

AOPA UK

June/July 2026

The 2026 AOPA Flight Directory - your go-to guide

Your essential and comprehensive listing of all AOPA Corporate Members, including flight schools, official bodies, trade services and more *P.18*

40

metres. The height of the National Spitfire Project statue

P.31

+ PAN PAN PAN

After an electrical fault, low-hours pilot Toby Arnold had to declare an emergency – this is his story *P.13*

+ CAA PRIORITIES

Martin Robinson delves into the CAA's strategic priorities for 2026/27. Is it good for GA? *P.06*

+ TRIP TO OZ

Terry Davis flew his Robin to Australia in a crazy adventure *P.36*





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TIME TO GO FLYING WHILST ALSO GROWING THE GA COMMUNITY

WE NEED MORE pilots and people captivated by General Aviation. And this issue's Flight Directory is the perfect way to encourage people to head to their local airfield, even if it's just for a cup of tea and a bacon sandwich.

Once someone is at the airfield it's then easier to convince them to sign up for a trial flight or that first lesson. GA should be for everyone, but it's up to us to give people a little nudge to go. It can be difficult finding some airfields by road, so help them out. There are hundreds of members in the flight directory, so pick an airfield and plan your next trip.

Talking of going: Terry Davis' adventure of flying his Robin to Australia after only having his licence for seven months is a story you have to read to believe. From armed guards protecting his aircraft in Egypt to being followed by an Iranian C-130 Hercules, it's a must-read on page 36.

Elsewhere in this issue I sit down with Steve Dean, the project manager of the National Spitfire Project.

The NSP aims to build a 40-metre tall monument honouring all those who worked on the Spitfire. The project is set out to commemorate, celebrate and inspire. The NSP wants to honour

“The NSP wants to honour the past whilst also encouraging future generations to get involved in all aspects of aviation”

the past whilst also encouraging future generations to get involved in all aspects of aviation. It's a wonderful-looking monument and building is pencilled in to begin in November of this year. Flick to page 31 to read more.

Martin Robinson assesses the CAA's strategic priorities for 2026-27. His view is that we need to ensure that General Aviation is being heard over the noise of other parts of

the industry.

AOPA, as always, is there to fight your corner and keep the skies as free from obstruction as possible. That's why we're always grateful for your continued support of AOPA. ■



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IS THE CAA HELPING US?

Martin Robinson delves into the CAA's strategic priorities for 2026/27

THE GOVERNMENT'S latest Strategic Priorities for CAA for 2026/27 set out an ambitious vision for UK aviation centred on growth, innovation, resilience, decarbonisation, and consumer protection. These are aims the aviation community can support. Yet, as many within GA recognise, the challenge lies not in the ambition, but in how GA is understood, represented in Government, and prioritised within that agenda.

For too long, GA has occupied an awkward position in aviation policy. Despite being fundamental to the aviation ecosystem, GA is treated as peripheral, viewed as recreational, niche, or secondary to what policymakers often describe as "real aviation". This perception continues to shape decisions on airspace, regulation, funding, and infrastructure without fully recognising the consequences for the sector.

AOPA has consistently argued that GA should be recognised as a strategic national asset and that this should be reflected in the Secretary of State's priorities for the CAA. That means ensuring that growth and innovation policies protect GA access to airspace and infrastructure; that airspace modernisation delivers inclusive solutions rather than marginalising smaller operators; that decarbonisation policy enables GA-led innovation through proportionate regulation; that economic regulation avoids disproportionate costs on smaller operators and flying schools; and that consumer and skills policy acknowledges GA's vital role in training and public service provision.

The reality is that GA already underpins much of UK aviation. It is where most pilots begin their careers and where the training pipeline for commercial aviation starts. It is also where innovation is often trialled first, whether in electric propulsion, advanced avionics, digital navigation systems, or surveillance technologies. GA supports business aviation, emergency services, aerial surveying, engineering skills, and regional connectivity. It is the foundation on which the wider industry depends.

Engagement with the Department

for Transport and the CAA remains constructive, but it is rarely straightforward. The challenge is not hostility so much as a persistent institutional mindset that prioritises airline operations, major airports, and commercial air transport. As a result, GA often has to work harder simply to ensure its concerns are recognised and understood.

A more agile and proportionate regulatory approach would not weaken safety. On the contrary, regulation that reflects operational reality and technological development is more likely to enhance safety by encouraging compliance and supporting innovation. Overly complex regulation risks creating unnecessary barriers, particularly for smaller organisations with limited resources.

Airspace modernisation presents another major challenge. Few would dispute that UK airspace requires redesign: the current system is increasingly congested, fragmented, and inefficient. Modernisation offers opportunities to improve efficiency, reduce emissions, and enhance safety. Yet for many in GA, the concern is that it is too often experienced as controlled airspace expansion without equivalent access solutions.

The gradual increase in controlled and special-use airspace, together with increasingly complex operating environments, risks progressively marginalising GA operations. Temporary restrictions frequently appear to become semi-permanent, while the cumulative effect of multiple individual airspace changes can significantly reduce operational flexibility.

The principle underpinning airspace modernisation must therefore be inclusion rather than displacement. GA should not simply be expected to "fit around" commercial priorities. Equitable access to airspace is essential if the sector is to continue contributing to training, innovation, connectivity, and economic growth.

The CAPI616 airspace change process was intended to improve transparency and stakeholder engagement, but

concerns remain about how effectively GA interests are protected. Discussions surrounding the expansion of UKADS and questions of governance, funding, and oversight have reinforced anxieties about whether sufficient balance exists between commercial interests and wider aviation users.

Economic regulation also remains an area of growing concern. The increasing application of "user pays" principles may appear logical from a commercial perspective, but aviation is not a uniform environment. The financial realities of a regional flying club, a small maintenance organisation, or a training school are fundamentally different from those of a major airline or airport operator.

Poorly targeted cost recovery mechanisms risk placing disproportionate burdens on the organisations that sustain the aviation pipeline. Flying training organisations, engineering providers, and smaller aerodromes already operate within tight margins. Additional regulatory or infrastructure costs can affect pilot training capacity, regional connectivity, and the long-term sustainability of the sector.

Electronic Conspicuity (EC) and surveillance policy illustrate another area where uncertainty continues to create operational and financial concern. While EC technologies offer clear safety benefits, uncertainty over mandate timelines, infrastructure funding, and long-term policy direction creates significant planning challenges.

Questions remain about how any future surveillance environment will be implemented, funded, and integrated across different classes of airspace and aircraft types. Concerns have also been raised that policy ambitions may be advancing faster than practical implementation capability, particularly in relation to ground infrastructure and interoperability.

The issue is not opposition to technology. GA has often been innovative in adopting new systems and operational concepts. The concern is that policy must remain realistic, proportionate, and properly resourced if it is to succeed.

Military airspace structures and future



“This perception continues to shape decisions on airspace, regulation, funding, and infrastructure without fully recognising the consequences for the sector”

Airspace Modernisation Strategy proposals also continue to attract attention. Uncertainty surrounding the role and future status of Military Aerodrome Traffic Zones (MATZ), together with possible replacement structures involving TMZs, RMZs, or additional Class D airspace, raises concerns about complexity and access restrictions.

Safety discussions within the sector increasingly focus on emerging operational risks below 500 feet, where the interaction between traditional aviation activity, drones, and other low-level operations is becoming more complex. While safety improvements remain paramount, preserving operational flexibility is also important.

Alongside these operational developments, aviation is also facing a growing cybersecurity agenda. The European Union Aviation Safety Agency’s proposed Part-IS framework is a significant development, recognising information security and cybersecurity as integral elements of aviation safety and operational resilience.

The proposal reflects the reality that aviation is becoming increasingly dependent on interconnected digital systems, including navigation infrastructure, surveillance technologies, maintenance systems, operational software, and data networks. Cybersecurity is no longer simply an IT issue; it is also a safety and resilience issue.

Part-IS seeks to require aviation organisations to identify cyber risks, implement proportionate protective measures, detect and respond to incidents, and maintain operational resilience. It aligns aviation regulation with broader European cybersecurity policy.

However, the implications for GA organisations could become more significant over time. Licensed aerodromes, maintenance organisations, and training providers may increasingly be required to introduce basic cybersecurity controls covering systems such as booking platforms, maintenance records, operational software, communications equipment, and fuel management systems.

The longer-term concern is the risk that obligations expand incrementally as GA becomes more integrated into digitally connected aviation infrastructure. Increasing dependence on GNSS

procedures, electronic conspicuity systems, digital maintenance systems, and data exchange with wider Air Traffic Management networks may gradually pull GA further into broader regulatory frameworks.

The central issue, once again, is proportionality. Regulatory requirements must remain scaled appropriately to operational complexity and genuine risk.

The UK is now developing its own aviation cybersecurity framework, broadly aligned with the direction of EASA Part-IS, although through a different regulatory model. The UK CAA has already introduced cyber oversight activity through guidance material and assurance processes, and further development is expected.

While the UK is not obliged to adopt EASA Part-IS directly following Brexit, similar principles are likely to emerge domestically. This creates both the possibility of regulatory divergence and concerns about potential “gold-plating” of requirements in the UK environment.

Against this backdrop of policy, regulation, and modernisation, it is easy to overlook something equally important: aviation culture itself.

A recent visit to the RAF Museum Cosford provided a reminder of aviation’s enduring ability to inspire future generations. The museum’s collection tells the story of British aviation development and the sacrifices made by generations of men and women in defence of the country. Yet beyond the history itself, what stood out most was the reaction of families and children.

Many of the visitors were too young to fully understand the historical context, but they were clearly captivated by the aircraft themselves – particularly the early jets and iconic military designs. The excitement, curiosity, and fascination were unmistakable.

Progress is possible, but it is rarely quick. The reality is that GA must often work harder than most to be heard within systems that do not prioritise it.

That is the challenge, but also an opportunity to define the argument, and support is vital to the effort. ■



M Robinson

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AOPA NEWS

RESURGENCE

SONEX BACK IN BUSINESS, STARTING SOON

ON Capital says kit production has resumed, with kits expected to ship this month

SONEX AVIATION announced today that ON Capital Inc. has acquired the assets of Sonex LLC, including the Sonex Aerospace and AeroConversions product lines, and has reopened the Oshkosh, Wisconsin-based kit aircraft manufacturer. According to the company, crews are back at work and kit production has resumed about three weeks after uncertainty over the company's future. The acquisition keeps the Sonex line in production for builders in the experimental and light sport aircraft market.

“Deposit holders of the former company will get their orders and all vendors will be paid”

The new owner of Sonex Aviation says all deposit holders of the former company will get their orders and all vendors will be paid as the company resumes operations at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh this week. Stephen Osborne

said he expects almost all employees laid off when the company ceased operations in late March will return and Sonex is expanding by adding an in-house machine shop. Osborne, whose main business is as a general contractor on projects throughout the U.S., said his lifelong passion for aviation drove him to inquire about acquiring Sonex, and he and Schaible were able to get the negotiations and paperwork done in three weeks.

He and former owner Mark Schaible (who is being retained as Lead Designer) said the company is now fully capitalized and once



New owner Stephen Osborne is at the helm of Sonex

the pressing obligations are dealt with, the business will enter a new phase of production predictability. “Back orders are a thing of the past,” Osborne said. The company intends to fill the warehouse with part and kits so turnaround time on orders is minimal. The in-house machining capability will allow the company to quickly make parts that are not in stock when orders come in.

A major focus will be on the Highwing model, introduced in 2025. Some tail kits have been shipped and production will be geared up to fulfil more than 80 orders for the Highwing. There are new designs on the drafting table, and Sonex hopes to return to a pace of delivering 100 or more kits each year. Most of the work will remain in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. ■

THE
BIG
STORY



Almost all Sonex employees laid off previously are expected to return

GARMIN FIRST SMARTWATCH WITH INREACH TECHNOLOGY

GARMIN has launched its D2 Mach 2 Pro, the ultimate aviator smartwatch equipped with inReach technology for two-way satellite and cellular connectivity between flights, giving aviators access to text messaging, voice calling, SOS capabilities and more without mobile connection. The Mach 2 Pro includes a suite of aviation tools including advanced

aviation maps, pilot health monitoring features, aviation weather reports, PlaneSync compatibility and more. The Mach 2 Pro includes a Carbon Gray carbon titanium bezel, Chestnut Leather and Silicone watch bands, built-in speaker and microphone and superior battery life. "The D2 Mach 2 Pro helps aviators stay connected, even without their smartphone. Satellite and



The new Mach 2 Pro

LTE connectivity allows aviators to keep in touch with family or get help if needed, adding extra peace of mind right on their wrist," said a Garmin spokesperson. ■



CAE AND EASYJET EXTENDED TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

CAE has announced a five-year extension of the Generation easyJet multi-crew pilot license (MPL) programme, reinforcing its longstanding partnership with easyJet and CAE's role as the airline's exclusive MPL training partner. The extension shows the strength of CAE's proven MPL training model and its role as a long-term, trusted partner to airlines. Under

the extended agreement, selected cadets will begin MPL training with CAE in late 2026.

As easyJet's exclusive MPL partner, CAE will continue to support the airline's pilot-training requirements through a structured, competency-based training pathway aligned with easyJet's operational standards. To date, CAE has trained and delivered more than

1,500 pilots to the airline through MPL, integrated airline transport pilot license (ATPL), and type-rating programmes.

"The extension reflects the strength and longevity of our partnership with easyJet, as well as the continued confidence in CAE's MPL training model," said James Cahill, vice president for commercial aviation – EMEA, CAE. ■

Spirit Airlines to cease

Spirit Airlines is preparing to cease operations after talks over a proposed \$500 million U.S. government rescue package failed to come together, according to a new Wall Street Journal report.

RIP Vern Raburn

Vern Raburn, founder of Eclipse Aviation and an early executive at Microsoft, died on Saturday 25th April, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Raburn brought the VLJ to the GA market.

Starlink alters GA pricing

After SpaceX raised prices for its aviation Starlink low-earth-orbit satcom service earlier this year, the company revised those prices for General Aviation Starlink users.

AOPA TO RUN THE GASCO AIRSPACE INFRINGEMENT AWARENESS COURSES

WHEN THE GASCo Board of Directors decided to cease trading, it left GA without a number of key services. One of the most urgent needs was to ensure the continuation of the Airspace Infringement Awareness Course (AIAC). The GASCo Board members agreed that the AIAC course should be transferred to AOPA for administration, using the

same personnel to avoid disruption.

AOPA agreed to take on the task, subject to approval from the CAA. Approval was given in early April 2026 and AOPA has been working with the ex-GASCo team to put everything in place to administer the course.

AOPA has no role whatsoever in determining who is required to attend

the AIAC. That decision rests solely with the CAA following a full and independent investigation. AOPA's long-standing role in supporting members on alleged infringements remains unchanged and occurs before any decision is made.

The AIAC sits within the CAA's just culture framework, something AOPA strongly supports

as it promotes learning rather than punishment and ultimately improves safety.

When GASCo could no longer continue administration, there was a real risk that the scheme would either cease or be transferred to a commercial provider. AOPA stepped in solely to ensure continuity, stability, and zero disruption to the established CAA process. ■



FOREFLIGHT LAUNCHES AIRCRAFT INSURANCE MARKETPLACE

JEPPESEN FOREFLIGHT announced the launch of ForeFlight Insurance Agency, LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary which will serve as an aviation insurance broker for General Aviation pilots via a new web-based platform: the Aviation Insurance Marketplace.

Built with the same software expertise behind the widely-used ForeFlight Mobile EFB, the Marketplace is designed to modernise the process of shopping for and buying aviation insurance by making it faster, easier, and more transparent, bringing

a digitally-optimised approach to an industry that has traditionally relied on phone calls, manual paperwork, and extended wait times for quotes.

As part of a partnership between Jeppesen ForeFlight and Old Republic Aerospace, aircraft renters and

Certified Flight Instructors (CFIs) will be able to purchase non-owned insurance backed by Old Republic via the Aviation Insurance Marketplace at launch, with an expansion into aircraft owner's insurance from a large variety of insurers planned for summer 2026. ■



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Welcome to the COMMUNITY section of the magazine. Bringing you help, advice, and other insights from the world of AOPA, in an honest and up front way to help you stay flying. Something to say? Please contact us at editor@aopa.co.uk

WORDS & IMAGES Toby Arnold

LOW-HOURS PILOT'S FIRST PAN

AOPA member and low-hours pilot **Toby Arnold** had an inflight electrical failure and made a PAN call and diversion to Sywell to land safely – this is his story

ON THE DAY I carried out a thorough pre-flight inspection. There were no reported issues and nothing unusual was found during the inspection. It was a perfect VFR day and nothing about the flight suggested anything untoward was about to happen.

We were cruising past Northamptonshire when during my regular FREDA checks, I noticed the low-voltage light had illuminated and the ammeter was indicating a discharge. This suggested that the alternator had failed and was no longer providing electrical power. I tried to cycle the alternator switch but when that had no effect, I shed all non-essential electrical equipment, leaving the aircraft running solely on battery power.

With limited battery endurance remaining and the possibility of losing the radios and flaps, we decided the safest course of action was to divert to Sywell and land as soon as possible. I called Sywell and told them of our intention.

I joined overhead at 2,000 ft. Whilst downwind I declared “PAN PAN PAN”, advising that I had an alternator failure and was downwind to land on the hard runway (03L) due to its greater length. I was able to land without difficulty, with the

fire crew following us down as a precaution.

After landing, we parked up and, under the Strasser Scheme, Sywell waived landing and parking fees. Engineering inspected the aircraft and found that the alternator belt had snapped.

As per the Safety Sense leaflet on Occurrence Reporting, I submitted a Mandatory Occurrence Report as PIC. The process was straightforward, requiring basic flight information and a short narrative of the event.

The incident reinforced the importance of closely

“I shed all non-essential electrical equipment, leaving the aircraft running solely on battery power.”

monitoring aircraft systems whilst maintaining visual navigation. It also highlighted the importance of declaring a PAN when priority handling is required. Declaring early allows others to assist and reduces workload during an already stressful situation. As a relatively low-hour pilot, it's reassuring that my training kicked in: recognise the problem, fly the aircraft, navigate, communicate and land safely. I'm also grateful to the team at Sywell, and to my passenger, for their support during what was a new experience for me as a pilot. ■



WORDS Jeff Simon **IMAGES** Courtesy of Sensenich Propeller Service Inc

LEAKING PROPELLERS - RESEAL, REPAIR, OR OVERHALL

At some point in the life of a constant-speed prop, it happens: tiny dots appear on the windshield. Your propeller is leaking oil. What you do – and when you do it – requires informed decision-making to protect your safety and your wallet

MOST GA constant-speed propellers are hydraulically driven. The propeller governor is a variable-speed, high pressure oil pump. The propeller control allows the pilot to adjust the governor output flow rate (and resulting propeller pitch) to maintain a constant engine speed (the governor has centrifugal flyweights that vary the oil output pressure to make this possible).

The oil is then fed through a transfer collar into the hollow forward section of the crankshaft and into the propeller dome. There, it actuates a piston that adjusts the pitch of the propeller

blades through linkages to the blades. Understanding how your propeller works can help you determine whether a leak is due to normal wear or signals an impending failure.

You cannot properly inspect a propeller with the hub hidden from view, so your first step when investigating a propeller leak should be to remove the spinner (be sure to mark the spinner position so that it can be installed in the same indexed position from which it was removed). With the spinner removed, carefully inspect the propeller hub for cracks. The hub is a highly stressed component, and any cracks should result in the immediate grounding

“Understanding how your propeller works can help you determine whether a leak is due to normal wear or signals an impending failure”

of the aircraft. Be sure to consult a mechanic to help you investigate any leaks and determine appropriate action.

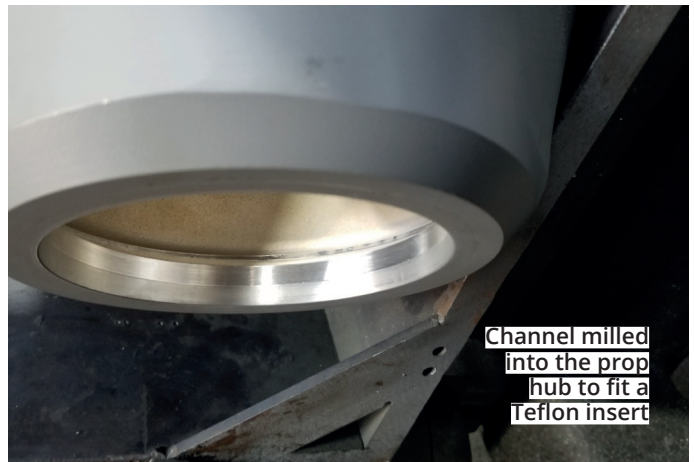
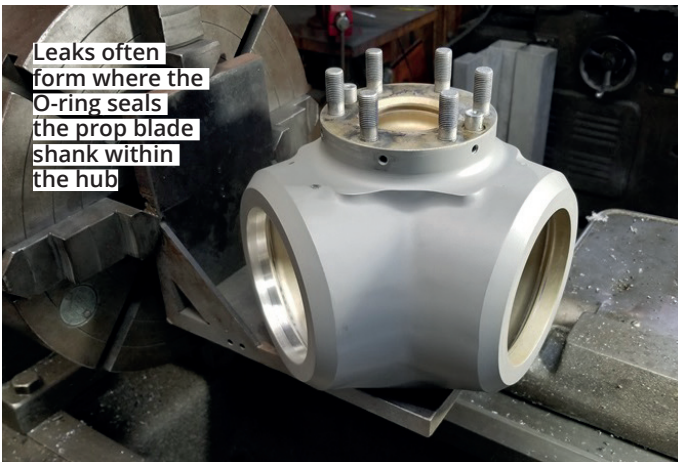
The engine oil flowing from the engine to the propeller should never leak out of the propeller. If it does, it means that the internal piston or the O-ring sealing the propeller to the crankshaft is leaking. If engine oil leaks into the propeller hub cavity, it can cause a hydraulic lock and prevent the piston from moving. This serious issue can prevent your propeller from working properly.

Some of the most critical parts of a constant-speed propeller lie outside of the piston, but within the hub. This is where the propeller blades are securely retained while still allowed to rotate to change pitch. Depending on the make and model of the propeller, this portion of the assembly is lubricated by grease or oil. McCauley propellers use red dye in the propeller hub, so consult a mechanic right away if you see red oil coming from your propeller. There are seals (or sealant) at the seams where the hub is assembled, but the most common leaks occur at the blade root.

When you think about the forces at work at the blade shank, it's a wonder that every propeller isn't leaking. As the propeller spins, enormous forces are trying to pull the



A Teflon insert installed into the hub to form a lasting seal with the O-ring



blades outward. The blades are held in place by retention systems of ball bearings or rollers that work against very high centrifugal, bending, and twisting loads. In the midst of this lies the lowly O-ring around the propeller blade shank, in perpetual battle to prevent grease or oil from departing the hub as the propeller spins and the blades rotate to change pitch.

Over time, these O-rings can lose their flexibility, get stuck, or wear away at the aluminum hub. This is the cause of most propeller leaks. Once it starts, it's unlikely to get better. However, McCauley offers a procedure that you can try in an attempt to remedy an O-ring leak (you can try it with other propeller makes as well): Essentially, the propeller is thoroughly cleaned, then, with the engine running, the propeller pitch is cycled at least five times from low to high pitch. Once the engine is shut down and the propeller is inspected, cleaning up any oil that may have leaked during the engine test, the process is repeated. If the rate of leak decreases during the second test, it's not urgent to get looked at that instant.

If the leak increases, the propeller must be repaired immediately.

According to Mark Hahn, general manager of Sensenich Propeller, as propellers age and run through multiple

“The modification involves milling a channel into the hub into which Teflon material is inserted, allowing the O-ring to move and seal against the Teflon”



overhaul cycles, they can be more likely to leak at this joint. This is because the blade shank is also where moisture can seep in and cause corrosion in the hub, requiring propeller shops to mill the surface to remove pitting within the manufacturer's tolerances, keeping the hub in service whenever possible. One of the issues that Hahn noted was that, while O-rings are markedly softer than the aluminum hub within which they rotate, they can still wear away at the aluminum itself – leading to leaks and additional material removal at overhaul. However, there is a modification that can help reduce leaks while preventing future hub wear in this specific area.

The modification involves milling a channel into the hub into which Teflon material is inserted, allowing the O-ring to move and seal against the Teflon. This forms a better seal and, if the Teflon wears over time, it can be easily replaced the next time that the propeller is opened for maintenance. After speaking with Hahn, I recommend this modification for anyone having their McCauley propeller repaired or overhauled.

When faced with a blade root leak, the owner is inevitably faced with the decision of whether to reseal, repair, or overhaul. Resealing

typically only involves propeller disassembly, limited inspection, O-ring replacement, and reassembly. Repair includes the stripping, inspection, blade cleanup, re-profiling if needed, and re-painting of the blades. Repair can also include modifications such as adding Teflon inserts.

Finally, there is the option of a complete overhaul. Overhauls, by definition, must include the inspection of all propeller components to specific service tolerances, as well as mandatory replacement of all parts as required by the manufacturer's guidelines. The advantage of an overhaul is that it resets the time between overhauls (TBO) for the propeller. The disadvantage of an overhaul is the increased cost for components that may be otherwise in serviceable condition, as well as the removal of additional blade material as part of a mandatory blade cleanup and re-profiling.

The best defence against a leaking propeller is to fly often. Propellers that sit idle for extended periods of time are much more likely to experience leaks at the blade root.

Above all else, keep a keen eye out for leaks and identify their source before flying. Seek out the guidance of your local A&P mechanic when in doubt. ■

THIS ISSUE'S **HERO** IS ONE OF GA'S MOST LOVED HIGH- WINGS; THE **CESSNA 182 SKYLANE**

THE CESSNA 182 Skylane is one of the most popular light aircraft in the world, known for its reliability, versatility, and ease of use. Whether you're a seasoned pilot or a first time buyer, owning a Cessna 182 can offer an exciting and rewarding experience with plenty of support available.

This issue's *Your Hero* covers everything you need to know about owning a Cessna 182 Skylane, including its cost, maintenance, specifications, range, and different uses, just in case you're in the market

for one.

The Cessna 182 Skylane was first introduced in 1956 and has remained in production in various forms ever since. More than 23,000 units have been built during its 70 years of production.

The popular 182 is a four-seat, single-engine light aircraft, designed for both private and commercial use. Over the years, the Skylane has undergone various upgrades, particularly in avionics and engine performance, making it a reliable aircraft for flight schools, personal use, and even light commercial purposes. ■

Send Your Hero to editor@aopa.co.uk. It doesn't have to be your own aircraft... own it or admire it from afar, either way we want to know what's Your Hero and why. Just send us around 100 words, your top 6 'fast facts' and we'll do the rest to show off your favourite aircraft.

MAIN IMAGE: Adobe Stock



PERFORMANCE

Known as a rugged machine, the 182 offers a massive upgrade over a 172 in climb rate, useful load, and speed



COST

Moderately priced for GA, it holds its value well. Fuel burn is typically 10–13 gallons per hour (gph)



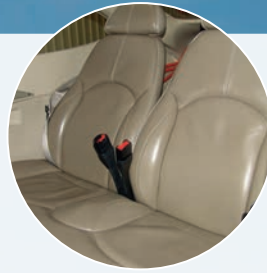
HANDLING

It is stable in flight but feels heavier to control, especially in pitch, requiring more focused handling in turbulence



MAINTENANCE

Maintenance is straightforward due to its popularity, with parts readily available



VERSATILITY

Ideal for families and cross-country trips, it is equally capable as a stable, comfortable personal transport



AVIONICS

Many 182s have had an upgrade in avionics over the years, so there's a model suitable for many budgets

POOLEYS

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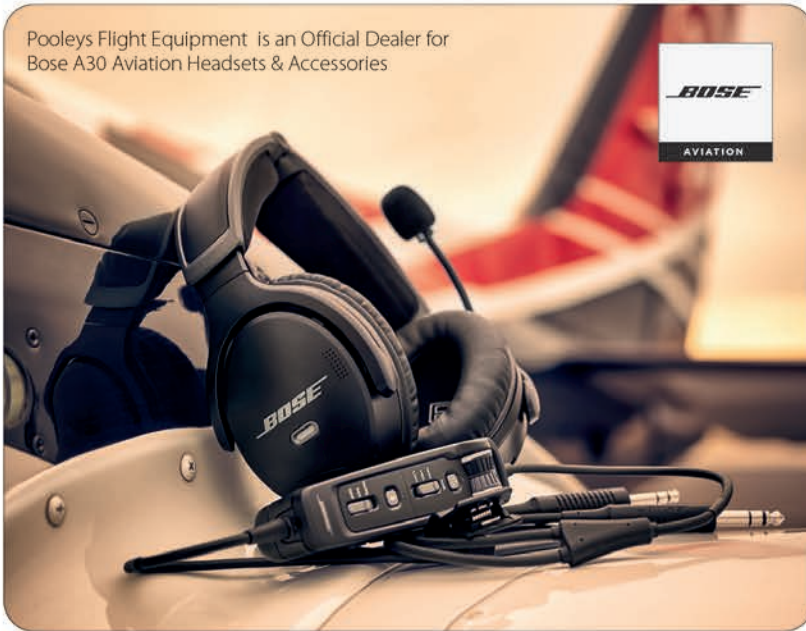
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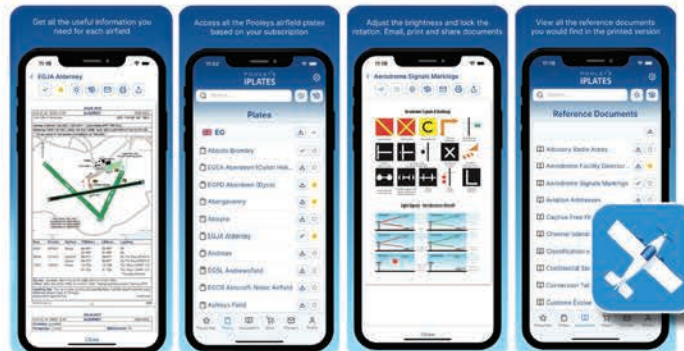
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D2 Mach 1 Smartwatch

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CORPORATE FLYING CLUB LIST

CHANNEL ISLANDS

JERSEY



JERSEY AERO CLUB

Jersey Airport,
L'Avenue de la Reine
Elizabeth II, St Peter, JE3 7BP
T: 01534 743990
E: info@jerseyaeroclub.com
W: jerseyaeroclub.com



SKYWALKER FLIGHT TRAINING

Ground Floor – Jersey Aero
Club, L'Avenue de la Reine
Elizabeth II, St Peter, JE3 7BP
T: 01534 743990
E: info@skywalkerflighttraining.com
W: skywalkerflighttraining.je

Types:

2 x PA28 Cherokee Warrior

ENGLAND

BEDFORDSHIRE



CAMBRIDGE FLYING GROUP

At the Shuttleworth Collection,
Old Warden Aerodrome, Old
Warden, Bedfordshire,
SG18 9EP
T: 07787 427589
E: info@cambridgeflyinggroup.co.uk
W: cambridgeflyinggroup.co.uk
The Cambridge Flying Group offers a rare opportunity to anyone, whether experienced or just starting, to enjoy classic flying in a way that few can. It has built a remarkable hands-on approach that has grown from its roots as a voluntary organisation. For those interested in seeking out the real spirit of flying, and wanting to tackle the challenge of flying – and learning in – vintage aviation icons, joining the Cambridge Flying Group gives access to a unique community of aviators

and aircraft.

Types:

2 x DH82A Tiger Moth

BERKSHIRE



WEST LONDON AERO CLUB

White Waltham Airfield,
Maidenhead, SL6 3NJ
T: 01628 823272
E: ops@wlac.co.uk
W: wlac.co.uk
White Waltham is home of the West London Aero Club (WLAC) and is one of the oldest airfields in the country, set on the edge of a picturesque estate in beautiful countryside. If you are interested in learning to fly this is the place. The club has plenty of parking and a wonderful atmosphere, with its friendly and historic clubhouse, a wide choice of aircraft and enthusiastic instructors.

Types:

11 x PA28-161
1 x PA28-181
2 x PA28R
2 PA18-150

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE



Denham Aerodrome

BICKERTON'S AERODROMES LTD

Denham Aerodrome, Tilehouse
Lane, Uxbridge, UB9 5DF
T: 01895 832161
E: operations@thepilotcentre.co.uk
W: thepilotcentre.co.uk
Flying has been taking place at the site of Denham Aerodrome since the early 1900s. It has been operated by Bickerton's Aerodromes since the 1930s and was CAA-licensed in 1938.



LAPWING FLYING GROUP

Denham Aerodrome, Tilehouse
Lane, Uxbridge, UB9 5DF
T: 07977 985420

E: MartinBowley@hotmail.com
W: lapwingflyinggroup.co.uk
Lapwing is a small group of very friendly, informal, dedicated aviators who come from a wide range of backgrounds. Experience levels range from ex-airline pilots to basic students, but we all love flying.

Types:

1 x Piper PA-28-151



THE PILOT CENTRE LIMITED

Denham Aerodrome,
Tilehouse Lane,
Uxbridge, UB9 5DF
T: 01895 833838
E: operations@thepilotcentre.co.uk
W: thepilotcentre.co.uk

A friendly flying club with an up-to-date fleet at reasonable prices. Courses: LAPL(A), PPL(A), Night rating, IR(R), FI(A), Night Derestriction, FI(A) Applied Instrument Instruction, Tailwheel, Flying Companions course, PPL Ground School. Discount on full membership for AOPA members. Instructors: FI x 7, LAPL x 4. PPL ground school.

Types:

9 x Cessna 152
2 x Cessna 172
1 x Cessna 182RG
1 x Citabria
5 x Piper PA-28

CAMBRIDGESHIRE



CAMBRIDGE AERO CLUB

Gate D, Cambridge Airport,
Newmarket Road,
Cambridge, CB5 8RX
T: 01223 373717
E: enquiries@cambridgeaeroclub.com
W: cambridgeaeroclub.com
Cambridge Aero Club has been training pilots since 1929 and our ethos hasn't changed

- we believe in striving for excellence! Cambridge Aero Club is an approved training organisation, meaning all aspects of training and safety are continually monitored and audited by the industry regulator, the Civil Aviation Authority.

Please contact us for details or see our website. Courses: PPL, Night, IMC, CBIR, Differences training.

Types:

4 x Cessna 152
2 x Cessna 172
1 x Cessna 182

CORNWALL



CORNWALL FLYING CLUB

Bodmin Airfield, Cardinham,
Bodmin, PL30 4BU
T: 01208 821419
E: bodminairfield@gmail.com
W: bodminairfield.com
We are open for experience flights, PPL and LAPL. Our mission is to promote the interests of GA throughout Devon and Cornwall, and to provide a safe, friendly and stimulating environment for members and visitors alike. Pop in and see us; you're guaranteed a warm reception.

Types:

1 x Cessna 152
1 x Cessna 172
1 x Gyroplane (Magni M16C)



PERRANPORTH FLYING CLUB LTD

Higher Trevellas, St Agnes,
TR5 0XS

T: 01872 552266

E: perranporthflying
club@live.co.uk

W: perranporthflying
club.co.uk

We are a UK CAA DTO offering
Part-FCL ICAO-compliant PPL,
night- and IMC-rating training.
We also offer microlight
training/hire.

Types:

1 x PA180 Piper Archer
1 x PA28-180

CUMBRIA



CARLISLE FLIGHT TRAINING & AERO CLUB

Hangar 30, Carlisle Airport,
CA6 4NW

T: 01228 573344

Mob: 07834 559560

E: info@carlisle-flight-
training.com

W: carlisle-flight-training.com

Types:

1 x Piper PA-28 Archer
1 x Piper PA-28 Warrior
2 x Robin HR200-120B

DEVON



DEVON & SOMERSET FLIGHT TRAINING LTD

Dunkeswell Aerodrome,
Honiton, EX14 4LG

T: 01404 891643

E: info@dsft.co.uk

W: dsft.co.uk

Courses offered include PPL,
LAPL, IR(R), Night, FIC, Touring
Motor Glider (TMG) Rating,
Tailwheel, AOPA Aerobatic and
Radio Navigation, Farm Strip
Flying. ATO Approved.

Types:

4 x Cessna 152
2 x Cessna 172
1 x Pipistrel Velis Electro
1 x Piper PA-28 Warrior

ESSEX



ANGLIAN FLIGHT CENTRES

Earls Colne Airfield,
Colchester, CO6 2NS

T: 01787 223676

E: enquiries@flyafc.co.uk

W: anglianflightcentres.co.uk

Situated in the heart of Essex,
Anglian Flight Centres has
a team of dedicated and
experienced instructors
supported by the airfield
Ground crew. The airfield is
licensed 7 days a week with
grass and tarmac runway
and 5mins walk from the
Essex Golf and Country club.
We have a large fleet of

aircraft and offer NPPL, PPL,
Night, IMC and CBIR. Anglian
Warbirds also operates the
Harvard IIA from the airfield.

All these ratings and course
help towards gaining your
AOPA Wings Awards.

Types:

1 x Turbo Arrow III (EFIS,
GFC500 autopilot)
1 x Cessna 172 (EFIS)
1 x Harvard AT6 IIA
5 x Robin HR200 (1 x Alpha
A120T variant)



NORTH WEALD FLIGHT TRAINING LIMITED

Hangar 2 Apron, North Weald
Airfield, CM16 6HR

E: enquiries@nwft.co.uk

W: northwealdflight

training.co.uk

North Weald Flight Training
is a leading provider of flight
training in the South East of
England and has an enviable
reputation for our airfield
facilities, aircraft fleet and
experienced instructional staff
that all go to help our many
students realise their dream of
flying an aircraft.

Types:

7 x Cessna 152
5 x Cessna 172
4 x Piper PA-28



SEAWING FLYING CLUB LTD.

Southend Airport, South Road,
SS2 6YF

T: 01702 545420

E: info@seawingfc.co.uk

W: seawingfc.co.uk

Seawing Flying Club has
been in business for 50
years operating from London
Southend Airport. We are
the only Members-Owned
flying club at the airport which
enables us to offer a friendly
and social environment in
which we provide professional
and effective an-initio and
advanced training. We have
many students, who have
gained their PPL, go on to
join the RAF and various
commercial airlines.

Types:

3 x Cessna 152
1 x Cessna 172



STAPLEFORD FLIGHT CENTRE

Stapleford Airfield,
Romford, RM4 1SJ

T: 01708 688380

E: reception@flysfc.com

W: flysfc.com

Stapleford Flight Centre has
been training private and
commercial airline pilots for
over 45 years. Many of our
students have gone on to
enjoy a lifetime of 'fun-in-the-
sky' and others have become
flight instructors.

Types:

15 x Cessna 152
1 x Cessna 172
8 x PA28
3 x PA28R
2 x PA34
1 x DA42 Sim
3 x DA42 Sim
1 x DA40D
2 x DA42D



THE TIGER CLUB

THE TIGER CLUB 1990 LTD

Damyns Hall, Aveley Road,
Upminster, RM14 2TN

T: 01708 524633

E: info@tigerclub.co.uk

W: tigerclub.co.uk

The Tiger Club was founded
in 1957 with the aim of
encouraging all aspects of
sport flying. It offers pilots
from all over the world the
opportunity to experience
flying vintage aircraft - as
well as aerobatics and
formation flying.

Types:

2 x de Havilland Tiger Moth
1 x Mudry CAP 10C
2 x Piper PA-18-90 Super Cub
4 x Rollason D31 Turbulent

GLOUCESTERSHIRE



COTSWOLD AERO CLUB

Aviation House SE2,
Gloucestershire Airport,
Cheltenham, GL51 6SP

T: 01452 713924

E: info@cotswoldaero
club.com

W: cotswoldaeroclub.com

Based in the heart of the
Cotswolds with easy access
from Cheltenham, Gloucester,
Bristol, Bath, Swindon and
Worcester, Cotswold Aero Club
is one of the oldest flying clubs
in the UK. It has a professional
yet relaxed attitude for flying
and learning to fly and offers
training for NPPL, PPL and
associated ratings.

Types:

1 x Piper PA-28R 200
2 x Robin DR400
1 x Robin R2112



STAVERTON FLYING SCHOOL

@Sky Park Ltd.
Hangar SE50, Gloucestershire Airport, Cheltenham, GL51 6SR
E: info@stavertonflyingschool.co.uk

W: stavertonflyingschool.co.uk
Training aspiring pilots to fly. If you're interested in learning to fly, extending your existing qualifications or you just want to get back into flying after a break then you've come to the right place.

Types:

2 x Cessna C172
2 x Cessna 152

HAMPSHIRE



THE SPITFIRE FLYING CLUB

Popham Airfield, Micheldever, Winchester, SO21 3BD
T: 01256 397733
E: airfieldmanager@popham-airfield.co.uk

W: popham-airfield.co.uk
Tie-downs and overnight camping available, low landing fees, fuel available 24/7.

HERTFORDSHIRE



FLYERS FLYING SCHOOL

Elstree Aerodrome, Hoggs Lane, Elstree, WD6 3AL
T: 0207 267 9049/07810 597273

E: info@flyersflying-school.co.uk

W: flyersflying-school.co.uk

We welcome anyone who would like to learn to fly and gain a PPL Licence. In addition we support owners with our aircraft management package, and hirers who just want to enjoy the fruits of all their labours having gained licences and ratings. The school has aircraft available for hiring and training purposes. Based at Elstree aerodrome, we are superbly placed to serve the

north and west London area. We now offer Flight Instructor Courses.

Types:

3 x Piper PA-28
1 x Piper PA-28 Glass Cockpit
1 x C172
1 x G1000

KENT



MPFC LTD T/A MP FLYING CLUB

Hangar 513 Biggin Hill Airport, Churchill Way, TN16 3BN
T: 07720 809633

E: info@mpfc.org.uk

W: www.mpfc.org.uk

MP Flying club is a flying club set up to promote safe and cost effective flying for its members. We offer training as well as Tailwheel difference training and aircraft hire.

Types:

1 x Grumman AA5
1 x Piper Cub
1 x DHC1 Chipmunk

LANCASHIRE



NORTHWEST AEROBATICS LIMITED

Manchester Barton Aerodrome, Liverpool Road, Eccles, M30 7SA
T: 01617 102290

E: info@northwestaerobatics.co.uk

W: northwestaerobatics.co.uk

We are a friendly advanced flying school offering aerobatic instruction for the Aerobatic Rating and AOPA Certificates in our Extra 200 and Christen Eagle aircraft and tailwheel differences training in our Citabria 7GCAA. We also provide SEP revalidation/renewal, formation flying training, farm strip courses, PPL stall/spin awareness training and aerobatic instructor courses. We can provide training in your own aircraft if required. The Citabria and Extra are available for private hire to suitably



CAMBRIDGE FLYING GROUP
Based at Old Warden, the Cambridge Flying Group operate two Tiger Moths

qualified and experienced pilots together with a Luscombe 8F. We also provide AUPRT and AUPRT instructor courses in conjunction with our partner school Ravenair at Liverpool.

Types:

1 x Extra 200
1 x Citabria 7GCAA
1 x Christen Eagle II



SOUTHPORT & MERSEYSIDE AERO CLUB

Room 2, M8 Shipwright House, Queens Dock Commercial Centre, 67 Norfolk Street, Liverpool, L1 0BG
T: 07944 705852
E: secretary@smac.org.uk
W: smac.org.uk
The Club has a number of Flying Instructors among its members. Our Flying Instructors' role is mainly refresher training for members, at both PPL level, and for the IR(R) (former IMC) and Night Ratings.

Types:

1 x Cessna 172



WESTAIR FLYING SCHOOL LTD

Blackpool Airport, FY4 2QS
T: 01253 342660
E: school@westair.uk.com
W: westair.uk.com
Westair Flying Services have been operating in Blackpool for over 80 years and have extensive experience in all aspects of aviation. Westair Flying School has trained hundreds of people to fly, including many who have gone on to fly commercially. The courses on offer include CPL, PPL, LAPL, NPPL, FI @, IR@, Night Rating and Multi Engine training and renewals at an affordable price with quality instruction. We offer a range of Trial Flying lessons and Half Day

Flying Experience which are ideal for those eager to commence their flying careers or as memorable gifts for family, friends and work colleagues. Our Engineering Department provides high quality maintenance at our Blackpool Airport and Barton City Airport facilities, with experienced engineers that have combined man-hours totalling more than 170 years! We can also offer bespoke Corporate Aviation Solutions, tailor-made to suit you, as well as assisting with aircraft sales and hangarage.

Types:

1 x Cessna 172S
1 x Cessna F172P
1 x Cessna FA152
1 x Piper PA28 Warrior II
1 x DA40
1 x DA50
1 x 737 Simulator
1 x Air Combat Simulator

LEICESTERSHIRE



LEICESTERSHIRE AERO CLUB

Leicester Airport, Leicester, LE2 2FG
T: 0116 259 2360
E: info@leicesterairport.com
W: leicesterairport.com
Leicestershire Aero Club offers flying lessons, training for a PPL as well as a range of flying experiences and a whole lot more. We operate at Leicester Airport and we've been at the centre of the Leicestershire flying community since 1909.

Types:

4 x Cessna 152
2 x Cessna 152 Aerobat
2 x Piper PA-28
1 x Super Decathlon

LINCOLNSHIRE



THE POM FLYING CLUB LTD

The Terminal, Humberside Airport, Ulceby, DN39 6YH
E: info@gbpom.co.uk

W: gbpom.co.uk
T: 07985 753336
07711 438999

We train for PPL/LAPL/IMC and night ratings.

Types:

2 x PA-28-161 Warrior II



WADDINGTON FLYING SCHOOL

c/o Station Central Registry
RAF Waddington, Lincoln, LN5 9NB
T: 01522 724 965
E: wfsmanager99@gmail.com
W: waddingtonflyingclub.com



WICKENBY AERODROME LLP

The Old Control Tower, Wickenby Airfield, Lincoln, LN3 5AX
T: 01673 885000
E: info@wickenbyairfield.com
W: wickenbyairfield.com
Club House Facilities. Jet A1 Bowser. Avgas is available during operating hours Wed-Sun 10am til 4pm. Hangarage available. Flying School.

NORFOLK



OLD BUCKENHAM AERO CLUB LIMITED

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E: info@flyingmadeeasy.co.uk
W: oldbuckaeroclub.co.uk
T: 01953 860806

A different type of flying school. Our instructors have a wealth of experience and are ready to help you gain your licence or extend your skills.

Types:

2 x Cessna 152
1 x Extra 200
1 x Piper Arrow II



SAXON AIR TRAINING

Klyne Business Aviation Centre, Norwich Airport, Norwich,

NR6 6JT
T: 01603 518120
E: flight.training@saxonair.com
W: www.saxonair.com

Saxon Air is a Norwich based CAA AOC holder for rotary and fixed wing aircraft. We now offer flight training for the next generation of pilots. We operate the DA40, Pipistrel Explorer and aligned with our commitment to reducing environmental impact, the Velis Electro.

We offer PPL, Night rating, IR (R), companion course and differences training via our DTO.

Types:

1 x Diamond DA40
1 x Pipistrel Explorer
1 x Pipistrel Velis

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



SYWELL AERODROME

Hall Farm, Sywell, Northampton NN6 0BN
T: 01604 801620
E: info@sywellaerodrome.co.uk
W: sywellaerodrome.co.uk
Sywell Aerodrome owns and operates a historic airfield regarded as one of the best General Aviation airfields in the UK. Sywell provides facilities for flight training, corporate charter, maintenance and leisure flights. The Aviator Hotel is on site with bar, restaurant and conference facilities.

SHROPSHIRE



AVALANCHE AVIATION LIMITED

Sleap Airfield, Harmer Hill, Nr Shrewsbury, SY4 3HE
T: 07768 333030
T: 01952 770776
E: sales@avalancheaviation.com

W: avalancheaviation.com
We offer AOPA Aerobatic Certificate training up to Intermediate level. In addition,

we can provide coaching and advice for any pilot wishing to compete in the BAeA competitions. Our Slingsby Firefly is also available for hire.

Types:

1 x Slingsby Firefly T67M MkII

STAFFORDSHIRE



SHERWOOD FLYING CLUB

Tatenhill Airfield, Newborough Road, Burton On Trent, DE19 9PD

T: 0115 9811402

E: office@sherwoodflyingclub.co.uk

W: sherwoodflyingclub.co.uk

The Sherwood Flying Club is first and foremost, a club which is run for the members, by the members. We strive to keep our overheads low and this allows us to keep the cost of flying down, an all-important consideration in these days of rising prices.

Our flying rates are still amongst the most competitive in the Midlands.

Types:

2 x PA28 Warrior II

SUFFOLK



VIRAGE AVIATION LLP

Beccles Aerodrome, Brock Road, Beccles, NR34 7PJ

T: 01502 476074

E: admin@virage.heli.co.uk

W: virage-aviation.co.uk

Virage helicopter was founded in 2010. It all started with a Hughes Schweizer, an office & an Airfield to fly from! After a few years of successfully training multiple pilots Virage decided to add to the fleet & then arrived the Cabri G2. This proved very popular amongst our training pilots who found a love of the new technology & unique design. Then came the arrival of the Robinson R44. Proving a favourite with our pilots who converted

quite quickly allowing them to take multiple family & friends flying around the UK. After a busy few years and with the school growing considerably Virage expanded again and they welcomed a Robinson R22 to the fleet. The R22 has also been extremely popular for people learning to fly and has helped many students gain their license since its arrival. Sadly we did say a goodbye to the Schweizer due to the popularity of the other training machines. Virage Helicopters have successfully continued to help multiple pilots obtain their PPL (H), Convert onto alternative helicopters & keep their licenses current. As well as offer gifts of trial lessons & experiences to hundreds of people around the East of England. In 2021 Virage Helicopters decided to expand and add a Cessna 150 to our growing fleet. So then Virage Aviation was born! Since opening officially we have taken on many students who we are now helping to gain their PPL(A) and our first student officially passed in the summer of 2022!

At the end of 2022 we welcomed a Cessna 172 to our fleet which is available for training and self-fly hire. Virage Aviation has been on quite a journey so far & we look forward to what the future holds..

Types:

- 1 x DA40 D
- 1 x Cessna C150
- 2 x Cessna C152
- 2 x Cessna C172
- 1 x R22
- 1 x R44
- 1 x Cabri G2

SURREY



AEROBILITY

Disabled Flying Charity, Blackbushe Airport,

GU17 9LQ

T: 0303 303 1230

E: frontdesk@aerobility.com

W: aerobility.com

Aerobility provides anyone with any disability, whatever the impairment, the opportunity to learn to fly and participate in aviation-based activities. Flight training in the charity's Piper PA28s and Tecnam P2002 is available at the Blackbushe Airport HQ and Tatenhill Airfield, with support and advice available to all aspiring disabled aviators.

Types:

- 1 x PA28 Warrior
- 1 x PA28 Archer
- 1 x Tecnam P2002-JF
- 1 x PA32 Cherokee Six



BLUEPLANE LTD

T/A Blackbushe Aviation, Blackbushe Airport, Camberley, Surrey, GU17 9LB

T: 01252 471 309

E: fly@blackbushe.com

W: fly.blackbushe.com

ATO offering Modular Training, including PPL, CPL, IR, Night Ratings, and FI Courses.

Types:

- 2 x Sonaca S200
- 3 x PA28
- 1 x PA28 R
- 1 x PA28 RT
- 1 x Diamond DA40
- 2 x Diamond DA42
- 1 x Diamond DA42 FMPTII Sim



CUBAIR FLIGHT TRAINING LTD

The Old Squash Court, Redhill Aerodrome, RH1 5JY

T: 01737 822124

E: opsdesk@cubair.co.uk

W: cubair.co.uk

Cubair Flight Training is a long-established, not for profit organisation with the aim of promoting leisure aviation. We are a friendly flying school specialising in flying training for the Private Pilots Licence,

associated ratings and tail wheel training.

As we are not driven by the need for profit we are able to offer an individual service to our students with time to complete proper pre and post flight briefings and for our instructors to attend to a student's particular needs. We have a dedicated team of instructors, many of whom come from an airline or corporate jet background, others are experienced General Aviation pilots.

Types:

- 3 x Katana DA20-A1
- 1 x Katana DA20-C1
- 1 x Piper Super Cub
- 1 x Piper Warrior
- 1 x Diamond Star DA40 NG
- 1 x Slingsby T67M



REDHILL AVIATION FLIGHT CENTRE

Redhill Aerodrome, RH1 5JY

T: 01737 822959

E: fly@redhillaviation.co.uk

W: redhillaviation.co.uk

We are based at Redhill Aerodrome in the beautiful Surrey countryside. Redhill Aerodrome is one of the oldest purpose-built airfields in the country. It is a licensed airfield with six grass runways (plus two tarmac runways for winter use) and full Air Traffic Control. It is open 0900 to 1700 during winter months and 0900 to 1900 during the summer, extensions can also be arranged.

Types:

- 6 x Cessna 152
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You can also register for the seminar online at **www.aopa.co.uk**

WORDS David Rawlings IMAGES National Spitfire Project

A tribute to innovation, past and future

The National Spitfire Project is working to create a landmark monument on Southampton's waterfront that will honour everyone connected to the Spitfire story



MORE THAN a sculpture, the monument is intended as a place of remembrance, reflection and education, linking one of Britain's most famous aircraft with the city where it was born and with future generations who may be inspired by its legacy.

The story behind the project reaches back well over a decade. The idea of creating a national monument to the Spitfire emerged around 2010, driven by the belief that Britain's most famous fighter aircraft deserved a major public tribute in the city where it first took shape. Southampton is central to that story. It was home to the Supermarine works, and the nearby airfield at Eastleigh was the site of the Spitfire's first flight on 5 March 1936. For the people behind the National Spitfire Project, that makes the city the natural home for a monument with national and international meaning.

What is striking about the National Spitfire Project is that it is not simply about an aircraft, or even only about wartime heroism in the air. The project's message is broader than that. Its guiding themes are to commemorate, celebrate and inspire. In practical terms, that means commemorating not only the pilots who flew the Spitfire in combat, but also the designers, engineers, factory workers, maintenance crews, fundraisers and support staff whose work made the aircraft possible. "It also means celebrating the extraordinary level of British engineering and design that allowed the Spitfire to remain effective before, during and after the war," said Steve Dean, the Project Manager. "In fact the Spitfire remained in service until 1961 when the Korean Fleet Air Arm retired it."

The monument itself has been designed to make an immediate visual impact.

According to the project's official description, the National Spitfire Monument will rise 40 metres above the waterfront at Mayflower Park in Southampton, with a stainless-steel Spitfire appearing to soar skyward above a sweeping mast shaped like a vapour trail. "The plan also includes a circular plinth extending over the waterfront, a reflection pool, seating and 30 roundels representing the nations that flew the Spitfire during its service life," explained Dean.

The base is conceived not as a simple pedestal, but as a place where visitors can move, sit, reflect and learn. The accessible circular form allows people to make their way toward the centre, while the water, seating and interpretation panels are intended to slow the experience down. Rather than glancing up at a monument and moving on, visitors will be able to spend time there. This reflects the project's wider ambition: to create a memorial that honours loss and sacrifice, while also presenting the Spitfire as part of a bigger story about invention, resilience and public effort.

As things stand, the project is advanced in design but still dependent on funding and final delivery permissions. In the interview, Dean explains that the project has planning permission and the detailed design work has been developed, and the scheme is approaching tender stage. The project is waiting for works to be completed on the seawall. Work is hoping to begin in November 2026. Rather than attempting to construct everything at once, the project team plans to begin with the foundations and the public base structure. Those works involve significant engineering in their own right. The monument must be able to support an enormous sculptural element while also integrating with the existing waterfront.

“Critically we're losing our first-hand stories of the Second World War: there are no Battle of Britain pilots left. So we want to inspire the next generations to just be better citizens of the world by understanding the past”

Dean describes foundations that rely on multiple deep piles and a structural base that sits partly on land and partly over the water. Planning documents published in 2025 likewise describe a two-stage construction process, integrating the monument's roundel base with river wall and seawall works before the final sculpture is installed.

The second phase is expected to focus on the mast and aircraft itself. "The major sculptural elements will be fabricated off site and only installed once the groundwork is complete and permissions are secure," explained Dean. That makes sense for a project of this complexity. A stainless-steel Spitfire at one-and-a-half scale, mounted on a towering curved support, is not something that can be improvised. It requires specialist design, careful procurement and extensive engineering checks.

There has also been extensive wind-tunnel testing and academic support from the University of Southampton, showing that behind the emotion and symbolism of the monument lies a serious programme of structural analysis and technical planning.

This is where the National Spitfire Project becomes more than a memorial campaign. The team wants the monument to support a wider educational programme, especially around STEM subjects and history. That is important because the Spitfire story is not only dramatic; it is also deeply instructive. It is a story about advanced design, production under pressure, adaptation, teamwork and the consequences of global conflict. By building interpretation and learning into the site itself, the project aims to turn a monument into an active teaching tool. In an age when fewer people have direct family memories of the Second World War, that educational role may prove just

The base of the monument will have the roundels of all 30 countries who operated the Spitfire



The breath-taking sculpture will be a marvel of engineering, just like the Spitfire itself



as important as the physical sculpture.

Fundraising remains central to making all of this happen. The project has already secured significant backing, including UK Government support and match funding.

There is also a pleasing historical echo in the way the project is being funded. During the war, the original Spitfire Fund became a public expression of shared purpose, drawing support from communities, companies and individuals.

The National Spitfire Project is tapping into something similar today: the idea that remembrance is strongest when people actively participate in it. Donations do not simply pay for steel, concrete and fabrication. They help create a public space, a teaching resource, a place of reflection and a national statement about the people behind one of Britain's most enduring symbols.

For readers who want to support the project, it's easy. The website includes a donation page, and the charity also has a JustGiving page where supporters can contribute directly.

The National Spitfire Project is about much more than creating a dramatic silhouette on the skyline. It is about placing memory in the landscape of the city where the Spitfire began. It is about recognising the men and women who designed, built, maintained and flew an aircraft that still carries enormous emotional power. And it is about asking what that legacy can mean now: not only courage in war, but excellence in engineering, the value of collective effort and the importance of passing difficult history on with honesty and care. If the project succeeds, Southampton will gain a remarkable landmark. More importantly, the public will gain a place where remembrance, design and civic purpose come

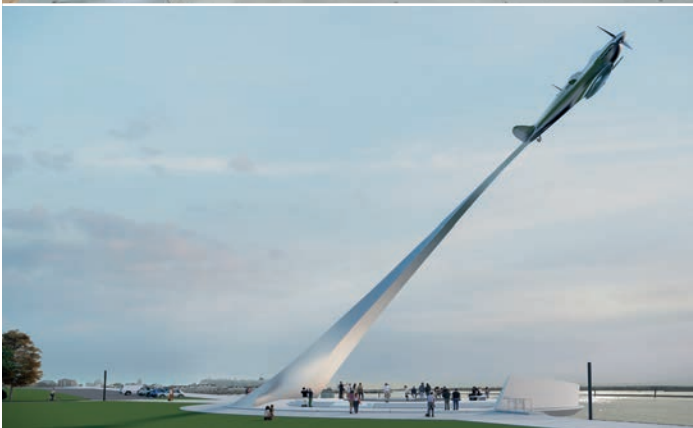
“In fact the Spitfire remained in service until 1961 when the Korean Fleet Air Arm retired it”

together in one of the most resonant aviation stories Britain has ever produced.

“Our goal is to commemorate, celebrate, inspire,” said Dean. “The aim is to commemorate everyone involved in the Spitfire story, including those who designed, built, maintained and flew the aircraft. Another key objective is to celebrate the Spitfire's enduring relevance/legacy and the British engineering, entrepreneurship and ingenuity behind it. And then our third tenet is to inspire, which is to get young people interested in aviation and becoming the engineers of the future.”

Dean concluded by saying: “Critically we're losing our first-hand stories of the Second World War: there are no Battle of Britain pilots left. So we want to inspire the next generations to just be better citizens of the world by understanding the past.”

nationalspitfireproject.org ■



- 1** A 1/40 scale model was tested in a wind tunnel to ensure its durability
- 2** The statue will stand at 40-metres over the waterfront in Southampton
- 3** The team hopes to start work on the base in November of this year



WORDS & IMAGES Terry Davis

Heading Down Under from Rochester in a Robin DR400

In 1990, with the ink still drying on his PPL, **Terry Davis** decided he wanted to fly his seven-month-old Robin to Perth Australia – what could possibly go wrong?

Just one of the landmarks Terry encountered on his 13,000 mile journey

IN A seven-month-old light aircraft with an extra fuel tank and more optimism than sense, Terry Davis and his friend Don point the nose east toward icing, thunderstorms, bureaucracy, and the thrill of being just competent enough to keep going.

The plan was simple on paper: take a small Robin DR400 from England to Australia in a chain of “short hops.” In practice, each hop was a fresh roll of the dice, one that began with a crowd on the apron at Rochester and quickly escalated to frozen canopies over the Alps, a wall of thunderheads rising from the Mediterranean, and a crosswind landing that felt like putting a kite down in a hurricane. This is what happens when you discover that adventure isn’t a single leap into the unknown – it’s

hundreds of tiny decisions, made quickly.

AOPA Magazine met with Terry to talk through his adventure and his book, about the trip. As soon as you meet the man you can understand not only why he was able to do this trip, back in 1990, but also why.

Terry has just released a book chronicling the experience, and AOPA caught up with him to hear about a journey that most pilots only dare to dream of. What follows are Terry’s own memories and excerpts from the book itself.

THE FRIST TAKE-OFF

At Rochester, the moment has the strange, unreal brightness of a film set: half of Kent on the apron; friends in other aircraft shepherding you toward the coast; and a helicopter nosing in close with television crews ready to record the beginning of something you

KEY FACTS

13,747
MILES

99.9
HOURS

3,532
OVER WATER

3,215
OVER THE DESERT

1,016
OVER THE JUNGLE

have promised will be possible. It’s the kind of attention that makes even routine tasks feel loaded. You don’t merely start an engine—you perform the act of starting an engine.

There are cakes, last-minute jokes, and that familiar pilot’s habit of talking about anything except the thing you’re about to do. The aircraft has been turned into a purposeful little long-range machine: rear seats removed, an extra fuel tank installed, life raft aboard, spares packed, sponsors’ badges on the skin. But the real weight is less measurable—the calendar reminder that it’s also a wedding anniversary, the knowledge that every goodbye could be longer than intended, and the nagging awareness that a “series of short hops” can add up to a continent-spanning test of nerve.

Then the prop bites, the runway slides away, and the noise in your headset turns

into the calm, professional cadence of air traffic control. You're escorted towards Folkestone; you trade callsigns and good wishes; the helicopter hangs nearby like a watchful chaperone. And then quietly, without any cinematic fanfare, the English coast slips behind you. The land that has always been there is suddenly optional. Ahead is France, then Italy, then a list of countries that reads like a dare. The adventure doesn't begin with a trumpet blast. It begins with the simple fact that there's no easy place to turn around anymore.

FROZEN OVER THE ALPS: WHEN THE COCKPIT TURNS INTO A REFRIGERATOR

The first big lesson of long-distance flying arrives early: you can plan for route, fuel, and paperwork, and still be undone by something as simple as temperature. On the way to Nice, you're instructed to climb—first to 9,000 feet, then higher. The aircraft enters cloud at around 4,000 feet. The world outside becomes a wet, featureless greyness. Inside, the temperature begins to slide.

Under normal circumstances, you might reach for heat. But this aircraft has been prepared for the hot countries ahead: the heating system disconnected so cool air can flow through the cockpit when Italy is behind you and the Middle East is looming. In late March over Europe, that clever preparation turns into a penance. At -10°C the Robin begins to ice up, a white crust slowly colonising the wing's leading edge. You climb to escape the cloud and the ice, break through at about 10,000 feet—then pay for the victory with a colder problem. At -15°C the inside of the canopy starts to frost, the cockpit glass becoming its own weather system.

It's hard to convey how quickly fear becomes practical. You stop thinking in grand

themes – Australia, the map spanning continents – and start thinking in short sentences: keep the wings clean, keep the engine warm, keep flying. Then the cloud finally fractures. Blue appears. Sunlight lands on the canopy like a blessing. The Alps sit to the east; the Mediterranean stretches ahead; and you catch yourself grinning at the simplest sight in the world: the sea.

Nice is supposed to be glamorous. But after 4 hours and 50 minutes, 739 miles, glamour is a secondary concern behind thawing your hands and finding a bed you didn't book. You land, taxi in, and begin the odd two-track life of the long-range light-aircraft pilot: half aviator, half improvisational logistics manager. The Riviera might be waiting beyond the airport fence, but you're already learning that this trip won't be about beaches. It will be about making the next departure happen.

NICE CIVILISED BAHRAIN

After parking, the fuel man asked whether we wanted any fuel. After 1,109 miles, we certainly did. Thirty minutes later, he returned with a 45-gallon drum. Even Luxor had a bowser, so this felt a bit primitive. "You're joking," Don said. "No," I replied. "Apparently, this is the deluxe service, and at these prices, I'd expect it to be served in a crystal decanter," I added. Eventually, we were filled up: 53 US gallons at a cost US\$233. The most expensive fuel of the trip so far and they produce it here!

A NERVOUS ENCOUNTER OVER IRAN

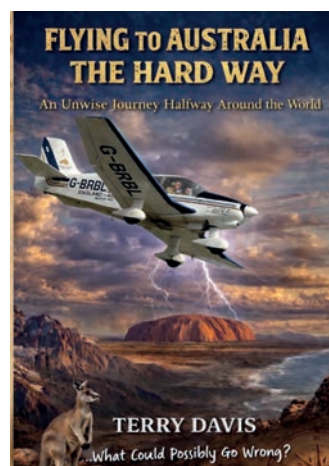
We were tracking along the Persian Gulf, about 11 miles from the Iranian FIR. Everything was routine until we lost the VOR signal, although we were still in contact with Bahrain Radar. They gave us a heading of 110. We steered 120, just

"Then the controller came back on the radio: G-BRBL... believed to be an Iranian C-130. My first thought was: Great. We're not even halfway there, and we're about to be shot down by the Iranians"

to be safe. "Let's give them a bit of room," Don said quietly, tapping the fuel gauge. "Bit of a no-man's land out here, isn't it? I'd rather have a signal than a guess when we're this close to the Iranian border." "If the VOR stays dead, we're navigating on hope and a prayer," I added, checking the compass for the tenth time. An hour later, the United Arab Emirates controller called us. G-BRBL, there is an unidentified aircraft at your 9 o'clock. No squawk, no height, no further information. "Check the heading again," I snapped, my eyes scanning the horizon until they felt like they were popping out of my head. "If he's got no squawk, he's not looking to be friendly." "He's practically invisible to the system," Don whispered. "Keep your eyes peeled, Terry."

Eventually, we saw him. A bright yellow aircraft, heading directly toward us, well below our level. Then the controller came back on the radio: G-BRBL... believed to be an Iranian C-130. My first thought was: Great. We're not even halfway there, and we're about to be shot down by the Iranians. Don looked across at me. UAE Radar called again: G-BL, Iranian aircraft one mile, same heading.

They asked if we could identify it. Don confirmed it was a Hercules. As I am writing this the war in Iran is raging (28/03/2026) It would not be a nice place to be today. "That's definitely a C-130," he said. "And he's not climbing." It passed underneath us. For a moment, nobody spoke. I watched it disappear behind the wing and said, "Well... that was interesting." I realised then that my grip on the control column had been rather tighter than usual, and that I had been holding my breath. "I think I've left permanent fingerprints in the plastic," I joked weakly once the sky was empty again. We lived to fly another day. Looking back while writing this, with America now at war with Iran, that small encounter takes on





- 1 As Terry and Don left Naples they were able to see an unobstructed view of Mount Vesuvius
- 2 A local news crew arrive at Rochester to speak to Terry and Don before they embark on their adventure
- 3 Refuelling in Bahrain was the most expensive – amazing, as that's where it's produced



- 1 The Robin makes it to Alice Springs and the middle of Australia
- 2 An escort arrives as the Robin flies over Jersey - part of another adventure that is also documented in the book
- 3 The pair have a worrying moment when they fly over an Iranian C130 Hercules



- 1 Terry and Don are guided to their parking spot at Perth International Airport
- 2 The Australian Royal Aero Club formate on Terry and Don as they fly over the Swan River in Perth
- 3 A camel and kart burst through the traffic in Karachi - possibly the safest form of travel in the city

TERRY'S TOP TIPS FOR ANYBODY PLANNING A TRIP

- 01 Don't do it. But if you must, some of the following could be useful.
- 02 A Bible for use inside CB's.
- 03 A St. Christopher to talk to when you get fed up with your travelling companion.
- 04 A uniform is essential.
- 05 A good crew I.D. badge, as genuine-looking as possible, with a number and signature.
- 06 US\$3,000 in small bills.
- 07 Plenty of mineral water is available in most hotels, but make sure you have enough before Pakistan and India, as their bottled stuff can be a bit iffy.
- 08 A good medical kit, especially for "Delhi Belly!"
- 09 Engine oil is difficult to obtain en route.
- 10 A good-sized funnel and a chamois leather to filter fuel through — if you soak it in fuel first, it will not let water through.
- 11 A good tool kit, including hydraulic fluid and grease.
- 12 Screw-type tie-downs and rope.
- 13 Hand-held RT.

- 14 Life raft and life jackets.
- 15 E.L.T.
- 16 A knife, especially useful for cutting up pineapples at Bali market stalls.
- 17 An umbrella for rain and sun.
- 18 Assorted spares, including tyres and inner tubes.
- 19 Lots of sweets and biscuits.
- 20 A sense of humour — you'll need it.



The medical kit that Terry packed for the trip

a very different meaning. If we were flying that route today, the story might have ended rather differently.

INTO THE STORM IN BURMA

Over Burma (now Myanmar), we encountered a very large cumulus formation. It was far too wide to go around, so we decided to go straight through it. "Straight through then," Don said, studying the cloud wall ahead. "Right then, let's see what the old girl is made of," I replied, tightening my harness. After a few minutes, the sky turned black, and the turbulence suddenly became severe. We had unwittingly flown straight into a cumulonimbus. The centre of it was horrendous. Up. Down, Bang.

It felt like being a peanut in an empty tin can – shaken by a giant.

"This isn't good," Don said, gripping the side of his seat. "I'm fairly sure I've just seen my own breakfast pass me by!" I yelled over the roar of the airframe. I throttled back, switched carburettor heat on, pitot heat on, and reduced the airspeed. It didn't help much. We requested a descent back down to flight level 110 to try and find a way out. Bangkok Control, G-BRBL requesting immediate descent to one-one-zero. By this point, I honestly thought we might never get out. The beating the aircraft was taking was incredible. The strength of that airframe must be tremendous. "She's holding together," Don shouted above the noise. "Better than I am!" I shouted back. "My teeth are rattling in my head!" Eventually, we burst out through the side of the storm. My knuckles were white on the stick. I was still shaking twenty minutes later. Don finally broke the silence and said, "Let's not do that again." "You don't have to tell me twice," I panted. "I think I've left permanent finger-grips in the control column." When we looked back... it was the only storm in sight.

And it wasn't even that large. I remember thinking: "If that one can throw us around like that, what could its big brother do?". Anyone who has ever flown through a tropical CB will understand exactly how we felt. It was my first visit to the centre of Hell, and I hope it will be the last. A little later, we spotted another storm—much larger than the first. "We're going nowhere near that one," I said. "I'll fly back to England before I point the nose at that monster." If I had needed to fly 100 miles off course to avoid it, I would happily have done so.

TIMOR TO DARWIN – THE FINAL HOP

We tried repeatedly to obtain the weather forecast for Darwin. No success. Eventually, we decided to depart anyway. If conditions deteriorated, we could always return to Kupang or try to relay messages through passing aircraft. "Or," I said, "we'll just keep going and hope Australia is still there, and we don't miss it."

"It's a big enough target, Terry," Don said. "Even with our watch-setting skills, I think we can find a whole continent."

Soon after departure, we encountered large cumulus build-ups. This made me uneasy. We had over 400 miles of open water ahead of us. Earlier, we had even seen a large shark circling near the surface as we approached Kupang. I was convinced it probably had my name tattooed on its back. I looked down through the gaps in the cloud and said, "Let's try not to introduce ourselves." "He looks like he's waiting for a delivery," I said, eyeing the fin below. We continued carefully, weaving between CBs and cumulus formations. Kupang ATC could only respond with a simple: "Roger." After 80 miles, we completely lost contact with Kupang.

We still had more than 420 miles across the Timor Sea. We had no idea what the weather was like in Darwin.

"We had unwittingly flown straight into a cumulonimbus. The centre of it was horrendous. Up. Down, Bang. It felt like being a peanut in an empty tin can – shaken by a giant. "This isn't good," Don said, gripping the side of his seat. "I'm fairly sure I've just seen my own breakfast pass me by!" I yelled over the roar of the airframe"

And I couldn't forget something my mother had mentioned she had seen on television; Darwin had been experiencing severe storms, including a mini-cyclone with winds of 117 mph. Don shook his head slowly. "Let's hope the weather's finished with Darwin for now." "I don't fancy landing in a 117-mile-an-hour gale in a Robin," I muttered. "We'd be blown back to Indonesia." About two hours from Darwin, we heard a Britannia Airways jet talking to Darwin. We asked them to relay our position. It was only an estimate – we had lost all radio navigation aids except for a distant NDB radio station, which at least provided some music while we flew. The Britannia captain confirmed Darwin's weather was fine. An enormous relief. Before signing off, he asked if we carried HF radio. When we told him we didn't, he replied cheerfully: "Well, at least the sea is warm in these parts!" Don looked across at me and said, "Very comforting." "Trust a jet pilot to find the silver lining in a ditching scenario," he added dryly. We avoided one last threatening CB, and soon the weather improved. Eventually, we picked up Darwin VOR at about 100 miles. At 80 miles out, we saw the Australian coastline. It seemed to take forever before we finally landed. But when we did, we knew one thing for certain: we had made it! Exactly one year and two days after my very first flying lesson. I took off my headset and simply said, "I don't believe it... we actually did it."

WHAT A TRIP

Terry's enthusiasm for this trip is still there more than 30 years later and is testament to how far you can go with the right frame of mind and a can-do attitude. Terry's humour spills out on the pages of *Flying to Australia the Hard Way*. ■ To read Terry's hilarious and heartfelt book, you can purchase it here: <https://shorturl.at/IAjDS>



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