

IRMA Conference: Toronto, Canada

Day 1: Thursday 17 May 2001

After an early start to catch the Ansett Flight to Sydney there was a rush to get those people transferring from the Sydney domestic terminal across to the International terminal as the departure time was drawing closer and closer. We had about 20 minutes to rush through immigration but luckily the Air Canada flight is late for takeoff. Felt good getting special treatment by the ground staff as we were being ushered through gates that are normally closed and other people looking on wondering who are these people and why are they getting preferential treatment, but we made the flight which pulled away from the terminal at 10:00am.

After the 1999-2000 trip to USA flying to Auckland and then onto Los Angeles, it was strange flying in a north-easterly direction along the Queensland coast line until finally we lost sight of land on route to Honolulu. All the announcements by the cabin crew are in English and then repeated in French, *Merci de piloter Air Canada, appréciez votre vol.* On route we flew through a number of storms even at 39,000 feet it was rather bumpy at times, never mind the food was excellent, plenty of leg room in cattle class and a pleasant flight. The only thing that is annoying is they keep playing a film clip of the Bee Gees singing "Stayin' Alive" as part of an advertising campaign. Ha Ha Ha Ha staying alive, I would rather be asleep thank you.

Around 3:30pm (Australian time) the sun disappeared as we flew into the night arriving in Honolulu around 12 midnight and could only see the lights stretching across the city, very pretty. Rang Robyn and had a chat as it was around 8pm in Australia as we had to wait for the aircraft to be refuelled, cleaned and re-supplied for the leg to Vancouver. I had the choice of the direct flight to Toronto but choose this one, madness as I didn't think that I couldn't see any of Honolulu from the air because it's midnight. Maybe the stretching of the legs walking around the terminal is worth it instead of the long direct flight.

We arrived in Vancouver at 9:30am and from the air it looks beautiful, cleared customs and completed the check in for the flight to Toronto. Sitting at gate 41 I am looking out at the snow capped mountains and the ski runs, fancy living and working 2 hours from the ski fields. Spring ski season runs to the end of May at Whistler and other British Columbia ski destinations.

I must have been extremely tired as I remember the aircraft lining up on the runway and rolling and the next we are at cruising height sometime down the route. As we approached Toronto we were warned of a storm and fog down to 200 feet so the approach was slow and it wasn't until we were just about to touch down did we catch a view of the airport and surrounding countryside. Being an internal flight we were soon out of the airport, on the city motor coach, into a taxi and being dropped off at the Howard Johnson hotel 592 Sherbourne Street, a restored Georgian four (4) story building with lots of character and is only 1 km from the city centre and close to the Sherbourne Subway Station making it easy to get to and from the IRMA Conference at the Toronto Marriott Downtown Eaton Centre.

Day 2: Friday 18 May 2001

Picked up from the hotel by the tour company with a bus full of tourists heading for Niagara Falls and although the fog is still heavy and it's raining lightly, the bus set out through the suburbs down the highway system, past the CN Tower, the dome and along the shores of Lake Ontario and past the Ford car plant and steel mill.

The Canadian side of Niagara Falls is much better than the USA side because of the view and tourist attractions. On first impression the falls are not as high as I had anticipated, but at 54 metres and the amount of water flowing over the edge is very impressive, the roar of the water is very loud, plenty of mist and is windy. Our tour included a walk through the tunnels bringing you out behind the falls talk about a deafening roar and was surprised there was no barricade to prevent a person from jumping into the waterfall, I mean it would be instant death, but it would be easy to do if you were that way inclined.

Next it was down the walkways to the boat ramp to board the 'Maid of the Mist' for a cruise right up to the face of the falls. Before boarding you are given a blue poncho to wear and you soon realise why it's called the mist as everyone who stands out on the front deck gets covered with the fine mist, absolutely soaked but loving it. The boat leaves from the Canadian docks past the base of the American Falls, then into the basin of the magnificent Canadian Horseshoe Falls where it manoeuvres into various positions so you can take plenty of photos and get a drenching in the eman time.

Back on the bus and off to the Skylon Tower for lunch. The tower is located in the centre of the hotel and the lift (on the outside of the tower) takes you 775 feet above the Falls and reaches the observation deck in less than 1 minute. The view on the ride up (and down) is magnificent and from the observation deck you can see Niagara Falls, the Great Gorge, Niagara wine district, Buffalo (USA) and they say on a clear day New York city and Toronto. I can't remember what we had for lunch as I spent most of my time looking out of the windows and didn't even notice the restaurant was revolving until it was pointed out to me.

After we got back on the bus we stopped in at Niagara on the Lake. This beautiful village dating back to the 1800s is the site of the old Neutral Indian village of Onghiara and settled at the close of the American Revolution by Loyalists coming to Upper Canada. If you into history, ports, restaurants, shopping and relaxing this would be a perfect place to spend a couple of days exploring the many attractions close by. On our way back to Toronto we made one last stop to a winery for some wine tasting of 'ice wine', a type of dessert wine produced from grapes that have been frozen while still on the vine. The sugars and other dissolved solids do not freeze, but the water does, allowing a more concentrated grape must to be pressed from the frozen grapes, resulting in a smaller amount of more concentrated, very sweet wine.

I have been in email contact with Trevor Page, a fellow X-air ultralight aircraft owner and pilot and we had arranged to meet up and to spend some time with his family. Trevor picked me up at around 10pm and we drove out to his place to meet his wife Karen and her 2 sisters and their boyfriends. Their house is about 1 hour out in the country off the highway leading to Niagara Falls.

Day 3: Saturday 19 May 2001

After a great night's sleep Trevor and I headed out to a private airstrip owned by a retired airline pilot and his wife who is an ultralight flying instructor. By the time we were ready to take to the air to go to a fly in another 4 ultralight aircraft had arrived and we made the 1 hour flight in information to another country airstrip and no sooner had we landed and we were tucking into a solid breakfast. The countryside is much like the Lockyer valley back home in Queensland with small farms, trees, creeks, villages all on the outskirts of Toronto and Lake Ontario due East. The flight ceiling is supposed to be 700 feet but everyone flies around 1500 feet for safety i.e. glide factor should you have engine problems.

There were about 20 aircraft of all makes and types on the deck at the fly in but the one that stood out for me was the 60% replica of a Spitfire, very impressive. We had to leave early as the wind was starting to pick up and fortunately it was a tail wind so made it back to the hanger in good time instead of flying into the wind. After putting the X-air back into the hanger we went back to the house where he showed me his restored Corvette and Thunderbird. I have really been well looked after by Trevor and Karen and the two Koala Bear pins I gave them could not repay them for the wonderful time, meals and fun I had.

Around 4pm Trevor drove me back to the hotel in Toronto and before long a group of lecturers from Victoria University in Victoria who I met at the IRMA conference in Anchorage (Alaska) last year had arrived. We all headed off for a walk around the neighbourhood which resembles parts of Melbourne with its highrise flats and apartments, tree lined streets, trams, small corner stores and fast food outlets. By the time we walked back to the hotel we all agreed that this neighbourhood may not be all that safe when you see police in 'flack jackets'. In the future we will stick to the subway as it will take us straight to the conference centre.

Day 4: Sunday 20 May 2001

Today is the first day of the IRMA 2001 conference at the Marriott Hotel so we were up early in the morning and headed off to the subway to catch the train only to find out that on a Sunday the subway doesn't start until 9am so we walked the 6 or so blocks downtown for the 8am start.

Each of the presentations was supposed to be 20 minutes with 5 minutes of questions, however we found out that the organising committee slotted in another speaker resulting in all presentation being cut to 12 minutes and no question time. All that research and work putting the paper together and here we are on the fly rushing through each slide so that the 7 presenters could be heard. What made matters worse, the person that was slotted in didn't turn up so the whole session ended early with a lot of unhappy and disgruntled lecturers who had come half way around the world to present our work.

Behind the Marriott Hotel is the Eaton Centre, a huge mall among other things, much like the Myers complex in Brisbane so we had lunch in the food court before heading back for the afternoon session. In the evening there was a cocktail party where all the conference delegates could mix and network but not being one to network that much I simply eat the food and had a few drinks.

This time we could take the subway back to the station about 100 metres from the hotel we were staying in. The subway system uses a ring system with one loop running North and South while the other ring runs East and West and for a \$2 token, you can ride in any direction.

Day 5: Monday 21 May 2001

Today we caught the subway to 'Owen' station with a short walk to the marriott. This is my big day with 2 presentations making 3 in total. First there was a conference breakfast and opening address by the chair of the conference and it appeared all of the delegates were there as the room was very full.

After the breakfast it was my turn for my 2nd presentation and this time I could use the allocated speaking time and questions and answer time. I think it went well based on the number of questions and interest in my research. In the afternoon I presented my PhD proposal the symposium and true to form with PhD candidates the audience posed plenty of questions about the theoretical framework, research methodology and how I had challenged many of the concepts the same authors who were in the room had written in textbooks used by universities around the world. The biggest debate revolved around using a grounded action research method for the research with many of the audience saying that what I was doing was consulting and not research. However, that stirred up the academics who support grounded action research so there I was standing on the stage behind the podium listening to a rather heated debate going on across the room between the various academic camps, loved every minute of it as it shows how false, childish and unimaginative many academics are and how jealous and possessive they are about what they believe is true research.

David Whiteley who is an author on eCommerce and has his work published by McGraw-Hill and who who I was challenging about the paradigm shift in eCommerce and eBusiness was my greatest supporter and he told them off challenging them to be creative and helpful with the PhD candidates instead of ripping them apart with biased self-centered view points as research is about discovery and not regurgitating what other authors have written. Good on you David at least there is one academic who supports new thinking.

Sunday night we had a dinner down by the harbour so we decided to walk through the entertainment district, call into 'Hooters' to see what all the fuss was about (topless waitresses) as this had been one of the dreams of one of the VU lecturers. In my opinion Toronto isn't all that great, a big city but it could be a city anywhere in the world.

Day 6: Tuesday 22 May 2001

With all the pressure off I slept in this morning while the other VU lecturers left early as they were presenting at various time slots during the day. I had a very pleasant walk downtown looking at all the landmarks and features, through the walkways under the streets and roads which are heated in winter and protect people from the harsh chilly winter conditions, through the shopping mall and into the conference centre of the hotel.

As I walked into the conference hall there was David Whiteley who came up to congratulate me on thinking outside of the square and looks forward to reading my research outcomes as this may shed light on the changes that are occurring in eCommerce and eBusiness. To my surprise Professor Janice Burn from Edith Cowen University in Perth Western Australia and chair of the conference came up and apologised for her conduct during the symposium and encouraged me to continue with my research and challenge the current thinking model for SMEs adopting eCommerce and eBusiness. Well I never would have expected that.

The IRMA conference lunch was excellent and during the awards presentations and keynote speech from Lucent Technologies I questioned (to myself) how these papers won the awards as I thought they were not that enlightening and didn't present new knowledge as that is why we really do research. I made up my mind there and then not to attend any further IRMA conferences as it appears that it's a close knit club who simply look after each other's interests. The interests centre on Northern America and Central Canada as they think they are fount of all knowledge and the rest of the world is here to pay homage at their feet and pick up their crumbs they brush aside onto the conference floor.

I couldn't take any more of this crap so I headed out into the pouring rain for the subway for the ride back to the hotel. I have deliberately kept away from the VU lecturers attending the presentations that suite my teaching at the University of the Sunshine Coast as well as helping my research topic. Tonight I am staying indoors to catch up with my note taking and consolidation of presentations at the conference as well as getting my diary up to date as tomorrow I fly out at 2pm for Montreal to visit the Class - BushCaddy factory in Montreal. This also gives me the opportunity to get my clothes washed and dried ready for packing in the morning. If the weather is fine and the cloud lifts I would like to go to the CN Tower to take a couple of photos and have another look at the city.

Day 7: Wednesday 23 May 2001

The rain has stopped and the sun is trying to shine through the fog and clouds as I set out for the subway to Union Station and the short walk to the CN Tower (Canadian National). From the ground you cannot see the top of the tower as it is hidden by the fog but that's not going to dampen the experience of going up to the observation deck on this 553m or 1,815 foot communications tower that was completed in 1976 (construction began in 1973) and for a while held the record as the world's highest tower.

The view from the lift that is on the outside of the tower as you rise from the base is good but would be magnificent on a clear and sunny day. Before you know it you're at the observation deck 340 metres above the ground and there is a further ride to the next level but as we are up in the fog I didn't see the purpose in paying the extra fee.

On feature I found thrilling was standing on a glass panel and looking down to the ground. While I was standing there taking photos others would come up, balk and step back and you can see the fear in their faces with some making all sorts of horror and shocked sounds, squibs. Others however showed their delight when they stood on the glass panel to have their pictures taken, a must do experience if you're in Toronto regardless of the weather conditions.

We could still see parts of Toronto through the fog as you take the 360 degree walk around the observation deck looking at the views through the glass panels. You can also step outside into a heavily secure area to get a better view but once again the fog is spoiling the view. Next door to the tower is the Blue Jays baseball park, pity they don't play this time of the year as I would like to go and watch a baseball game. There is a restaurant in the tower as well but there is no time for a meal today, lots to do before catching the flight to Montreal.

This time I walked back to the hotel so soak in the last sights and smells of Toronto and phone Marlene from Class – BushCaddy in Montreal to let her know the flight I will be on to Montreal as

she will be picking me up from the airport. After packing and checking out of the hotel I caught the subway to 'Kipling' (end of the line) and the free 192 Rocket bus to the airport.

As I got to the airport early the check in desk from Air Canada put me on an earlier flight to Montreal, thanks Air Canada, better than sitting around. As we took off for the 1 hour flight to Montreal it was bucketing rain outside the fog made it difficult to recognise any of the landmarks but one major event occurred in-flight. As we passed from Ontario to Quebec instead of the flight crew making the announcement first in English and then French it was reversed so that the first message is in French and then repeated in English.

Waiting for me in the hall was Marlene to welcome me to Montreal and outside in the car was Shaun the other part owner of Class who design and build the BushCaddy range of ultralight aircraft. We drove through parts of Montreal on our way out to the factory in Les Cedres located north of the Saint Lawrence River in the Montérégie of *Quebec* near Vaudreuil-Dorion. They are building a new 4 seater and it is interesting watching the workers use the tools, they certainly know their craft and I am looking forward to learning about working with metal, riveting and aircraft manufacturing.

Late in the evening we drove to a restaurant in Saint-Lazare, also known as Saint-Lazare-de-Vaudreuil to lake Lake Saint-Louis to chat about the dealership of the BushCaddy R-80 in Australia. Once the meal was completed Shaun took me to his place to stay while in Montreal and would give us more time to talk about opportunities to sell the Bushcaddy in Australia. It was about 11:30pm when we finally said goodnight.

Day 8: Thursday 24 May 2001

Shaun's place in the suburbs but on the deck outside having breakfast with the trees all around and the green lush grass you wouldn't know you are in built up area until you go out the front of the house.

On our way out to the factory Shaun stopped off at various places along the way picking up components for the new 4 seater plane they are building. All the signs are in French with hardly any words in English and Shaun pointed out that only around 10% of people in Montreal spoke any English as French is the official language and is rigorously policed by Quebec's language police who crack down on various retailers and businesses in an effort to uphold the French Language Charter, Bill 101. I thought this must be a joke but no it's for real, well stiffen the cows opps, raidissez les corneilles, sorry language police. Shaun couldn't stop laughing as I tried to read and pronounce the French words in my Australian accent.

Once you leave the main highways you immediately notice the deterioration in the roads as they need a lot of maintenance work and another thing I noticed was cars only have a number plate on the rear, not front and back like in Australia.

Back at the factory I was put to work and after a demonstration on riveting it was my turn to start earning my keep. Last time I did any riveting was back in high school doing manual arts but being taught by professionals using the various tools to prepare the surfaces, cut, clean the edges, drilling holes, de-burring the holes, spray the surfaces, clamp using clecos, before starting riveting in the centre and working to the outer edges to stop any ripples in the surface of the aircraft grade aluminum. Although I was given excellent instructions, Corin and Mario watched every step I was

doing as they are the ultimate professionals but as they couldn't speak and English we had fun trying to communicate and when Mario noticed there was a smile dent in one of my rivets they were trying to explain to me that I had made a mistake and the rivet must be drilled out and replaced. Finally when I got the message I said now I get it, 'it's bugged' . Shaun translated what I said in French maintenant je l'obtiens, « il a lambiné » which made Mario and Corin burst out laughing. From that moment on anytime I did something wrong Corin or Mario would say in their French accent 'buggered'.

The new 4 seater is much like a Cessna 172 but will be much lighter to fit in with their category for registration of an ultralight aircraft but it would not pass CASA regulations in Australia as an ultralight is restricted to 2 seats only.

Across the road there is a truckies stop where the crew go for lunch and supper and once again everything is in French and no translations to English so Shaun and Marlene translate the menu for me while the waitress and other staff look on wondering what is going on. It is strange how they French try to change anything and everything that has an English origin by reversing words or giving them a whole new word as a substitute, they must really hate the English. Shaun was explaining that there is a special government department who negotiate with companies in Montreal to try and have them change their business name but how can you change an international brand like Union Carbide, John Deere, Canadian National Railway and Microsoft etc.

When it was time for me to order my meal I simply asked for something typically French and let it to them to choose. When she brought out my meal and waited to see my expression and comments I thanked her, had a taste and said this is shepherd's pie. Well all hell broke loose in the kitchen and with the staff as they had cooked '*plat irlandais constitué de légumes et des morceaux de boeuf recouvert de pommes de terre et cuit au four*' not shepherd's or cottage pie. From that point on the staff were not that cooperative so I had to leave it to Shaun to order my meals in the future as I was snubbed.

I really appreciate the assistance from Corin and Mario as they take time to explain aircraft manufacturer and before long we have sorted out a broken French/English way of speaking and surprisingly we understand each other with Maelene or Shaun having to step in on the rare occasion. They also explain the modifications that have been made to the BushCaddy R80 that I will need to be aware of when I build my aircraft when I get back home.

The crew at Class work long hours and it's about midnight when we get back to Shaun's place and not much sleep before we start again at 7:30am in the morning. Didn't take me long to drift off into '*pays des merveilles, pays imaginaire*' or never never land.

Day 9: Friday 25 May 2001

Today we were to meet a pilot with a BushCaddy that has floats and while he managed to land on the lake and pulled into the marina it was far too rough to go flying so after a chat and inspection of the plane we headed back to the factory to continue working on the 4 seater that is really taking shape. They want to have it finished, flying and registered in time of Oshkosh where they will have a stand and perform demonstration flights.

Time to closely inspect the Voyager R80 parked outside the factory and go for a couple of circles on the grass to test the flight controls. It is so quiet inside the cockpit even with the Rotax 912 engine revving at 5,800rpm and the view over the nose and out the side under the wing is excellent and with the hydraulic breaks easily hold the plane during engine run-up and bring the plane to a stop when taxiing. The hydraulic breaks were installed to assist pilots in short take-off strips running the engine up to full revs before lifting off the brake pedals.

Shaun and I headed back on the road to pick up more components and it also gave me an opportunity to more of the countryside and the city. Later in the day the weather subsided and the sun came out so we headed over to the original airstrip at Saint-Lazare where Shaun has his R80 taildragger and after entering the training area Shaun put the aircraft into stalls and tight turns to demonstrate the manouver ability of the R80. During the manouvers there was no drop in the wings just a slight flutter in the controls.

Next test was to tuen off the engine to test the glide ratio and for a metal aircraft it out performed the X-Air and much better than the Skyfox I did all my flight training in. Back to the glide and only metres above the ground Shaun fired up the Rotax 912 engine again and put it into a climb of around 1000 feet per minute. Back at 1500 feet and it was my turn to take control of the aircraft and test the flying characteristic for myself. I have not flown an aircraft with a centre control stick before but it didn't take long to get use to the controls. The aircraft is very responsive and handles like a dream and after a small trim I was flying the aircraft hands free just using the pedals to fly the aircraft back to the airstrip where Shaun took over, gave the radio calls and landed the aircraft as I have not learned how to taxi, take off and land a taildragger aircraft. Very impressed and know I have made the right decision to buy a BushCaddy R80 once I have sold my X-Air.

It was getting dark as we left left the airstrip but as we drove along the road I couldn't get over the beauty of the countryside, the houses, lush paddocks, hoarses but was soon brought backto reality when we arrived at the factory as there was more work to do on the 4 seater only to stop for 'supper' before arriving back at Shaun's place around midnight.

Day 10: Saturday 26 May 2001

This is my last day so after breakfast I thanked Vera (Shaun's wife) for hosting me before we headed back to the factory a different way across the Island of Montreal. The historial knowledge Shaun has on the French and the English and Montreal is outstanding and is backed up with his collection of artefacts of coins, muscats, cannon balls, hammers, tomahawks etc he collected over the years diving the rivers and lake systems around Montreal. Some of the items go back to the earliest time when the French and English traded and fought wars in the 1600's and 1700's.

When we got the factory Mario and Corin had finished their part of the construction and after 2 weeks of non-stop construction living and working in the factory they headed back home up north, about a 6 hour drive. They were impressed when I handed them a couple of Aussie pins and said '*bonjour, au revoir*' in my broad Australian accent.

One last look at the R80, check out all the tools they use and record the part numbers before heading over to Saint-Lazare to say goodbye to Marlene but because Shaun and Marlene had to discuss engineering issues with the 4 seater Ron the third partner in the business drove me to the airport to catch the flight back to Brisbane, Australia.

This short visit to meet Shaun and Marlene and spend time in the factory learning the skills from Mario and Corin has been invaluable, something you cannot pick up reading the instruction manual.

Ron dropped me at the airport 45 minutes before the advertised flight time and when I went to check in I was told I had to pay \$10 Canadian airport improvement tax, they get you every way don't they. The ladies on the counter were so nice that I also gave them each a Koala pin which they thought was great, well I need to get rid of them anyway.

The plane took off 10 minutes late and after the initial bumpy climb out of the weather pattern at 35,000 feet above the clouds the flight is smooth as we travel the 4 hours to Vancouver. There is a group of school or college students onboard and the young girl sitting alongside me is doing trigonometry and although and although I can see what she is doing, it's all in French, so I won't be able to help as I guess she only speaks French as well.

As we got closer to Vancouver the clouds cleared and I could see the snow capped mountains, lakes and river systems and it look absolutely brilliant, and I don't know if the ski runs I could see were from Whistler or another resort but I seeing them makes me determined to come back one day to have a ski.

They are upgrading the Vancouver airport and after talking to Robyn on the telephone went for a walk as I had 5 hours wait for my connecting flight. Wow 5 hours, if only I could go through immigration and customs and head into Vancouver. I thought about it for a while but then realised that I would have to be 90 minutes before the departure to go through all the immigration and customs again and it just wasn't worth it.

On the flight from Vancouver to Honolulu no one was sitting on the seat next to me so I could spread out and enjoy the flight that arrived in Honolulu at 10:30pm. Once again the stop over in Honolulu was boring as there were only a couple of shops open so it didn't take long to window shop so the only sensible thing to do was to stretch out and have a snooze.

Unfortunately I had someone sitting next to me on the 10 hour flight from Honolulu to Sydney so I couldn't stretch out like before.

Day 11: Monday 28 May 2001

As we crossed the International dateline we lose a day as we head for Australia and at one point we flew over a big thunder storm with lots of lightning that lit up the sky, looks good from above. Eventually we could see the orange glow from the rising sun.

As we approached Australia Sydney was still in darkness and as we started descending into the flight path to Sydney airport we could see the lights along the South Coast as we tracked North-West before joining the circuit into the airport. By now the rays of sun together with the lights of the Opera House and the city provided a perfect backdrop on the left side of the aircraft for international visitors arriving in Australia.

The movement through immigration and customs was very quick but the transfer to Ansett in the domestic terminal was painful with long queues lining up for a boarding pass and then to board a bus, this is one service that needs improving. Also, there are a lack of clocks so you can rest your

watch and see how much time you have to catch your next flight, seems so Hicksville especially for Australia's number one airport (so they claim).

Well I am writing this diary entry from gate 33 because as it turns out I have a long wait for my flight to Brisbane and in the background I can hear people trying to reschedule their flight to get an earlier one as they had connecting flights in Brisbane. Apart from this it is great to be back in Australia even if it is in Sydney can sitting in another airport terminal and as I said earlier, I will never go to another IRMA conference but look for other conferences to attend.

I am looking forward to getting home, have shower and shave in our own house with Robyn and my family. I know I am a lucky person, take too much for granted and should tell Robyn, David and Greg how much I love them and appreciate what God has given us.

We have now boarded the Ansett flight for Brisbane on the final leg home and have just worked out the colour scheme for my BushCaddy R80. I have spent a lot of time looking at various aircraft colour schemes around the world and think the Ansett colour scheme seems the best, so when I get home on the computer I will try different combinations to see what works out the best.

As we take off and track north to Brisbane, Sydney and the New South Wales coast line look a picture out of the left hand side window but that storm we flew over is now getting closer to the Australian coast line and with it, some very impressive lightning activity. The weather at 39,000 feet is bumpy with very strong westerly winds buffeting the plane. On the way north it was good to watch the Channel 7 news and find out what has been going on in Australia as I have not heard anything about Australia since leaving for Canada 11 days ago.

Looking at the countryside and hills it certainly is a contrast to Canada and what I flew over 26 hours ago with the snow capped mountain and my mind drifts back to the time I spent with Shaun, Marlene, Corin and Mario building the 4 seater BushCaddy aircraft and learning the skills from master professionals, I just hope I can do a job just as good when I build my R80.

We have reached our destination with a direct descent into Brisbane airport touching down at 10:00am on Monday 27 May 2001.