



BRIEFINGS

Autumn Edition

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Issue 15

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL KULNINE FLYAWAY



Kestrel's Japanese contingent arrives at Kulnine:
L-R Hiroshi, Yoshi, Toshi and Kiyu

The serenity of an early Sunday morning at Mangalore Airport came to an abrupt end recently when Kestrel staff and students took to the skies with a fleet of 4 Robinson R22 's, and Bell 206L heading west for another Kulnine Flyaway.

The Flyaway which ran from 19th-24th March was attended by close to 20 participants, with a total of 5 nationalities represented, making for an exciting week of flying and fun around the campfire.

The Flyaway also played host to several visitors who had read about Kestrel Aviation's Flyaway successes featured in many aviation magazines over the past 12 months.

Chief Pilot of Aeropower and their new line pilot from Israel stopped in on their return flight to Brisbane to meet with staff and students and experience first hand the outback training opportunities Kulnine has to offer.

The Flyaway was also attended by a record number of female pilots and trainees. See Women in Aviation story on Page 3 of this newsletter for more information.

For Chillian student Antonio Bombal, Kestrel's unofficial party starter, this was his second trip to Kulnine Station. Antonio believes that the Kestrel Kulnine Flyaway is the ultimate flying training opportunity and he was only too happy to share his experiences in this newsletter. Please see the story featured below.



Ray with the Aeropower Crew

KULNINE FLYAWAY

A STUDENT'S

PERSPECTIVE: Antonio Bombal

The sun goes down over Kulnine Station and I am amongst the last students to arrive, after spending the day travelling to Kulnine by road in the Kestrel Ute. Eagerly the other late arrivers and myself anticipate the bush flying experience that lies ahead of us over the next week.

I am on my way to completing my commercial helicopter licence, after having recently attained my private aeroplane licence with Kestrel Aviation.

My time at Kulnine is dedicated to doing circuits, emergencies and low flying training with my instructors.

With my training showing improvement, and feeling more comfortable with my bush surroundings, I was shocked one crisp morning when my instructor asked me to land the helicopter, with him leaving me to complete my first flight as pilot in command.

The exhilaration of my first solo flight will stay with me forever, as will the feeling of the ice-cold water I was doused with as my initiation once I returned to camp.

My Kulnine flying experience has given me great satisfaction and appreciation of flying over terrain that lacks many distinguishing features. The flying opportunities I was exposed to surpassed my expectations.

By night as always the entertainment was around the campfire, sharing stories, and singing, it was a great mesh of nationalities. I am very thankful to my fellow students and the Kestrel staff as there was there were many lessons to be learnt from the yarns spun around the campfire.

Other activities I enjoyed at Kulnine included a river boat cruise and, in my free time yabbing in the shallows of the river and the dam. The end result after four days of hard work, was a total catch of 1 yabby which we set free, hoping that we will re-capture him again on our next expedition to the outback.



DICK SMITH VISITS KESTREL



Kestrel Aviation staff and students were privileged to meet successful business man and experienced pilot Dick Smith when he came to Kestrel Aviation in late February to complete his Multi-Engine Command Instrument Rating renewal, tested by Ray Cronin, in Dick's Augusta 109E.

Staff and students relished the chance to share in some of Dick's amazing tales of his adventures circumnavigating the world. Dick was also keen to hear the experiences of Kestrel's up-and-coming graduates, and participated in photo opportunities with eager students.

FAREWELL PAUL



Kestrel Aviation farewelled senior helicopter instructor Paul Fulton in early April. Paul, who completed his helicopter instructor rating with Kestrel Aviation in 2004 has been an integral part of Kestrel's training program for the last 2 years.

After braving the chilling winds and wild weather during two, month long stints in Antarctica over the summer (see Page 3 of this newsletter) Paul has packed up the family and headed west to the sweltering heat of Karatha in Western Australia, taking on a position with Helicopters Australia, where he is conducting marine pilot transfers in the Bell 206.

On behalf of everyone at Kestrel Aviation we wish Paul every success for the future.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to the following students on their recent achievements:

CPLH

- David Elliot 21/03/06
- Jarrod Danahay 30/03/06
- Craig Ingles 30/03/06
- Ashley Williams 27/04/06

PPLH

- Hugh Walsh 10/03/06

PPLA

- Antonio Bombal 25/02/06
- ### STUDENT SOLO'S
- Ashley Williams 03/02/06
 - Yoshiaki Ito 08/03/06

INSTRUCTOR RATING (H)

- Yvonne Dobinson 05/04/06



Hugh Walsh completes his PPLH



Ashley Williams being congratulated by Ray Cronin on completion of his CPLH

AIRPORT DEVELOPMENTS

Visitors to Mangalore Airport would be surprised to see the changes that have taken place since a change of ownership early last year.

The first visible change was the removal of the old pines that lined the airport.

Further improvements have included major repairs to the runways as well as a total facelift of the reception centre previously known as Biggles.

The reception centre was restumped, freshened with a coat of paint and a state of the art audio visual system was installed to improve the airports capabilities as function centre.

Continuing works are being carried out on the old office involving the construction of a reception/office area, and a section dedicated to the Lancaster pilots of World War II. As a tribute to the pilots that lost their life during this period the complete Biggles complex will be renamed the Lancaster Suite, and is expected to open early 2007.

The improvements are already paying off, with the airport hosting the Manardi Formula 1 racing team in late March, who used one of the runways to carry out test runs reaching speeds of 310km p/h.

The event attracted attention up to 10km away, with the roar of the engines audible in nearby Avenel.



KESTREL'S SUMMER IN ANTARCTICA

In late February Kestrel Aviation welcomed home Bell206 VH-FRL and Bell206L VH-WLI after having completed 3 month long journeys into the icy depths of Antarctica. The two aircraft made it home virtually unscathed, considering the treacherous conditions that were experienced enroute to Antarctica from Bluff in southern New Zealand on the second voyage. Ian McFadden and Paul Fulton, Kestrel's pilots on the first and third voyages experienced relatively calm conditions. Pilots on the second trip, Ray Buller, Rex Booth and Steve Jones were not so lucky. After recovering from the thrill of the experience and the sensation of standing on solid ground again, Rex Booth compiled the following report on his journey to deep Antarctica.....



We left Bluff on a high after having a de-brief with Paul and Ian as they returned from the first voyage. We were eagerly anticipating the journey ahead after Ian and Paul spoke of very unexpectedly calm conditions.

Our enthusiasm quickly waned after leaving the New Zealand sub Antarctic Islands however, where the Ship's Captain took a 3 day detour heading into the wind, our direction west instead of the south to avoid rough seas.



Weather conditions improved in the Antarctic allowing for some spectacular charter operations, with all passengers agreeing that the helicopter flights were the highlight of their trip. To ensure all passengers and staff experienced time ashore the helicopter crew had to operate continuously during times of suitable weather, sometimes for 7 hours during which time 25 take offs and landings were performed from the ship, taking advantage of the continuous daylight.



The B206L was also used to fly an injured Uruguayan fisherman to Cape Hallett where an Italian Twin Otter was waiting on the ice to fly the injured man to the American Hospital at McMurdo.

The helicopters allowed the passengers to be taken to places that would not have been accessible by Zodiac. One such occasion was at Terra Nova Bay where passengers were set down at 3000ft some 10NM inland from the coast. From this position passengers were really able to experience the vastness of Antarctica. An opportunity that would have not been possible had Kestrel not been able to provide this service aboard Svetlana.

WOMEN IN AVIATION

Kestrel's latest Flyaway was represented by a record number of female trainee and qualified pilots.

Recent Kestrel CPLH graduate Billie-Joe Kies and her CPLH holder sister Brigette used the Flyaway as an opportunity to catch up with Kestrel staff and students and participate in the festivities.

PPLH holder Meg Wade wanted to participate in a Kulnine Flyaway after reading about its success in several aviation magazines. For Meg the week provided her with the opportunity to carry out some advanced flying training, including low-level and sling.

Kestrel students Yvonne Dobinson and Anna Sutton relished the opportunity to get out of the Mangalore training area and gain some real bush flying experience.

Yvonne used her time at Kulnine to build hours towards the completion of her Instructor Rating, which she went on to complete the week after returning from Kulnine Station.

CPLH student Anna Sutton is no stranger to the outback, after recently making the move from the family station in north-west New South Wales to train with Kestrel.

With such a shortage of Commercial Pilots in the aviation industry at present it is encouraging to see more women rising through the ranks of this previously male dominated field.





ANOTHER FIRE SEASON COMES TO AN END

The 2005/2006 fire fighting season came to a close in early April. Kestrel's fire bomber Helitack 345, Bell 212 was dismantled upon return to Mangalore and shipped

back to Canada in readiness for the summer season over there.

Once again it was a quiet season, it initially looked as if it were going to be quite the opposite after a wet winter; new growth and hot temperatures were expected to rack havoc. December and January were busy for crews with huge fire fighting campaigns required to tackle large fires in the Grampians and Murrindindi Shire.

Both the Bell 212 and the BK117 finished the season successfully, as did the C182 which was contracted to the DSE for fire spotting.



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