



# Snowy River Aviators Newsletter

August 2007

## *Biggles Comments*

Winter is not the most conducive time to go flying, particularly in aircraft without heaters, so some of our members having been doing their maintenance with the hope they will be ready for the spring weather.

Those who have not flown for some time are reminded that it is a good idea to have check flight with an instructor just to be on the safe side.

Most club's with hire aircraft insist on check rides if you haven't flown for three weeks or more before they hire out their machines.

There must be a reason for that.

“A clever man learns from his mistakes—a wise man learns from others mistakes”

Another way is to indulge in “Hangar Flying” where the general chat (once suitably disseminated) may impart knowledge. This is why the “crash comic” or Aviation Safety Digest was so popular.

Another way is to go to [www.recreationalflying.com.au](http://www.recreationalflying.com.au) and you will find plenty of hangar flying stories, and advice to make your flying more enjoyable .

Remember our motto:-

Safe, affordable, fun, flying

And have a great spring season.

*Biggles*

## *Presidents' Monthly Report*

The question was raised :-

“Will the Monthly meeting date be changed because of Father's Day?”

Vice President Jack replied:-

I haven't heard any mention of delaying the meeting by one week because of Fathers' day.

In my opinion, moving the meeting day seems to cause more confusion and difficulties than it's worth.

I am a firm believer in having the meeting day the first Sunday of every month, and if not many people turn up, so be it.

Also, in my opinion, I think we should just have a get-together on the first Sunday of every month, and only have a meeting if there are enough people, and only if there is something to have a meeting about. We still have a barbeque, and stand around and talk as usual.

Some people have expressed the opinion that we should not have any meeting, and go flying instead. I am against this, because I have noticed that only a few people have aircraft, and the others would not have a reason to go there. And I would fly elsewhere anyway !

So - maybe we should call the first Sunday of the month our get-together day instead of meeting our club meeting day !

## **POSITIONS OF CLUB OFFICERS.**

*President: Brian Donnelly*

*Vice President: Jack Pittar - Engineering and management of all airfield operations.*

*Vice President: Niall Waterhouse - Public Relations, promotions and fund raising.*

*Treasurer: Ron Horner*

*Secretary: Jane Reid*

*Committee: P Breukel, P & V Davis, A Menhennitt, Ion Stott.*

### **Web Page news**

The news on the web page is that Stan has reported over 5000 hits and new addresses are occurring every month.

It is time some of those interested came in out of the cold and joined our ranks formally.

How about it? Your contribution to our ranks would be most appreciated.

# **Treasurer's Report**

## **Financial Report for 5th of August 2007**

The past month saw several membership renewals. Counting family memberships as one entity, our membership now stands at 32.

During July, we have paid the Department of Fair Trading \$43 for the submission of our 2007 Annual Report and the attendant financial details. In addition I have repaid one member \$43.15 for the provision of barbecue supplies.

During the month, we banked a small amount from the BBQ tin in respect of the hangar pegging out day, a

ember purchased 2 additional shares, and four hangar site holders repaid their Development Application Fee portion back to Norm Boyle.

As he had indicated, Norm has generously ploughed these repayments back into Club shares. Hopefully during the next week or so, I will be paying the \$1700.00 Construction Certificate Bond fee to the Shire. This will allow for the approval process for the clubhouse, the toilets and the hangars to proceed to the construction phase.

I will be invoicing each hangar plot holder for 10 % of the total ( \$170 ), with the Club in general contributing 10 % as well for the common facilities. At the completion of the work described within the Development Application, \$ 1500 is to be returned to us providing we have not damaged public facilities.

\$ 200 is retained by the Shire as a fee. Again, using the same proportions, I shall be repaying 10 %, or hopefully \$150 back to the Plot holders, and \$ 150 back to the Club.

It should be noted that future hangar builders will be expected to contribute similar amounts to the Club funds as the original builders paid.

During the last month I received notification back from the RAAus that our application for Club Affiliation has been accepted. The Snowy River Aviators Club is now officially RAAus member number 021239 .

I have now received the Rates Notice from the Shire. This now puts us in a position to start formulating a budget. This will be a most interesting exercise.

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## **SHARES IN AIRFIELD**

*(Up date from last Month)*

Treasurer Ron reports that there are still shares available in the airfield fund. From a financial point of view this appears to be a good investment.

For newcomers information there are 100 shares have been offered at \$250 each (\$25,000) and the latest valuation of the airfield values the shares at over \$300 each. Work it out for yourself if this is not a good investment.

So think seriously about this investment

***Since this appeared last month their have been a number of acceptances. So if you want to be part of the action better move fast..***

Edited

# Secretary's Report

Full Minutes as Web Site

Snowy River Aviators Minutes of Meeting  
Held at Adaminaby (Kennedy) Airfield

5th August 2007

Meeting opened at 13.45

Attendance:- Ron Horner, Jack Pittar, Niall Waterhouse, Jane Reid, George Jennings, Peter Davis, Peter Wilson, Jim Hynd, Adrian Menhennitt, Brian Donnelly, Alister Menhennitt, Paul Nossiter.

Discussion regarding email from Jan Leckstrom inviting us to take part in the Anniversary of 50 years since Adaminaby was 'moved', planned to be on Sat 29th and Sun 30th September as part of the October long weekend.

SRA is very supportive and willing to take part. Brian will let the council know that we are participating in this Adaminaby community function by continuing to provide TIFS as per normal club function during the event while weather permits.

SRA should expect to raise club funds by offering to show people the old town from the air and also to run a BBQ at the airfield. Adrian will approach Peter Wilson to be involved and bring a trike.

Brian moved that the club give "authorisation of the secretary and the president to execute contract under the Seal of the Club", and following discussion, it was moved by Brian "that the contract between SRA and Hangar Owners be ratified",

Much discussion. In order to alleviate potential conflicts of interest, "Where a president and secretary member is a hangar owner/plot holder then two committee members of the club be authorised to execute contracts on behalf of the club".

. After much discussion, Niall moved that "Snowy River Aviators" become full members of the Lake Eucumbene Chamber of Commerce and expend \$80 per annum annually.

Much discussion about the formal naming of the airfield

It is currently advertised and promoted as Adaminaby (Kennedy) Airfield and described as such on the Development Application. The club agreed to continue with the name of Adaminaby (Kennedy) Airfield and to erect a plaque of this name on the gate.



It was cold and windy—so an inside BBQ was held

## DAFFYNITIONS— *from Paul Nossiter*

**AIRPEED** - Speed of an airplane. (Deduct 25% when listening to a retired fighter pilot.)

**BANK** - The folks who hold the lien on most pilots' cars.

**CARBURETOR ICING** - A phenomenon reported to the CASA by pilots immediately after they run out of gas.

**DEAD RECKONING** - You reckon correctly, or you are.

**DESTINATION** - Geographical location 30 minutes beyond the pilot's bladder saturation point.

**ENGINE FAILURE** - A condition that occurs when all fuel tanks mysteriously become filled with low-octane air.

**FIREWALL** - Section of the aircraft specifically designed to funnel heat and smoke into the cockpit.

**FLIGHT FOLLOWING** - Formation flying.

**FORMATION FLYING** - Several Cross- countries converging at the same time.

**GLIDE DISTANCE** - Half the distance from an airplane to the nearest emergency landing field.

**HOBBS** - An instrument which creates an emergency situation should it fail during dual instruction.

**HYDROPLANE** - An airplane designed to land long on a short and wet runway.

**IFR** - I Follow Railway-lines

**LEAN MIXTURE** - Non alcoholic beer.

# Recollections of The Monaro Flying Club and the Aviation Scene on the Monaro in the 1960's

( As recalled by Ron Horner )

Aviation has flourished on the Monaro for many years.

The area originally used as an airfield was adjacent to the Cooma Golf Club, and was used from time to time until the Cooma (Snowy Mountains) airport was established with the advent of the Snowy Scheme.

Aircraft operated from the field at Delegate just to the east of the town, and the airfield at Bombala was opened in the 1960's.

There were several enthusiastic owner pilots on the Monaro during this period, including the local doctor at Bombala who operated his own Cessna, with at least two Austers on properties in the Bombala /Delegate area. Local grazier, the late Mr. J.F. Litchfield of Hazeldean, operated a Cessna 182 with his business, the aircraft being flown for charter etc. at other times by the late Stan Birtus, and another of our members who had flown Lancaster Bombers.

Much of the enthusiasm was fuelled by these, and other returned servicemen who had flown during the WW2 conflict.

The Monaro Flying Club was formed at this time, primarily under the guidance of the late Mr. Tony Litchfield, a former Pathfinder pilot; and a local businessman and returned serviceman, Mr. Max Brown. During its existence, the CFI of the club was Stan Birtus, who was a former Polish fighter pilot, a thorough gentleman and a good friend.



Beryl Young—Club Instructor

Various other instructors were employed by the club; among them was Beryl Young, who later became the personal pilot for the Queensland Premier, Joh Bjelke Peterson. She was a great person and a most capable instructor.

The club had started flying an Auster in its early days, then stepped up to a Piper Tri Pacer. We continued with this aircraft until the creaking noise from a wing spar became too irritating. At this time the club stepped up to a brand new Cessna D model 172. The writer was privileged to be the first club pilot to get his hands on it!

The Snowy Scheme was well under way at this time, and a Cessna 150 and a Victa 115 joined our stable. ( woe betide you if you let the approach speed get below 70 knots in a Victa. If old Sod didn't get you, the CFI would! )

These were exciting times; the Convairs and DC3's gave way to Fokker Friendships, all manner of aircraft would arrive and delight the enthusiasts, and during winter, skiers would be transported in and out by a stream of DC4 aircraft. To watch a pair of DC4's sharing the circuit with a Cessna 150 was quite a sight to behold!



DC 4 with C150 and C337

There was a Royal Visit; the arrival being by air, safeguarded by the purpose built 2 truck fire station and radio communication facility at the Cooma airport (our former SRA clubhouse).

Up until this stage, radio communication had been on the HF band, using amplitude modulation, primarily using 5499 Kc/s. ( In those days we still used cycles rather than hertz ) We were rarely able to work Sydney, but Melbourne never missed our calls during daylight hours. With the advent of the comms. facility, several different VHF frequencies were used until finally 118.1 was vacated by Mascot tower and Cooma took it up. At one stage Cooma had shared a frequency with Bankstown, but as more of the visiting traffic used higher and higher levels, the radio traffic conflict became a problem.

Up until this time, the club operated from the open hangar adjacent to the highway at Cooma, and our members built the room at the N/E corner of the building to serve as a clubhouse. Such was the activity at this time, the club acquired the (now rather derelict) building adjacent to the above hangar, transported it to the airport, and set it up as a clubhouse.

This was very successful, with a telephone and gas heating. We connected the building to the electricity supply at the terminal building using an underground cable for the princely sum of 110 pounds. Just try and match that price now! ( or get your GA flying for only \$18/hour )

Around this time the club employed a groundsman/ caretaker. Sunday evenings were very special with much tea, coffee ( and the odd can ). We had a number of most successful film evenings. On one such function we had as our guest the immediate past leader of the RAF Red Arrows.

It must have been a good evening as one of our members, Dorothy, ended up marrying the guest!

Those days were the zenith of the Monaro Flying Club; we trained at Cooma consistently, Delegate as required, and at Merimbula on Sundays.

It is interesting to note that two of our members were Max & Cliff Kennedy. Here is a link to our current club at Adaminaby (Kennedy Field).

Max & Cliff had their own aircraft, an early Cessna 172, VH-RDD. This machine was available at times for club use, and many of us made much use of it.

As younger people are wont to do, we rather irreverently referred to RDD as “Rough, Dirty and Dangerous”, but it flew well.

A friend of mine and two local businessmen had formed a group and purchased a DH82. This was great fun until it was sold. This friend, Don, went to Western Australia, and ultimately took on various executive positions at the Royal Aero Club of WA, including the Captaincy and Presidency.

While all this was happening, the Snowy Mountains Authority operated a most substantial Air Wing based at Polo Flat, which serviced many small strips around the Snowy Mountains. Originally with 5 or 6 orange painted Beavers; the fleet was upgraded from time to time with aircraft such as a Comanche 400, a twin engine Piaggio, Grand Commander, Britten-Norman Islander & Pilatus Porter.



Piaggio P166 Circa 1964

It was most unusual not to hear the throb of aero engines on and off all through the working days. The SMA on several occasions provided a Beaver to be part of the float display during town celebrations. The Beaver would be landed on the Canberra roadway just out of town and transferred to a truck. A great exhibit!

Aerial agriculture was another facet of aviation within the district during this period, and there were close friendships forged between the club members and the ag. pilots. Various companies and pilots operated around Cooma. Much of the local crop dusting was done by Mr. Peter Blewett, flying D.H.C. Beavers for Aerial Agriculture P/L. Many of our members received countless flights in the Beavers, operating from many well known properties such as Hazeldean, Arable and others. There are countless stories of these times; many of which are probably best left in the past!

There was a very close camaraderie at the club, with the saloon bar of the Cooma Hotel often waist deep in broken propellers, bent aeroplanes, and even more suspect stories!

However, as does happen, circumstances change, and the Snowy Scheme began to wind down concurrently with a dry period on the land.

Some members left to take up aviation careers, and others had to move from the area as employment opportunities changed.

There were changes within the club itself; this writer had done several stints as Treasurer, but was replaced by a new breed of “progressive thinker”.

As this occurred the Victa had to find a new home, then the Cessna 150 also had to look for a new stable.

Throughout this period we had been able to keep the club afloat by “cutting our cloth” appropriately. The time came however, when the Continental 0300 on the Cessna 172 finally ran out of hours.

A new idea was surfacing in the club from within the ranks of the New Broom faction. “Get a brand new aircraft, fit it out for night VFR etc., etc., and the punters will flock to us!”



Beech Musketeer Sports

Sadly, listening to hearts rather than heads, the New Brooms got their way. Nevertheless the new Beechcraft Musketeer Sports was a beautiful aircraft to fly, a lot heavier than our previous machines, but really a sheer delight as long as one appreciated the need to watch the speed on final; it could sink like a brick if the approach was not watched carefully.

However the New Brooms had thrown financial rigour to the winds by now, and there was insufficient demand for the new aircraft with all its bells and whistles; so the magnificent new Beechcraft was led away to the auction block.

The club continued briefly using “Rough Dirty & Dangerous”, but the winding up of the club was inevitable.

While many of our members have now passed on to clearer skies, there are still 4 or 5 of them around in the district.

Following the demise of the club, several operators continued with training at Cooma using various aircraft such as a Robin, and Cessnas. However that is beyond the scope of these recollections. *(My thanks to Ron for this great contribution— ed.)*



Victa 115

## Managing Engine Temperatures

Thanks to Shell Aviation

### Before start-up

Engine start-up is something that we are all familiar with, but what about engine starting in cold weather? Cold winter flying can produce some of the beautiful and memorable flights but when temperatures reach  $-7$  to  $-12$  °C engine pre heating needs to be considered, even if using multigrade oils. The primary reason for this is that your engine is constructed of different metals, for example the crankcase is aluminium, the crank is made of steel, and these metals expand at different rates. Engines are designed so that the gaps between moving parts are optimal during normal operation when the internal temperature may be 100°C: cool everything down and the differential expansion starts to be a major consideration. Aluminium expands and contracts at a much larger degree than steel, so the aluminium crankcase shrinks onto the crank shaft and nips up the bearing clearances. If we then consider that the oil is relatively thick when it is cold, then we can start to appreciate that there is a real risk of bearing damage when starting in very cold temperatures.

### Engine Warm Up

Once the engine is running, even in summer temperatures, it is sensible to warm the engine on the ground before proceeding to take off power. Again differential expansion is a significant factor here. Aluminium pistons slide in steel barrels and are a loose fit until the engine is warm. This is particularly significant in those engines that are capable of high power and are of large cylinder bore. Piston rock can result if the piston clearances are too large and high power is applied. The aluminium end caps that hold the gudgeon pin place are also common victims of this type of operation—they are forced into the cylinder wall and are the common cause of very high aluminium levels in oil analysis results.

The minimum operating temperatures for takeoff power differs in different engine types and can be oil temperature related, but may also be cylinder head temperature related. The pilot's Operating Handbook should give the minimum temperatures for your particular aircraft, but many of the lowered powered aircraft do not specify any limits. However, even in these aircraft, I personally like to see the oil temperature off the minimum before I take the engine to high power as I feel it is kinder in the long term.