

NEWS FROM HINKLER COUNTRY

A couple of months of mild weather has seen a lot of flying in our part of the world, several trips to Biggenden and a busy training schedule, which has resulted in two students completing their training.

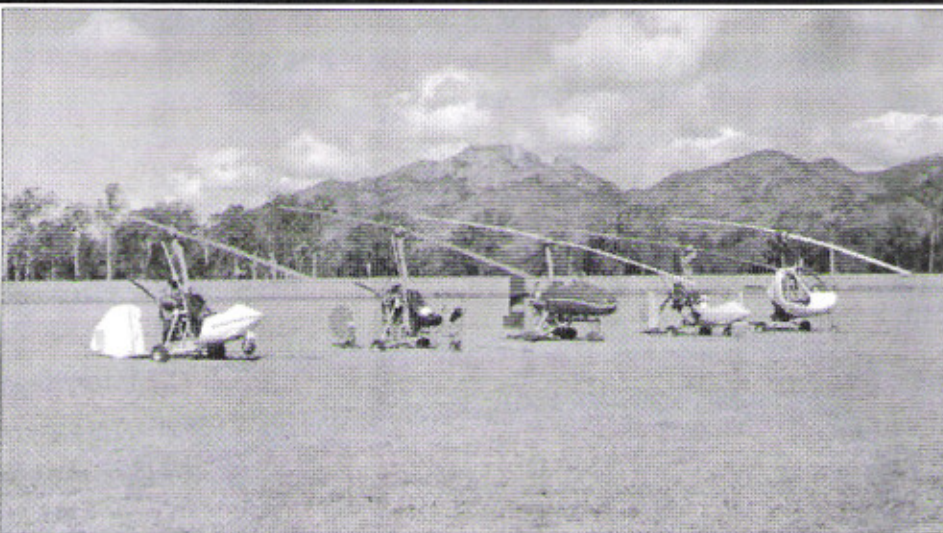
Congratulations to Justin Hill and Steve Stubberfield – many happy and safe flying hours in the future.

Last month there were six gyros at our Biggenden get-together and because of demand we have decided to run a monthly fly-in at Biggenden Airstrip on the third full weekend of every month. Anyone interested can contact me at work on 07 4143 4743, home 07 4151 8618 or email stubbs@interworx.com.au

I recently had the opportunity to test fly a rather unique gyro powered by a 200hp engine (yes 200hp!!), I will be writing a full story with photos in the next issue.

Safe flying

Dave Stubberfield A218



Above—The line up at Biggenden Airstrip Q;d

cate on 4 frequencies on this one. However I was able to negotiate with a helpful air traffic controller who, despite the intense traffic in the Washington DC area, agreed to help me by keeping it to 2 frequencies.

These negotiations delayed my flight well into spring. I then had to deal with the drawbacks of flying in warmer temperatures: diminished power, oil cooling aspects, and personal discomfort due to being overdressed at ground level.

I knew that perspiration in the inner layers of clothing at ground level would destroy the insulation at altitude.

In the initial test flight, Woodstock showed an impressive climb of over 1,300'/minute. This was despite using reduced power as high pitch precluded full-boost in the initial climb. The attitude was extreme and a little unnerving to me, a straight and level pilot. However, with a little practice, I became used to the steep attitude and the view of severe blue.

The flight also showed that the very well sealed and insulated cabin, that had previously served so well, had one obvious drawback at altitude. Condensation began to form on the inside of the cabin windows, and I knew that it would turn to frost above the freezing level. So we had to remove the seals around the door to allow the passage of air through the cabin, just enough to ensure the removal of exhaled, moist air.

I made a few rehearsals to ensure that everything would run smoothly. Just as well because on one of these, I found there had been a slow leak in the oxygen system, and that the radio did not work!

I had to abort the record attempt twice, once because of weather, and again because a security cap was placed over Camp David and the surrounding airspace. Finally, on a marginally passable day, I was able to get off the ground.

UNITED STATES

FIVE MILES HIGH

LW5's altitude/time-to-climb flight

Having achieved the long distance record in Woodstock, I was now very interested in testing how high she could fly. She had proved herself as a reliable, long range and endurance aircraft, and while I had previously flown her to 10,000' on several occasions, and once to 17,500' I had not had the chance to run her up to absolute altitude. I knew that in order to do this she had to be stripped of all but essentials and pared down from her long-range 610 lbs empty weight.

Ron Herron again proved indispensable in this task. We removed the long-range tanks, substituted lighter, longer blades, and even replaced the seat cushion, finally realising an empty weight of 555 lbs. The only additional weight I had to add was a 5 lb oxygen system.

Communications was my next consideration. Woodstock has a simple radio that has access only to 2 frequencies while in flight. While this had not been a problem on the previous flights, I needed to commu-

At 5,000', I announced my call sign, location and altitude, entered the designated discrete code into the transponder and waited. There was no flashing light on my unit and it dawned on me "If all else fails, turn it on." I turned the power on and waited. Still no light. The controller came back to me to say that he could not read my target. Crestfallen, I cancelled my flight plan, and advised that I was descending. A few seconds later, the function light began to blink! The controller could see me again, and to my relief, was one who could suffer fools. He generously cleared me to continue the climb.

At about 15,000' he advised me to transfer to the high altitude frequency. When announced, I turned on the oxygen flow and attached an oxymeter to my finger to monitor my blood oxygen level.

At 20,000' my climb rate had dropped to about 500'/min and in the increasingly thinner air the propeller and engine began to speed up. I had to reduce the throttle in order to stay under the redline, and found myself fully occupied monitoring engine and rotor function, airspeed, location, and making corrections to keep me there.

In addition, I noticed there was condensation on the inside of the oxygen mask, my glasses and the radio mouthpiece. The headset also seemed wet and began to slide off my ears. So I was busy for a while handling this. When I looked next I noticed that the GPS indicated 26,000'. That was the height to which I was assigned on my flight plan! I could see that Woodstock was still indicating a climb rate of 200-300'/min and that I could go even higher and push the record.

I waited for a break in the controller conversations to request permission to descend while noticing that the altitude now read 26,200'. In the course of this conversation I inadvertently allowed the airspeed to drop to zero and as the aircraft began to mush the nose dropped of its own accord and airspeed was quickly regained. I was surprised how little alarm this caused. Distractions were becoming significant so it was time to head on back down to the airport.

On the ground we checked that the flight took 70 minutes and used 7 gallons of fuel. While monitoring the frequency and chatter, the NAA witness heard a voice, which questioned, "That little guy is way up here!?!"

Woodstock had done it again. Weighing a shade over 550 lbs, a quarter the weight of our Volkswagen, she was made to climb. I have a feeling that she would like to poke round up there again to see how far she can really go.

The NAA (National Aeronautics Association) witness took the flight recorder to download and submit the results for acceptance by the FAI. The World records

claimed were:

Altitude: 26,408' (8,049 meters)

Time to climb to 6,000 meters: 24:28 minutes

Andy Keech

Washington DC USA

Date: Fri, 16 Jul 2004 12:20:25 EDT

Subject: Shattered!

The following was on the EAA web page today:

EAA Member Shatters World Gyroplane Records

Congratulations to EAA member Andy Keech, Washington, D.C., who on June 22 set what appear to be two world gyroplane records for altitude and time-to-climb in his homebuilt Little Wing Autogyro N100MK.

World records submitted to the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI) by an official observer from the National Aeronautics Association included: Altitude - 26,408 feet, which is more than 2,000 feet higher than the previous mark and time-to-climb to 6,000 meters - 24:28 minutes. For a description of the flight, visit the Little Wing website

Andy



VICTORIA

ROTORCRAFT ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC

The cold weather has well and truly hit Victoria, a much harder winter than we have had for quite a few years; it has been either gale force winds or rain or both, so not much flying being done.

We have been busy in other ways; our regular meetings have been excellent social occasions, with a lot of information being exchanged. We have more new members each meeting, most training and in the process of getting or making machines.

We had a special meeting recently where Paul Bruty ran a Radio Training Course for interested parties – we had fifteen people show up and do the test, everyone had already equipped themselves with the books and studied up.

Most passed on the night, the others will re-do the test next meeting – they only missed out by a couple of points, so a great effort by everyone and another step up in skills and training for Gyros generally.

Several machines are being done up while we are grounded, with everyone aware of the benefits and