



THE INTERNATIONAL COMANCHE SOCIETY AUSTRALIAN TRIBE FLYER

Volume 14, Number 2

July 2008



TRIBE CHIEF'S REPORT

The Tribe has been very active for the last six months as you will see from other reports despite the tribe Chief contributing very little as he has been out of the country on and off for the last three months.

Proficiency Course. Deniliquin. February.

A very successful course with 29 students attending. Four brand new members and six old members attending the course for the first time. We now have a beginners and an advanced course with a third level to be added at our next course later this year. (Date to be advised).

New at the last course was a report by myself on Hypoxia and the Go 2 altitude Hypoxia training course. I recommend members review this website <http://www.hypoxiatraining.com> We hope to have this Hypoxia training available at the next proficiency course.

All this hard work was made more pleasurable by the excellent fellowship with new and old friends in the society. (Please note the support of QBE who allow us to deduct the costs from our insurance premiums and Shell who also support us).

The Warrnambool Autumn Fly Away weekend was very successful due in large part to the hard work, impeccable planning and attention to detail of Angela and Tony Read.

Thank you also to Assistant Tribe Chief, Ian, ably helped by partner Irene. (See Irene's report). Ian filled in for me as I was catching up with my son who lives in Beaver Creek, Colorado. I did a lot of skiing to aid father/son bonding.

I was able to liaise with board members of I.C.S. while in USA. I learned that the ICS website which has given us so much grief, is being entirely redesigned to make it much more user friendly, thank God. Under its old structure, due to problems with spam, many Australians were blocked from accessing the website. New arrangements with the ICS and Village Press should ensure (we hope) speedy addition of new members to the Pathfinder which Village Press use to create the mailing list. We have been embarrassed in the past with the time that has sometimes elapsed between new members joining and receiving their copy of the Flyer. Should any members have problems with receiving the magazine please let me know.

As you know Manfred Melloh, our esteemed Treasurer, is accompanying Rolf Frieden on an around the world trip in Rolf's PA24. They have arrived safely. Report elsewhere in this issue.

Our next Fly Away weekend is in Wagga Wagga. Details elsewhere in this issue.

On a sadder note, one of our Foundation members, Ernest Mills, (George'suncle) passed away recently. Ernest was a legend in Tasmanian/Australian Comanche aviation. He will be sadly missed.

I am off back to USA next week with 6 other Comanche flyers to attend the celebrations of the 50 years of Comanches at the Oshkosh Air Show. I shall give you a report in the next newsletter.

Remember, there are no strangers in the Comanche Society, only friends you have not yet met.

Safe flying,

Jim Barry
Tribe Chief

Editors Report

It's mid year and a lot is happening in our Society as can be seen by the range of articles in this Flyer. Again I thank all those who have supplied material especially Ken Holdsworth who never fails to come up with something for the Flyer.

I would ask that all the members give me some feedback on the worth of the Australian Flyer and the Australian ICS website. To me these two sources should be where all of our Australian related items appear but unfortunately many pieces of information that should be on the site and in the Australian Flyer are either circulated around just a few members or bypass our Australian site and flyer to go directly to the US web site or flyer.

If that is what members want then I think it is pointless in maintaining an Australian ICS website or producing Australian Comanche Flyers.

On the other hand if members want to retain the Australian sources of information then all relevant items concerning our members should be provided to the editor for publishing.

Please give me a call on 03 95983320, or drop me an email on tonyang@bigpond.net.au to give me your view.

Tony Read Editor.

Vale Earnest Mills

Australian tribe loses a founding member



The Comanche world has lost one of its great characters with the death of Earnest Duckett Mills OBE. He was a life member of the Australian Tribe and one of the very earliest participants in ICS with the membership number of 573.

He died in March just four days after his 96th birthday and only a few years after taking his last flight as PIC.

At his funeral his nephew, Martin Dumaresq, said "Earnest's qualities were always of strength, boldness, courage, adventure and inspiration combined with an entrepreneurial endeavour that turned opportunities into reality".

These qualities led to a high profile in agriculture. With his brother, Bill, he opened up large areas of north eastern Tasmania for pastoral activities. At one stage the partnership ran 50,000 sheep and 1000 cattle.

He later went on to invest in pastoral properties in Queensland. Agricultural politics was a real passion and he worked hard to unite various groups within the industry even travelling to London in the 1960s to meet with delegates from all over the world in the interests of farmer unity.

He was president of the Tasmanian Farmers Federation and at one fiery meeting he removed his shoe and banging the table declared "unite - after all we are all sons of the soil". He received his Order of the British Empire medal for services to agriculture.

These same qualities made him a fiercely independent and skilled pilot who was never constrained by the rules. His ongoing battle with CASA and its predecessors over several decades is legendary. Some of his exploits were described in an article in the Comanche Flyer in 2006.

His introduction to flying was unusual. He learnt to fly a gyrocopter in London in the 1930s. In doing so he acquired licence Number 1 as he was the first civilian to train on gyrocopters. All other trainees had been military personnel with previous flying experience. On returning home he trained for his aeroplane licence with the Royal Aero Club of Tasmania in Launceston.

He went on to own four aircraft starting with an Auster and then two Cessnas. He bent the undercarriage on the Cessna 210 twice and declared it "far too weak". In 1965 he bought the Comanche 400 VH-EDM and went on to fly it for the next 22 years and 3000 hours before it was taken over by his nephew George Mills. EDM has spent its entire life operating from the same turf strip and hangar at Longdown, Tasmania where all Comanches are still welcome.

He was notorious for flying in all conditions even though he never held in Instrument Rating. ATC would ask if he was a visual. His stock reply was, "conditions are marginal and the weather is closing in behind me". He developed his own approach into Launceston using two radio stations.

He greatly favoured navigating via radio stations, especially those of the Australian Broadcasting Commission - they were more powerful than NDBs. But he got into strife on one occasion when an ABC station was on relay - he ended up way off track.

In his later flying years he had access to a Cessna 152. It was a common sight around Launceston usually just above treetop height and at astonishing angles of bank. According to George he had an amazing seat of the pants feeling for an aircraft. He could fly around quite comfortably at low level with the aircraft right at the edge of the envelope, just off the stall.

Australian member, Tony Read, remembers attending a Fly-In during the 1990s at the Mills' property. "This 152 appeared over the trees at dot feet, rolled into a steep turn and landed amongst some parked cars. Earnest got out carrying his shopping!"

Just before his 90th birthday Earnest was hospitalised with chest pains. He recovered after a few days by which time his regular doctor had gone on leave. On discharge he asked the young intern if he was permitted to fly. Assuming that Earnest could only be talking about flight as a commercial passenger, the young doctor helpfully said to he could see no reason why not.

Earnest immediately went out to Launceston Airport and took what was believed to have been his last flight as pilot in command!

He was a stalwart of the Australian Tribe and instrumental in laying the foundations of an organisation that continues to serve Comanche owners to this day.

Even after relinquishing ownership of the 400 he was still a regular visitor to Tribe events in company with George. He will be sadly missed.

Comanches at Oshkosh 2008

PRESS RELEASE

World Race Gold Medalist honors 50th Anniversary of Comanches

Among the many Comanches scheduled to participate in the Comanche Mass Arrival at Oshkosh, is a Twin Comanche that is the only U.S. airplane to have raced around the world, twice. Over 65 Comanches, with all variants produced represented, will depart from Watertown, Wisconsin destined for EAA AirVenture 2008, "the world's greatest aviation celebration", on Sunday, July 27 at 11 AM. The public is welcome to watch the departure. This Piper Twin Comanche will be flown by owner and FAI (Federation Aeronautique Internationale) Gold Medallist Patricia Jayne (Pat) Keefer. Keefer won the Gold Medal for the longest race in history, 24 days around the world, with her mother, world record holder, Hall of Fame and Aviation Hero for the First Century of Flight, Marion Jayne (1926-1996). Also arriving in the group will be twelve 1958 model year Comanche 180's and 250's to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the start of production of the type.

Keefer will honour the exciting Twin Comanche by speaking about her gold medal world race adventures at the International Comanche Society tent located in the main display area at AirVenture at 1 PM on Monday, July 28. Piper Aircraft company first started building Comanches in 1958, and today there are thousands of single and twin engine Comanches flying their owners and passengers to business meetings, family functions and vacations all over the world. Thanks to ICS, intelligent owners, general aviation mechanics, and aviation industry manufacturers, the Comanche fleet is a vibrant and viable aviation platform over 50 years after it was first brought to market. Sturdy and built to last, the Comanche is known, in particular, for its fuel economy, useful load and stable flight characteristics in difficult weather conditions.

More than 65 Comanche owners and operators will be camping with their planes in rows 83-90 in the Vintage Aircraft Camping area at AirVenture. In addition to Keefer's "Racing for Gold: 24 Days Around the World" presentation, the ICS tent will also host Kristin Winter speaking on Aviation Insurance at 10 am on Tuesday. She will also do a presentation on Comanche Pre-buy tips on Thursday at 10 am. Kristin is a Twin Comanche owner, aviation attorney, CFI, A&P and IA. Dr. William Tarver, NASA Flight Surgeon, will speak on how to physically qualify to be an astronaut, or at least keep your medical, at 1 pm on Tuesday. Matt Kurke, owner of Comanche Gear will be giving two talks on Comanche maintenance, one in the tent on Monday morning at 10am, and weather permitting, we will have a hands on clinic in the Comanche parking area on Wednesday afternoon at

1pm. Presentations will be offered at 10am and 1pm every day, Monday through Friday on various subjects including Comanche specific, as well as general interest subjects. For the most up to date information, stop by the ICS Tent any time during Oshkosh. To find our tent, turn left as soon as you come in the main gate and we are located about 200' down the first isle in lot #39. If you have a fold up chair you might want to bring it along to be used in the tent.

Additional Information on all planned activities is available from:
 Zach Grant, Mass Arrival Organizer and ICS NC Tribe Chief at 317.201.4293
 Dave Fitzgerald, ICS President 330.936.7979
www.ComancheFlyer.com

== Coming Events ==

10 th 11 th 12 th October 2008	Spring Fly-In	Wagga Wagga / Temora
Date to be advised	Pilot Proficiency Course	Deniliquin
5 th to 16 th July 2009	July Flyaway	Cape York

REPORT ON RECENT FLYINS



**ICS Aust Tribe - Shipwreck Coast
 Warrnambool / Port Fairy Fly-in
 14th.15th &16th March 2008**

Friday 14th March 2008

The weekend began in the company of fellow Comanche flyers as we assembled at Warrnambool Airfield. The noise level was as always when good buddies catch up very loud and jovial. It didn't take long before we were on the bus which meandered its way to Port Fairy and our beds for the next few nights at Seacombe House. Picturesque Port Fairy lies on the Shipwreck coast between Melb. and Adelaide A great escape from the cities, many of the cottages built over a century ago for the fishing and whaling community have been restored and today present themselves as B&B's.

Seacombe House was built in 1847 by Captain John Saunders from the schooner Dusty Miller which ran aground on the rocks off Rabbit Island. Cpt. Saunders decided to stay in the fast growing town of whalers and pastoralists and built the house then called The Stag Inn. After about half a dozen owners and numerous add-ons we were lucky to have a portion left we see now as heritage listed.

A late dinner that evening was of local seasonal produce washed down with well seasoned wine and it wasn't long before our beds beckoned us for the evening..



Saturday 15th March 2008



The morning presented itself as sunny and warm and it felt good to reacquaint ourselves with the art of shopping in the township of Port Fairy. The words quaint and friendly sprung to mind as we took on shop after shop and gallery after gallery all with their charm and friendly warmth. Most of the pilots explored the wharf with many a yacht and fishing vessel. It's a boy thing! A quick lunch and back to the galleries before being picked up for a late afternoon and evening tour. Brian Trener our tour guide drove us to Warrnambool past pastoral land which now supports small dairy and sheep farms but mainly vegetables are grown due to the fertile soil left from the volcano flows. Brian took us first to Tower Hill Reserve nestled in the crater of a dormant volcano. Shannon explained to us

about the Aboriginal Worn Gundidj natural history centre and the thriving nature reserve bought back to life as it was for the indigenous people living there some 30,000 years previous on the crater rim. Many species of plants along with emus, kangaroos and birdlife thrive today in Tower Hill Reserve. After leaving the reserve we stopped and viewed the wild and beautiful seas of the shipwreck coast.

Dinner in Warrnambool was a delightful if not a little rushed due to our "Shipwrecked" sound & light spectacular at Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum. The mood was set when we all boarded small open trains which took us to our seats for the re-enactment of the

disaster of The Loch Ard. In 1878 the ill fated Loch Ard set sail from England with 18 passengers and 36 crew. (Pretty good ratio not repeated in today's journeys) Within one day of reaching Melbourne and well off course, two kilometres off shore in mist and rain the Loch Ard ran onto rocks at Mutton Bird Island and sank within fifteen minutes. Its only survivors were 18 year old Eva Carmichael a passenger who was saved by Tom Pearce crew hand. The ship's bell



remains in the small colony town built at Flagstaff Hill along with a Minton porcelain peacock. The re-enactment was great and should be recommended to friends. Back to Seacombe House for the night.

Sunday 16th March 2008

Sunday morning and another clear sunny day if not a little hot. After breakfast and a short ICS meeting we were taken back to Warrnambool Airfield for quick farewells before once again taking to the skies and homeward bound. 15 Comanches and an Aerostar flew in while others drove for a get together for another delightful weekend.

We would like to thank both Tony and Angela Read for organising our few days.

Irene Lawson



September FLYIN 2008

10 – 11 – 12 October 2008
WAGGA WAGGA
Hosted by the Wagga City Aero Club

Friday PM

Arrive Wagga Wagga Airport

6.00 pm – Happy Hour and BBQ Dinner at Wagga City Aero Club venue

Saturday

Depart by bus for all day at Temora Flying day.

6.30pm – Coach Departure to Old Wagga Winery for dinner

Sunday AM

8.00 am – Breakfast Wagga City Aero Club venue

9.00 am – Members' Meeting

Contact Nigel Wettenhall for more details Ph: 03 5881 7348 ah./ 03 5881 2504 bh.

wetair@bigpond.com

July FLYIN 2008

ICS 2009 CAPE YORK & TASTE OF TORRES STRAIT TOUR



1.0 INTRODUCTION

As a result of the details included in the latest Australian Comanche Flyer we have received a number of expressions of interest which augers well for a great Tour.

After an exploratory trip to the area we have been able to establish an itinerary and program which should prove both interesting and economical. At the moment all activities are established but there may be some minor changes due to the nature of organized activities requiring some of the local community involvement.

The brief itinerary is attached and a detailed itinerary with full details of times, PIC contact details, refueling, etc will be supplied as the Tour approaches.

Some key items are as follows;

- 1.1 Due to accommodation, transport capacity and aircraft parking at some locations we are limited to a total of 12 Aircraft and/or 26 people whichever is the greater.
Due to this we will have to establish a priority list in order of receiving the attached registration forms and deposit.
A standby list will also be established in the event of oversubscription.
- 1.2 Accommodation is either Double or Twin share.
Wherever requested Double rooms will be supplied if possible, however there may be some locations where only Twin single beds are available in a room.
All rooms will be with ensuite toilet/shower.
- 1.3 A deposit of \$300 is required to be submitted at the time of registration to cover some locations requirement for accommodation reservations and to establish your priority on the list.
- 1.4 The Tour total cost represents very good value at \$2555 per person including GST which covers
 - ◆ All 11 nights accommodation,
 - ◆ All meals,
 - ◆ All airport transfers & sea ferry transportation &
 - ◆ A total of 10 Tours/Cruises.If anyone requires Tax Invoices for the Tour these can be provided on request.
- 1.5 All landing and parking fees will be to the cost of the attendees
- 1.6 By law, alcohol is not able to be taken to most of the aboriginal communities and should **NOT be carried any further North from Karumba** to ensure that we do not break these laws.
Heavy fines are levied on offenders and immediate expulsion of the total Tour Group could result if this requirement is contravened.
Alcoholic drinks can be purchased at most Community locations in certain premises which includes most of the resorts where we are staying. In these cases alcoholic drinks can be purchased for consumption on the premises. All drinks are at the cost of attendees and most costs of wine and beer, etc are at reasonable prices and not inflated due to the remote locations.



- 1.7 We have 2 visitors from the ICS USA, John van Bladeren and wife Barb who have a definite interest in joining the tour and would be looking for some seats, and are more than willing to share the aircraft costs.
If any of the attendees are able and willing to help in this please advise on the registration form.
- 1.8 **If there are any concerns about the 2 day trips to the islands due to over water &/or their 720mt bitumen strips please advise & we can arrange alternate trips or seating in other aircraft for those days.**



	DAY	2.0 <u>PROGRAM DETAILS</u>	~ FLT TIME mins		BKFAST	LUNCH	DINNER	TOUR	TRN/FERS
			125 kts	150 kts					
5/6/09	1	Arrive at Rewan Airstrip CARNARVON GORGE during afternoon. Coordination for shuttle bus pickup times. Bus 1 - 1400hrs, Bus 2 - 1600hrs. Settle in at accommodation.			N	N	Y	N	Y
6/6/09	2	1/2 Day Tour - approx 5 hrs, 14kms included. Optional full day tour additional \$25 - approx hrs 22 kms.			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
7/6/09	3	Lunch Pack provided for flight to KARUMBA. Depart Rewan Airstrip 0800hrs - Fly over or refuel at HUGHENDEN. Arrive KARUMBA Airstrip approx 1200 to 1400hrs. Sunset Cruise 1500hrs & barbecue dinner included.	300	245	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
8/6/09	4	Lunch Pack provided next morning for flight to BAMAGA. Depart KARUMBA 0900hrs. Arrive BAMAGA 1300 to 1500hrs. Swim in pool, relax for big Tour next day.	190	160	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
9/6/09	5	0730 hrs 4WD Tour to the Tip of Cape York, Jardine River Crossing and Fruit Bat Falls (Twin Falls+Elliott Falls time permitting). Arrive back at Resort approx 1800hrs.			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
10/6/09	6	Depart BAMAGA 0800hrs. Arrive Horn Is approx 0900hrs. 1000hrs HORN IS Tour incl Lunch. Afternoon Ferry to TI & at 1400hrs TI Tour (Museum, Green Hill Fort, Cemetery, etc) (half group), 1530 hrs remaining group. Wander the town, visit Gab Titui Cultural Centre. Return to HORN IS Resort at 1800 on last Ferry.	15	10	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
11/6/09	7	Mid morning boat to Friday Island Pearl Farm. Fascinating demonstration of Pearl seeding and pearl harvest by the owner. Fresh Japanese buffet Lunch provided at the Pearl Farm. Boat trip back to HORN IS.			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
12/6/09	8	Depart HORN IS 0830hrs. Fly 40NM to over beautiful Torres Strait WARRABER IS to land at COCONUT IS (16NM). Tropical lunch at Resort included. Bus tour of island, beach & village walk around the island and talk by local inhabitant. Swim/snorkel in clear tropical water. Return to HORN IS for the night.	30	25	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
13/6/09	9	Depart HORN IS 0900hrs. Flying over beautiful Torres Strait, MOA IS (22NM) to land at BADU IS (5NM). Tropical lunch included. Bus tour of island, beach & village walk, & talk by local inhabitant. Return by same route to HORN IS for the night. Lunch Pack for next day supplied by Horn Island Resort.	15	10	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
14/6/09	10	Bus to Airport - depart HORN IS 0900hrs. Arrive COOKTOWN by 1200hrs. Bus to accommodation. 1400hrs visit James Cook Historic Museum & wander the town. Evening meal at the Bowls Club included.	160	140	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
15/6/09	11	0745hrs Guurrbi Rainbow Serpent Rock Art Tour (16max) or Rainforest Bush Walk & Story Tour. Arrive back at 1230hrs. Lunch Pack provided by Motel. 1500 hrs Endeavour River Cruise. End of Flyaway Barbecue dinner at Motel.			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
16/6/09	12	Depart Cooktown at your own leisure to your destinations. Free bus departs Motel to airport leaving motel at 0930hrs. If departing at any other time \$40 taxi at your own cost.			Y	N	N	N	Y

3.0 REGISTRATION FORM

PLEASE PRINT COMPLETE DETAILS AND PROMPTLY FORWARD BY EMAIL ianirene@internode.on.net OR FAX 03 5988 4608 OR MAIL TO C/O IAN THOMSON, 36 IAN ROAD, MOUNT MARTHA, VIC. 3934

PIC NAME: HOME PHONE: MOBILE:
FAX: EMAIL:

AIRCRAFT TYPE MODEL: REGISTRATION:

PAX NAMES: 1. 2. 3.

ACCOMMODATION REQD: (Please circle type required) DOUBLE or TWIN SHARE

NOTE: If anyone requires single accommodation this may not be available & would be additional cost.

Double accommodation will be supplied wherever possible but may only be available as Twin Share.

DO YOU WISH TO TAKE THE FULL DAY TOUR AT CARNARVON GORGE AT ADDITIONAL COST OF \$25 PER PERSON? (please circle YES or No) YES or NO :

IF YES HOW MANY PERSONS? ____

ANY CONCERNS ABOUT THE DAY TRIPS ON 12TH & 13TH TO ISLANDS YES or NO

ARE YOU ABLE TO OFFER SEATS FOR THE ICS USA MEMBERS ON AN AIRCRAFT COST SHARE BASIS? (please circle) YES for 1 SEAT: YES for 2 SEAT: or NO

MEALS: Please advise of any special dietary requirements:

DEPOSIT PAYMENT METHOD YOU WILL USE:

- ◆ CHEQUE ENCLOSED
- ◆ TRANSFER TO ICS BANK ACCOUNT: Note on transfer documentation "2009 TOUR deposit" and name of Payee.

BANK DETAILS: NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK

ACCOUNT NAME – INTERNATIONAL COMANCHE SOCIETY

BSB: 082 – 309 ACCT No: 045381169

SIGNED PIC:

DATE:

ICS OFFICE USE

DATE REGISTRATION RECEIVED:

DATE \$300 DEPOSIT RECEIVED:

4.0 REGISTERED CREW DETAILS

SEQ No	NAMES	AIR CRAFT TYPE	REGN	No PAX	PHONE	MOBILE	EMAIL	ADDRESS
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								
14								
15								
16								

IAN TO COMPLETE AND EXPAND WHEN PARTICPANTS REGISTERED

Comanche 260 Around the World



As many of you will know the Australian tribe is (for the second time in two years) playing host to a PA24-260C on an around the world flight. Last year, it was Wojciech Mirski in HB-OTF, this year it is HB-PON's turn to fly eastbound around the world.

In the planning for nearly 6 years, the PIC is the Swiss owner of the aircraft Rolf FRIEDEN and the co-pilot is long time ICS member Manfred MELLOH of Australia. Many of you will remember Rolf from our convention on Hamilton Island where he talked about his trip to South Africa in HB-PON.

HB-PON has been especially prepared for this trip. A 100USG cabin tank adds to the 260C's 120USG fuel in main, giving nearly 20 hours range when cruising at 11,000ft, a good thing as the final stage across the South Pacific from Easter Island to Santiago will take at least 14 hours. Appropriate survival gear and a satellite phone have been added for good measure.

For family reasons, they will make the trip in 3 stages. The first will be to Australia and will take about 2 months. The second will be via the South Pacific (Mangareva, Easter Island, Santiago) to Chile and then north along the west coast of South America. Finally, across the Atlantic and back to Geneva.

After a couple of days initial delay due to weather HB-PON and crew departed Geneva, Switzerland at 11:00LT on Friday June 20 on their first leg to Brindisi, Italy. From there they tracked to Dubrownik (Kroatia), Luxor (Egypt), Dubai (Emirates), Muscat (Oman), Malé (Maledives), Colombo (Shri Lanka), Phuket (Thailand), Singapore, Christmas Island (Au), Bali (Indonesia) and Broome (Western Australia), arriving there at 4:30pm Wednesday July 9.

In Rolf's own words:

" Our trip first stage from Switzerland around the World went very well so far. Comanche HB-PON performed extremely well with sometimes 20% overweight on take off and in the air.

The longest leg so far was from Muscat (Oman) all over water to Malé (Maledives) and it took us 11.5 hours to do this with plenty fuel left at our arrival at night.

The flight the day before yesterday from Bali to Broome went very smooth and we arrived late

afternoon here on the west coast on terra firma of Australia.

The overall experience on this trip will remain unforgettable. Different countries, people, cultures etc.

Unfortunately we had a total failure of our main artificial horizon on the way from Singapore to Christmas Island, and we are somehow limited in our IFR activities at this time. Due to the uncertain weather conditions (IMC conditions) in the south western part of Australia at this time, we have now changed our routing and will continue in good and clear weather to Alice Springs tomorrow morning and have a loaned replacement artificial horizon fitted there.

From Alice Springs we will then continue on to Ayers Rock, Coober Pedy, Adelaide, Melbourne, Deniliquin Sydney and then finally on to Brisbane.

At Brisbane, I will leave HB-PON on the 24th of this month for 100 hour maintenance, and I will return by airline back to Switzerland for work and some time with Anne.

Starting early September we will then continue across the south Pacific to Chile and from there up to the USA, where again we will leave HB-PON for a few month for maintenance and rest over the winter season.

Early spring 2009, we will then resume with our third phase of our round the world experience and fly HB-PON back across the north Atlantic (Azores) back to Europe and finally home to Geneva and La Cote airfield.”

The Australian Tribe is planning a welcome dinner for Rolf and Manfred at Deniliquin on Saturday July 19 and all are welcome.

MEMBERS PANEL

HB-PON

Comanche 260 of Rolf Frieden in which Rolf and our own Manfred Melloh are flying around the world



Care and Maintenance of Your Comanche Braking System

by

Roy Sneesby – Technical Director

The braking systems of an aircraft are often sadly in neglect. A syndrome of out of sight out of mind, or due to a lack of ability or knowledge on the part of the operator. Any small defect is a message that a major fault or catastrophe is on the way. Do not wait for your engineer to notify you or until the next service to rectify any faults as the fault may manifest itself at some inopportune time.

Keep your system clean and the reservoir topped up to the prescribed level. Do not overfill, as there is a particular reason for this. Due to the small capacity of the system one emergency stop generates considerable heat, a lot of which is absorbed by the brake fluid, which in turn expands and takes up the allotted space left in the reservoir. Therefore, too full a system will cause an overflow situation; conversely if the system is allowed to operate with too little fluid, contraction of the fluid will allow air to enter the braking system. In normal operations, you will have to keep topping up the fluid level due to wear of the brake linings and the resultant changing position of the brake calliper pistons. Wear on the brake disks has also to be taken into consideration.

Since inception the Comanche has been fitted with three different types of braking systems. First models (i.e. 180 and 250) used a single hand brake lever protruding from beneath the instrument panel, which was connected by a cable to a single master cylinder beneath the floor, which operated both brakes in unison. There was no differential braking to assist directional control. The park brake lock was an independent unit mounted beneath the floor and operated by a single Bowden cable.

This system was lacking in several areas i.e.:

1. Ease of inspection for leaks in the systems;
2. If one brake cylinder seal failed, there were no brakes at all; and
3. If one wheel brake was more efficient than the other, directional control was affected.

Following this, toe brakes were installed to the pilot's rudder pedals which operated the wheel brakes independently. These master cylinders also incorporated an integral hand brake lock, which also was controlled by a Bowden cable. Earlier production series incorporated the central handbrake level, which was removed in the later series.

This newer system allowed for better control due to the differential operation. Unfortunately, due to more sophistication and smaller moving parts it was prone to leaks if not serviced or maintained correctly. I have witnessed many that have suffered abuse and incorrect assembly in their previous lives.

A common fault is wear on the brake locking pin and plate. This safety device is intended to preclude the inadvertent application of the brake lock while the brakes are off. If this system is worn or maladjusted and the brake lock is inadvertently applied, the next time you apply the toe pedals you have a beautiful hard pedal feel but no braking effect whatsoever. In fact the aircraft seems to accelerate alarmingly! The manufacturer's intention was, with the park brakes off, that the levers engaged on a square shouldered pin, which precluded the lever from moving. To operate the brake lock, pedal pressure is applied which in turn causes the park brake lever and shaft to compress a spring and move sideways, thus disengaging the lock pin and allowing the lever to turn when the cable is pulled. This operation requires two separate and distinct movements on the part of the operator. If this is not accomplished, accelerated wear on the locking system occurs. If the system is operating correctly, the

brake lock cable should not be moved to the locked position until brake pressure is applied by the foot pedals.

Later series of the Comanche could be purchased or fitted with co-pilot toe brakes in series with the corresponding system used on the pilot's pedals, except that the co-pilot's brake cylinders did not incorporate the brake lock lever. Because the system was in series the park brake lever on the pilot's cylinders attended to this act.

The incorporation of co-pilot's brakes introduced some further complication as to increased maintenance and to bleeding the air from the system after servicing. The service manual does not cover this procedure in any great detail. More often than not, after bleeding the system the pilot has good brakes and the co-pilot little or none. Other times you can get mediocre brakes on both sides, but a gradual degradation in performance on either side after a short period of time. This series of events is due to air being introduced to the system via a leak, failure to completely eradicate air during the bleeding process, or incorrect assembly of the components. If after servicing and bleeding, and you are confident all air is evacuated, you find that all pedals have a good hard feel except one, check that the main piston has not been inverted on assembly and that the nylon seal is in place.

Spongy brake feel can also be caused from other regions of the system after servicing, such as defective brake disk surfaces, flexing brake callipers and hoses, bent brake plates, and carelessly fitted brake linings. The brake system has a very small amount of fluid displacement and any of these faults can affect the pedal feel. I have seen cases where new linings were fitted and the rivets were set so hard that the linings were distorted between the rivet spacing causing the lining to buckle and not sit flush with the backing plate. As the brakes were applied, the system first had to compress the lining to the backing plate before coming up against any resistance, thus giving a soft pedal feel.

It should be obvious that there is more to the braking system than just pushing the pedals and coming to a stop.

TECHNICAL ARTICLE 2

Piper Comanche Single Engine Models Summary of Yearly Model Changes

Year	Serial Numbers	Summary of Changes
1958	PA-24 Serial Numbers 24-1 to 24-102 inclusive.	- Four-place low wing airplane with 180 HP engine (as originally designed).
	PA-24 and PA24 "250" Serial Number 24-103 to 24-332 inclusive.	- Model PA24"250" approved. - Battery located behind baggage compartment.
1959	PA24 and PA24"250" Serial Numbers 24-333 to 24-1476 inclusive.	- New Interior - New Exterior paint scheme - 250 Cowl used on 180
	PA24 and PA24"250" Serial Numbers 24-1330 and up.	- Ventilation Change - Overhead ventilation in cabin and fresh air scoops added on bottom of cowl to firewall.
1960	PA24 and PA24"250" Serial Numbers 24-1447 to 24-2174, 24-2176 to 24-2298 inclusive.	- Paper Air Filter – new scoop and new duct - "180" only – Engine moved forward and canted 3 degrees to right and 2 degree 45' down (Face of prop attachment flange and

		thrust line in same position as “250”). - New paint scheme and Interior
	Serial Numbers 24-2202 and up.	- Firewall Seal Project: New firewall seals, exhaust vent, removal double windows, deletion of vertical heat ducts.
1961	PA24 and PA24”250” Serial Numbers 24-2175, 24-2299 to 24-2843 inclusive except 24-2563.	- Auxiliary tanks (“250” only) - Center mounted radios - Toe brakes and hand brake - Altimatic autopilot - New battery installation - New radio supply shelf - New heating and ventilating system - New interior and paint scheme - 100lb Gross Weight Increase (“250” only)
1962	PA24 and PA24”250” Serial Numbers 24-2563 and 24-2844 to 24-3284 inclusive.	- New slotted electric flaps (“250” only) - New cabin door (“250” only) - New instrument panel (“250” only – DME and push to test for fuel quantity) - Fuel injected “250” - Reduced aileron loads via bell crank change (“250” only) - New interior and paint scheme - Combined gear indicator lights and gear solenoid on one circuit breaker

FUN BIT

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We will be on time, maybe even early.

I fixed it right the first time, it must have failed for other reasons.

I'm a member of the mile high club.

I'm 22, got 6,000 hours, a four year degree, and 3,000 hours in a Lear.

We shipped the part yesterday.

We in aviation are overpaid, underworked and well respected.

Sure I can fly it — it has wings, doesn't it?

We'll be home by lunchtime.

Your plane will be ready by 2 o'clock.

Of course I know where we are.

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