

Phil Duthoit and Margherita's WA trip

In Phil's Jabiru J230, Tagalong with a Cessna 172, Cessna 206 and Tecnam.

Loxton to Coober Pedy. Day one.

3/05/2013

Left for Coober Pedy via Port Pirie at 8.30. Waited for Tecnam 2.5 hours. He had to Divert to Renmark from Stawell due head winds and lack of fuel supply. 85 litre tank capacity as opposed to our 135 lts.

Arrived Coober Pedy at 4.30 and booked into the Mud Hut Motel. Too late to do the tour But went for a walk after dinner, a nice underground porter gave us a key to inspect the underground rooms carved out of the hillside.

Fuel Pirie, 34 Coober 66 lts

Saturday 4 th

Coober Pedy Giles via Ayes Rock

Lost about 10 lts overnight due parking on slope, over flowed through breather. Direct "The Rock" after some pics of the diggings from the air. The rock stood out some miles before we could make out any buildings. Some of the group went on the Rock tour and others just loafed around window shopping etc. I got a couple of Mozzie hat nets as the flies at Coober were really bad and am now prepared for another invasion in the outback.

Left for Giles at 3.32 Arrived 4.43.

We were warned to look out for stray Camels on the airstrip but none seen.

Giles in one of the official weather stations in OZ that supplies data to the national stations.

The town??? is actually called Warrakuna. There is a roadhouse cum store with the settlement about 3 kms away. Three weather station guys do 6 month stints, run 24 hrs 7 days. Hubby and wife run the roadhouse. We had a BBQ tonight, chops and snags. Salad supplied by roadhouse. BBQ plate was clean, someone suggested because the dingoes had licked it.

Val played a recorded interview of Len Biddel, who opened up this area with his grader to access Maralinga and hence the Gun barrel highway, He was a great speaker and we all enjoyed some history of his exploits in the outback.

Dry area so we had our first AFD for a while. Accommodation was motel type rooms.



Sunday 5th

Giles to Newman via Patjarr

Up early, then a tour of the weather station which took over an hour. We met the on duty weather man watched as he did his things, like inflating the balloon and tracking with radar, he did his usual stuff of temperature readings, dew point and rain recordings. I took a video which is very interesting.

Left Giles at 10.30 SA time, we pick up a couple of hours today on W A time. Arrived Patjarr 11.42. Up hill, straight in approach.

Greeted by the local community artists with a shed full of paintings, some were very good, all done on canvas. Pilots bought a couple for 12 and 13 hundred dollars each. Refueled 63 lts and away for Newman at 2.40.



Patjarr to Newman cont.

The trip across the Gibson Desert was unbelievable, thermals were the most prevalent and stronger than I have ever experienced, one minute 4500 ft and then up at over 1000 ft a minute. I managed to ride these to good advantage as riding down hill at around 135 kts which gave me a speed advantage over the other planes that were higher. We got well ahead of all except the Cessna 206 which is considerably quicker than the rest but uses three times the fuel. He was 20 mins in front at landing; the others were 20 and 30 mins behind.

Joined base for 23.

Tie downs in short supply due work in progress.

Fuel 75.4 lt 15.8 hours flying so far.

Monday 6th Newman to Karijini

Hurry Hurry, there is a front approaching the WA coast. We are told that the Karajini tour will be today and not tomorrow, so all haste to get away to beat the front to Coral bay.

55 minute trip to Karajini national park was somewhat eventful due to the thermals and hills aplenty. Auto pilot got the shits because of the bouncing around so turned off.

Karajini strip about 30 kms from the lodge. Strip same colour as surrounding country I was nearly over the top before I spotted it, or perhaps Marg did first. Full right rudder and left aileron for the most aggressive side slip ever. Slight tail wind, touched down 2/3 strip one good bounce and heavy breaking, made it with a little runway left.

Peter West the Ranger, who owns the Eco lodge where we are to stay, collected us in a bus from the strip for a gorge tour until dark.



Gorges beautiful with layers of colours on the walls. Marg went for a swim in one water hole, Me, I just looked at the climb I had to do to get out and had a smoke. Early start tomorrow. 6 am for 7 Breakfast as the weather and front is still approaching the coast.

Karajini to Coral Bay Tuesday 7th

We got away at 8.45. Very pleasant flying, little winds at 4500'. Plenty of hills and tiger country. Tom Price on LHS and saw about 12 centre pivot irrigators that they use to get rid of their waste water to grow hay for the surrounding cattle stations. Very colorful scenery, one area just like a painting with all the branches of creeks dyed by what I presumed was iron ore deposits.

We saw plenty of small mining operations from now until Kalgoorlie, every few miles some sort of activity, past or present was obvious. Also a few landing strips for the FIFO workers.

Two hours twenty minutes to Coral Bay. Some slight confusion as another strip about a mile away from the main one, executed a missed approach and landed on a coral and sand runway which was too hard to use the screw tie downs I carried. I found an existing peg and rolled up a piece of bore casing for the other wing. There had been a discussion regards my inadequate tie downs previously and was asked a couple of times not to leave my plane near theirs in case it blew over and did them damage, couldn't really complain because it was my fault for not packing the hammer and stakes that I had back in the hanger at home.



We beat the weather front by a few hours.

Front arrived with good winds but little rain. Brad and Gail (Tecnam) walked the couple of kms to the strip to check out the planes in the dark, all OK.

Wednesday Coral Bay.

Val was denied avgas from the local charter company, so they may have to shandy Ultimate fuel to get to Carnarvon. Also a possibility that we give Carnarvon a miss and go to Meekathara via Mout Augustas. I have enough to get to Carnarvon but others are short. Wait and see what happens, meanwhile let's enjoy.

Quad bikes were fun, a couple of hours over sand hills and along beaches.



Thursday Coral Bay.

Rang Jamie Cook at Jabiru re the com 2 not working. Organised to return for repairs when I get back. He instructed me on how to receive the standby channel by holding down the flip flop button for 3 seconds. M and I walked out to the strip over some sand hills to check over plane and try the radio, all OK. I forgot to mention that when on final to the Rock the com 2 packed it in, just went blank. I now felt justified that I got two radios installed when I bought the Jabiru..

Friday Coral Bay

Walked up for the paper (yesterdays) and lounged around after I bought some tie down pegs, they are for awnings but heavy duty and should do the job if we have further hard areas to tie down.

Leaving for Carnarvon for fuel tomorrow and overnight at Meekathara.

Saturday Coral Bay to Meekathara via Carnarvon.

Refueled at Carnarvon. 106 lts used from Newman.

Our landing was interesting as the preferred strips of 18 and 36 were waterlogged, consequentially we had 22 kt X-wind. Graeme Boatman, the tour owner who was flying in the Tecnam with Brad, the learner pilot who bought the plane from Graeme's company, made a sarcastic remark re Jabiru landing in these conditions. Fortunately we managed OK, left wing down and M way up above me in the right hand seat.

Graeme had a couple of comments about the Jab, I just held my tongue and beat them to the next stop by a fair bit after giving them 20 or minutes start, so I was quietly happy with the way the insinuations were going.

Some head winds again to Meekathara 3 hours 4 mins. Arriving at 4.14. refueled 71 lt.

Sunday, Meekathara to Kalgoolie

Head winds again three hours to Kal. Many small mines and some color but mostly shrubby type bushes. An occasional airstrip near a mine site was sighted I think 6 or so for this leg with plenty of tracks for emergency landings if needed.

Refueled and tie downs were available 63.3 lts.

Monday Kalgoolie to Eucla via Forrest

Left Kal at 9.48 WA time for Forrest for fuel arriving 1.05

Along the way we crossed some of the worst tiger country, no rocks, just no clearings in the scrub for a forced landing until we tracked to intersect the rail line and open Nullabor plains, rabbit warrens and cattle aplenty.

We saw 3 two large freight trains near Rawlinna siding. There were also a few strips along the rail line probably for train breakdown access.

Val advised that Eucla airstrip was out due the rain that preceded us for most of the way home to Loxton. She rang Nullabor Road house, which has a strip and enough rooms for us for overnight.

We are now back on SA time and lose a couple of hours. Everyone disappointed that we will not fly along the Bight as time does not allow. We decided to cut across to the Bight about 40 odd miles before Nullabor to see the cliffs and the head of the Bight. This was a good decision as the view from a half mile or so from the ocean was spectacular. M had a little fly whilst I took plenty of pics and a video, she held it straight and level for long enough for me to do the job. Well done Margherita!



Nullabor strip a bit dodgy with one end unserviceable and some casual water in places, no real hassles as we taxied up to the rear of our rooms for the night. 82 minutes including detour.

Tuesday Nullabor to Port Lincoln via Ceduna

7.30 Weather report not too good, showers and head winds all the way. Departed 9.07 Ceduna 10.30.

Funny section as we were over water one minute and dodging showers a few miles inland the next. Some of the coastal scenery was very good, plenty of rainbows between showers. I couldn't find the strip at Ceduna for a while, I did a circle over a town looking for it when I realized I was 7 miles short and not Ceduna at all which was over the bay near Thevenard. Landed on edge of shower where we had lunch and waited nearly two hours for the weather to clear to Port Lincoln. The flying doctor plane came in and exchanged patients

Tuesday cont. Ceduna to Port Lincoln

Left 12.07 Arrived Lincoln 12.05

Same experience as before, dodging showers inland and then out to sea, again some good scenery along the coast. Cummins silos on left, over the hill and we were there. 42 lts.

Tied down scew ties worked for the first time.

Hire cars X 4. Cameron, one of the pilots is our driver. We hope all OK to go to Coffin bay and the air park of Mick Hart. Chris Wise had rang him to see if he was available, we made arrangements for tomorrow after Coffin Bay lunch.

A short walk around and then two cars left for Mick Harts air-park. He has done a fabulous job and obviously no expense spared to build this complex on 60 odd acres, two stips with one down hill or up-hill depending on which way you look at it.

The two hangers were filled with about 7 aircraft, all tail draggers including two Cubs, an RV and a Pitts. Other contraptions, motor bikes, Jeeps, A Commodore with a 6 cylinder aircraft engine mounted on the bonnet. Really a worth while visit that took about two hours to show.

Weather looks bleak for the crossing to Aldinga tomorrow, also severe icing conditions central Victoria, I don't think we will get away as planned.

Thursday Port Lincoln to Home,

Weather as expected, so Victorians decided to stay an extra night. We planned to go home via Cowel and cross the gulf to Wallaroo. Ok 'till Cowel where I considered landing as low cloud and showers about but fairly well spaced. I could just make out the peninsular in the distant and continued on albeit at a much lower level than planned. No chance of higher level as forecast was freezing at 5000'

Still dodging showers over water, the 28 miles seemed to take longer that when I did it previously. Tail wind from Lincoln most of the way. We diverted around numerous showers all the way home. Arrived at Loxton just missing a good shower over the airfield at 12.05.

Two hours fifteen minutes total From Lincoln.

Trip Highlights

Coral Bay stay, Quad bike tour. Glass bottom Coral tour and snorkel.

Newman and Kalgoolie mine tour.

Giles weather station tour.

Great Australian Bight- unbelievable!!

X-wind landing at Carnarvon.

Massive thermals over the Gibson desert.

Patjarr community.

Karajini National Park.

Beating the Tecnam and 172 into airfields.

Preparation for trip.

Marghertita's company.

Jabiru never missed a beat.

38.3 hours tacho time. 766.6 lts = 20.02 lts/hour

Engine burn 22 lts/hour





LOXTON AERO CLUB

PO Box 765, Loxton SA 5333

Newsletter

Summer - Autumn 2014

27th November saw Loxton Aero Club host the Riverland region's annual CASA AvSafety Seminar. This year the emphasis was on the coming changes to Pilot Licensing, including the Part 61 Recreational Pilot's Licence which will allow GA pilots to continue flying their VH registered Aircraft (with some restrictions) if they can no longer pass the CASA medical examination. After a BBQ tea, CASA Aviation Safety Advisor, Malcolm Wardrop presented the session to a crowd of around 30 local pilots, and answered questions about the use of "electronic flight bags" (iPad Navigation & flight planning software).

(Post) Christmas Family BBQ and Flying Comp.

We dodged the busyness of the pre-Christmas silly season this year by postponing our annual Christmas function to January, and it turned out to be a very successful day. We



kicked off with a briefing by President Steve Munn outlining the navigation exercise before the crews took flight, heading first to Moorook before steering the prescribed heading to see where that took us. On return to Loxton the planes each did a touch-and-go landing before trying to land as close as possible to the markers for judging. The winning team was Chris "Bingle" Schwarz and

Paul Steer (navigator). President Steve presented the winners with the Frank Ferber Trophy, and also made a presentation to Glen Gray and Jarrod Vowles for successfully completing a forced landing last January.

New member Sam Owens moved his Gyrocopter into hangar 1 in January, and recently re-assembled the rotor and took her for a few circuits.



January to March saw the annual migration of Piper Cherokee's from Cootamundra to patrol the Almond trees at Century Orchard (adjoining the Loxton Airfield) and Jubilee Almonds near Overland Corner. Ollie Dubois (a newly licensed Commercial Pilot) and Rohan Scarfe were flown to Cootamundra by Tom and Greg of Central Air Services late in December, and each ferried a Cherokee Warrior back to Loxton the next day. For the next three month's they were flown at low level above the Almond trees by Ollie, Greg and Nina, to deter the crows from eating the ripe almonds. On 14th March, Ollie, Nina and Rohan flew the three warriors back to base, and after lunch in Cootamundra, returned in the Cessna 206.



Our esteemed eldest member Howard Hendrick turned 90 years old in October, and members helped Howard celebrate with a birthday cake in the clubrooms on the following Sunday. On his birthday, Howard took to the air in the Jabiru for his regular flight with Instructor Tim Laidler. Go Howard !!! Keep flying.

In March, Howard was Guest Speaker at the Cessna 182 Owners' Club Dinner. Over 20 Cessnas flew in to the Renmark Aerodrome over the weekend.



While holidaying in the UK last year, Rohan took his Pilot's Licence and log book with him and fronted up at the Cambridge Airport looking for a Cherokee to hire. His licence is valid in the UK, so after a short briefing on local rules and a 45 minute check flight he was able to take his family for a fly over the Cambridgeshire countryside, dodging around US Air force and RAAF bases and their controlled airspace. There are airports everywhere in the UK and lots of abandoned wartime airstrips in East Anglia now being used as industrial parks.

