



Watts News

A newsletter issued by the Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield

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July 2004

AEROMODELLERS' WEEKEND

On the weekend of the 3rd and 4th of April the QVAG modellers section held their inaugural fun fly weekend. There was a large attendance from over ten model clubs from the southeast district bringing an array of model aircraft from small models to those with wingspans over 3.5m., as well as helicopters. An estimate of those attending would be around 150 people in total.

During Saturday weather conditions were ideal. Models flew continually all day and one of the highlights was a stunning large scale extra 300s from a Toowoomba club member who put on a faultless aerobatic display including smoke. Night time flying was very interesting and was thoroughly enjoyed by both participants and spectators alike.

After the night time flying had finished everybody retired to the QVAG clubroom for dinner and drinks. There was much reminiscing about the days events

and telling of tall stories. This continued late into the night and a good time was had by all.

Sunday morning most awoke with sore heads and viewed overcast skies. This did not deter the diehard modellers who braved the weather and flew anyway.

All participants who attended the weekend enjoyed it immensely and were pleasantly surprised with the high standard of the model field and QVAG's excellent facilities. We were asked on a number of occasions if we would consider holding this event biannually as the modeller's clubs are eager to come back to Watts Bridge in the near future.

The event would not have been possible without the assistance of dedicated QVAG AFM volunteers and much-appreciated assistance from the Toogoolawah SES in providing shade shelters.

Matt "Schultzy" Baker



Serious Vintage



Serious Aerobatic Scale

Rental Increase To Be Phased In

Sub-sub-leaseholders of land at Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield may be aware that a market value review of the rental paid by our association was to apply from 1 July 2003. The annual rental prior to the review was \$8,044.40 per annum. SEQWater advised in October 2003 that the new rental was to be \$20,000 per annum. In view of the magnitude of this increase the association joined with Esk Shire Council in objecting to it.

Unfortunately it may take some time yet for this objection to be resolved, however in the meantime

SEQWater has agreed to the following phase-in of the increase with an upper limit of \$20,000pa.

Year ended 30 June 2004 – an increase of 3.5% ie \$8325pa

Year ended 30 June 2005 – a further increase of 3.5% plus \$2000 ie \$10500pa

Year ended 30 June 2006 – 50% of the balance

Year ended 30 June 2007 – the remaining balance

It is intended that all sub-sub lease rentals will increase commensurately commencing with those due on 1 July 2004. – *Cheryl Brown*

The Inaugural ANZAC Day Ceremony

One feature of this occasion was the amount of flying both before and after the ceremony. A tight formation flypast by Michael McFadyen and Barry Hempel preceded the main event while the gathering was treated to some aerobatics afterwards.

The ANZAC Day Ceremony itself began promptly at 7 am with a spectacular overflight by Barry Hempel's Antonov (Big Bird). The sky was overcast and when Barry was 150 metres out from the flagpole the landing lights came on. In the pre-dawn gloom the sight and sound were spectacular.

Around sixty folk gathered from Watts Bridge Home Base Groups, The Brisbane Valley Lodge, The Dutch Marine Corps and the RAAF. During the ceremony Rod McNaught (seen with his back to the camera) on behalf of Brisbane Valley Lodge presented the Memorial Flag and Pole to Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield. The WBMA response was delivered by Airfield Council Chairman Ian Perkins. Following the ANZAC invocation given by Ed de Laat, the last post and the reveille were sounded. During the reveille the flag was raised to half-mast. Caboolture Gliding Club members then laid a wreath at the Memorial Cairn.

Following a brief address and prayer by Airfield President Mike Nelson, the ceremony concluded with a formation flypast by Caboolture's Tigers and Barry's Yak. Guests were then treated to a first-class breakfast organised by Noelene Mill and her team. Our thanks to Ron Dunn, Ray Zuillerman, Barry Hempel and Jeff Underhill for organising the flypast. Also thanks to Ian Perkins for the sound system. Once again, we have a good example of our people all working together for a successful outcome. Next year's ceremony promises to be even better.



THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

On building bridges and breaking down barriers

Clive Tudge in his Aerobatic report observes that the Caboolture Gliders and the Aerobatic Club shared the same weekend at Watts and that the cooperation between both groups was impressive. It seems to symbolise a new spirit of unity on the airfield. Ian Perkins makes the same point in the Airfield Council Report.

This theme of cooperation extends to the immediate community around the airfield. At the ANZAC Day flag-raising ceremony there was a good representation from the neighbours of Watts Bridge and the goodwill from our friends in this community was evident. Dialogue is now underway with Brian Belz but the goodwill needs to work both ways. So you will be seeing Brian Pettigrew's map with GPS readings of sensitive overfly areas in your second Information Bulletin.

There is still some way to go in resolving other matters. The legal maze surrounding the lease issue is being worked through right now with SEQWater. Again, in a spirit of cooperation. Another challenge is that the processing of the new Development Application and the survey that must accompany it may prove expensive and lengthy, yet necessary, in order to make the WBMA future secure. A working party comprising Cheryl Brown, Liz Cook (WBMA), Greg Steel (SEQWater) and Brad Sully (ESC) has been convened to develop and present submissions to an independent valuer (API) so that the proposed airfield re-valuation and the flow on to rental increases are kept as low as practicable. Another example of goodwill is that Peter Borrows of SEQWater has agreed to phase in the increase annually, while it is still being determined. This gesture means that our Treasurer has a current figure that enables her to issue rental invoices for next financial year that are significantly lower than the final benchmark.

We will all be facing some additional costs in time, effort and money. I am hopeful that WBMA members will see that our preferred future for Watts Bridge is really worth all the effort. Cooperation will always take us further than confrontation.

Mike Nelson

CHRISTMAS IN JULY

The Poker Run was down a little in numbers but QUA's 'Christmas In July' was well attended. Plenty of good food, drink and conviviality as usual. Our thanks to Glenda and her team for a great day. The picture of our prize-winners plus the organisers says it all. In the second picture Bevan Dryden South East Queensland RAA Rep, accepts the poker run award from Richard Faint on behalf of Andy McCallum, Toowoomba.



STOP PRESS

Shane Winter advises that there is a QVAG Breakfast Fly-in Sunday the 11th of July from 08.00hrs. You are invited to enjoy a cooked breakfast and beautiful winter flying.

To help us with catering, please RSVP to Craig Justo Ph: 3349 6003 or Shane Winter Ph: 3300 3357

Queensland State Aerobatic Championships

11th to 14th June 2004.

This year's annual Queensland State Championships took place at Watts Bridge over the long June weekend amidst some beautiful weather and with double the number of pilots from last year. Twenty four (yes, 24) pilots turned up to compete for the coveted trophies with 7 pilots making the journey from the NSW Aerobatic Club. In addition, we were honoured to see the President of the Victorian Chapter here again to assist in the judging.

Flying started on the Friday with unofficial practise and then at about 11.00am official practise was declared and our able Contest Director, Liz Cook got things underway:

Official practise allows everybody 10 minutes in the box (no more) to practise what they will; usually trying to sort out the difficult bits and to get themselves orientated on the surrounding hill-sides and dams. For most of the Queensland Aerobatic Club the orientation is not too much of a problem as they have a practise day on the last Sunday of each month at Watts Bridge, AND, there is now a permanent box marked out to the South

side of runway 12/30. Those of you who were wondering what the yellow markers were, well it's the aerobatic box markings showing the 1km x 1km square that all sequences have to be flown in.

Practise continued on the Saturday for those just arrived and then the competition got underway in earnest. First off were those dashing young men in their flying machine, Alan Kilpatrick and Richard Wiltshire from NSW, competing in the Advanced Grade in a Pitts S1A. This was followed by the Intermediate, Sportsman, Graduate and Entry Grades.

This was the first competition to have the Entry Sequence which has been evolved to allow aircraft not specifically designed for aerobatics to compete in Aerobatic competitions. This means that these aircraft do not have to have an inverted oil or fuel system and can be fixed prop.

The Intermediate group consisted of 3 completely different pilots in completely different aircraft. Once again we were graced with Keith Hinchcliffe and his beautiful Akro aircraft:

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Also in Intermediate was Markus Walther in his newly renovated and painted Pitts S2B (b..ger no picture yet) and Matt Burnet in the Decathlon DEC: The Sportsman grade had ten (yes, 10) competitors this year and it proved to be a very even competition with only 5% separating 1st from 8th after the first day.



The Graduate pilots also demonstrated that the competition gets even stronger with 7 competitors and again all very close from 1st to 5th.

With the number of pilots flying it meant that the 2 in the Entry level had to complete their first sequences in the shadows cast by the setting sun.

And so on to the village hall in Esk for dinner.

On the 2nd day of competition, on the Sunday, all competitors competed without interruption and we had an earlier close than the previous day. The 2nd day is the completion of the competition for the Sportsman, Graduate and Entry grades and you could hear the relief of the competitors at the Sunday evening dinner. The Advanced and Intermediate flew their last sequence on day 3.

Final results for trophies were:

Advanced:

- 1 Alan Kilpatrick
- 2 Richard Wiltshire

Intermediate:

- 1 Markus Walther
- 2 Matt Burnet
- 3 Keith Hinchcliffe

Sportsman:

- 1 Scott Jarron
- 2 Anton Dettori
- 3 Connie Greenberg

Graduate:

- 1 Carley Bansemer
- 2 Chris Gallagher
- 3 Ivan Toh

Entry:

- 1 Russell Bell
- 2 John Gallagher

Once again an excellent competition took place with lots of appreciation to the organisers and Judges.

Particular thanks must go to the glider club who demonstrated that it is possible for multiple groups to enjoy the Watts Bridge environment at the same time. Sometimes they had as many as 5 or 6 gliders in the sky and not once was there any conflict with the Aerobatic flying; thanks guys and, by the way, they looked beautiful.

Thanks also to the Queensland Vintage Aircraft Group for the use of their facilities and for cleaning the mess up after us.

The local Lions group provided the lunches each day and it was an effort to get in the aircraft after such delicious lunches!

Clive Tudge



LEASEHOLDER HBG NOTES

How do you like our new title? We felt that it encompasses all members involved in leases and infrastructure. On Sunday July 4th we had an attendance of eighteen, the best for some time.

Items addressed included Cheryl Brown's arrangements to phase in rental increases and her request to our pioneer members to provide evidence on the amount of work undertaken by them in those early days when the airstrip was being restored. This is necessary to prevent an assumption in valuing the

airfield that the airstrip base was already in place before volunteer labour restored it. Mike Nelson informed us about improved relationships both within and beyond the airfield and Peter Freeman provided some prices for more airfield speed signs should they be needed.

The next meeting will be held at Rod and Noelene's place on Sunday September 12th at 1 pm.

Peter Freeman

Airfield Council Notes

The Council is constituted from the delegates of all Home Base Groups at Watts Bridge. Our focus is principally on operational activities on the field and matters of interest to the HBGs. We have now held three meetings where discussions have been amicable and productive.

At the request of the BoM, we have been reviewing the Operational Bylaws of WBMA, with input from all delegates. We should have our first draft available for distribution to members by July/August, with the objective of having the final version adopted by members at the AGM. While it won't be perfect, it will be replacing the current document which is now out of date and somewhat cumbersome.

Member's input is most welcome and should be channelled through your HBG delegate. While your specific suggestions may not be incorporated, they will receive consideration and be discussed in the context of finding the best solutions for all of the various interest groups and activities.

The BoM has established the immediate needs and critical priorities for Watts Bridge, for which there is apparent widespread support. The Council is also giving some thought to further priorities on

the Airfield, and considers that a common clubhouse facility (for the 2 to 5 year time frame) would be of value to many groups. We all have plans for our own group "homes" at Watts Bridge but have other priorities in the short to medium term eg the Gliding Club rates a dedicated hangar as it's most important claim on Club funds.

Our thoughts are that we could combine resources with the Association by each chipping in 5 to 10 thousand dollars, to provide a facility which will ultimately be owned by the Association through buying out each of the participating groups when they are ready to establish their own space. This could become the proposed GHQ that has been the subject of much debate.

Finally, as Chairman of the Council, may I say what a pleasure it has been to see the combined activities and progress on the field over the last year or so. From my perspective, we still have challenges but these are being addressed in a positive and productive manner, leading to an excellent attitude of harmony and cooperation between all stakeholders.

Well done All!

Ian Perkins



Airfield satellite imagery courtesy SEQWater