



# Royal Newcastle Aero Club

Windsock Tales...



## Hello Everyone,

Welcome to "RNAC Windsock Tales" #026.

A little different this time... I have several short reviews from the Board, Staff and RNAC Members that I hope you find interesting... It is a little long but I think it is important to communicate in this way at this time of the year. If this format is received in a positive way, I shall endeavor to continue this special Christmas edition in years to follow... Trevor Bright.



**John Tate**

**RNAC President**

***A Very Special Note First...***

*On behalf of the Royal Newcastle Aero Club Members, Staff and Board, I would like to share the following statement...*

*With the tragic accident of 30th November 2019 still very raw in our minds, I would again offer our sincere condolences to the family and friends of both Sig Bruhn and Alex Blanch. Both very active RNAC members, held in very high esteem, they will both be sadly missed ...*

Hello Members,

I take this opportunity to acknowledge Richard Morrissey and Ed Pitrolo as newly elected Board Members. I would also state many thanks to Trevor Bright, Marty Burrige, Alex Blanch and retired Director Peter

Eedy for their contribution throughout the year. A very special thank you must also go to staff members, Lyn Kauter and Kristy Lyons for their continued support and dedicated service for the entire year.

As mentioned at our most recent information session, Glen Thomson will soon be the RNAC HOO/CFI. Glen will be supported by long term RNAC Member, RNAC Club Captain and now RNAC Flight Instructor Greg Kennewell. The work these two fellows have done behind the scenes over recent months has been enormous. The task to re-establish RNAC Flight Training in our own right has been long, administratively difficult and at times frustrating for all involved, however, we will be successful.

As a special mention of thanks, I must share with you the quiet efforts of Club Member, Warwick Dand. Warwick has provided services for our Club over recent months that many may not be aware of. His assistance has been greatly appreciated and deserving of this special 'Thank You'...

With the above stated, two more recognition statements need to be shared...

1. Our friends at Central Coast Aero Club and Warnervale Air - Thank you for filling the gap and helping our student population continue their flight training, Thank You...
2. Our very loyal members of RNAC - The Board and Staff greatly appreciate your collective support and again say a very sincere Thank You...

In closing, with the continued help, contribution and loyalty of our members and staff, I believe our Club is very well positioned for a successful future. As a Christmas wish, I hope you can have a very Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

**John Tate**



**Glen Thomson**

**RNAC HOO/CFI**

To start off with I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you for offering me the position as Chief Pilot/Head of Operations for Royal Newcastle Aero Club. Just to give you an Idea of my background in aviation, I have been a corporate pilot operating aircraft throughout Australia for various companies. I was a line captain operating a Kingair for Air Affairs Australia at HMAS Albatross in Nowra carrying out fire scanning through Victoria and NSW. I have worked for some of the most well respected flying schools in Australia both 141/142 operations.

I completed my pilots licence here at RNAC back in the eighties and nineties with instructors like Don Moor, Bernie Sarroff, Andrew Ford, Russ Evans and Lew Plumsted. At that time RNAC was a one stop shop for all your flying training options ranging from, what is known these days, licences such as RPL, PPL CPL, NGTVFR, Multi engine and Instrument ratings. I have watched RNAC over many years change into what it is today.

Over the next 12 months I would like to bring some of my training/operational experiences from working with large corporate aviation providers and integrate them into the RNAC training syllabus to expand the possibilities on what the members can achieve with their flying career/interests.

Over the Christmas period I wish you and all your family members a happy and prosperous new year and look forward to meeting you in the future.



## Lyn Kauter

**RNAC Business Manager, Life Member**

As 2019 draws to a close we reminisce, the good memories, the fun times and how fast the year has flown.

It's a time to thank our loyal members, the directors and fellow staff for the parts each of you has played in creating the good memories and the fun times.

Celebrating RNAC's 90 years was a great club achievement and memorable for many of our members, especially me as I was honored with Life Membership – thank you RNAC.

This is also a time to plan for the new year, with new motivated instructors we are excited for the opportunities that lay ahead.

Wishing you all a very happy and healthy festive season, looking forward to a prosperous 2020.



## Greg Kennewell

**RNAC Instructor, Club Captains Xmas Message**

Colleagues, we are at a familiar time of the year, Xmas is just round the corner and it seems to come more frequently the older I get!! Is that good or bad??

With our new CFI, I am looking forward with positivity to future 'Flying fun days' format. Thanks to everyone who submitted feedback for next year. The feedback was clear, many of the events

we currently do are still popular, but let's have more fun, competition is good but perhaps we could look at better frequency. A calendar is being prepared including some trial items for 2020.

Whilst we have not been able to complete all of our Flying fun days this year, we timed 3 rounds of the Club Competition to perfection and Bob Doran has provided the results below. Well done to all!

Event	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>
Instrument Climb	D. Brooks	A. Hipwell	G. Scott
Forced Landing	G. Southwood	S. Bruhn	A. Hipwell
Spot landing	D. Brooks	A. Hipwell	G. Scott
Aggregate	G. Southwood	G. Scott	A. Hipwell
<b>CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP</b>	S. Bruhn	G. Scott	A. Hipwell

**Thanks to everyone for their support on our flying days.**

### Safari's

Well done to our intrepid Safarians from 2019. Two Safari's - one to Parkes via Wollongong, and the other to Aldinga and back via a circuitous route including the 12 apostles and Wangaratta.

### Key dates:

**TRI-CLUB COMPETITION:** Late January if held - Taree - TBA

**Avsafety Seminar** – 19<sup>th</sup> February

**ALAC's:** 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> of MAY 2020 AT TAREE

Regards,

**Greg Kennewell**



**Andrew Smith**

### **Warnervale Air, General Manager CCAC President's Xmas Comments**

General Aviation is a hard gig at times. Costs are sky high, the regulator keeps on over, well ... regulating... and the trend seems to be a move to large, academy type schools which pump out students by the hundreds with scant personal attention.

Aero Clubs, like that seen here at the RNAC and down the road at the CCAC are really a precious thing. I think we can all agree that the end product from an organisation such as ours is superior to that from one of the bigger academy style schools. Additionally, Aero Clubs retain a sense of community spirit and an historic appreciation of the rich heritage of Australian aviation which the sterile larger schools completely lack.

The RNAC and CCAC have always enjoyed a symbiotic relationship. You have been there for over 90 years, and we started around half that time ago as an 'offshoot' of the RNAC. Our operational staff and boards have always worked well together when needed – for example, the board of the Australian Association of

Flight Instructors (AAFI), Australia's industry body of Flying Instructors, was comprised of almost totally Instructors from RNAC and Warnervale Air (CCAC's operational arm).

In 2015, our runway was closed for over a month for re-surfacing (with very little warning) – the RNAC immediately came to our rescue, giving us our own office and resources at Rutherford, allowing us to run our own flying school with our students and aircraft from right beside the offices of RNAC. This display of extreme comradeship was not lost on the CCAC, and we were only too happy to reciprocate when the recent issues were visited upon the RNAC. The CCAC board unanimously decided to continue to operate the Flying School at RNAC as long as is necessary until the RNAC operation is fully up and going again.

This inter-Aero Club cooperation is really our strength. We both benefit from the ability to come to each other's aid when needed – this is something that the bigger schools would not (could not) ever consider doing. It is not in their DNA.

I have spoken with your senior Directors, and it is very obvious that this co-operation is going to continue, and indeed it is my hope that we can broaden and strengthen our close ties in the years ahead to create a stronger GA presence in the Hunter Valley and Central Coast. Together we are stronger than apart.

The Christmas period is a good time to reflect on this happy relationship. I for one am a big fan of what the RNAC stands for, and the CCAC stands ready to continue to support the RNAC when needed. I have no doubt that this goodwill would be reciprocated when, and if needed by us.

Merry Christmas to all the RNAC membership, board and staff. From all of us down here at Warnervale, we wish you a safe and happy New Year.



**Andrew Smith**  
**President**  
**Central Coast Aero Club**

*"1 mile of highway will take you a mile. A mile of runway will take you anywhere"*



**Ed Pitrolo**  
**RNAC Director**

As one of the newest members of the RNAC Board of Directors, I want to take this opportunity to give you my impressions of the inner workings of the group and view for the future. Despite the amount of work it has been initially for me in coming up to speed with the many issues the group has to deal with, I have found it extremely encouraging to witness the level of openness, teamwork and focus on improving the Club's position in all areas of activities.

I missed a few meetings after being appointed a Director due to being out of the country and during my absence, the Board decided to hand over to me the Budgets and Financial work. So...there is value to attending the meetings! In all seriousness, I am pleased to have the opportunity to be heavily involved in this area. Besides having a fair amount of experience in developing and managing businesses tightly to an approved budget, the future and positive growth of the Club hinges

on our ability to do this successfully. The Board has been quite supportive in the suggestion to rearrange the current budget items into the primary business areas and use this as one of our primary management tools. It will give us all a much clearer picture as to how the businesses are going, and I look forward to sharing this with you at our next regular meeting.

Clearly one of the most challenging areas the Board is dealing with is the re-introduction of flight training activities once CASA approval is obtained. The delay in this process has presented a unique opportunity for the Board to consider how to “rebrand” our services and make sure we offer to the market a unique service to recapture a market share. Plans are being developed to publicly kick-off this initiative, as well as a re-forecast of the budget and estimated expenditures through the balance of the fiscal year.

Despite the challenges, I am very encouraged in the direction the Board is taking and believe it will result in a very positive future.

I wish you all the best in this holiday season, hoping for rain, cooler temps and nicer flying weather!

## Ed Pitrolo



## Richard Morrissey

### RNAC Director

Hello Club Members,

Richard Morrissey here – I was recently elected to the Board of RNAC - A little about myself.

I am married with two teenage children and have lived in Elermore Vale, Newcastle for the past 28 years so I am nearly a local! My flying journey began with a trial instruction flight at Bankstown with Whitworth Aviation back in 1987. I progressed from there gaining a PPL with Tamair at Tamworth in 1992,

completed a commercial licence in 1998 and a grade 3 instructor rating in 1999 – this training was completed at RNAC.

I clearly recall Bernie Sarroff (ever the salesman) saying at the end of my CPL test he would pass me on the condition I started an instructor rating – the rest is history!

I have operated an aerial photography and mapping business since 2006 and have used RNAC aircraft and pilots for the majority of my operations. Having access to skilled commercial pilots and aircraft that are maintained to a very high standard takes a lot of the worry out of what I do.

Board meetings to date have been pretty much a listen and learn about the management of flying operations and the management of a large portfolio of property, buildings and land maintenance. I have a strong desire to see our club prosper and grow from its present position and can only hope my enthusiasm and positive approach to life can contribute to bringing members together so we can all work towards a common goal. I am committed to the principal of doing more with less as we have limited opportunities to generate income, I have a few ideas and initiatives that will be developed over the next

month or so that can be considered and put in place and see how they go. Keen to hear any ideas members can bring forward as well – stand by!

A special thanks to the volunteer pilots who man the duty pilot roster – A job well done!

Wishing all members and their families a happy and safe Christmas and look forward to meeting members in 2020.



**Marty Burrige**  
**RNAC Secretary and Director**

Hi All,

For those that I may have not met yet, I have a long association (coming up 30 years) with RNAC as pilot member, aircraft owner and hangar owner on our aerodrome and in more recent years participating in the management of our club in a dual role of company secretary and director.

I maintain nationally recognised qualifications of an Aerodrome Reporting Officer (ARO) & Aerodrome Works Safety Officer (WSO) which allow RNAC to report our registered aerodrome compliance directly to regulators.

Due in part to my professional background in Civil Engineering (Contracting) & Surveying, I'm tasked with leading the portfolio of our governance, asset maintenance -on/off site, construction activities and aerodrome compliance for the club.

I look forward to working together & sharing the work load of our planned future projects with our newly elected director Richard Morrissey who has many years of experience in related disciplines and aviation.

Apart from the ongoing pot hole repairs in the carpark and driveways we have delivered some more notable projects to approved budgets as follows: -

- Construction of Eastern Hangar Precinct & Associated Taxiways
- Drafted & submitted to MCC a storm water maintenance management plan for their approval
- Repair, Re-surfacing & Line marking of RWY 05/26
- Rehabilitation of Western boundary "Borrow Pit"
- Re-grading of TXY 05/23, RWY 23 run-up pad, fuel facility apron area
- Remediation & protection of areas of 2015 flood scour damage
- DA- Submission of Western Hangar Precinct (Infill Development including proposed grounds maintenance facility)
- Approval & subsequent vegetation management & tree removal from APR RWY 05
- Construction of Eastern Hangar Precinct access roads and concrete causeway

I'm proud of what our team have achieved this year, but most of all keeping true to our mantra of promoting aviation activities & our facilities for our members & visitors. It's pleasing to look back at the year that was and the challenges overcome and look forward to starting of the new decade with another progressive year in 2020.

Merry Christmas and hope you enjoy the holiday season & this December edition of Windsock Tales!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Burrige', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.



## Peter Meguyer

### RNAC Life Member

Fellow Members,

As my visits to the aerodrome have been less frequent in recent times it was most satisfying to receive the Club's positive financial position outlined in the 2019 Annual Report. It is evident that though the efforts of many, the Club has overcome the many difficulties that were evident since my first visit to the aerodrome in early 1980's.

The recent departure of Phil Unicomb was disappointing but on reflection we must now look forward to a new era with Glen Thomson taking up the position. Our Club has adapted to many changes during its remarkable history and it will continue to evolve into the future. As with any of the Club's nine prior CFI's during my time, Glenn will inherit a challenging role.

Although flying operations remains the Club's core objective, the sole reliance on flying activity began to experience headwinds in the late 1950's. The first indication came when Howard Williams, the then Club President announced it was no longer profitable to operate its country centres. This was a time when Commonwealth Government subsidies began to decrease, they were later withdrawn completely in the early 1960's.

Throughout the following decades, despite various measures, the Club's sustainability continued in a progressive struggle. The measures included the construction of the "Jack Fahey Training Centre" in 1994 and later as a provider for the "University of Newcastle" but despite improved flying activity, the future was bleak.

The combined foresight of those who acquired the Club's extensive land parcel and the efforts of successive management direction from around 2003 have collectively delivered today's sustainable outcome. While flying will hopefully remain the core objective, landing fees, hangar sites and aircraft basing coupled to the rewards from the adjoining business park will undoubtedly be the primary driver for the foreseeable future.

With the numbers in decline of those who can tell our Club's remarkable history firsthand I will continue to urge the club to consider a dedicated effort to preserve our history. With the club's centennial now fast approaching it may also be time to commence planning the provision of a gallery within the Social Club. Russ Evans, Bill Hitchcock, Bernie Sarroff are among the surviving few who may consider pooling their collection.

I would like to thank all past and future efforts and close by wishing all a Merry Christmas and all the best for 2020.

**Peter Meguyer**



## Trevor Bright

**RNAC Vice President, Life Member**

Hello Everyone,

Clearly this year has been challenging however, there has been many positives that I believe have the potential to secure the future of our club. As stated in the previous Windsock Tales, the support provided by our friends at Central Coast Aero Club, Warnervale Air, Lyn, Kristy and Greg cannot be understated and our collective *"Thank You"* is once again shared with great appreciation...

Moving forward, I believe the RNAC business has established a strong foundation, both financially and business structure. The board is working very hard with many projects completed this year and many more in progress. With the appointment of Glen Thomson as our next HOO/CFI and Greg Kennewell as a full time Flight Instructor, our club will again provide flight training in it's own right very soon.

Historically, the RNAC core business was flight training. As times have changed the financial viability of our club now depends on a diverse range of income generating sources in addition to flight training. I firmly believe as members of RNAC we are all duty bound to honor our roots, our Club traditions, the people who started this most incredible flying club and the people who have contributed to our 90 year history. That being said, I believe we must continue to provide a flying training / private hire environment for everyone, not just a few...

With Christmas almost here, it is a good time for reflection. Goodwill for our neighbors and if possible, a time to be with family and friends.



Kind Regards,

**Trevor**

**Vice President and Life Member  
Royal Newcastle Aero Club**



**Trevor Bright**

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