



# The N.S.W. Sport Aircraft Club Newsletter

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2006

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The Bathurst day-trippers outside the Tourist Information Centre . . . . . "Say cheese"



Seven Club aircraft and one visitor at Bathurst's Raglan Field

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**Maree is tempted to try the horn on this old beauty inside the Bathurst Tourist Information Centre.**

**Wendy and Bruce Nash heading for a healthy lunch. (Ain't love grand?)**



**Mt. Panorama circuit showing Skyline, the Esses, Forest Elbow and part of Conrod Straight**

Welcome to the **October/November** edition of your Newsletter.

This issue is full of the usual contributions from our regular writers, and with a few additional articles and lots of colour photos for you to enjoy.

The Club's one-day trip to Bathurst was a beauty. Read all about it on **Page 10**, and see all the pictures of the trip scattered throughout this Newsletter.

Enclosed with this issue is a questionnaire seeking your input on which major projects your Committee should pursue, and how our money should be spent. Please take the time to fill it in and return it to your Club Treasurer. Also read what the President has written on the subject on **Page 5**.

Also enclosed is a letter of instruction regarding the method of receiving your **NEW GATE KEY**. (Yes,

the locks will be changed soon.) Refer also to the article on **Page 7**.

Many of us are looking forward to, and now preparing for the Club trip to **China**. Watch for the report on this trip and also of the upcoming **Open Day** in the next issue.

Thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue, and especially to Matthew Gray for assisting with the coloured pages.

We hope you enjoy this issue of your Newsletter.

*No headwinds*

**David Rittie**



You can contact your Newsletter Editor at [david.rittie@optusnet.com.au](mailto:david.rittie@optusnet.com.au)

## Words from the President

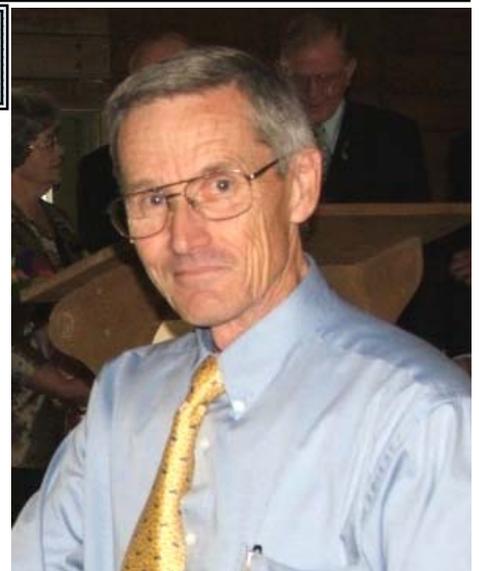
You will all be aware from the recent General Meeting Notice that arguments within the Committee about the location of the fuel bowser became quite passionate. Passions are still running high and the opinion has been voiced that I have a vision for the Club that is not generally supported. Whether or not that is the case is up to you, the members, to decide.

The projects that the Committee has been pursuing are regularly discussed in the Newsletters. The Committee's activities on behalf of you members in 2005 are set out in detail in the President's Report for that year. And I have now twice been re-elected to chair your Committee of management. So I am hopeful that the majority of you do approve of what the Committee has been doing under my chairmanship. Although the projects pursued over the previous almost three years illustrate the vision for the Club that is being pursued, I have never set out any general principles. Since I have now been challenged, I propose the following guiding principles apply to my vision:

*"...of a Club led by an elected Committee that promotes all members' enjoyment of recreational aviation by representing their interests respectfully and impartially, without favour to particular interests or individuals and without exceptions in applying the Club Rules for the benefit of members as a body corporate. These objectives, which are internal to the Club's operation, I believe must be implemented with respect for the laws of our society and accord respect and consideration for our neighbours as fellow citizens and the environment which we share with them."*

It might be suggested such a general vision is a "goody two shoes" dream. Before concluding that, I suggest a moment be taken to recall that with every difficult conflict, there is at least some pressure to compromise principles to relieve the conflict or to defer the problem. I've done it, we all have. But so often such "solutions" are short-lived. Having principles in mind helps reach decisions that are fair and lasting.

Differences of opinion are inevitable in any community. Some of these



differences are entirely valid, as in a free society, individualism is valued. Some may be due to certain individuals or groups seeking more from the Club than other members think is fair or equitable. Laws of our society and the rules of our Club are in place to provide a framework of accepted behaviour and agreed limits. I put it to you as members of the Club, that the appropriate way to manage conflicts with the Rules is to seek majority support to vary them and not by making exceptions.

An obligation for the Committee to represent the interests of everybody places great responsibility on the people you elect to it. But your re-

sponsibility does not end with that election. Only if you maintain a close interest in what your Committee is doing will you assure that your Committee is accountable for its decisions.

As I look around my fellow Club members I see a small core of inter-

ested people. Their approach to some issues is even-handed and in others there are vested interests to pursue. That division is natural enough, but what alarms me considerably is that there is a much greater part of the membership who are not engaged at all in the management of the Club.

To paraphrase another famous writer, "nothing lets bad governance flourish so much as good men remaining silent".

Fly safely

**Peter Scott**

### Fuel Bowser Decided (or is it?)

The General Meeting on 10 September endorsed the Committee decision to site the fuel bowser east of the windsock by a vote of 43 to 35. There were 79 votes counted, of which more than 30 were proxies.

I had prepared a tabulation of comparative costs and diagrams showing the layout of the two bowser locations that had been considered by the Committee. In summary, the chosen site was estimated to cost about \$1600 more than the modifications of the existing site (to move it further away from the runway). The proponents of the location east of the windsock (and yes, that includes me) argued that its benefit of much greater distance from the runway and its much greater distance from any member's hangar justified that small extra cost. The proponents of the alternative site (about 7 metres east of the present location) argued that the costing for it was unreasonably inflated because they included 34 metres of new gravel road adjacent to the tank and a fire-proof wall to isolate the tank from traffic on the new roadway. (The wall is a requirement to issue the dangerous goods license.) According to this view, such costs were unnecessary if the roadway to the southern hangars was simply closed and access was required to be via the taxiways or the track to the east of the southern hangars. Another objection was that the taxiway layout presented for the site east of the windsock was different to what the Committee had considered. (No detailed drawings of taxiway loca-

tions for either option had been tabled at three Committee meetings.)

Notwithstanding these arguments, the members voting at the meeting had available to them the schematic diagrams of both proposals and the comparative measurements and costing of works required in reaching the decision they did. But there was a wild card. Among the five sites that had been proposed for consideration by the Committee was one located at the northern end of the existing aircraft park adjacent to the new hangar Row O. Vic Laybutt argued at the General Meeting that the Committee should not have discounted this site since it required significantly less taxiway construction and therefore would be less expensive to implement. There had been no supporters of this site at Committee, notwithstanding that it was recognized there would be cost savings arising from use of taxiway O for access. My personal decision to discount it as a final candidate for the fuel bowser

location was that it only just met the minimum standards for clearance from a future 07/25 runway. (That is, it was less safe than the site east of the windsock) and it required an imposition on the owners of hangars in Hangar Row O that could be avoided by using the site behind the windsock. (That is, I was concerned that matters of democratic equity be taken into account. The same consideration applied to the proposed modification of the existing bowser site.)

The Committee is aware that a members' petition is being raised to have the site at the northern end of the aircraft park reconsidered. The Rules provide that if 5% of members sign such a petition then a Special General Meeting is required to consider that petition. If this happens there will be still more debate over the location of the fuel bowser. You will all get to vote again! A slow process, yes, but that is democracy!

**Peter Scott**



**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS  
(SPEND IT NOW OR SAVE IT FOR LATER?)**

Back in the 2005 October/November Newsletter, I presented a review of possible items for capital improvement. That article sought input from everybody in the Club as to what should be our capital priorities for the coming few years. To refresh your memories, the items discussed were:

- Land purchase**
- New fuel bowser**
- Vehicle-proof boundary fence**
- Refurbish clubhouse toilets**
- Bunkhouse block**
- Cross runway development**
- Level "the ditch"**
- Seal the northern 500m runway**

Several of these items were again discussed in the 2005 President's Report and subsequent newsletters. Additional matters proposed have been completion of the taxiways servicing the northern hangar development, modification of the main taxiway to the threshold of 17 and the revegetation of areas of bush along the entrance roadway.

**Feedback on Capital Plan.** There has been very little comment from members, either positive or negative, about the wisdom or priority of any of these proposals. (Lots of discussion, to be sure, about a location of the fuel bowser, but no-one seemed to object that its inclusion was inappropriate or that its priority should be low.) Two members have advised me verbally that they think the cross runway should not be pursued. One person thinks this is inappropriate because there are so many obstacles to be overcome, the probability of completion is remote. Another considers that an elevated threshold to an approximate 07 vector would create hazardous down drafts in easterly

breezes. Apart from these objections, other informal opinions have been supportive as a means to encourage pilots of aircraft with low wing loading to fly in a greater range of weather conditions.

**Spend it or Save it?** Recently, a proposal was made by a Committee member that the Club should "bite the bullet" and commit to sealing the remaining 500m of runway 17/35. The supporting argument was that as our liquid funds attract an interest rate that is barely sufficient to keep up with inflation, it is logical to use those funds if there are important tasks to implement rather than saving them for projected future expenses of uncertain timing and cost. Clearly, the potential need to purchase the property would be an example of the latter contingency. In general, it is a sound principle of investment that liquid funds be employed to improve infrastructure rather than have inflation nibble away at their real value. But clearly the relative priorities have to be taken into account.

**Fund-raising Models.** Supposing we spent \$150,000 to complete the sealing of the main runway and the associated taxiway (a logical complement to the northern taxiway project). How would we replace the capital used?

As we do not own the property, it is not possible to borrow against our equity in it. Even in the event that it might be freehold in the future, land value is not likely to constitute significant collateral, because of the limited market for an airfield built over a mine subsidence area that does not have transport, power or water infrastructure.

**1.** One option is to institute an annual levy on members to pay for the capital works undertaken. For example, for the sealing of the main runway and taxiway, an annual levy on flying members only of \$240 would be sufficient to replace the capital cost (assuming this is \$150,000) over 5 years including 10% interest. *Would you members see such a proposal as reasonable and equitable?* The Committee needs your feedback on such ideas.

**2.** Another means of raising money is to issue debentures to those members who are willing to lend money to the Club at a low interest rate (even a no-interest rate?). If sufficient money could be raised this way, the responsibility for the funding would fall only on those who were willing to contribute funds for the good of the body corporate. It is an open question as to whether there are sufficient members motivated to contribute to raise the level of funding needed.

By contrast, the proposal of a levy on all flying members spreads the responsibility equally across those who will get most benefit from the improvements, the pilots and aircraft owners.

If the freehold acquisition proposal ever succeeds, these questions will need to be addressed, but with an objective of raising still further amounts of money than the example used above.

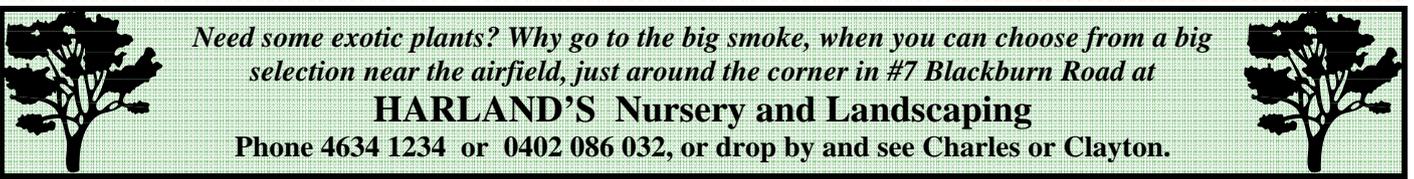
**So please give these matters your thought and get back to the Committee with your ideas.** Preferably let us have them via email or letter as a permanent record is easier to document as a Committee record and is less likely to be overlooked than a verbal conversation

**Peter Scott**

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G'day fellow aviators

Well, by now you will all have heard of, or read elsewhere the result of the recent general meeting's vote on the location of the new fuel bowser. Those of you who attended will know that passions were running high, and that in the end the votes on Ian Harvie's motion fell 43 for and 35 against, endorsing the committee's decision to locate near clubhouse windsock.

The bowser argument seems to me to be dividing the club, and that troubles me because EVERYONE who has had involvement is intending the best result for the club. How about we all remember that important fact, and get on with DOING the work required rather than arguing about it.

Meanwhile, thanks to all those who have done great work on the Northern End main taxiway and drainage

and runway surface. We are a club of volunteers and it is good to see the amount some people are prepared to put in for the benefit of us all.

Progress with freehold purchase, hangars and the boring bits of managing the club goes on without any particularly interesting things to tell. Bernie has the names of recently interviewed and probationary members elsewhere in the newsletter. The next thing the fun police will be hassling you about is the changeover to the new security keys for the gate, and there should be details on the process for this included with the newsletter mailing. Amongst other things, these keys require a signature for issue, and there is no way around this. No autograph, no key. Sorry.

On the aviation front, some of you will be amused to know that the Axe made it through yet another annual,



and is still able to perform a climb at the dazzling rate of as much as 700 fpm (on a good day). Every time I manage to get to the airfield and do some flying, even in such a modest aeroplane, I remember how lucky we are to be capable of flying, and how privileged we are to have such a great facility to operate from. Let's make sure we don't forget.

Keep the blue side up (except on Victor 1...)

**Bret Cavanagh**

## New Members Report



There has been a steady stream of new member applications and enquires being received by your Committee. The following people have requested to become full members of our club:

**Uri Malaniak** – Uri holds a RA-AUS pilot license and is building a Lightwing Speed.

**John Lightbown** – John also holds a RA-AUS pilot licence but believe it or not, is not even old

enough to hold a driver's license. John flies a Jabiru with a STOL wing.

If anybody has any comments they would like to make about either of these future members, please direct them to either myself or any current Committee member. We ask you to make welcome our new probationary members:

**Jay Anderson**  
**Timothy Causer**  
**John O'Byrne**  
**Peter Needs**  
**Sam Spencer**  
**Chris Willis.**

We would also like to have some feedback on where our club should be heading in terms of membership. Some members have suggested we limit intake, and/or temporarily stop all new membership. Others say we should increase the membership

joining fee. What kind of members should we be welcoming to our club? Do we want new members that just want somewhere cheap to park their aeroplane(s) and perhaps pay a premium? Or do we only want members that will chip in around the club, and participate in flying and social events? There is already a lot of current members who don't attend any flying and/or social events. What type of example are these people setting? What hope do we have in new members if there are only a handful of current members turning up to organised events.

Is G.A. really dying in the Sydney Basin? I hope not. Why don't we all make a conscious effort just to get in our flying machines and get airborne. The more flying hours everybody does, the cheaper it will be in the long run for all of us.

Always Airborne

**Bernie Stevermuer**

Hi again,

Although our financial year only begins in February, I am already putting thought towards next year's budget. In doing this, I'd like to be able to think a little further out than just one year. To ensure the club moves forward and to assist decisions about how and where we want to spend our money, it is important to have a plan. A plan of where we want our club to be in one year, in three years, in five years...

I'd like to refer you to the "planning ahead" sheet (this is a modified version of that given out at the last general meeting), that details options for where the club might wish to spend its money. Some of these items are definitely needed; others are just wishful thinking. To assist with planning the budget for next year and beyond, I'd like to know

for each item:

Is this something you would like to see the club's money spent on? (yes or no)

if yes,

Do you consider this expense to be a priority?

How much money do you think we should set aside for this?

I'm also interested to know if there is anything else you think the club should be spending money on.

The flip side of this coin is where the money comes from. I'm keen to get your feedback on some of my suggestions and hear your ideas.

Help me ensure that the club moves in the direction that we, as a club, want it to go with the funds required. Please send your responses and comments to Tara Stevermuer, **55 Meadow St, Tarrawanna 2518**



or email to:

**stevermuer@uow.edu.au.**

One final thing: if you do not put your ten cents in now, don't complain later...

Blue skies,

**Tara Stevermuer**

The questionnaire Tara refers to is the green sheet included with this Newsletter

Ed

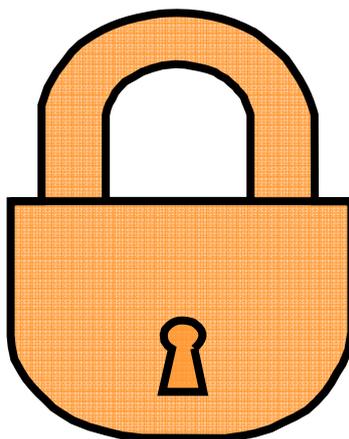
## GATE KEYS REPLACEMENT - How do I get mine?

The often-promised new keys have been received. The plan for their distribution will provide several opportunities for members to pick them up at Club functions over an approximately two month period. At the end of that time, the locks will be changed.

**You will find enclosed with this Newsletter detailed instructions about where keys can be collected and the requirements. Please read carefully.**

1. It is a requirement of the Rural Fire Service (which authorized the use of their locks and the provision of keys to Club members) and Campbelltown City Council (which manufactured the keys) that every key is signed for by the recipient. There is a separate sheet documenting the allocation of each key. You will be required to sign this documentation upon taking delivery of your key.

2. At the September Committee Meeting it was agreed that keys would only be distributed to members who have completed a fresh Member Data sheet to confirm or update their personal contact details and information about aircraft owned and kept at Wedderburn. A form for this is enclosed with the instructions about the key. Presentation of the completed Member Data Sheet is a requirement for your key



to be released.

3. Another requirement applied by the committee is that keys will only be distributed to those members who are not in arrears with their debts to the Club. So please ensure your accounts are not overdue before arriving to pick up your key.

**ONCE AGAIN, PLEASE READ THE ENCLOSED PACKAGE OF INFORMATION AND PLAN TO ATTEND A COLLECTION OPPORTUNITY WITH THE DATA SHEET COMPLETED.**

After new locks are installed, your old keys will be requested, and when received, your account will be credited for the \$30 deposit. The Clubhouse door locks will be changed to suit the new keys.

Many thanks

**Peter Scott**

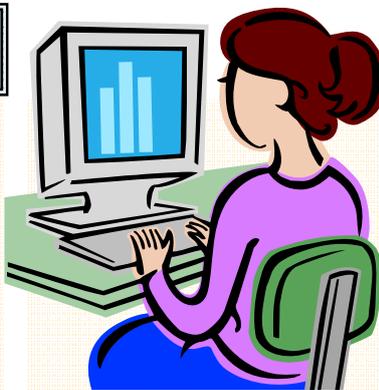
Hi Everyone,

Here we are almost into October and this means we are getting closer to our Open Day to be held on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> November – write this date in your diary NOW because we need all of our members to be present on our special day.

To the Wedderburn Rural Fire Brigade, who presented the SAC Ladies Auxiliary with a Certificate of Appreciation for our support, a belated “Thank You”. I was delighted to accept the certificate on behalf of our dedicated group of Ladies. We are always willing to help your wonderful organisation whenever possible.

The Fly-In/Drive-In Brunch we held on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> August was attended by 28 members and after a very hearty meal of sausages, eggs & bacon, all were very interested to hear our guest speaker Ern Thompson talk about his most interesting life as an aviator in World War II. Thanks to all who came and supported our always popular get together.

Our Movie Night held on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> August saw 19 SAC members and 17 of our friends from the Wedderburn Rural Fire Service attend for a most enjoyable night – there was lots of laughter as we showed about three of the funniest Mr. Bean DVD’s first and then the main picture, “The Worlds Fastest Indian” which proved to be a big hit. It was an excellent movie and if you haven’t seen it yet may I suggest, like many of our members, not to miss it. Eve-



ryone enjoyed the supper at half time and I have had great reports back from our friends of WRFS that they would like to come along to the next Movie Night, so

I will certainly make a couple of Saturday nights available on next year’s calendar. My thanks go to our friend Rob, who set up all the entertainment equipment to enable us to enjoy our Movie Night – hope you will help us again Rob!!

The Work Day, held on SATURDAY 26<sup>th</sup> August was a great day with 56 members turning up to work – we served lunch at 1.00 p.m. to 49 workers who stayed to enjoy a free lunch and free beer. The menu of BBQ Sausage sandwich with various salads, followed by delicious cakes was a great hit and it was good to see many of our members attend who normally are so busy on a Sunday they are unable to attend, so in this respect a Saturday seems to suit quite a few of our members. My “Thanks” to Dave Thomas who became Chef of the BBQ and I

noticed he had two young ladies helping him – Thanks to Grace and Lillie Harvie for assisting, you ALL did a great job. To my team of wonderful Ladies thank you for your help in preparing the meal for all of us to enjoy, and to our workers, thank you for carrying out much needed maintenance around the airfield.



## WORK DAY SUNDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2006

Yes, this is the last workday of the year and it falls just one week short of our **Open Day** so this is a very important day for our workers to come along and participate. We need to have our airfield looking good for the many visitors.

The Ladies Auxiliary will prepare a hearty lunch for you all and we would ask that you make sure you register your name on arrival in the Clubhouse as this helps with our catering numbers. Also our normal charge of \$5.00 will apply.

**OPEN DAY****OPEN DAY****OPEN DAY**SUNDAY 5<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2006 10.00 A.M. TO 4.00 P.M.

Yes! countdown to our Open Day has begun, by the time you receive this Newsletter we will have only 5 weeks left before our big day will be here so REMEMBER bring your families and friends along to support your CLUB.

Our talented members of the Ladies Auxiliary are very busy knitting, sewing, cooking and generally preparing to stack our stalls with wonderful gifts for our many visitors to buy. The jam and relish ladies have already started to cook these always popular home made preserves and our chefs who arrive with delicious cakes on the morning of our Open Day assure me they will be cooking again for this year.

I have been in contact with Sy, who is our main Open Day organiser this year, and he is pleased that the Ladies Auxiliary has been able to confirm that the Lions Club of Camden will, once again, cook all the Hot Food at lunch time for our hungry members and many visitors we hope will attend.

All we need to do is pray for fine weather for the 5<sup>th</sup> and let us all enjoy this wonderful day

**GENERAL MEETING SUNDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2006**

A reminder that our General Meeting will be held in the Clubhouse on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> December at 2.00 p.m. so please make a note in your diary as December is not far away.

Cheers

**Margaret Adams****Fisher's Ghost Fly-Over Saturday 4th November**

The Club's usual contribution to the Fisher's Ghost Festival procession along the main street of Cambelltown will occur again, if requested by the organizers, as we expect. A "Show Flight-master" has not yet been appointed, but when we engage this expert, there will be a call for aviators to attend a briefing late Saturday morning and crank their birds for a line astern salute to the good people on the streets 1000 feet below.

Please keep this in mind and check the web-site for information.

That's the day before our open day.

**OPEN DAY Sunday 5th November**

A reminder to everybody that the Club's Open Day in 2006 will be on Sunday 5th November, that's the weekend of the Campbelltown Fisher's Ghost festival. **Sy Allsep** has agreed to be the convenor and many of you will be contacted by him or his sub-committee of helpers to lend a hand in preparing for the day or organization on the day.

The Committee conveys its appreciation to Sy for undertaking this important role. The Open Day is our major public day of the year when we welcome the citizens of Campbelltown and beyond to see our air-field and the aircraft that we enthuse about.

## BATHURST ONE DAY FLY AWAY - SUNDAY 17th SEPTEMBER 2006

Well, for a change we had pretty good weather for the day. We had eight aircraft attending and 16 people. Two guests from the Royal Newcastle Aero Club joined in and all had a great time.

Everyone got away at their own time from WBN, so that we all arrived at Bathurst's Raglan Airport prior to 10 a.m. We had a mini bus waiting to transport us around for the day. We went into town first to pick up two of our chaps who had arrived the previous afternoon, and then we headed for Mt Panorama Motor Racing Circuit, home for Australia's big races - where we just had to go for a lap around.

So here we are in our hot-up super-charged mini bus weighed down by 16 people and definitely not helped by the two overnights who, from their bragging, reckoned they visited every pub in town the previous night, and were now carrying a couple of kegs of beer in extra weight on them. So, extra weight was the problem for our four-cylinder racer mini bus, but we coasted along Pit Straight and survived Hells Corner, then it was chug chug up Mountain Straight in third and then second gear, down to first gear long before The Cutting, second gear past Reid Park and up to third gear for the rush to Skyline, through The Esses, down The Dipper, screamed around Forrest Elbow at 30 k's an hour and finally into fourth gear while tearing down Conrod Straight and into The Chase (no one could catch us then - mainly because they had all passed us) and lastly to Murrays Corner and down the escape road at 10 K's.

The fastest lap officially recorded was clocked at 2.09 minutes - guess what? it wasn't us. We took about 25 minutes!

We did have a stop at Brocks Skyline and a quiet moment for Peter Brock - there were lots of tributes, messages and flowers left up there for him. He will be sadly missed.

The circuit is 6.213 km in length and 874 metres above sea level. Apparently in 1938 the Mount Panorama Scenic Drive was opened to the public, it is a public road which means drivers need to obey the speed limit when taking a drive around the circuit outside race meetings. It is a rural setting with quite spectacular views from the top and it has some 40 private residences located in and around the circuit. There are also private businesses including accommodation, a winery, restaurant and fruit orchard on the Mountain. It is home to Australia's oldest rifle range and provides facilities for other sports like archery, clay pigeon shooting, the Panorama Motorcycle Club and Bathurst Light Car Club. A driver training school and motorcycle training school are run from the pit area. The Council also owns and maintains a flora reserve on the top of the mountain. At about lunchtime / afternoon there was to be a memorial drive and meeting for Peter Brock so they were expecting quite a crowd - we were lucky to get in ahead of them and have a look about.

Once back to normal driving mode we stopped at the National Motor Racing Museum & Hall of Fame for a look through. Heaps of racing cars and motor bikes and history on racing kept everyone busy reading and looking. There was also a very interesting movie clip showing the early days of racing on the Mountain.

By this time it was tucker time, we headed into town to find some tucker, did a lap around and sadly the two pub crawlers found that they had missed a pub or two in their travels the night before. Easily fixed - they will be back.

Some of us ate at the Crepe place - very nice - others headed to the pub for a Thai Prawn Salad. All, I reckon, were happy with their fill. By early afternoon the old grey clouds were showing their face, we cut the city sights tour to a brief drive around. There are some beautiful old homes from the early days now restored, Ben Chifley's house, Old Government Cottage, Abercrombie House, and a heap to see and do in the town and area and certainly worth a re-visit.

Bathurst was Australia's first inland settlement located in the Macquarie Valley. Originally the region was home of the nomadic Wiradjuri Aboriginal Tribe but Lachlan Macquarie proclaimed Bathurst a settlement in May 1815 and it was used as a base for further journeys west. The settlement really flourished once gold was discovered in 1823 and again in the 1850 & 1860's.

Unfortunately, some clouds were still making a presence so by mid afternoon we started making tracks back to the airfield. Had a quick stop at the Visitor Information Centre - a new building, it had an old Cobb & Co carriage and another old vehicle of sorts - it certainly drew the interest of our



**Can anyone make any sense out of this sign?**

guys - anything with wheels or an engine seems to keep them happy, but they couldn't help themselves, a couple of them had to see if the horn on the old car worked - it did, but doing so incurred a disapproving word and look from the Centre Manageress, she "expected that sort of thing from boys - not grown men".

Back to the field and a big "thank you" to Malcolm our mini bus driver, and then it was to our aircraft for a quick check then our flight home. All back safe and sound after

skirting around a couple of rainstorms on the way home. Thank you to all who attended.

Happy flying and stay safe.

Cheers

**Lindsay and Maree  
Sinclair**

It was a really nice trip.

Thanks for organising another great and entertaining day, and thanks for the story.

**Ed**



### EVENTS STILL TO HAPPEN::::

#### ANNUAL BIG CLUB TRIP AWAY — CHINA

Well, the China trip happens next. Those Club members participating will depart Sydney on 2nd October for the TRIP OF A LIFETIME.

All of the arrangements have been finalised, and most of the travellers will return on 12th October after what should be a very memorable trip.

**ONE DAY FLY OR DRIVE EVENT TO ALBION PARK, WOLLONGONG** - happening on **19th November 2006**. Last chance to earn points and get your name in the hat for the big prize at the end of the year.

This will be a lovely leisurely fly or drive with brunch or lunch there, either at the cafe or perhaps at a club nearby. Watch the website for more details closer to the date.

**Lindsay and Maree Sinclair**

### CHRISTMAS DINNER and SAC AWARDS DAY Saturday 16th December

#### FLY OUT for Christmas Lunch

#### The Aviator's Lounge at YWOL

This is a restaurant frequented by various SAC gastronomes for regular Sunday sorties. They vouch for its good tucker and convivial atmosphere.

And we can take our flying machines! Or not, as the choice appeals to you. Either way you will need your personal pilot to take command if you intend including some liquid cheer in the return loading manifest.

Bookings will be essential and the cost will be advised shortly on the website. To reserve your place, contact Robert Greig on 0418 271 188 or 0413 884 831.

**MARK IT IN YOUR CALENDARS**

**Hello Everyone,**

I would just like to say that, in my first year at looking after the workdays, it has been gratifying to see how some of the members pull together on these days for the betterment of the club. Although we have an age limit on the need to attend Workdays, there are a number of the over 65 group who continue to attend and play an active role in the maintenance of the club, in fact some of them have been to every Workday so far this year, and although the Newsletter goes to print prior to the last work day of the year, I am sure I will see their faces again in October.

For interest sake I have included some “food for thought” statistics based only on Full Members’ workday attendance so far this year. They are:

Not attended any days	56
Attended only 1 day	23
Attended 2 days	19
Attended 3 days	22
Attended 4 days	7

I should also point out that we have had a number of Associate Members turn up on Workdays and also a handful of Social Members. As I mentioned we still have one more workday to go. All members have the opportunity to make-up their Workday commitment at any time if they are not in a position to attend the actual designated Workdays, so there is still plenty of time between now and the end of the year if you want to get those three days logged and credited.

Now, I would like to take a moment to thank the following people for their extra effort in their own time this year in helping to make the airfield facilities better for all of us. As you know the runway and drainage ditch to the northern end of the field has had extensive work done to it to improve the surface and make that end of the field much safer in the event of a mishap should an aircraft depart the runway on the landing or take-off roll. Anyway, those members are:

1. Bob Sproule – yes I know, he does get paid by the



club for his work, but, it is important to note that Bob does far in excess of the “paid” job when he comes to the airfield, if we were charged for every hour Bob actually worked, our bill would be unbelievable – thank you Bob, the place is looking great.

2. Lindsay Sinclair – again, an amazing amount of effort over and above the call of duty on lots of

fronts, from airport maintenance, security, and of course with help from Maree, the fly-aways and social functions, truly a great contributor to this club. Please keep it up.

3. Vic Laybutt – although not on the committee any more, Vic still spends hours out at the field assisting with a number of the facility improvements and raising new ideas on how we, as a club, can improve our environment – very much the quiet achiever.

4. There were a couple of members who came to the field during the runway upgrade to assist the three guys mentioned above with all this work. They are Bill King and Neil Johnston. Thanks guys, a great effort. I am sure it is appreciated by all. It should also be noted that the work they did fulfilled their Workday(s) commitment outside of the standard assigned work days, so it is a good example of how flexible the system is, and how it can work for you and your situation.

5. Lastly, I think we should all seriously acknowledge the work that Mike, our caretaker, puts in. One of the reasons our Workdays have been reduced in time is purely due to the constant work that Mike carries out around the airfield on a day-to-day basis, catching things before they get out of control and keeping the place looking nice for all.

Well, the year is almost over and there is only one Workday remaining before we put 2006 to bed. This Workday is on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October and is our last chance to get the airfield looking good prior to the Open Day and the long break before returning to start all over again in 2007.

Some of the activities for this day will be:

- Clean the gutters on the club house

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- Replace the wooden uprights to the kitchen entrance landing.
- Replace wooden slats on the clubhouse veranda.
- Paint clubhouse veranda.
- Undergrowth removal and general tidy up around the main entrance / recreation area to the clubhouse.
- Trim gum tree outside the front of the caretakers residence.
- Paint marker cones and tyres on runway and taxiways.

If you know of any other jobs that you think might need attention prior to the Open Day, please don't hesitate to email me with your suggestion.

On closing, you will recall that the last Workday was carried out on a Saturday as a trial to see what members thought of this as an option to just Sundays. I am pleased to say that it appeared to work well with most liking the idea of Workdays being spread throughout the year on a series of both days. So unless there is any overwhelming reason why Saturdays should not be included throughout next year, we will have a look at the possibility of Workdays 1, 3, 5 being Sundays, and Workdays 2 and 4 being Saturdays for 2007. I will have more on that in the next Newsletter.

Happy Flying Everyone

**Matthew Gray**

### **GUEST SPEAKER: Ern Thompson - "A Flying Life Lived Dangerously"**

At the Fly-in/Drive-in Brunch on 6th August, members and guests were addressed by Ern Thompson, ex RAF and now retired to Wollongong. We knew Ern flew Hawker Hurricanes and Tempests in WWII against Hitler's shipping, but we discovered his wartime service encompassed a great array of experiences, aircraft types and operations. The audience sat rapt for 40 minutes of matter-of-fact description of extraordinary exploits. Read on for a flavour of the adventure, and the understated terror.

Ern made several landings in occupied France as pilot of the Westland Lysander, the British counterpart of the German Storch, the design copied in ¾ scale as an Australian Ultralight. The technique in these STOL operations was to have a small fire lit on the upwind end of the chosen paddock, and fly along the smoke plume to alight in the dark, drop your load of agents, or collect those returning to Britain before scuttling out of the field low and slow for the safety of the English Channel.

Operational crews were rested periodically from front-line operations. For one such relief, he flew the Vultee Vengeance, a dive



bomber, but in his experience used for shipping protection patrols. When Ern reported for duty, he was handed the flight manual and told go fly it. Landing after a sweeping fighter approach to the runway, he was immediately approached by aircrew asking if they could be his observer. Asked what he thought of this American design, he replied its most likeable feature was its direction-finder that allowed the crew to listen to the latest dance tunes on the radio station broadcasts!

Ern used heavy cannon and rockets against shipping, and described the firestorm of flack that greeted rocket attacks on the V1 sites in Holland. With the Tempest, Ern defended Britain against these flying "Buzz-bombs". The buzzing pulse-jet gave the V1 a cruise speed that a Spitfire could overhaul only with the momentum of a dive. But the Tempest had the straight and level velocity to cruise with them. So what? Well, a lot of "so what".

With a tonne of amatil in the war-head, a gun attack produced an explosion that destroyed the attacking aircraft! Ern explained how the technique was to fly along-side and use your wingtip to lift the V1's wing until its gyro toppled causing it to crash for lack of guidance. Amazing that this modest old guy had done all this hair-raising flying as little more than a kid.

It was not all adventure though. Ern told us how he could not speak of some of the horrors he saw. A hint of the sadness was in his account of a Hurricane badly shot up after a sortie to the V1 launch sites, landing at base, to stop and shut down on the duty runway. Sent to investigate, the ground vehicle crew found the pilot dead of haemorrhage.

And what was Ern's favourite aircraft?

"No question," he said, "the Hurricane. Stable, strong, easy to fly and it would stay airborne in one piece with damage that would see a Spitfire pilot dangling on his parachute!"

Ern was a fascinating speaker. We will invite him back!

**Peter Scott**

For nearly three years now Frank Luke's Auster has been undergoing a major refurbishment.

The Aircraft is a 1951 Auster J1B that has been owned by Frank Luke for over 20 years

Frank and Ian Harvie have been working on the aircraft most week-nights and every weekend in an attempt to have it airworthy in time for the Auster Fly-in, scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup>

September this year at Wangaratta.

Included in the refurbishment has been an all new interior with new upholstery done by another Wedderburn member, Frank Krassoi. Frank very kindly did all the stitching at no cost. All new perspex has been fitted with the exception of the rear 'glasshouse' and a revamped instrument panel with panel mounted XCOM 760 radio has been fitted. Yes, with creative mounting it just

fits between the fuel tank and the panel! The wings were re-covered about 10 years ago by Jack Davidson.

Frank and Ian are very pleased with progress, and are very happy to have the Auster nearly serviceable again.

We all look forward to seeing the Auster in the air soon.

*Thanks for the story Don.*

**Ed**



Many hands and backs help to fit the wings. Congratulations to Frank Luke and to Ian Harvie for getting the Auster a major step closer to becoming airworthy. More pictures next page

## NSW SAC Aviators drop in to Coonabarabran

In August, a small band of NSW SAC Members paid a flying (one night) visit to Coonabarabran to tour many of the observatories at Siding Springs during the day, and to do some star gazing at night.

The group consisted of Wendy and Bruce Nash who flew in their beautiful **RV4**, Pam and Phil Power in the sleek **Lancair 320**, and David Rittie and Dave Thomas squeezed into the long-tail mighty little **Jabiru**.

After an early morning start the group arrived at Coonabarabran in

time to catch the 11 o'clock tour of the Siding Springs observatories.

The many observatories, (especially the big mother) were very interesting, and the rugged local scenery presented us with a spectacular view from the top of the mountain.

Later that evening we all gazed into telescopes admiring the heavens. Four of Jupiter's moons were on show, and Jupiter's GT stripes were visible.. The moon rose above the horizon later in the evening, and we spent time studying its craters. The

telescope was not powerful enough to see the American's Lunar Lander. Did they really go to the moon? (Of course they did, but our guide is not 100% sure they actually did.)

The view of the Warrumbungles and the siding Springs Observatories from the air the next morning was simply awe inspiring as we departed for home, and a fuel and coffee stop at Mudgee on the way topped off a very enjoyable couple of days.

**David Rittie**

**Pictures on next page**



Frank Krassoi shows off his new run-about



Bret Cavanagh taxiing for circuits in his "Axe" (Piper Tomahawk) VH - KAJ



From story on PAGE 14: LEFT; Wings ready to fit to the Auster, and RIGHT; Wings on, job done!



From Story on PAGE 14 - TOP ROW: Main observatory at Siding Springs; The aviators soon after arrival; and some of the rugged scenery of the Warrambungles. ABOVE: The sleek Lancair 320; The beautiful RV4; The Siding Springs observatories from the air.



Visitor Steve McCarthy (top) and Bernie Stevermuer (above) display the amazing short-field performances of both the Storch and the Helio Courier at Wedderburn, during the recent Fly-in/Drive-in Brunch.



Margaret Adams welcomes an old friend and prospective new Club member, Percy Hardcock, to the clubhouse on our recent film evening. Percy, a confirmed “bikie”, claims he “flies high” on his motorcycle.



**ABOVE: Bathurst's Mount Panorama motor racing circuit showing Caltex Chase on Conrod traight, Pit Straight and the start of Mountain Straight**

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