

# WHERE EAGLES DARE

**TAKE-OFF:** The Gathering of Eagles fly-in at Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield on Saturday, August 29, was a sight to behold.

PHOTO: TOM THREADINGHAM



Gatton,  
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# Star



# Eagles event a soaring success

By TOM THREADINGHAM

THE skies above Toogoolawah were alive and buzzing with winged history during the Gathering of Eagles on the weekend.

Marking the centenary of Anzac and celebrating the 40th anniversary of QVA/AFM, Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield's Gathering of Eagles event played host to more than 100 aircraft across both Saturday and Sunday.

Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield president and event organiser Bruce Clarke said he was impressed with not only the diverse range of aircraft flying in but crowd numbers too.

"What I enjoy most is the interaction of the public, and they really seem to enjoy it," Mr Clarke said.

"We haven't had the public here in such large numbers for a few years so we are trying to build this up into an event for the public, which will bring tourism.

"In the early days, one of the clubs used to run these but we are trying to get everyone involved now and make it more of a public



**READY TO TAKE OFF?:** Kim Rolph-Smith and Louise Bailey with the T28 warbird at the Gathering of Eagles fly-in at Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield.

event. Obviously its aviation-related but I think people generally just want a day out and some entertainment and the aeroplanes are something different."

The event saw both restored and replica planes hit the skies including 1954 T34 Mentor, T28 Warbird, Spitfires and Tiger Moths to name but a few.

It wasn't just about the

planes, with historical groups putting on First and Second World War displays too.

Watching aircraft come and go, crowds were given a brief scare, with a replica



John Walmsly from Coominya Flight Training took Lowood's William Fritz for a joy ride.



Troy Smith flew Craig McConnell in his 1954 T34 Mentor, an ex-US Air Force trainer.

Spitfire failing to take-off during the event.

However, it was but a minor incident in what was a packed weekend celebrating the history of flight.



Skydivers from Toogoolawah Ramblers put on a show.



Kirsty Coombs, aka Miss Harlem Tale.

"We had a mishap but the pilot was fine and he said he had a control issue and put it on the ground but landed rather heavily," Mr Clarke said.