NOTAM from IFFR World President Peter More

Dear IFFR Members,

It is that time of the year to mark your calendar for activities at the 2011 Rotary International Convention in New Orleans. The IFFR Banquet will take place on MONDAY May 23, 2011 at the Loews New Orleans Hotel, 300 Poydras Street, New Orleans, LA. Please come and enjoy the fellowship gathering that will begin at 6PM followed by dinner at 7PM. On WEDNESDAY May 25, 1PM the Annual General Meeting will be at the SpringHill Suites New Orleans Downtown, 301 St. Joseph Street. Our program will be Eric Charlez (#3211) from Belgium speaking on his trans-oceanic adventures. I look forward to seeing you there!

In January, it was a delight to have former Scandinavia Section Chair Christer Liljenstrand (#6671) and his wife, Marianne, visit us in Los Angeles. They joined me at my Rotary Club of Westwood Village for lunch with a flag exchange followed by a visit to UCLA, the Getty Center then dinner. A few weeks later, Shirley and I flew to San Diego Montgomery Field to visit the Liljenstrands at the hanger of Emidio Del Conte (#7029) who was busy finishing up his beautiful Kit Fox.

A box containing IFFR archival material arrived from Mark Crotts (World President 1978-1980). The IFFR Membership Directory of 1975, listed some interesting names, among them Elrey Jeppesen (#41), Bill Cutter (#129), audio pioneer Paul Klipsch (#563) and Honorary Member Senator Barry Goldwater (#72). Today, we continue to enjoy the company of our long time members, Ray Stebbings (#65), Ives Branson (#171), Angus Hines (#314), John Fisher (#370), Howard Wunderlich, PWP Charles Strasser (#652), Dan Nalven (#801), Stow Kentish (#822) and Richard Sollner (#857).

Since our formation in 1965, IFFR membership is open to all Rotarians with an interest in aviation. A recent change in the Rotary International Code of Policies allows the addition of “spouse of Rotarians” and “Rotaractors” in Rotary Fellowship. I hope you will continue to tell your Rotarian friends about IFFR and sign them up as members.

Penelope Cornwall (#8228) gave a presentation to District 5280 Rotarians on fellowships with a highlight on IFFR and home hospitality provided.

I am pleased to announce the continuation of PWP Feroz Wadia’s “President’s Award for Achievement”. This will be presented to the Section Chair with the highest membership growth for 2011. Let the race begin!

Yours in Rotary Fellowship and Safe Flying,
Peter More

Peter More, World President 2010-2012
International Fellowship of Flying Rotarians

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IFIfr Activities Before, During and After the RI Convention in New Orleans

NOW is the time to check out our website, make your plans, complete our registration form, and send your money. The convention is earlier than usual this year so the New Orleans experience can be more pleasant, so you need to be making an confirming your plans now.

The most current information is on the website, www.iffir.org, where you can find both the information and the registration form. We recently had a minor tweak in our post-convention fly about after Americas VP and World President Elect Dr. Michael Graves took the best part of a week to fly the route.

Pre-convention: On Friday afternoon, 20 May, a fly in to the Slidell, Louisiana airport (KASD) will be hosted by local Rotarians. We’ll have a welcome BBQ and home hospitality provided.

Convention week: Official airport is New Orleans Lakefront (KNEW), just the other side of Lake Pontchartrain from Slidell. Many of us will make that short hop by mid-day on Saturday the 21st. Our annual IFFR banquet will be Monday evening the 23rd. Beverages and fellowship will start at 1800 and the dinner is scheduled to start at 1900. This dinner will be in lieu of home hospitality night, which is not quite the same as it used to be. This way everyone who wishes can make whichever opening ceremony time they are assigned. Our board and annual general meetings will be held on the last day of the Convention, Wednesday 25 May. The “AGM” is always interesting, and the presentation after the business part of our meeting by Eric Charlez will be fascinating.

Post-convention: The Southern Skies Fly-About full program begins Thursday morning the 26th and takes us to 5 airports before concluding Sunday morning 5 June. We’ll overnight in Natchez, Mississippi, Smyrna, Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee, Asheville, North Carolina and Charleston, South Carolina. If you can’t come to the entire fly about, attend as much as you can — follow the instructions on the registration form, attend first, last or middle as you can arrange your schedule.
IAN KERR  
VICE PRESIDENT  
EUROPEAN REGION

I live just south of Aberdeen in northeast Scotland with my wife Jan. It was the gift of an introductory flight from Jan that first got me flying in late 1977 and my passion for flying was born. Jan has joined me for some trips over the years with our children, Christine and Stuart, but she’s never been as enthusiastic about flying as me - I’m sure this has a familiar ring to many other pilots.

I joined Rotary in June 1993 and shortly after that Jan’s cousin was visiting with her Norwegian husband, Tito. The Norwegian section was initially started by the involvement of the late John Ritchie and it was Tito who told me about IFFR as he was a member. At that time I only had access to a Cessna 152 but I joined a group with a PA28 in 1994 and had my first IFFR trip to Jersey in summer 1995 where Charles Strasser and Graham Le Quesne had organised a fly-in before the convention in Nice. This was my first flight beyond the coast of the UK mainland so on that occasion Jersey was far enough.

Goodness me have I had some trips since then. In Europe we are blessed with some very active sections and I’ve flown to them all over the years. I’m still in the same flying group but we now have a Cirrus SR20 which is a fantastic touring aircraft in which to travel to the many meetings held in Europe. It’s great to meet so many old friends every time I go to one of the meetings, in the sure knowledge that I’ll always meet some new friends.

My first involvement helping to organise a meeting was in 1997 after the convention in Glasgow when I was responsible for the Aberdeen segment of the tour. It was on that trip that I had the pleasure of being joined by Brian and Jeanette Souter from New Zealand in my PA28 and flying with such an experienced pilot was a great influence on me. He suggested I should get my Instrument Rating and in November 2010 I finally achieved this.

I am delighted to have the honour of being the VP for the European region and look forward to working with all the section chairs and meeting with as many members as possible at events throughout our region. In 2011 we have meetings already planned for Turin in Italy, Trier in Germany, Bruges in Belgium, Newcastle in England, Leipzig in Germany, Zermatt in Switzerland, Helsinki in Finland and Lyon in France. Check for further details on the front page of iffr.org as they become available.

BY-LAW PROPOSALS

We have two proposed by-law changes which need to be presented to the general membership 60 days in advance of the annual meeting.

The exact wording of the first proposal will be worked out by the time it is presented at our annual general meeting in New Orleans.

By-law proposal 2011-1: An amendment of our IFFR by-laws Article III Section 1 to reflect the addition of membership qualification to include spouse of members and Rotaract members in accordance with the Rotary International Code of Policies dated May 2011 sec 42.010.2. (proposed by World President Peter More)

By-law proposal 2011-2: An amendment to Article I to read “The principal office of the International Fellowship of Flying Rotarians, hereinafter designated as IFFR, shall be determined by the Board of Directors.” This eliminates the need to change bylaws with each change of officers. (proposed by Past World President Angus Clark)

WAYPOINTS

25 - 28 March 2011  
New Zealand Section  
Fly-in to Alexandra  
Australian Section  
Fly-in to Dubbo, NSW  
UK Section  
24 - 26 April 2011  
Weekend in the Lakes, Kendal, UK  
Americas SW  
Truckee/ Tahoe, California, USA  
Spring Wing Fly-in  
Italian Section  
6 - 8 May 2011  
Fly-in and AGM - Turino, Italy  
German - Austrian Section  
Fly-in to Trier  
20 May 2011  
Pre-convention home hospitality New Orleans, LA, USA  
Rotary International Convention  
26 May – 4 June 2011  
Post Convention  
Southern Skies Fly-About USA  
Mississippi, Tennessee, Carolinas  
Benelux Section  
Fly-in to Bruges, Belgium  
Americas NW Section  
Fly-in to Arlington, Washington, USA  
UK Section AGM  
Fly-in to Newcastle  
27 July 2011  
EAA AirVenture, Oshkosh  
Rotary Meeting, Nature Center @ 1200 Informal BBQ, Hagen motor home @ 1800  
Informal BBQ, Hagen motor home @ 1800  
HELSINKI, FINLAND  
SCANDINAVIAN SECTION  
AGM & Fly-in to Helsinki  
Swiss Section  
Fly-in to Zermatt  
German - Austrian Section  
AGM & Fly-in to Leipzig  
French Section  
AGM & Fly-in to Lyon  
AOPA Summit  
Hartford, Connecticut, USA  
22 - 24 September 2011  
IFFR Americas AGM - Date & Time TBA

UPCOMING EVENT ...

ALEXANDRA, NEW ZEALAND  
25 – 28 MARCH 2011

Alexandra is civilisation within the weathered rock landscape of Central Otago. The town boomed during the late 1800s, when huge gold dredges worked the Clutha River. The most successful dredge was the Dunedin, which extracted an estimated 528kg of gold. Today Alexandra owes its prosperity to orchardists and wine makers. On foot or on a mountain bike, you can follow gold miner’s trails in the hills to appreciate the unique beauty of the area. You can also visit Pinot Noir vineyards and discover gold mining history at the museum...

Alex” is also about as far from the sea as you can get in NZ, and as a consequence gets hot Summers and cool Winters. Summer maximums can reach into the mid 30’s (deg C) and winter temperatures of well below freezing are common. Flying wise, the weather is pretty good! The climate is dry so seldom is flying cancelled due to weather. Alex has both sealed and grass runways.

The Fly In will include a visit to the largest hydroelectric power station in New Zealand, Manapouri Power Station, an underground hydroelectric power station on the western arm of Lake Manapouri, in Fiordland National Park. The construction of the station was a massive feat of civil engineering with the majority of the station including the machine hall and two 10-km tailrace tunnels being excavated under a mountain.

UPCOMING EVENT ...

DUBBO, NSW, AUSTRALIA  
15 – 18 APRIL 2011

On Friday 15 April, members and guests will arrive (usually after lunch). The evening meal will be followed by the AGM. This is the first year that our AGM will not be held on the Sunday. It means that the weekend is free to make the most of the local attractions, etc. On Saturday and Sunday we will be bussed to various places of interest, including the Western Plains open range Zoo. A visit to the Old Dubbo Gaol is planned. Narromine, home of the Narrumine Aviation Museum, is just 30 minutes from Dubbo.

A joint dinner meeting with the local Rotary club(s) is planned for Saturday night. In the past few Fly-Ins many people often stay till the Monday, thus making the most of the distance and time taken to get to the Fly-In.

We are planning our October Fly-In to Canberra on the weekend of 7 – 10 October 2011.

REPORT ON PREVIOUS EVENT ...

IFFR AMERICAS REGION 2010 AGM

The members of IFFR Americas Region gathered on November 11-14, 2010. Our meeting coincided with the AOPA Summit in Long Beach, California. Flying Rotarians from Denmark and Germany joined our members from all over North America. Our annual special presentation was given by Rotarian pilot Jim Payne. Jim won the gliding online contest in 2008 with six flights averaging more thans1200sm per flight . His cross country soaring flights were conducted in mountain

Page 2
wave on the lee side of the Sierra Nevada. Jim is a retired F16 USAF pilot who is now in charge of the flight test program for the Global Hawk. Jim explained the atmospheric energy unleashed by mountain wave conditions, the advantages they give to the soaring pilot, and the deadly hazard they pose unaware pilots in all aircraft.

Special fellowship was enjoyed at the IFFR both within the AOPA meeting. Each evening included a social hour arranged by our hotel, and dinner as a group. (This picture shows our group after dinner on Friday night the 12th).

Special awards were presented. PWP Sam Bishop was recognized for decades of IFFR service. Steve Henderson was lauded for his valuable assistance as Americas secretary/treasurer. World President Peter More was praised for the outstanding job he did during his tenure as Americas VP. Rotarian Jim Payne took home an award for his excellent keynote address.

Thank you all for your participation from near and far to make this a successful meeting.

Michael Graves, IFFR VP Americas Region

IFFR FAMILY NEWS

Joyce Condon, wife of Past World President Brian Condon of Port Pirie, South Australia, died on 4 November 2010 after a lengthy illness lasting most of the past decade. Through the fly about after the 2003 RI Convention she was always at Brian’s side.

Takahashi “Ken” Yamamoto passed away in 2009, and we found out about it the last quarter of 2010. Ken headed the IFFR Japanese Section for several years, and was chair during the 2004 Osaka (2004). He was helpful at making sure we had staffing at our IFFR booth that spoke Japanese. He worked to help smooth our IFFR experience in Osaka.

Speaking of staffing the IFFR booth in Osaka back in 2004, Shigeru & Yasuko Tsukamoto helped then. They were probably the only Japanese IFFR members who had participated in more than one of our IFFR events at RI Conventions: I especially remember Calgary. Shigeru wrote us to tell us that Yasuko passed away suddenly on 29 September 2010.

Condolences to the families and friends from the larger family of IFFR.

MAROOCHYDORE, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA 2010 FLY-IN

There were approximately 35 of us from Queensland, NSW, South Australia, Tasmania, Canberra and Victoria at the Fly-In in Maroochydore on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland in the first weekend of October 2010.

In executive session early in the weekend, the board approved a collapsible banner for Australian IFFR that could be carried to various Rotary functions when IFFR was participating. The Board also confirmed future fly-in events in Dubbo and Canberra, and made suggestions for future venues.

Saturday was busy spent visiting the Ginger and Honey complex in Yandina in the morning, which was most interesting and informative. Not long before World War 1, some pieces of raw ginger found their way to Buderim, Australia – which was then a small farming area about 100km (60 miles) north of Brisbane, where the comparatively high rainfall and humidity combined to produce conditions which were ideal for growing this unusual crop. The interruption to the supply of ginger from China, caused by World War 2, provided the opportunity for growers in the Buderim area to expand their sales. The establishment of the Tourist and Administrative Complex in Yandina during 1985 completed the industry’s relocation program. In the last 10 years or so Buderim Ginger has become globally recognized for producing the World’s Finest Ginger. This has been achieved by investing in production facilities and meeting the needs of customers in overseas markets - Buderim Ginger Exports to over 17 countries. We were able to see how ginger grows and the manufacturing process, before indulging in a delicious tasting session. We also watched a beekeeper reveal the secrets of the honeybee, amid the action of a living hive. Afterwards we were able to sample different types of honey.

This was followed by a trip to the Queensland Air Museum after lunch. The museum has more than 40 complete aircraft in its collection. The largest civil and military air museum in Australia, it was founded in 1974 with the aim of preserving Australia’s aviation heritage and serving the community’s educational needs. The Rotary Club of Caloundra Pacific hosted the IFFR members at their meeting on Saturday night. Air Commodore (retired) Peter Growder spoke on the Australian Airforce Cadets and the F111. He was an F111 pilot during his period of service.

Sunday morning was spent at the Caboolture Historical Village where more than 70 buildings help to re-create an authentic sense of the past. Memorabilia of bygone days was most interesting.

The Sunshine Coast lived up to its name, but only on the Monday, the day many of us were leaving!! But, once again, it was a great time of fellowship, meeting new acquaintances and seeing new sights.

- Judy Berends

ROTORUAN Where it Counts Tour

Australian Rotary Health and Rotary Down Under toured outback Australia in August and September of 2010 to help raise awareness of local health issues.

The tour, beginning on Monday, August 30 in Roma, ran for seven days across six Queensland locations, including Roma, Biloela, Emerald, Longreach, Mt. Isa and Lightening Ridge.

“The tour is about raising awareness and encouraging Rotary groups to highlight local health issues from within their communities,” said Terry Davies, Corporate Manager at Australian Rotary Health, before the tour started. “We had a number of groups interested in participating in the event. It’s a great opportunity to make contact with local health professionals in an effort to bring health issues to the fore,” he said. Two planes, pilots and fuel were donated to assist Australian Rotary Health and Rotary Down Under in their tour of regional Queensland.

Mark Wallace, Associate Editor at Rotary Down Under, hoped the tour would highlight how much regional Rotary clubs assist their communities with the little that they have. “We want to show regional Rotarians that we take them seriously and that they are important,” said Mark. “The tour [allowed] their voices to be heard and [helped] us find out what goes on where it counts in rural Australia,” he said.

NZIFFR SPRING FLYIN WHAKATANE OCTOBER 2010

Early October 2010 approximately forty IFFR members along with partners and friends, students headed for Whakatane, a coastal town situated around 120 NM South East of Auckland in the Eastern Bay of Plenty. Friday mid day saw most attendees arriving by either private plane, commercial airline or driving at the Rotorua airport for lunch. This also once again included Past World President Brian Condon and friend from Australia. After lunch and a catch up it was time to head to Whakatane which is a short flight or drive out to the east coast. Some members took the chance to overfly Whakatane for a scenic tour out around White Island a volcanic island around 20 NM off the coast. After everyone arrived safely at Whakatane airport the bus organized transported the gathering to the accommodation in Whakatane. After settling in and having a catch up it was time to walk down town for the IFFR meeting followed by a very nice Thai meal.

Saturday dawned wet and windy so the programme organised for the day was swapped for Sundays as it involved better weather than we had for an enjoyable day. This gave everyone a lazy morning with some members later in the morning going for a flight around White Island and Whakatane with some of the local Rotarians along for the ride. The afternoon
involved a bus trip out into the country to a natural hot pool complex where some of the members took the plunge and went for a swim while others just watched on. It was then back to the motel for some social time before going out to join the local Whakatane Rotary for a meal and spend the evening with them. This included the normal hilarious sergeant session conducted by Marlene Marsden but also included a presentation on the activities of the NZIFFR by Ian Jenner and Phil Pacey.

Sundays weather dawned fine which enabled the group to set sail on a charter boat for White Island. As previously pointed out White Island is an active volcanic Island off the coast which is part of the chain of active thermal activities which run down the centre of the North Island of New Zealand. The trip included a boat trip of around one and a half hours each way and a guided walk around the Island. This meant walking amongst the boiling hot pools and the active Crater Lake on the Island. For those who had flown around the Island the previous two days it was a totally different perspective. Along with the guided tour and the history of the Island it was a fascinating day.

FRENCH MEETING & FLY-IN
SEPTEMBER 2010
From a report by Patricia Bowden in The Rotating Beacon
John & Patricia Bowden and son Harry made the trip to Poitiers, France, for the French annual meeting and fly-in and Patricia’s report was published in the UK Section’s The Rotating Beacon. Poitiers is in west central France. Their routing took them from the UK to an overnight in Le Havre, arriving at Poitiers the next day after a short weather delay. After a buffet lunch, they were taken into town, and had the afternoon free to explore.

After supper we “walked to the Eglise Notre Dame La Grande because, at a certain time, it changed colour! Some of the men were more interested in how it was done and spent their time working this out. It was done by a projector in a building opposite and showed the church in the colours it used to be. It was also used to test John’s colour-blindness!”

Saturday’s program included a visit to Futuroscope “where were immersed into the world of 3D. We had an escorted tour which took us to all of the educational attractions - birds, space and underwater.” Later Patricia remarked about seeing a car chase scene in a movie house with movable seats (not the movie about Van Gogh they thought they would be seeing), and a short about Louisiana’s wetlands. “Supper was in an underground restaurant in an old crypt, which was rather warm as all the cooking took place next to us. The food was delicious and got better with each course.”

“At dinner we learnt that Dominique had been appointed Chair of the French section, the first lady to be appointed by a national Section in the world. Jean-Pierre Gabert was awarded a Paul Harris Fellowship for his services to IFRR. Congratulations to both of them.”

A guided tour of the town was given to the group on Sunday morning. The town has a long history, having been the provincial capital since Gallo-Roman times. The Cathedral is quite impressive: “Built to-wards the end of the 12th century by Eleanor of Aquitaine, this Angevin Gothic-style cathedral has an exceptional facade with a rose window and three arched doors.”

On the way home, the Bowdens overnighted at Le Mans, where the historic airfield is adjacent to the famous racing circuit, before heading back to Britain.

SCANDINAVIAN MEETING & FLY-IN
AUGUST 2010
In a recent Rotating Beacon, George Ritchie wrote about his attendance at the Scandinavian meeting in late August 2010. Danish IFRR member Svend Andersen and his team assembled a weekend filled with memorable events.

George would be flying G-IFFR with Katie, and they decided to fly their aircraft with another one flown, a Cessna 182 flown by Martin Wellings and Rodney Spokes. They decided to leave a day early before poor weather came. They flew from Henlow to Groningen (Netherlands) for a late lunch, then to Roskilde, Denmark. The final leg was completed just after 2000, with the total flight time from Henlow of 4 ½ hours.

Thursday evening they connected with more IFRR members from the UK, including European IFRR VP Ian Kerr, who had just come over a long water crossing from Aberdeen in just under 4 hours. Friday they participated with other IFRR members already present in welcoming the new arrivals to Roskilde.

From Roskilde, the coach took them to the Viking Museum, housing a collection of genuine Viking ships. They returned to Copenhagen for dinner in an underground restaurant lit solely by candlelight that must have been one of Copenhagen’s finest. A picture shows some of the Ritchie family with Peter and Ellen Wenk of Florida, USA.

On Saturday we were treated to a guided walking tour, seeing sights that most visitors don’t get to see, and ending with the Changing of the Guard ceremony at the Royal Palaces. In the afternoon we had a tour of the city by boat, seeing the spot where the Little Mermaid should be (but wasn’t). The evening was spent at the wonderful Tivoli Gardens. After the speeches, and the award of the Nordic Aviation Trophy, which this year went to Bo Johnsson from Sweden, we could stroll the gardens on our own, with the more daring amongst us sampling the rides.

Sunday morning marked the end of the trip, though departures began on Saturday due to forecast MVFR conditions en route. Weather separated the Ritchies from Rodney and Martin on Sunday, but both parties were home by Monday afternoon after the weather cleared. George reported a 25 knot tailwind both coming and going, a good omen for the first trip from Britannia since 2007 of G-IFFR.

IMPROVED GA ACCESS SEEN FOR HAWAII TFR
PLANNING SESSIONS WITH OFFICIALS AIDED GA CONCERNS

Flying Rotarian Joe Kiefer (IFFR #6394) helped to host and plan our fly about in Hawaii after the Osaka Rotary Convention in 2004. He also flew with us for a portion of the Southwest Fly About after the San Antonio RI Convention of 2001. The 2004 picture shows now WP Peter More with Joe, the then current WP Angus Clark, and the then immediate past WP Tony Watson.

Joe got involved as an AOPA Airport Support Network volunteer in helping to make the 2 week TFR over Hawaii during President
Barack Obama's holiday there in December a little less onerous for general aviation than it was in 2009. Security was still tight but at least things weren't completely shut down for tour operators and most GA operations.

"The FAA, Transportation Security Administration, and Secret Service accepted all but one of the suggestions that GACH (GA Council of Hawaii) offered and AOPA handled to officials during discussions held months in advance of the anticipated TFR in the effort to preserve GA access.

"No pilot likes a TFR. However, we are very encouraged by the fact that those responsible for creating the TFRs are beginning to take account the devastating impact that TFRs have on GA and are trying to mitigate the damage," said Brittney Miculka, AOPA manager of security and borders, of the discussions. 'General aviation access is allowed, businesses can continue to operate, and those parties that the Secret Service protects are not compromised. It proved the value of stakeholder contributions during the planning process of a TFR.'"

"Screening opportunities for sightseeing operations have been expanded, allowing several more air tour operators to fly during the TFR than last year," Kiefer said.

Traffic pattern work and instrument approaches [were] allowed at John Rodgers Field, Kalaeea, subject to the screening of the flight instructors and students. [In 2009], those operations were prohibited."

"Local news organizations in Hawaii have taken notice, and have reported on the cooperative effortst between officials and GA. 'The government has done its part to allow GA to continue to operate; it is now up to every pilot flying in the area to ensure compliance with the published procedures,' Miculka said."

"ASN volunteer Kiefer called the TFR agreement 'a good compromise' that keeps GA businesses running and lets security agencies 'know who's up in the air.'

You take two weeks of income out of one of these small businesses and it really hurts," he said.

"AOPA's efforts were a 'huge help' to Hawaii GA pilots, Kiefer said, and he also had words of gratitude for the cooperation of FAA, TSA and Secret Service officials."

"It would have been very easy for them to say, 'Sorry.' But they didn't. They came to the table," Kiefer said."

-- Quoted from AOPA source article by Dan Namowitz

**MY RELIEF FLIGHT TO HAITI**

**PETER WENK**

A member of my Rotary Club in Belleview, FL approached me a few months ago about flying a relief mission to Haiti. This member is a Haitian-American, who has just finished Divinity School, and was looking forward to moving back to the village where he was born with his wife and 3 children. He wants to start a church and a school there. I told him at the time that I would be interested and with no clear date in mind, promptly forgot about it. Then, a few weeks ago, the subject was brought up again and that is when I seriously began planning the trip.

My over-water light plane experience was somewhat limited. I've done some trips to the Bahamas and one to Puerto Rico but I wanted to get some input about Haiti directly from somebody with flying experience down there. I was put in touch with Joe Hurston, who runs an organization called Air Mobile Ministries. Some of you may have seen him on ABC's show, "Extreme Makeover, Home Edition" on Feb. 13. He and his family were the worthy recipients of a new home and upgrades to his Cessna 337 plus a $ 100 K grant to further his missionary work. Ellen and I drove to Cocoa and met with Joe and got a tour of his new home the week before the show went on the air. He was most helpful in explaining how to transit the Bahamas and get in and out of Port au Prince, having flown to Haiti for almost 30 years. His web site is www.airmobile.org and he writes a daily blog.

We loaded up the plane on Feb. 7. for departure the following morning. Our cargo consisted of medical supplies for a dental team, scheduled to arrive 2 weeks later. We also carried some toilets and sinks, along with other plumbing equipment to be used in bathroom facilities in the village.

Heeding Joe's advice to be airborne early, wheels up were at 0515. That puts us in the Exumas around 0830, just about the time customs open their doors. The fuel truck met us on the ramp, we quickly dealt with customs, filed a new flight plan and were airborne by 0900. I figured another 2hr. 45 min. to Port au Prince which put us in there just before noon. After passing off our General Dec. to the ramp official, we taxied over to the General Aviation area, where a flying missionary organization was based. Our final destination was an island approximately 35 miles NW of PaP. The missionary group were helpful in filing a flight plan for us to the island of La Gonave. We also arranged for fuel to be available the next day when we came through.

La Gonave has a 2400 ft. dirt strip. It was adequate, however, our first approach was a "wave off", as there were goats on the runway and the local controller was busy getting them off. Looking back, the flying was the easy part. The real adventure was about to begin!

Benis Guerrier, my Rotary Brother, the preacher that was flying with me, had arranged for the A/C to be tied down and looked after while we were going up to the village with our cargo and spend the night. He owns a Toyota Land Cruiser, which he bought in the States for $ 4,000. It cost him an additional $ 8,000 in duty to bring it in to Haiti! We loaded the Toyota and began our trek to Benis' village in the mountains, 1400' ASL. I wish I had brought a video camera to document the ride up. I have never ridden on anything so unimproved in my life. The rocks and ruts this Land Cruiser traversed were beyond belief. One can only imagine the condition of the "road" during the rainy season!! After 2 hrs, and I am sure we didn't travel more than 15 miles, we arrived in the village. No electricity, they had 2 generators, both inop! No running water! (a well is being drilled and cisterns are used to collect water during the Rainy Season. Benis' home is under construction and when completed will be about the size of a 35' single wide trailer. This is where he, his wife and 3 children will live. Adjoining the construction site is his old home where we spent the night. I was privileged and got the only bed, and after a long, exhausting day, slept very well. Benis used his time well, meeting with the construction crews working in his home and also the new church. He started a school some time ago, and met with the director and teachers. My hat is off to him and his wife for wanting to give back to these deserving people and accepting the challenge of living without simple conveniences that we take for granted.

The following morning we were up early, however, it took some time before we hit the road. Everyone in the region knows Benis, and it would have been impossible if he didn't chat with them all. After another arduous trip down the mountain, we arrived at the air strip around 10. Off to PaP for fuel and Flt. Planning. This always takes longer than planned, especially when you are in a hurry. We were in the air around noon. Winds were not a problem but my concern was to make Ft. Pierce before curfew. We landed at Exuma to top off, file again and call customs as is required. He had my E-APIS (Electronic Advance Passenger Information System) arrival message and remarked that we should have landed at 3 PM. I explained that we were delayed and was told that we better be there by 6, because that's when they close! I figured our flight time at 2 hrs. 45 min. and we left just after 3. We got expedient handling into KPFR (Fort Pierce, FL) and rolled up at customs at 5:50!! Cleared quickly and they kicked us out, not even giving us time to use the toilet!

We landed back at Leeward Air Ranch, my home base, about 715. With good weather, it was an easy trip once we got over the apprehension of being over water and out of sight of land. Flt. Following worked for most of the trip. Miami Center lost radar a few times, however, we could still communicate. Haiti was less reliable. Going in we were unable to talk to anyone until about 20 miles from PaP. Fuel prices were $6/gal. in Exuma, $7.35 in PaP.

I was pleased to be able to assist Benis in his involvement to help the less fortunate in his homeland. He has formed an organization called International Ministries of Hope and more information can be found on his web site, www.IMoH.org. People have asked me if I saw a lot of destruction from the earthquake. No, I really did not, and honestly, the island is so poor, there were hardly any buildings or roads that could have suffered.

Almost forgot to mention, Benis was ordained on Feb. 13. at the First Baptist Church of Ocala.
Angel Flight West

In 1983 twelve general aviation pilots came up with the idea of volunteering to transport those needing non-emergency medical treatment for free. In their first full year of offering this free air transportation in their personal, private planes at no cost to the passenger they flew fifteen missions.

Angel Flight West (AFW), the organization these volunteers gave birth to is headquartered at the Santa Monica Airport in Santa Monica, CA USA. Last year (2010) AFW arranged 6716 flights and flew 4252. Angel Flight West is a non-profit organization with a staff of eight and an annual budget of over one million dollars (US). I have the privilege of being AFW's Executive Director and I am also a member of the IFFR.

When Peter asked me to put together an article about AFW I agreed, thanked him, hung up the telephone, and then wondered what I would say? It didn’t take me long to figure out that many IFFR members might not know about organizations like Angel Flight West. As an IFFR member it always surprises me how many Rotarians don’t know about the IFFR.

I also realized that for many the IFFR exists to provide fellowship for Rotarians who have a passion for aviation. However, I also know that in AFW there are IFFR members who also give back to their communities through their flying. It’s a natural for Rotarians. But AFW is only one way those of us fortunate enough to fly can give back.

All one has to do is go to the web site for the Air Care Alliance (http://www.aircareall.org) to see a listing of literally hundreds of groups that “give back” through general aviation. And – I know for a fact that there are Angel Flight type organizations around the world.

Angel Flight West serves the thirteen western states of the United States...the eleven mainland states, Alaska and Hawaii. We have over 1600 volunteer pilot members flying everything from Cessna 150’s to a Lear 40. This year we will approach 50,000 flights since our beginning – which means we’ve arranged close to 80,000 because for every three flights flown we arrange five. We have expanded our mission to include domestic violence flights, special camp flights, adoption flights, Wounded Warrior flights and basically, any flights that qualify as "compassion".

We’ve also partnered with two Rotary Clubs – the Westwood, CA Club and the Santa Monica, CA Rotary Club to develop the Earth Angel Program. These clubs recognized that our passengers needed transportation from the airport to their appointments – and back.

Last year Rotarians from these clubs provided over 250 rides to our passengers. We call them Earth Angels – but I think of them as autopilots (sorry – had to throw that in...).

I encourage you to visit our web site www.angelflightwest.org and/or visit us on Facebook – www.facebook.com/angelflightwest. I appreciate Peter providing me the opportunity to “wax poetic” about an organization that, through general aviation, gives back so much. Blue skies and tailwinds,

Alan M. Dias (IFFR #7143)
Executive Director, Angel Flight West

CALL FOR ANNUAL MEETING
As stipulated in IFFR’s by-laws, our annual general meeting will be held during the upcoming Rotary Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana. Wednesday, 25 May 2011, 1300
SpringHill Suites
New Orleans Downtown