

# BRISBANE VALLEY FLYER

## MARCH 2026



Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield, Cressbrook-Caboonbah Road, Toogoolawah, O'ld 4313.

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1, 2, 3, FINGER 4 YAK  
FORMATION OVER  
LOWOOD ON  
AUSTRALIA DAY 2026.  
Ian WyllieThe locals  
did see these fellas  
doing a good thing for  
the Australia Day.  
Photo credit Ian  
Wyllie, Lowood

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Peter Ratcliffe (Pres.)  
John Innes (Vice Pres.)

0418 159 429  
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Ian Ratcliffe (Treasurer)  
Acting Secretary

0418 728 328  
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## Contents

Page

From the Club:	-1	A flying start
	1	Presidents Report
	2	More on the YAK tivity on Australia Day
	3	Editorial
	4-9	Biography of VH- RKA, the genuine little WARBIRD
	10	Quiz
	11	Engine Developements
	12	Quiz Answers
	13	NOTICE of FLYING EVENT
	14- 19	Advertising

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Greetings Members,

Hello all.

The first meeting of 2026 was very well supported by our members with 19 in attendance.

We all had a great day and at the meeting and the BBQ afterwards, we were able to get first coat of plaster on the walls in new room. Starting to look like a room now.

Our next meeting will be held on the 7th of March, so come along and join in.

Peter Ratcliffe

Best wishes

Peter Ratcliffe  
President BVSAC

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AUSTRALIA DAY FLYOVER.

We at the FLYER magazine production unit (our back verandah) are thinking it is not a reliable option to try to add the videos of more of the YAKs action. Therefore, you are directed to a couple of fb pages. These pages were put up for all to see and thanks to the recording person/s the record there for our enjoyment.

LOOK FOR : Member of SOMERSET COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD(AUST)

Queensland Warbirds and Vintage Aircraft Association

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IP9JX9wgnBE>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/somersetcommunitynoticeboard/posts/25785208654467914/>

As with anything in this realm, no guarantee is given that your device will actually lob on the correct place, but it's worth a shot if you would like to see local 3 1/7<sup>th</sup> lots in action.

I know. It's a pretty poor pun, but I used to work with an ex-military Tech Records Officer who had so many aphorisms for pilots I just have to try a few out.  
Pi = 3 1/7<sup>th</sup>

Many locals sent the Editor their photographic record and comment of the event. The amount of knowledge shown by the public should make us aviation people realise there is still much to do with regard to public understanding of General Aviation. The difficulty of doing something "nice" for the community makes the doing so regulated, the aviators often give up. Indeed this was not a community event, 'Twas just four blokes out for mutual flying fun".

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## EDITORIAL

G'day Aviators,

We have a few projects coming along in the going to fly category. It will take a bit more time to collect these yarns so that's for future issues. Many I's to dot along the way though of course. Requirements for construction go way beyond plans and blueprints. Workshops are a huge part of airworthiness. Every needs notice to do a make and mend on their home base before anyone should want photos of progress. 8 hours cleaning on a lathe seems to be only just enough once a year. They don't look much different afterwards either.

I guess we have to ask , what are the things we're looking forward to in 2026 ?. Airshows and fly ins are about. I'll try to scout them out , but , please if you have any likely jaunts or jollies or just flying together for fun , let the FLYER know and it will get some airplay. I would like to try inviting outside groups for lunch dates to spread the knowledge of aviation around. Art groups love a day out. And as aircraft owners don't you just want to have the little 'uns crawling around in your cockpit pulling handles. Hmmm, Art groups are looking good.

Perhaps Guest speakers with fun stories or something of the science of aviation. A lot of work in this , but maybe now and then. I reckon RAAUS would like to get a leg up at WATTS.

Whatever direction it goes, low stress and a few laughs is the best way to go.

Cheers,

Mike H., Editor

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## Taylorcraft Auster MkIII VH-RKA

RKA started its life at Rearsby in Leicestershire in 1943. It was to be a long and colourful life which continues to this day.

In August 1943 this aeroplane was taken on charge by the RAF as MT450. After spending six weeks at 20 Maintenance Unit at Aston Down it was allocated to 662 Squadron at Old Sarum.

Six months later we find MT450 making its first antipodean connection when it went to 488 (RNZAF) Squadron at Castle Camps. 488 was flying deH Mosquito night fighters at this time. The squadron was soon to move to France, taking MT450 with it.

In France ownership of MT450 was passed backwards and forwards between 488 and another squadron: 219, which was also a Mosquito NF squadron. Both of these squadrons were part of 149 Wing, 85 Group, 2<sup>nd</sup> TAF in Europe.

Then, in February, 1945, MT450 was sent back to Rearsby for a Major Inspection. This inspection took about 9 weeks after which MT450 returned to 20 MU at Aston Down. At that time the airframe was sold to the Royal Australian Air Force. The RAAF requested that all Auster airframes purchased had a complete overhaul and that an 8 gallon auxiliary fuel tank be installed behind the front seat with a filler spout behind the starboard door. They went to Australia without engines because the Gipsy Major engine had been produced in Australia during the war by General Motors Holden (later of car fame) and there were plenty available.

222 Maintenance Unit at High Ercall dismantled MT450 and boxed it for shipping through Swansea Docks to Australia. It arrived in Sydney, N.S.W. in September, 1945, just over twelve months old.

By this time the war in the Pacific was just finishing and there wasn't much of a use for MT450.

One month after its arrival in Sydney it was taken on charge by the RAAF as Auster MkIII A11-47. The "A" in A11-47 does not stand for "Australia". The RAAF had adopted a stores classification system with alphabetical prefixes for different types of equipment. A for aircraft, B for engines, C for motor transport and so on. A11 was for Austers (a new series being started about 1935, A12 was allocated to Bristol Bulldog II and A13 to the Link Trainer, of course). The "47" in A11-47 means that it was the 47<sup>th</sup> Auster to be listed.

A11-47 began its life in Australia in storage at RAAF Richmond, on the north-western edge of Sydney, N.S.W. Twelve months later it was dusted off and did some work with No.2 Communications Squadron. This involved weather reporting, message carrying and some army cooperation.

Finally, after 3 years, a proper job was found for A11-47. In September 1950 it went to the Aircraft Research and Development Unit Trials Flight at Woomera in South Australia. Woomera (an Aboriginal word for spear thrower) was the spot from which rockets and missiles were launched, and it had a connection with the nuclear bomb programme.

A11-47 was to have a hard life at Woomera. At one time, whilst being serviced, the propellor was turned and the engine started unexpectedly. The aircraft jumped forward and nosed over into the ground. On another occasion A11-47 ground-looped on landing which resulted in more repairs being needed. Then there was an undercarriage collapse due to a heavy landing. The loss of a tailwheel on another occasion was also recorded.

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A11-47 eventually got away from Woomera to Canberra, Australia's capital city. Interestingly, a Geiger Counter run over A11-47 indicates a good reading over the tachometer and a little over some of the other instruments. Being in the region of nuclear tests in central Australia hasn't affected it.

Soon after, A11-47 was moved to storage again, then listed for sale. Eventually it was purchased by the Rockhampton Aero Club. Still in its Australian foliage green camouflage and with the roundels painted over with blue paint, A11-47 was flown on the long journey from Tocumwal in southern N.S.W. to Rockhampton, on the central Queensland coast. It couldn't have been a high priority as the Certificate of Airworthiness overhaul took over a year to complete. Finally, on 7th March, 1962 A11-47 was registered as AusterIII Model F VH-RKA. The correct Auster designation for the MkIII was Model E. But, probably due to Department of Civil Aviation paperwork errors, the Auster III became AusterIII Model F in Australia.

Aviation researcher Geoff Goodall notes that the DCA Register ledger has a hand-written entry stating VH-WAK, A11-47 was registered to Wimmera Aero Club (in Victoria) on 6.3.62, then removed from the Register the following day: the same date that VH-RKA was registered to the Rockhampton Aero Club. This, Geoff assumes, is a clerical error as there are no other references to the aeroplane with Wimmera Aero Club.

Over the next few years, the ownership of VH-RKA changed hands on a number of occasions. It was flown in remote areas of central Queensland until moving to Brisbane in south-eastern Queensland in 1970.

At this time the hard work started, towing gliders. It was said that RKA had the back pulled out of it due to the glider towing. There are obvious repairs to the bottom longerons. Also, RKA doesn't have any weights in the tail. Some say that, when the tow hook is fitted, the weights are removed. Then, when the tow hook is removed the weights have long ago disappeared. Gliders were flown from the Surfers Gardens airstrip, just to the west of the tourist resort Surfers Paradise. It was inside the Surfers Gardens car race track. Air strip and race track have long since disappeared under expanding suburbia.

In 1978 RKA was struck off the Register at the owner's request and was eventually involved in a long-term rebuild, being restored to the Register in 1999 with a new owner.

Over the next 20 or so years RKA was often seen flying about southern Queensland in its cream paint scheme with black trim. Most of the rear military glasshouse had been restored and the Australian military serial, A11-47 painted on the sides.

After flying around the beautiful Lockyer Valley, west of Brisbane, and joining various social events for a few years, the current custodian, Steve Chapman decided to give RKA a bit of refurbishment. The aim is to return RKA to the way it looked in 1944, carrying its MT450 marks. With this in mind, Steve is interested in hearing from anyone who has any information about MT450, A11-47 or VH-RKA. Information, stories, pictures, anything.

This Auster story will be continued.

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VH-RKA Photos key



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IMG 4631 RKA in formation with Scale Nieuport 17, scale Spitfire and full-sized replica Fokker Dr1 at a Gatton breakfast fly in



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Others photos are flying over the Lockyer Valley, west of Brisbane, Queensland

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## QUIZ.

This quiz will cover the physics of flight. Much of flying is dictated by the same Laws of Physics as it was in 1910., when almost nobody flew anything. In fact the referrence for the QUIZ is the class book

'A CLASS BOOK OF PHYSICS' by SIR RICHARD GREGORY, Bart and H.E.HADLEY BSc .first printed 1909.

Q1. Vernier is:

- a) a pair of legs on a pivot used to mark out patterns on sheet
- b) the family name of the French 'pilotes de ballon' who flew over Paris on a papier mache' bag of hot air
- c) the family name of the 'inventeur' who created the measurement system for all the instruments used for fine tolerance measurement up until digital stuff came along
- d) a soft cheese and sweet wine platter served under oak trees in the summer evenings

Q2. Time - A mean solar day is:

- a) Time taken for the sun to make an average transit across the firmament (?)
- b) Extremely hot day on a bush airstrip with a blown tire and a dead mobile phone.
- c) The time it takes the average boss to realise you don't have a blown tyre and are just bludging in the shade
- d) The sum of all day lengths in a year divided by the number of days in a year

Q3. Volume: Which unit of volume is a constant?

- a) Schooner
- b) Gallon
- c) Litre
- d) Sydarb

Q4. Measuring your equipment - Accurate weight is measured with a dynamometer...

- a) Calibrated with a pound of butter
- b) And reading the numbers off the engraved scale
- c) Revving it up the redline until it smokes
- d) Using known test weights and tabulating the increasing load on the dynamometer , then interpolating the curve for the item in question.

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Q5. States of Matter - A gas readily adapts itself to the shape and size of the vessel containing it...

- a) Sometimes
- b) Always
- c) Only when heated
- d) Only when pressurised

Q6. Elasticity - A steel wire No30 SWG cross section 0.000121sq in. 65in long will stretch by (how much?) with a load of 8 lb.

- a) A fair bit
- b) It will break
- c) 0.088 inch
- d)  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch

Q7. Fluid Dynamics - Where do you find a velocity gradient?

- a) When applying full deflection of the elevator control to the nose down position
- b) When two surfaces are separated by fluid, but in parallel and one is moving relative to the other
- c) When trying to get into the VIP lounge bar at an airport
- d) At the Winter Olympics big jumpski

Q8. Density - Calculate the relative density of petrol in this bottle. Bottle in air 26.953 gm. The same bottle in petrol 19.046 gm. The same bottle in cold water 16.081gm.

- a) 7
- b) 0.727
- c) 16.233
- d) -8.4

Q9. Pressure - What does an altimeter and a sealed can in the freezer have in common?

- a) Can both end up in a freezing atmosphere
- b) Nothing
- c) One costs a fortune the other is a throwaway mistakenly put there by a thirsty man
- d) Air pressure will determine what happens to their appearance

Q10. Light - Landing on a runway, (a dry runway) but being fooled into seeing water.? It is

- a) Fire Brigade practice not cleaned up properly
- b) No wait, it's outback Queensland 2026 , it is water
- c) Temperature changing in the air close to ground causing refraction of light
- d) mirage

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Engine Developments.

It's out there. The www sows it. An engine. Where to start ?

Crazy power. 560 cc. 4 cylinder. They can be bought. From where is a bit vague because it's a drone engine. Shades of security issues. Why? I have no idea what goes into military drones around the world but maybe this thing is a competitor to well known 503 cc , even 582's. the proof is in the pudding of course. HP numbers are also vague. A flat four from photos on a doctor engines post. Country of Origin ? Engine quality control at manufacture plays such a big part in the success or failure of a unit. Many countries have come a long way with manufacturing ability and thteh desire to get a share in the market means costs will be kept down.

A four pot twin carby running a bit less stressed( it appears direct drive) might be worth a second look. Trade is moving on from USA dependent systems in aviation. We should be looking I reckon.

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## Quiz Answers.

1. C,
2. D
3. C
4. D
5. B
6. C
7. B
8. B
9. D
10. C and d

The book of wisdom is archaic to look at but it has good credentials. I will try for explanations if required. Interpreting the Q's is part of the quiz. Two parallel plates? In our case, one is an aircraft surface and the other is the still free air. Altimeters and tin cans. I think we've all seen the heated gallon tin being doused with cold water. An altimeter diaphragm expands when air pressure decreases inside. A tin can collapses when air pressure outside or decreasing pressure inside overcomes the tin and crunch. C'mon, fair go, it's sort of the same. How about a litre?. Litres are a defined dimension. 1 Gallon is the space occupied by 10 lbs. of water, which varies with temperature, therefore your fuel available may change with the season. As to relative density or SG, that was all maths so I have no idea.

Reading the Book "FLYING DOCTOR" by Clyde Fenton. He writes of continuous mirage on the sea on the sector between some unknown beach and BALI. He was very tempted to chase these illusions as he was very tired and just wanted to land. This was in 1935 flying an open cockpit Gypsy Moth from Darwin to Hong Kong.

My head is melting assembling this Quiz. Anyone willing to step forward as QuizMaster

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## FLYING EVENTS.

At this stage the FLYER knows of a planned gathering for fun at MURWILLUMBAH very early MAY. Nothing official, just heard a few old timers going that way. The old QVAG from WATTS Bridge used to do this and a bunch of battlers are going for a weekend. Some of the past attendees may not be there , so it's time to bring on the young'uns

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### Aircraft Books, Parts, and Tools etc.

Contact Rob Knight on mobile – 0400 89 3632

#### Tow Bars

Item	Condition	Price
Tailwheel tow bar.	Good condition	\$50.00

#### Propeller Parts

Item	Condition	Price
Propeller spacers, Assorted depths, all to fit Rotax 912 UL/ULS propeller flanges	Excellent	\$100.00 each
Spinner and propeller backing plate to suit a Kiev, 3 blade propeller, on a Rotax 912 engine flange.	Excellent	100.00

For all items, Contact Rob Knight on mobile – 0400 89 3632

Or email me at:

[kni.rob@bigpond.com](mailto:kni.rob@bigpond.com)

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### **Aircraft for Sale** **Kitset - Build it Yourself**

**Reduced Price**  
**\$1,480.00 neg**

#### DESCRIPTION

All of the major components needed to build your own aircraft similar to a Thruster, Cricket or MW5.

- Basic plans are included, also
- Hard to obtain 4" x 3" box section, 2 @ 4.5 metres long.
- Wing spar & lift strut material - 6 tubes of 28 dia. x 2 wall.
- 20 fibreglass ribs plus the moulds,
- 16 spar webs plus the moulds,
- 2 fibreglass flat sheets for the leading edges - 4 metres long x 1.1 metres wide.
- A ballistic parachute,
- A 4-point harness,
- Set fibreglass wheel pants, and
- More.



*Box sections and tubes*



*Support parts – Harness etc.*

**A very**  
**comprehensive**  
**kit of materials**



*Ribs, tubes, spats, etc*

Colin Thorpe. Tel: LL (07) 3200 1442,

Or Mob: 0419 758 125

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## **Aircraft Grade Bolts for Sale**

**Aircraft AN Bolts - \$500**

AN3, AN4 & AN5 bolts, all bagged  
- 500 bolts in total.

Today's cost – approximately **\$5,500**

A list can be supplied if required

**Contact Colin Thorpe –**

**0419 758 125**



Wanted –vintage oil pressure guage. Suit Gypsy Major 1C engine. Yes, they do have oil pressure. We don't lean forward with an oilcan. Mob 0403012501 and please leave message as we have no mobile signal at home and the landline has been struck by lightening again.

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### **Sky Dart Single Seat Ultralight for Sale.**

**\$4,500.00 NEG**

A single seat, ultralight, Taildragger. Built in 1987, this aircraft has had a single owner for the past 18 years, and is only now I am regretfully releasing it again for sale. I also have a Teenie II and am building another ultralight so I need the space.



*The landed Sky Dart III rolling through at YFRH Forest Hill*

TTIS airframe is 311 hours, and the engine, TTIS 312 – is just 1 hour more. Up-to-date logbooks available. 2 X 20 litres tank capacity. To be sold with new annuals completed.

It is easy to fly (for a taildragger), and a great way to accumulate cheap flying hours.

Call me to view, Bob Hyam,  
Telephone mobile 0418 786 496 or  
Landline – 07 5426 8983, or  
Email: [bobhyam@gmail.com](mailto:bobhyam@gmail.com)



*Landed at McMaster Field after my flight back from Cooma just West of Canberra. In the cockpit with me is GeeBee, my dog*

### **Single Seat T84 Thruster, disassembled and ready for rebuild.**

I have a T84 single seat Thruster project in my hanger at Watts bridge.

The fuselage is on its undercarriage, the wing assemblies are folded up and the skins are with them.

Included is a fully rebuilt Rotax 503 dual ignition engine and propeller.

And, most importantly – the aircraft logbook!

Asking price **\$5000.00**

Contact John Innes on **0417 643 610**

## Aircraft Engines for Sale

### Continental O200 D1B aircraft engine

Currently inhibited but complete with all accessories including,

- Magneto's,
- Carburettor,
- Alternator,
- Starter motor,
- Baffles and Exhaust system, and
- Engine mounting bolts and rubbers.

\$POA

Total time 944.8 hours. Continental log book and engine log are included.

Phone John on **0417 643 610**

----- ooOoo -----