

Vivian man builds aircraft in basement shop

VIVIAN—More than one motorist on Hwy. 48 north of Ballantrae in the past year has blinked, stared and craned his neck and asked himself, "What was that?"

Somewhere above in the sky they saw, or thought they saw, a man seated in a chair and propelled forward by a chopping rotary blade.

That was, exactly what the motorists were seeing.

Robert Briggs, who lives on Cherry St. near concession 7, likely was out swooping, gliding and hovering in his gyrocopter, a one-man helicopter with a Volkswagen engine.

Mr. Briggs, a former member of the Canadian Opera Company, today drives a school bus in Stouffville and spends many hours in his spacious basement workshop producing aircraft of various kinds.

He recently sold his last-made gyrocopter and now is "80 percent complete" on a tiny two-

man airplane that is reputed to travel at speeds over 200 miles an hour.

As for gyrocopters, they have been a part of Mr. Briggs' life since 1957 or '58, when he built his first one. The machines are crafted so that they require a runway in order to take off, and will leave the ground at about 25 miles per hour.

The predecessor of gyrocopters were gyrogliders, motorless crafts which first were pulled behind German U-boats as observation devices.

"I've done the same thing, only behind a car," Mr. Briggs said. He built a gyroglider and used to go up in it at the Goodwood airport, towed behind a VW. It consisted of "a framework with a seat and two broom-control mechanisms."

Today, Mr. Briggs is developing his 10th project. Including his current aircraft, he has worked on four gyrocopters, four air-

planes, one "true helicopter" and one gyroglider.

The uncompleted airplane in his basement, Mr. Briggs feels, will be quite different from all previous projects.

"This'll be a change," he said. The plane should be able to reach Florida "in one hop," and Mr. Briggs hopes to have it completed in time to fly it at the international Experimental Aircraft Association convention in Wisconsin next year.

Earlier planes that Mr. Briggs built generally would cruise around 75 m.p.h. as compared with 200 in his current project.

The plane, a KR2 model designed in the United States, is being made by Mr. Briggs basically from scratch. It consists of a wood fuselage and fiberglass and polyethylene wings and tail. The wing span is 21 feet, which Mr. Briggs describes as "pretty small when you see it lined up even with a Cessna 150."

The kind of engine to be used in his KR2 plane will be "different from the run-of-the-mill VW engine" since it will have 85-90 horsepower as compared with the 58-60 variety used in gyrocopters.

His plane will seat "two people comfortably" and will have retractable wheels. He estimates its potential worth to be \$10,000.

"I really can't wait to get that thing finished," he said.

Home base for operating his plane will be Markham airport. He used to take off in his gyrocopter from a turf farm located at Vivian Rd. and Concession 6.

As to whether he is afraid of flying his minuscule airship, Mr. Briggs replied, "I build a lot of safety into what I do; safety is foremost, both in the building and flying of it."

Through the years, he said, "I have never had any close calls" although he did have "the odd scrape or two."

The plane must go through a vigorous round of inspections and approvals before Mr. Briggs will be granted a permanent licence for it.

Regarding the building and flying of gyrocopters, Mr. Briggs is a bit more cautious. "My honest opinion of that type of aircraft is that I wouldn't encourage anyone to build one," he said. "If a person's really bent on it, I would do anything to help them...

but it's not just for anybody."

A person who wants to build and fly a gyrocopter, he said, needs to have both "a knowledge of airmanship" and be a "good craftsman... They have a fairly high accident record."

Mr. Briggs said he has seen various gyrocopters that he would never fly because they are unsafely constructed. People who are interested should join flying clubs to learn the safe construction and operation of the machines, he said.

He himself is a member of a club in Hamilton that has monthly meetings and "occasional fly-ins." Members in the club have a "half-dozen powered machines" and three to five gliders.

"I don't consider gyrocopters as serving any practical purpose," said Mr. Briggs. You can travel 65-75 m.p.h. in one. "Any faster than that and your face starts to flatten out."

The crafts generally hold 8-10 gallons of gasoline and will use up about three gallons in an hour.



Robert Briggs of Cherry Street, north of Ballantrae, puts together part of the tailpiece for the lightweight plane he is building in his basement workshop. Mr. Briggs has been building small aircraft, including one-man helicopters, for 17 years.

Plane maker was formerly operatic tenor

— VIVIAN — Robert Briggs, a home builder of airplanes and gyrocopters, does not have a typical background, it would seem, for his avocation.

It is true that he did spend four years in the Royal Air Force, but not as a pilot.

Later, Mr. Briggs spent eight years as a lead tenor in the Canadian Opera Company and during that time took part in 12 television performances and five tours of Canada.

It was the touring that caused him to quit. "I had to get out of it," he said.

The opera company would play high schools and community halls, "and it just wasn't opera." There would be no orchestra and little scenery or props — only as much as could be carried in a Gray coach.

Nevertheless, Mr. Briggs still could get back into opera again. "I love opera, and classical music," he said.

Today, Mr. Briggs drives a school bus in Stouffville, and is in the process of completing the home he now occupies. The basement to the home is specially designed for building and removing small aircraft.

His building of planes and copters he calls "just a hobby."

ONTARIO'S MOST OUTSTANDING RESORT HOTEL

Deerhurst Inn And Country Club

"Where the character of the old earth meets the luxury of the new"

Heated indoor and outdoor pool, lounge, whirlpool, children with fireplace, electric heating and air-conditioning, colour television, highly entertainment, screened lounge, dancing, 4 Woods convenience center & disco, tennis, 18 hole golf course, hiking, water sports, fishing, table tennis and enjoy our excellent food & entertainment.

Deerhurst now offers 50 new luxury bed sitting room units.

For Reservations Call (705) 789-5543
OR WRITE BOX 192, HUNTSVILLE, ONTARIO

REUPHOLSTERING

A RECORD 25 YEARS IN MARKHAM

HUNDREDS OF HAPPY CUSTOMERS

OUR RECORD SPEAKS FOR ITSELF

LOWEST PRICES FOR THE BEST JOB

FREE ARMCAPS!

DEAL DIRECT WITH MR. F. (THE BIG BOSS)

5 YEAR GUARANTEE (Workmanship)

4 MONTHLY PAYMENTS — NO EXTRA CHARGE FOR FREE HOME ESTIMATES

CALL: 294-2581 **TOROMARK** 297-2055

TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

1976 FINAL TAX BILLS

The 1976 Final Tax Bills have now been mailed to all ratepayers and are payable as follows:

REALTY TAX
1st Instalment — August 31st, 1976
2nd Instalment — October 29th, 1976

BUSINESS TAX
1 Instalment Only — August 31st, 1976

If you have not received your final tax bill or if you have any inquiries, contact the Tax Office, Municipal Building, 19 Civic Avenue, Stouffville, Ontario. Telephones — 640-1900; 895-2423; 294-4267.

Failure to receive a tax bill does not eliminate the responsibility for the payment of taxes or penalties for late payment.

J. E. Foskett, Collector

Now's the time to save during our Exhibition Sale.

Take advantage of the great savings on beautiful, convenient and energy-efficient Natural Gas and electric appliances. Special prices on these are available at all our appliance showrooms as well as at the Exhibition.

SPEED QUEEN AMBASSADOR DRYER Model BG-4030—Gas
Multi-cycle timer and automatic drying cycle gives you a choice for heavy, normal or delicate fabrics with settings from 10 to 75 minutes. Especially suitable for durable press, wash-and-wear synthetic fabrics.
Reg. \$289
Special \$274
Save \$15

SPEED QUEEN AMBASSADOR WASHER Model AD-4010—Electric
Multi-cycle choice of washing and rinsing speeds; timer and water temperature including special cycle for washable knits and durable press. 10-year warranty on the Arc-O-Matic 210 transmission.
Reg. \$409
Special \$389
Save \$20

INGLIS LIBERATOR II REFRIGERATOR Model FT-72000—Electric
17.1 cu. ft. capacity. Freezer holds 155 lbs. and can be controlled separately from refrigerator. 3-temperature butter control. Separate freezer door at the top keeps frozen foods well frozen.
Value priced
\$499
Colour \$15 extra

INGLIS LIBERATOR WASHER Model GO 43000—Electric
Here's an exceptional value. To help you with a clean wash, there are 3 cycles including one for permanent press. 5 wash/rinse water temperature selections and variable water levels.
Reg. \$409
Special \$384
Save \$25
Suds return, \$20 extra

INGLIS LIBERATOR DRYER Model GO 72000—Gas
Dryer features flexible timed drying plus permanent press care, 3 temperature selections and large dryer capacity.
Reg. \$259
Special \$244
off the total! Save \$15
regular price if you buy either matching pair!

INGLIS CITATION DISHWASHER Model GD-27000—Electric
Just push a button and relax... this dishwasher does all the work for you. Features include 5 automatic cycles: Sanitizer, hi-temp rinse, easy rolling casters and reversible cutting board. Available in White, Harvest Gold and Avocado. (Colour \$10 extra.)
Reg. \$419
Special \$399
Save \$20

LITTON/MOFFAT MICROWAVE OVEN Model MUC 2495G—Electric
Verti-Cook control allows you to set precise cooking power level for various foods. You can cook everything amazingly fast—from meat, fowl, vegetables, casseroles to light-as-air soufflés! A special feature is the Micro-Grower which sears the food, one side at a time, to a juicy brown.
Reg. \$699
Special \$649
Save \$50

HARDWICK 30" LUXURY RANGE Model PKL 9631-350 DC—Gas
This luxury range's star features include continuous cleaning oven, delay start program cooking with "cook and hold" feature, gleaming chrome trim, jet glow all-glass oven door, 24" family size oven. Your choice of colours, at no extra charge.
Reg. \$479
Special \$449
Save \$30

GAS BARBECUES
\$20 off on any Arka, Falcon MKV or Broilmaster Gas Barbecue. Some propane models are available.
\$20 off

HARDWICK 30" RANGE Model PL 9632-120RM—Gas
One of our finest ranges—excellent value. Features include digital clock timer, fluorescent lighted back guard and oven window. White, Copper, Avocado or Goldtone—no extra charge for colour.
Reg. \$349
Special \$325
Save \$24

SPEED QUEEN FREEZER Model CF 815—Electric
Custom deluxe chest freezer offers maximum storage capacity, 15 cu. ft. and freezing efficiency with high density fiberglass insulation, safety lid and lock.
Reg. \$329
Special \$289
Save \$40

Be sure to visit our exhibit in the Better Living Centre at the C.B.L.E.

Consumers Gas
Gas for the future using it wisely today.
OUR SHOWROOM LOCATION:
500 ELGIN MILLS S.D., E. RICHMOND HILL
897-5817
EXTENDED HOURS
THURS. 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
SAT. 9:00 a.m. - 12 a.m.

All prices include delivery only. Installation costs are extra. Financing is available with monthly payments and up to five years to pay. Gas ranges and laundry specialties will be held until September 30, 1976. Special prices for other appliances are in effect until September 11, 1976.

The biggest racing weekend ever!

Player's 200

This is one weekend of racing you just can't miss! It's the only stop in North America for the World Sports Car Championship Group 6 versus Can-Am. And it's all happening at Mosport on August 20th, 21st and 22nd.

Camping is limited to North West corner of track so be there early! Camping charges are \$1 per person per night. Firewood is available for 50¢ per armload. Free water.

What a weekend of racing action! As well as the Player's 200, you'll see Trans-Am, Formula Atlantic, F-100 and 2.5 sedan races. You'll see Jackie Ickx, Patrick Depailler, Jackie Oliver and many other drivers. You'll see the most exciting cars in the world—Turbo Porsche, Turbo Renault Alpine, Chevron, Mirage, Shadow, McLaren, Lola.

Come for the weekend!

Advance tickets now on sale at many dept. stores, malls & ticket agencies, as well as at Mosport Park Ltd., 1905 Avenue Road. ADVANCE SALE: Super ticket (includes grand stand seats, Gasoline Alley & garages) ... \$20. Weekender ticket (includes all Super ticket privileges except grand stand seats) ... \$15. AT GATE: Friday ... \$3. Saturday ... \$5. Sunday ... \$10. Children 12 & under free. Off-road vehicles and motor cycles restricted to Honda Park.

Player's 200—August 20-22.

Organized by C.R.D.A./Sanctioned by C.A.S.C.-F.I.A.