

After another futile attempt to see the sunset at Ayers rock we had a very good, if rather expensive dinner and turned in for the night.

Next morning the weather had turned to fog! We all went out to the airfield where Graham, after filing an IFR plan, stated that when he could see the other end of the runway we would leave. In due course we did just that and climbed out on top at about 1,000ft agl. We could see the Olgas poking through the mist, but Ayers was still covered. We could see that the clag was fairly localised, but after a while the scud below became more and more solid. Alice Springs is one of the few places in Australia with a tower and controlled airspace; we expected we would have to do an ILS approach, but we were in fact vectored on to a radial for a DME arrival. This consists in essence of holding the given radial and letting down in prescribed steps as the DME distance reduces until eventually one breaks out close to the airfield on base leg for a visual landing; on this occasion we came out at about 2,500ft (800ft agl, but all flying is done on QNH in Australia). After landing and refuelling we waited in the Alice Springs Aero club for the others to arrive, which they did one by one. Then we all transferred by coach to the Vista Motel for a brief lunch before being taken on a tour of the town. That evening we met the local Rotary Club of Alice Springs "Mbantua", who entertained us royally; they had taken the precaution of organising their barbie indoors, at our Motel.

Next day we were due to go on a sunshine trip to the McDonnell ranges and Glen Helen Gorge. We took our macs and umbrellas, despite assurances from the locals that "it'll soon clear up, no worries" We became suspicious when we saw roadside flood warning signs every few miles and the coach kept fording rivers. We made a dash for it through the rain at Glen Helen Gorge, where we had coffee and cakes in a typical outback Australian

hostelry, which fortunately had a lovely log fire burning in the hearth. We were then taken to see the Finke River, claimed to be the oldest in the world still flowing in its original course, and to see a mountain sacred to the aboriginal people. We were lucky that it stayed dry while we visited the Ormiston Gorge, where crested pigeons ran about between our feet, so tame are they, and some of us saw a dingo. The barbecue lunch was held under a corrugated iron sun-roof, which on this occasion served to keep the pounding rain off us, although the noise of the rain beating on the roof made conversation somewhat difficult at times. Another pointer to the true nature of the so-called desert was the number of four-wheel-drive jeeps carrying boats on their roofs! Clearly the natives are not taken in by the tourist office propaganda.

A night out at the Overlander Steak House should have completed our stay in The Alice, but only those with valid Instrument Ratings, or enough spare cash and determination to hire instrument qualified local pilots, were destined to depart the next day.

This leg of the trip was to Broken Hill, New South Wales; about the same distance as going from Sumburgh in the Shetlands to Dinard in France. Graham was doubtful whether we would get clearance to depart single-engined, since the reported base was around 300ft agl; but we were cleared and after climbing to 9,000ft were still not completely clear of cloud. -XNH finally broke out after about two hours, just north of Lake Eyre, a dried out salt lake where the late Donald Campbell had taken the world land speed record for wheel-driven cars some thirty years or so ago. He too had been dogged (and bogged) by unexpected rain; it must be the Brits who attract it! We had considered stopping at Leigh Creek for fuel, but a tail wind made this unnecessary, and our bladders were still holding on.

Arriving in Broken Hill we found a rather disconsolate **Bruce Church #2406**, who had just been on the telephone informing several irate hoteliers that almost all of the IFFR party was stuck in The Alice; furthermore, his wife **Margaret** and some friends had spent a lot of time and effort making up nearly fifty bouquets and information packs that were not going to be needed either. Eventually about nineteen of the expected ninety-eight people turned up in Broken Hill on the appointed night. We had a pleasant meal in a club and swapped stories with **Don Bymaster**, **Ted Roe #3792** and his family, and **Dan Nalven #801** and his wife **Barbara #4305** about how we had all got out of The Alice. They had hired three Aussie

commercial pilots and a Beech Baron to enable them to fly IFR to Oodnadatta, where they found some VMC; the Aussies then flew back to The Alice in the Baron. Afterwards we were taken to see Two-up being played. This traditional and at one time strictly illegal Australian gambling game is now run by the local council, which seems to have taken most of the fun out of it. I was amazed to see ten and twenty-dollar bills being hazarded on the chances of two coins both coming down heads or tails.

The next day we made an uneventful flight over increasingly agricultural land towards Melbourne. The cloud increased the nearer we got and we were vectored to finals for runway 17 at Essendon. Here we said our thanks and farewells to Graham, who had to depart immediately for Geelong, to attend a family funeral.

#### *-RSU's Trip*

We, that is **Feroz Wadia** with **John** and **Mary Ritchie** in a Piper Arrow were more fortunate with the weather in Melbourne and were able to depart from Moorabin VFR with 2,500ft base and good visibility, enabling us to fly around the coast as planned, taking many pictures of the dramatic coastline, which is punctuated with small harbours and empty beaches.

Having only three on board the Arrow we were able to maintain as good a groundspeed as any one, thanks partly to the super-accurate navigation afforded by GPS, and we became expert at arriving at each destination just before the first coach was full. Arriving too early meant hanging around for the others; too late meant waiting for the last arrival, and missing the sight-seeing tour following each landing!

After the IFR people had left Ayers Rock the weather eventually improved enough for us to depart and, more importantly, get into Alice Springs VFR. The conditions precluded flight over or through the Ranges so we followed the Lasseter Highway, turned left at the Motel and went up the Stuart Highway to Alice Springs. Excellent visibility all the way and a cloud base that made us wonder what all the fuss had been about.

After a day's delay departing The Alice there was a VFR window on the Friday morning. A fleet of taxis was hastily summoned and after a rapid takeoff we all fled down the Stuart Highway at 1,000ft agl until we crossed the Finke River, where the cloud began to break up, allowing us to climb to 7,500ft QNH, where a tail wind gave us an easy, if lengthy flight to Leigh Creek, where we stopped for the night. VFR over the desert, single engined at night has absolutely no appeal.

Our only problem was the usual one that follows a swift departure after a long delay, during which endless cups of coffee have been consumed. It was solved in the time honoured manner - we knew the plastic bags in the survival kit would come in handy one day! How come the ladies seem not to be afflicted in this way?

On calling the Met office from Leigh Creek we were told that there should be no problem until we got to the ranges behind Melbourne, where the base was about 400ft. We stopped in Mildura, for fuel, where we met Ern Dawes. We then flew in company with him as far as Mangalore, where we landed since the weather was definitely getting worse, Melbourne Centre giving 2,000 metres in rain, with 4 oktas at 400ft and 6 at 700ft, not quite our idea of VFR. Ern disappeared in the direction of the Shepperton, to find an Hotel; we found two instructors who wanted to get to Melbourne, one agreed to fly the aeroplane to Moorabin, the other agreed to take us in his car; thus we arrived back at the Park Royal Hotel, where we met others with a tale to tell. We heard later that Ern waited three days before he could fly out of Mangalore.

We had had a fascinating experience that we are never likely to be able to repeat, and the cost, at a total of A\$3,650, which is around £600 per head, was about two-thirds the cost of hiring a similar aeroplane in the UK.

### *Epilogue*

Back at the Parkroyal Hotel IFFR members drifted in with differing tales about how they had got back to Melbourne. Some had commitments that precluded waiting for the weather to improve and were forced to abandon their hired aircraft in the Alice and catch commercial flights. Others, like the crew of -RSU, had flown themselves out during a short VFR "window" and had then flown as near to Melbourne as they could before being forced down by ever worsening weather. They then continued their journeys by whatever means were available.

Whilst this trip did not go completely according to plan for most of us it was nevertheless a marvellous experience. Ern Dawes, his wife Nola, Malcolm McClure #2968, Brian Condon #1119 and all the members of the team are to be congratulated for their enterprise and resourcefulness in the face of typical north European weather, a phenomenon of which they probably have little first-hand experience. However, they didn't lose anyone nor any aircraft; I think we all had a wonderful time and enjoyed great IFFR fellowship. We met Rotarians whose lives are very different from our own, and we saw an Australia that was a good bit different from the tourist brochures. It was definitely Fair Dinkum!

## REPORT ON THE 1993 UK AGM

This brief meeting took place at 0900 in the Eastgate Hotel, Oxford on Sunday 4th July during the UK Section Fly-in.

The Chairman's Report was adopted, having been given at the IFFR Dinner the previous evening.

The Accounts and Budget for 1993 were adopted, having been circulated to all members with the Winter "Rotating Beacon". It was agreed that the subscription should remain unchanged as there had been no increase in the World subscription, and the cost of printing the "Beacon" had reduced, thanks to the kind efforts of Past-Chairman David Rowe and his "desktop publishing".

Seven new members had joined since 1st October, but a similar number had resigned or left, leaving the membership still at 98.

A letter had been sent to the Department of the Environment in support of the General Aviation Awareness Campaign (GAAC) and the donation of £200 to the GAAC, approved at the last AGM, had been paid.

In the absence of any other nominations the present Officers were reappointed for a further year, all being willing so to serve.

There being no other business to conduct the meeting ended at 0930.

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## IFFR CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS

At the IFFR AGM, held in Melbourne, Australia on 25th May 1993 World President Don Bymaster announced that the Executive Board of Directors, meeting the previous evening, had adopted a revised Constitution, incorporating many of the representations received after publication of the draft Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws in the Spring World Bulletin. The final edition of the Constitution will be printed in the next World Bulletin.

It was agreed to adopt the Constitution and that it would become binding and effective upon the incorporation of IFFR as a body corporate. There would be a slight delay due to the resignation of world Secretary Mike Haun #4000.

President Don expressed his sincere thanks to all those had worked so hard to achieve a result acceptable to so many members, holding different views, for the future benefit of the Fellowship.

Reports from the Sections were received and adopted and plans for forthcoming events were approved. It was clear that the Fellowship is a very lively and active one.

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## UK SECTION INTERNATIONAL RALLY OXFORD, ENGLAND, JULY 1993

As I had been a member of IFFR for over 7 years I was developing a "depression" over my lack of support of the local and international meetings. Then I received the latest Rotam from IFFR, with the details of the Oxford event; I checked the diary and slotted it in.

My flying club was unhappy about my taking an aircraft for a weekend for only a possible five hours of wet time, especially as I asked for a decent aircraft!! Or at least one that looked the part for my first IFFR solo. Our Ops manager could not understand why I refused to take Foxy, G-AVPF, proudly declaring that the DI works *most* of the time and that the sandblasted paint-job gives the aircraft authenticity!!! However, the previous day the cloud-base gave me a routing 250ft bgl (below ground level), should I wish to keep within the privileges of my PPL under VFR. The decision was made to take D92 SKF instead.

Ann and I arrived at the Eastgate Hotel, Oxford at 1800 local, with the start of the evening booked for 1830. After a quick shower and change we were off to the International Dinner at St Edmund Hall. It was during this short walk that I realised we had not yet spoken to nor even seen any members of the fellowship; but I knew that if I displayed my Rotary wheel there would be no problem.

Entering the small square of the 17th century Hall keen-eyed aviators noted the strange face and immediately homed in like a beacon with a new battery. Introductions followed and the de-icer was no longer required. As the Squadron formed the atmosphere became very friendly, with the regular overseas members keen to make acquaintance with the new faces. Christian Schneider #3206 and Winfried Aufterbeck #3170 from Germany were among other visitors from Denmark, Sweden, Australia, Belgium Italy, Switzerland, Scotland and France.

Finally, we marched into Dinner. The four-course meal was followed by speeches from the Governor of District 1090, who in his second day in the job welcomed us to his zone and our own President, Graeme Le Quesne #2714 welcomed the guests on behalf of the IFFR members. The informal ceremony came to an abrupt end when the barman appeared to say that if he didn't have any custom shortly he would close the bar and go home! This announcement caused a Sharp Exit that needed no interpreters.

Saturday began with a tour of Wadham, and New Colleges, just across the road from our hotel. Both tours were very informative, our guide had been a scholar at Wadham, and now assists with the ongoing management of the buildings. After slotting in a quick shopping trip, since we were in the centre of Oxford, Ann and I returned to the hotel in time to catch the coach to Blenheim Palace, at Woodstock.

Erwin Rodgers #3437 and Carolyn made a superb job of organising the weekend and Saturday afternoon was no exception. Starting with lunch we sat with the German visitors and discussed various topics, including the "wall"; as some of our guests were from a town just 6km from the East they were well placed to comment on the social and economic consequences of the unification of Germany. Peter Gresham #3412 joined us, which I'm glad he did as he had been picked on all weekend by a Scotsman who lives so far north of the border that he must have dual nationality with Greenland!

After lunch the tour round the magnificent palace was completed with coffee in the gardens, in brilliant sunshine, as it had been all weekend - it's amazing what that Erwin can organise.

We enjoyed the day and speaking to the various people from overseas; great to learn about flying from Ian Richards #1893 and Roma from Australia who had come to the Oxford rally this time by commercial jet, but who had flown here from Melbourne in 1978 in their Cessna 210, taking thirty days - WOW!

The informal dinner on Saturday evening was like a big family occasion. Ann and I had got round to talk to most of the Rotarians present by that time, which numbered about sixty present. The crew were spread over three long tables; we were invited to join the Germans on their table and appreciated the evening talking flying, sport and Rotary. Christian Schneider was persuaded to play the "ivories"; Graeme's speech was in English and French, followed by announcements from Danish and French representatives plugging their own forthcoming rallies. John Donne #3746 was presented with a surprise birthday cake.

As usual the party went on until the small hours in the bar, where Kjell Akerman #3915, from Denmark was talking broken biscuits after too many Schnapps....

Sunday brought the final event of the weekend in the form of a trip on the river Thames. Understandably most of the French and Germans got away early; but the rest of us sailed from Abingdon to Oxford, a relaxed two hour passage



through countryside and locks with surroundings like you find on chocolate boxes. The voyage was rounded off with lunch at the "Trout Inn" on the banks of the river, after which we said our goodbyes. We had been made to feel at home from the very first encounter. My thanks to **Norman McLeod #3427**, a Scotsman with a sense of humour(?), John Ritchie (anyone who flies with him should bring a spare can of fuel) Erwin Rodgers, who promised to look out for my car hub-caps when he returns to Manchester, to Graeme, Peter, Feroz, the two Johns and Ives all of whom made my "first solo" a treat....

Tony Erskine #4096  
Crosby

Editor's note.

Tony and Ann would very much like to go to the Scandinavian Fly-in at ODENSE Denmark. If anyone has spare seats perhaps he would contact Tony on 051 924 8096 H or Fax 051 931 5510.

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#### **GENERAL AVIATION AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**

As mentioned in the UK Report, we are supporting this effort financially. After initial advice on procedure from professional political consultants and lobbyists a working group was set up and a small team of officers, led by David Ogilvy, conducts the day-to-day activity, under the patronage of Sir Peter Masefield.

Government Ministers, MPs, Peers, County Councils and some District Councils have been contacted and information about the essential usefulness of GA to business and training disseminated. AOPA has housed the committee, the aviation press has helped by distributing 8,000 leaflets. Comprehensive brochures have been sent to Ministers and meetings held with the Minister of Aviation and senior officials in the Transport Department stressing the importance of requiring local authorities to consider and make provision for GA in their planning policy decisions.

As a result the Department of Environment has issued two draft documents, calling for provision for GA and aerodromes. They are (i) Regional Planning Guidance for the South East; and (ii) Planning Policy Guidance Note #13 (Transport).

By using mostly voluntary staff and great economy the GAAC is achieving much and remains financially afloat, thanks to donations amounting to some £35,000, including an initial donation of £10,000 from TOTAL OIL, but it still needs the support of ALL of us who wish to continue to fly.

#### **IFFR PROGRAMME 1993-94**

There are several Section meetings and fly-ins arranged this year, to be held at :

Odense, Denmark - 20-22 August 1993

Versailles, France - 9-12 September 1993

Michaelisdon, Germany - 16-17 October 1993

St Lucia West Indies - 29 Oct-1 Nov 1993

Dresden, Germany -12-15 May 1994

Booking forms and full details for the first four of these may be had from Hon Sec **John Ritchie**,  
Tel: 0462-684941. Fax: 0438 740805

Brief details of each event are listed below.

#### **SCANDINAVIA**

The official deadline for this event in Odense, Denmark was past before we were given details, but we are assured that prompt applications should be accepted.

The programme starts on Friday 20th August with arrival at Beldringe Airport EKOD,

N 55 28.633 E 010 19.932

between 1600 and 1800 local time; customs are available.

Busses will take you to the hotel and a there is an informal dinner and dance in the evening.

On the Saturday there is a cruise to see a castle and have a traditional Danish lunch; then cruise back for Gala Dinner with dance in the evening.

There is sight-seeing on the Sunday before departure. All-in cost, including hotel, meals and transport is DKK 1300 per person.

Closing date 31st July

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#### **INSURANCE IN DENMARK**

Danish Aviation Law demands that any aircraft flying in Danish airspace must carry third party cover of at least 60,000,000 Danish Kroner (DKK) for bodily injury and DKK 5,000,000 for property damage. Those wishing to go on this trip would probably be best advised to approach their own brokers, but it would appear that you could get insurance arranged in Denmark by Ole Brandt, of Codan Forsikring.

The cost would appear to be DKK 600 for aircraft up to 2,000kgs MTOW, (DKK 450 up to 1,000kgs MTOW) for 12 months.

He would need to know the Owner's name and address, registration and type of aircraft, year of manufacture; also the name of your insurer, the

policy number and the sum insured, as well as a cheque or draft for the appropriate amount.  
For further details contact :

DE BETJENES AF:  
OLE BRANDT  
HELSINGORSGADE 19  
3400 HILLEROD  
DENMARK  
Tel: +42 26 10 00  
Fax: +42 26 45 16  
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The French meeting, at Versailles marks both the twentieth year of IFFR in France and also the retirement of Jean Recullet #1319, who has led it from the start.

The programme runs from Thursday 9th Sept to Sunday 12th Sept. and includes visits to an Aerospatiale factory (see note below) and an aviation museum at La Ferte Allais on the Friday. Saturday includes a trip to Paris to see the Spectacle de la Geode, lunch on a boat passing through Paris, a visit to newly discovered rooms in the Louvre and then back to Versailles for the spectacle les grandes fetes de nuit in the park of the Chateau de Versailles.

Sunday includes a visit to Le Bourget aviation museum, then lunch at Toussus Le Noble before departure.

It promises to be a memorable event. The full programme is FF 1500 per person, FF 1300 if you prefer to arrive on Friday afternoon and miss the Friday visits. Hotel is FF 600/night plus FF 100 breakfast for a double, FF 500/night plus FF 50 for a single room. Date limit for rooms is 30th July.

**NB A photocopy of your Passport must be sent if you wish to join the visit to Aerospatiale!**

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The German Section's Fly-in is to Michaelisdonn, on the northern bank of the River Elbe, just east of Cuxhaven: N 53 58 48. E 009 08 40. EDXM  
It starts with arrival on Saturday 16th October and is based at the Hotel Gardels, owned by IFFR member Jens Peters #4276 . Programme includes a visit to a seal breeding centre and an evening Rotary/IFFR meeting with dinner and folklore entertainment. Sunday will include a coast-wise flight, subject to weather, and a "Jazz Brunch". Cost is DM 200/person and includes hotel and meals, but not drinks.

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## **ST LUCIA WI FLY-IN**

### **PROGRAM: THURSDAY 29TH OCTOBER**

Aircraft arrive during the afternoon, crews provided with refreshments and taken to their Hotel. Aircraft arriving after 6.00pm will have to pay a Customs overtime charge of US\$14.00. Reception and Informal dinner at the hotel.

### **FRIDAY 29TH OCTOBER**

Shopping in the Capital at the duty-free facility and visit the city of Castries and Market.

Luncheon of the Rotary Club of St Lucia at the Green Parrot Hotel/Restaurant. This is for all members of your party, not just Rotarians. Lunch is pre-paid, casual drinks before lunch are not.

Evening: Reception by the Prime Minister, the Rt.Hon John Compton.

Dress "elegant informal" Jackets are not required for men; ladies long dresses are not required.

2030

There are options: Either go to GROS ISLET street party and jam, cost of beer/barbecued chicken etc not included. Transport at 0030 back to your hotel. Or Do your own thing, and spend the evening with a Rotarian, which will be set up at lunch on Friday.

### **SATURDAY 30TH OCTOBER**

Morning: Fly from Vigie Airport to Lementin Airport, Martinique. Distance 36 miles, met by Rotary Club of St Pierre and entertained till returning to the airport at 1630 for the return to Vigie. Flights will be on an individual basis.

Evening entertainment at Pigeon Point.

### **SUNDAY 31ST OCTOBER**

Morning: to Rodney Bay for a day sail to Soufriere with Lunch on board and drinks available at very moderate prices. A stop for swimming.

Return to your hotel for a shower and short siesta.

Evening: farewell party with very short speeches.

### **MONDAY 1ST NOVEMBER**

0900: to Vigie Airport for departure.

**Closing Date 31st July**

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Those who wish to join in the St Lucia Fly-in may be able to rent aircraft in Florida to fly to the island; or fly with an American with spare seats: information by fax from Peter Barnard #4181