

# River Run West

The Wagga City Aero Club  
takes a run over the  
Murrumbidgee, Darling,  
Murray and Lachlan Rivers.

Captain of Flying: John Smith



## Program

- 20 Oct 2021 Depart Wagga Wagga for Hay – Morning Tea, then Wentworth.
- 21 Oct 2021 Fly to Lake Menindee, land at Hillston for Lunch, then to Griffith and Wagga.
- 22 Oct 2021 Fly Griffith to Wagga x 2 aircraft – what happened there is not shared.

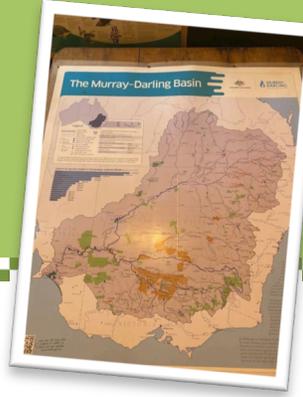
## The Team.

Mooney MKP:	John Smith, Col Duff, Tim Hutchings
Maule IBD:	Max Cochrane, Rob Davies
Jabiru 5331:	Bill Moncrief, Joyce Barrett
Jabiru 4949:	Rod Kendal
Cessna 177 CRD:	Roger Turner, Lyn Turner
Piper Archer PAR:	Andy Irvine, David Crooke

## What is a Maule?

The Maule is a single-engine light aircraft, 500 made in the USA, since the mid – 1980s. This one is a 1994 model, 2 seats in front row, 3 in the rear. 4 fuel tanks, 235HP Lycoming engine, 2 blade constant propeller, cruise at 128 knots.





## Two day Tour.

Smaller aircraft to leave first – faster ones 30 minutes later.

Bill and Joyce were the early birds, with their Jabiru 230 out on the tarmac, just before Rod and his 230 appeared. Andy and Crooky were next on the scene, GA Forest Hill. Max and Rob taxied over to us from Orange Grove, and

then there were 4 ready to go. A beautiful azure sky, cool 14 degrees temp to meet us, and about 7 – 10 knots of a tailwind to send us off West. Lovely close takeoffs by all, and very soon, the Jabs and the Maule were cruising at 4500', and the Arrow

at 2500'. All of us were getting along at about the same speed over the ground. There has been some rain around the Riverina lately, and that was evident with full waterways, and around Maud, the overflows created some wonderful

## Air tractor display at Hay.

green hues along their meandering ways, for many a mile. Flight conditions were perfect, and first into Hay for morning tea was a fifth member – Roger an Lyn

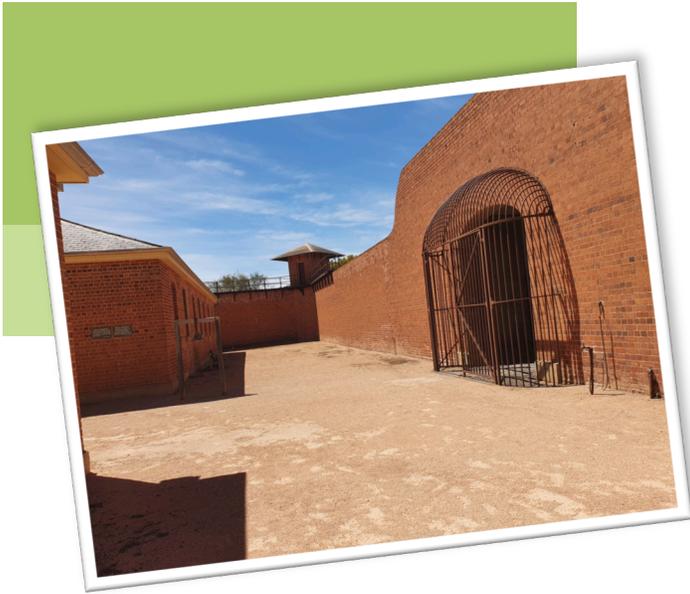
in their 1974 Cessna 177, which flew from their farm, North of Wagga.

The aero club in Hay provided a cuppa, some folks shared their muesli bars and home-made



biscuits.

There was a good old chat by the group going on while the local aerial spraying aircraft put on a



## Wentworth Gaol. Built 1879-1881

One of the first built Australian designed gaol. Bricks are made with local re clay, and the bluestone from Malmsbury, Victoria.

It ceased use as a gaol in 1927, and annexed by the local school until 1963, and now a local tourist attraction. Entry is \$6 per senior.

display of low runs over the gravel runway at 50', steep turns and reciprocal runs while opening a small water valve. Very entertaining, that's for sure.

John, Col and Tim flew overhead in the Mooney, as a reminder that we should be getting on our way, and we were airborne not long after that.

The next hour's flight was just as smooth as the first, and we landed to refuel the aircraft for a seamless departure the next morning.

Captain John had organised for a couple of

utes to come and run us into the Grand Hotel in lots of 4, and we were soon settled into our pretty good rooms. Roll call was in 15 minutes, and we trooped off to the bakery with our masks and phones to order pastries and coffees.

Next on the itinerary was a visit to the gaol, with a bit of a run down on the history by the current business owner.

Following this tour was a 1.4km walk to see where the Darling meets the mighty Murray River, a weir and a sizeable lock was a further 400m past the spiral lookout post.

When the touring was over, the front bar of one of the pubs was beckoning, so we dropped in for a couple of pre-dinner shouts and a bit of a catch-up with everyone. The evening ended with a fine dinner at the Grand, and a g'day from Bill Williams, from the South Wagga Newsagency, who was their with a contingent of paramedics helping out in the community.

Day 2 saw us straight back to the dining room for a continental breakfast, just after we had done our flight plans and checked the weather conditions – another

## Continued

fantastic day in paradise. The utes took us back to the strip, where we untied and readied our machines.

The Maule was first to get airborne, followed by the jabirus, the Arrow, Mooney and then the Cessna.

The eagles soared at 5500' while the sightseers settled for 3500'.

The rivers were full to the brim – thanks to the rains in QLD, and made for terrific viewing.

A couple went overhead Pooncarie, but all ended

up over Menindee Lakes on the way to Hillston for lunch by the Lachlan River behind the Club House Hotel in the main street.

The strip in Hillston is only 1.4km from the pub, so it was good to stretch the legs after a nearly 3 hour run. It was even better to walk back to the planes after rissoles, fish and chips, steak sangers and burgers as well.

Bill and Joyce's Jab 230 contracted a flat tyre while we were feasting, an as luck would have it, Rod carries a bike pump,

and someone else had a socket set. The pump wasn't enough though, and help was got from a crowd in town.



Bill worked hard with the bike pump, but, was just not enough this time.

We all said our cheerios there, and we headed back home again.

## Wrap-up.

All in all, thanks must go to the Wagga City Aero Club and in particular, John Smith – Captain of flying for organising this fly-away.

For Andy and Max, it has been the first time in two months since we've

been able to get airborne, thanks to Covid-19.

The group was a nice mix of people from the country, Regional and the coast of NSW, and got on just great.

The accommodation was great value and very

comfortable, the staff friendly and helpful, and the food and wine to a fairly high standard.



Down at the lock and weir,  
Murray River.



First get together in  
Hay for morning tea,  
and airshow.



John Smith's  
Mooney, shining in  
the hangar, ready to  
go.



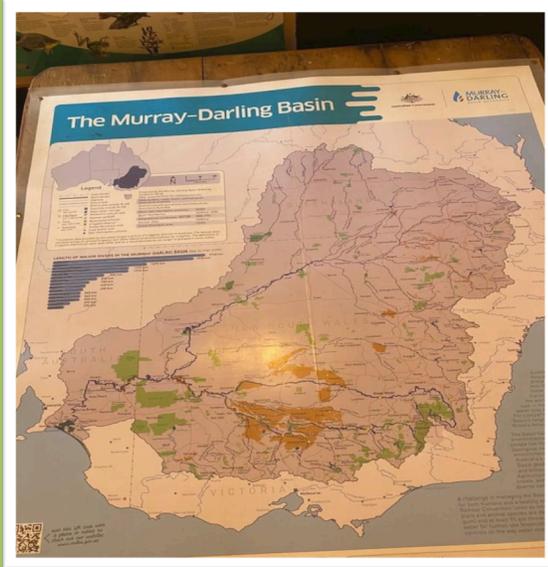
Pre-dinner beers at the pub. Note  
the extensive use of phones –  
updating the Service NSW app.



Flying over  
Menindee Lake –  
Full as.



Lined up at  
Wentworth.



The Murray Darling Basin, showing the catchment and the run to South Australia. All rivers outside this catchment in NSW run to the coast.

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Lunch by the Lachlan river at the rear of the Clubhouse Hotel – recently open again after a shut-down due Covid.



Crops growing around Wagga Wagga are looking spectacular this year.