

EMOTIONAL 42 YEAR REUNION

In 1952 as a young girl, Norma Baker, sailed off to England to purchase a light aircraft on behalf of her father R.B. Harvey. She returned to Australia with an Auster series J-1 three seat aircraft as deck cargo. The aircraft was re-assembled at Bankstown by Kingsford Smith Aviation. Originally registered as G-AIGL but for the last 54 years has been known as VH-AIK now lovingly restored by Rob Gard.

We know the creme and maroon tail-dragger in the back of the Cambridge Aero Club main hangar as "Rosie" but Norma knew the Auster as "Eric" named after Eric Robertson who had maintained the machine for a time.

"Norma and her son Brian arrived from interstate with various newspaper cuttings and photos. I set out the original Journey book and both Log books for them to see". said owner, Rob Gard. "There is quite a number of entries showing Norma doing local scenic flights and aerial photography".

Going through the books evoked a lot of memories like the flood relief trip on the second of March in 1955 from Griffith to Dubbo to return with 350 loaves of bread, the mail runs in 1956 and onwards and Norma's flights to South Australia.



Norma, the pilot, heading off from Sydney to Adelaide in the 1950's.



A teary Norma re-united with her Auster. She just sat in the aircraft for quite a time.

"After a couple of cups of tea and a long chat it was time to uncover the plane. Norma just stood back saying nothing at first, I noticed there were some tears in her eyes and I left her alone for a little while to see "Eric" and climb back into the aircraft for the first time in 42 years".

"When Norma finally stepped from the AIK she greeted me with a huge grin". said Rob.



MEET TOM

Tom Preston has been flying all his life, he was 8 weeks old when he began traveling between Flinders Island and Launceston, he can still recall some memories of this from when he was three. The flying must have imprinted on Tom because he has the bug bad. Congratulations to Tom on the first of January this year Tom went Solo,

Tom is looking for a career with the Airforce or maybe the Airlines, what-



Tom, hoping to get in the Airforce

TOM HAS THE BUG BAD, HE HAS TO LOOK UP EVERYTIME A PLANE FLYS OVER. SOUND FAMILIAR !

ever it's going to be Aviation. "The best bits are steep turns, turbulent flying,, the views and just the whole idea you are actually flying - controlling this thing up in the air". said Tom.

Tom won the major chocolate wheel prize at his School Fair, a flight to Southwest Tasmania with Par Avion. After he returned his dad made a couple of enquires at ParAv and Tom was soon flying a TIF with the ACST.

Tom says "I'm not finding it too hard at the moment, I did a lot of simulator work on the computer at home before I

PRESTON



Taking SIZ from the hanger to preflight

started, obviously the handling is different but the fundamentals are there. The BAK study was reasonably easy but the Private is a fair bit more involved, a bit of study should see that right".

"To get into the Airforce I will need to be academically advanced in Physics English and Maths by year 12 so there is plenty of study ahead for me". said Tom.