

FLYING IN AUSTRALIA WAS RATHER BORING AFTER THIS

By Ian Roennfeldt

WONENARA (East of Goroka)

This was an interesting place to fly into, it was a Lutheran Mission airstrip, no commercial aircraft operated into here.



On takeoff you could not fly straight ahead as the rising ground level in the valley would out climb your aircraft so a coordinated, balanced turn had to



be made at the end of the airstrip at the correct speed or you would crash into the ridgeline to the left of the photo.

Once you made it around the turn it was initially downhill towards Goroka.



WANIMA (West of Madang)



Another Lutheran Mission airstrip your wingtips were hanging over the edge as you landed but the strip did wind out at the second turn.

Notice the bends in the airstrip, you could see them on approach but on landing you couldn't see them as there was a curve on the airstrip so you had to anticipate the turns when you came to them.

If you stuffed it up & went over the edge this is what you had to look forward to.



TAPEN (Between Lae & Madang)
This was 750 Foot long & 5,000 Feet above sea level in the Finisterre Ranges.





TAKING OFF FROM TAPEN

This was a Cessna 182 with a special wing on it & a canard on the nose, it was called a Cessna Wren. The registration RAJ was named after Ray Jaensch who was a Mission Pilot killed south of Madang in 1964, he had an engine failure on takeoff. Ray & his wife Betty were Australians, they had 4 Daughters. Betty married Stan Read an American from Montana, these were our close friends who lived in Hamilton Montana.



MONONO (South west of Goroka)



The photos kind of tell the story.



Just north of Monono was Nomane, could be a bit tricky landing as there could be turbulence off the end of the airstrip.



This was my favorite Cessna 206, a contract Pilot crashed it in late 1970, ripped the left wing off & broke it's back just behind the rear window. The Pilot survived it he was a former military pilot flying Vampires.



A little further north is Omkalai (just a slight slope). Up that Valley just north of here is Mt. Wilhelm 14,793 Feet the highest mountain in PNG, in the middle of the year occasionally it would get a little snow on its peak.



KAINTIBA (a 50 minute flight south of Lae)

This was 1,300 Feet long with 17% slope. If you stood near where the aircraft is the aeroplane would disappear out of sight as it went over the edge on takeoff & only come back in view as it climbed out. You could land



half way up it & still stop, normally you had to put on heaps of power after landing or you wouldn't make it to the top.