

Piper PA-28-180 Cherokee, G-AVNW

AAIB Bulletin No: 10/97 Ref: EW/G97/08/10 Category: 1.3

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piper PA-28-180 Cherokee, G-AVNW
No & Type of Engines:	1 Lycoming O-360-A4A piston engine
Year of Manufacture:	1967
Date & Time (UTC):	14 August 1997 at 1300 hrs
Location:	Popham Airfield, Hampshire
Type of Flight:	Private
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1 - Passengers - 1
Injuries:	Crew - Minor - Passengers - None
Nature of Damage:	Damage to nose gear, propeller and lower fuselage; engine shock loaded and engine bearer frame broken
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence with IMC Rating
Commander's Age:	75 years
Commander's Flying Experience:	507 hours (of which 35 were on type) Last 90 days - 9 hours Last 28 days - 2 hours
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot and telephone enquiries by the AAIB

After an uneventful flight from Old Sarum, the pilot was making an approach to Runway 26 at Popham Airfield; she had previously flown an earlier flight from Fair Oaks to Old Sarum with the same passenger that day. The weather was good with a light surface wind. However, the pilot commented that, although the visibility at Old Sarum was very good, it was hazy at Popham and she noted some turbulence on her final approach. Runway 26 is 914 metres long with a grass surface and the approach requires a turn to avoid some buildings and to align with the runway.

Initially, the approach was normal with a selected airspeed of 75 kt. Then, at approximately 300 feet agl, the pilot selected final landing flap, reduced power and applied some elevator trim. However, as the aircraft approached the runway surface, her control input failed to arrest the descent and G-AVNW landed heavily nose gear first. As the aircraft came to rest on the runway, the pilot

stopped the engine, turned off the fuel and switched off the electrics before evacuating with her passenger through the right door.

Subsequently, the pilot commented that she had allowed herself to be distracted by continual comments from her passenger during the approach; he was not a qualified pilot and this was the first time he had flown with her. Because of the distractions, she considers that she reduced engine power too much when she selected final flap and thereafter failed to monitor the airspeed. Furthermore, the electric trim was unserviceable and she was not used to operating the manual trim on the cabin ceiling; after the accident, it was indicating "nose-down" and she believes that she wound it the wrong way during the final approach.

Whilst acknowledging her failure to concentrate on "flying the aircraft", the pilot was surprised at the degree of distractions she experienced and considers that she has learnt a valuable lesson about flying with passengers. This aspect is well covered in General Aviation Safety Sense Leaflet 2B: Care of Passengers.