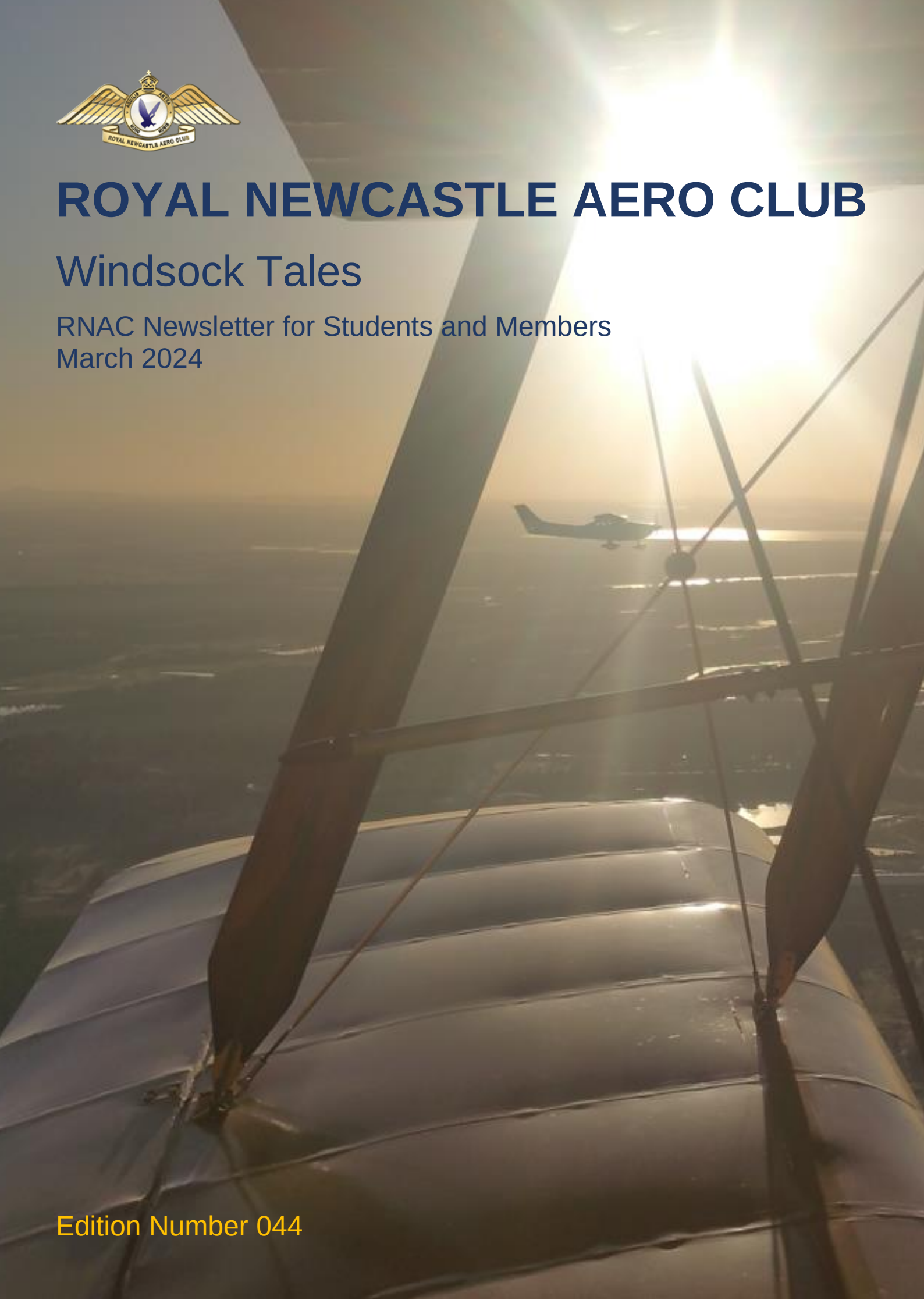
ROYAL NEWCASTLE AERO CLUB

Windsock Tales

RNAC Newsletter for Students and Members
March 2024



Edition Number 044

Cover photograph: Dawn flight, ANZAC Day 25th April 2020. VH-RNI in company with C-182, VH-VMR, on our way to Newcastle, Swansea, Rathmines, Wallsend, and back to Maitland.

This edition…

Trevor Bright 3
A small tribute to our old mate Bernie Sarroff 4
RNAC Student Member Cooper Gibson 7
Andrew Brill – 29 Years Later 9
RNAC Member Profile 10
Andrew Wagner 12
Greg Kennewell 13
Liam Pouw 15
Suzanne Ford 16
Avsafety Seminar 16
RNAC Social 17
Doug Brooks 18
RWY 08 / 26 Open Drain Reconstruction – Feb 2024 20
Lunch with the Tigers 22
Reflections – Part 2… 23
Beating the Odds at Aseki 27
Last Words… 29

Maitland Airport, 8:10am, 24th December 2023. Beautiful shelf cloud just prior to an incoming thunderstorm…

Trevor Bright.

RNAC President.

Hello Members,

Welcome to Windsock Tales #044, March 2024.

The year has started well. Access works between M and N row hangars is now complete, pictured below… We are waiting on the results of our two federal grant submissions to be announced very soon. Our Bellman hangar is being refurbished and we anticipate it will look magnificent once finished. The start date is scheduled for late April, subject to materials and weather.

It cannot be denied that our "*Street Appeal*" has been somewhat poor for many years. There have been many reasons for this over a very long period. Many RNAC boards, over at least two decades have struggled to maintain our appearance to an acceptable level.

The current board is very mindful of this position and is working hard to provide better facilities within a very limited budget. The Bellman hangar refurbishment will mark the first significant upgrade our club has seen in many years.

Government grants are still pending. The board is hopeful that we can be successful and continue this work of refurbishment and renewal as being well overdue and required.

With our 100-year anniversary not too far away, it is important to manage these projects in a fiscally responsible manner. I have great faith this can be achieved…

Several RNAC Members have made contributions to this edition of Windsock Tales. I can only say thank you as your work will be appreciated by the wider RNAC membership. In general terms, it really helps in providing information to the membership base. That can only be good… I hope you enjoy this edition of Windsock Tales #044.

Regards, Trevor.

A small tribute to our old mate Bernie Sarroff.

Contribution from RNAC member and previous RNAC director, David Atkinson.

A little bit of history to start…

In 1967 Club member Bernie Sarroff (BJ) received the Royal Federation of Aero Clubs medal for his services to the Aero Club movement.

In 1968 another airstrip was laid down. Maitland City Council assisted the Club with this project with the future of a commuter service for Maitland in mind. Also in 1968 the decision was made to hold one of the biggest air shows to be seen in the country up to this time. It would also celebrate the Clubs 40th Birthday.

Bernie was an instructor and CFI over his years at RNAC and a strong supporter of flying.

He enjoyed running Flying Safaris around Australia and overseas. These safaris were well planned and a hell of a lot of fun and flying to interesting places, for example Singapore and Anchorage.

The following is a brief run through the Alaska Safari that I was privileged to fly. Bernie had planned all the logistics, the lot.

Accommodation at Van Nuys airport.

Fly to LA. Pilots undertake US flight test and theory at LA (20+ pilots).

Fly LA to San Francisco (Concord) Various sightseeing tours here including the north shore and Bay area.

Fly Concord to Portland Oregan via Crater Lake.

Fly Portland to Vancouver around Mt St Helens and overfly Seattle.

Vancouver to Fort St John via Prince George BC (land for fuel)

Prince George to Watsons Lake (obligatory Maitland Road sign installed) We were rained in here for a day so did the Karaoke shift at the pub!!!

Watsons Lake to Whitehorse and a good evenings' entertainment was had!!

Fly over beautiful Kluane lake to Alcan border then to Northway Junction to get our passports stamped (with an Alaskan moose head)

From Northway Jn we went to Tetlin Junction where the Top of The World Highway from Dawson City (Yukon) and Chicken joins the Alaska Highway (Alcan Highway) then from Tok we headed WSW to Anchorage.

Whitehorse

Yukon River Note parallel strips Jets to the right 182s to the left!!

Matanuska Glacier in Alaska

Coming into Anchorage ATC advised I had traffic on my right an F14 Tomcat and an F18 Hornet inbound for Elmendorf AFB – I could almost see their eyes We were landing at Merrill Field the first airport in Anchorage, now a small airport about 1 mile east of the city of Anchorage.

We then had motorhomes and travelled around to Danali NP, etc.

Fly via Whitehorse to Juneau overflying Tagish Lake and Skagway.

Tourist activities at Juneau and then due to weather, fly to Watsons Lake then down the trench thru Mackenzie to Prince George for overnight.

From Prince George we tracked southeast over McBride and then thru the Rockies at Mt Robson then Jasper, out onto the prairie to Rocky Mountain House Alberta and then to Calgary.

From Calgary to Banff by coach for a day trip.

Fly Calgary to Cody Wyoming. Leaving Calgary on a hot day needed all of runway 35 & I struggled to get it in the air, then ATC made me track over higher terrain so climbing to 9000ft took a while.

We tracked generally south and passed Lethbridge rail bridge the biggest trestle bridge in the world. Refuelled at Great Falls International Airport 1100m (great runway) Montana. Then off to Cody in Wyoming where there was sixty odd Grumman Tiger aircraft as their association was having its convention there. Parking our planes was difficult (see Salt Lake City).

At Cody we hired a car and did a quick recce into Yellowstone NP

Fly Cody to Salt Lake City Utah

Today we had to do some spectacular mountain pass flying as the pass we used was 10,000 ft it was critical to get the right one else we would become earth engaging hardware (bulldozer!!)

We flew over Yellowstone past the Great Tetons and the spuds of Idaho and down to Salt Lake City in Utah.

We did a couple of tours there.

From here we flew to Page for fuel then down the Grand Canyon to end up in sunny Las Vegas where the asphalt was melting!! The ground service here was great.

Heading back to Van Nuys a few days later we overflew the Mohave Desert where I flew the exams Edwards Airforce Base and solar power set up for Vegas.

Thank you, Bernie RIP,

RNAC Student Member Cooper Gibson

Contribution from RNAC member Trevor Bright and the Daily Liberal – Dubbo local newspaper.

Young, Cooper Gibson has a dream to become a pilot. His mum, Sheree Gibson has provided us with the Dubbo Newspaper – Daily Liberal front page and the article regarding her son Cooper. See next page…

A sincere message…

From your friends and instructors at Royal Newcastle Aero Club…

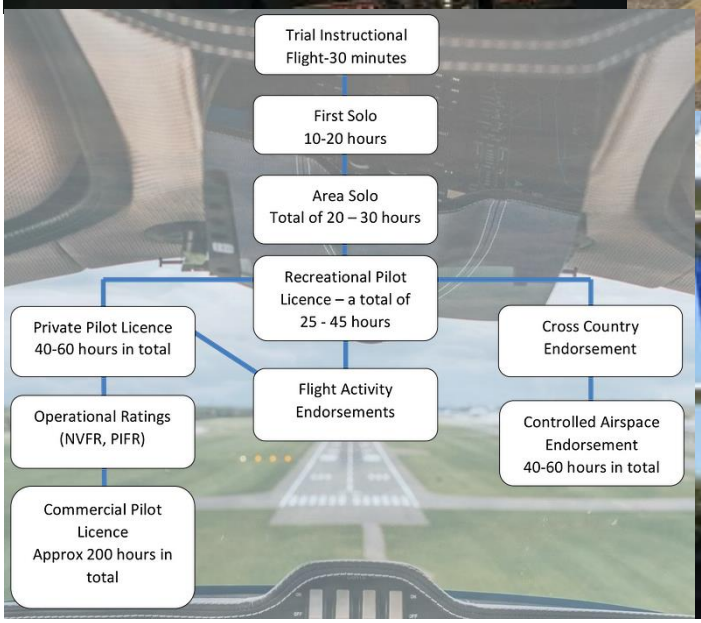
- Keep the dream going.
- Enjoy the learning experience.
- Embrace your goals with enthusiasm and commitment.
- And do not let anyone say, "*It cannot be done…*"

Learning how to fly and embarking on an aviation career is achievable.

Well done on your flying achievements so far…

Everyone at RNAC would wish you the best on your journey to becoming a full-time aviator in whatever capacity you wish.

For inspiration, read the next two articles – 29 Years Later and RNAC Member Profile, Safe flying Cooper…



Cooper set to follow his 'dream'

Dubbo

Sarah Falson

COOPER Gibson hasn't got his driver's licence yet but he is well on his way to obtaining a licence to fly.

Not your average 16-year-old, Cooper already has his recreational pilot licence and is preparing to obtain his private pilot licence (PPL) by embarking on the trip of a lifetime to Dubbo.

His PPL will allow him to fly solo and with other passengers, and he will attempt to obtain this as soon as he legally can, which is on his seventeenth birthday, on May 5.

It's like I'm flying at 200 kilometres across the ground, and I'm in control of this 700-kilogram plane.

Cooper Gibson

Cooper, who comes from Nelson Bay, has always wanted to fly, and has worked in his auntie's cafe after school to raise the thousands of dollars required to study for the ticket.

Conditions allowing, he will fly from Rutherford - the home of the Newcastle Aero Club - to Dubbo where he will land on Wednesday, January 24.

He will then fly on to Mudgee and land and refuel before completing his trip back to Rutherford.

Cooper will do all this on his own as part of his course to become a licenced flyer.

When he touches down in Dubbo, he will be met by his great-grandfather's brother, local retired businessman Peter Fitzalan, who built the Abel Tasman Motor Inn.

Cooper said flying made him feel free.

"It's like I'm flying at 200 kilometres across the ground, and I'm in control of this 700-kilogram plane and I just feel free," he told the *Daily Liberal*.

Cooper's mum, Sheree Gibson, said her son was following his dream, and hoped it would show other kids they could do the same.

She said whenever the family went on holidays by plane, Cooper would always stick around to visit the pilot in the cockpit.

"I have made more aeroplane birthday cakes than I dare to count and this kid has wanted to fly before he could walk," she said.

Cooper's first dream once gaining his PPL is to fly his family to Condobolin to visit his grandmother, Laurel Gibson. "It's just always been a dream of mine that I would fly and go and see my nan because she lives quite far away from where we are now," he said.

" ... We've always talked about it ... Every time we drove past the airport out there, I've always said I'm going to land there and we're going to come and visit you. I'm going to bring my plane."

How confident is he this is going to happen?

"One hundred and ten percent. It's going to happen," he said.

Cooper is entering Year 11 in 2024 and wants to be a commercial airline pilot when he leaves school.

His older relative, Mr Fitzalan, said he is very proud, as he himself used to fly recreationally, and his son works as a pilot. "It's a good achievement for him," he said.

Andrew Brill – 29 Years Later

QANTAS Captain, RNAC Member and former RNAC Flight Instructor

Preamble from Trevor Bright: *Below is a recent email from Andrew. This is a great story, and I am sure Andrew and Mark will not mind me sharing the email in its entirety. Photos were attached, enjoy...*

Hi Trevor,

Not sure if you would like some content for Windsock Tales.

I had the pleasure of flying from Sydney to Bangalore recently with one of my former students.

Mark Saurins came to us as a young teenager in 1995. I conducted his TIF on the 3 June 1995 when he was 15 years old. He continued his training with RNAC. I sent him solo October 1995. His commercial test was conducted by Bernie Sarnoff. He subsequently finished his Aviation Degree with the University of Newcastle before joining the RAAF and having a long career before joining Qantas in 2019 before COVID standdowns. Mark still serves with the RAAF to this day as well as working for Qantas.

On the 24th of February this year it was an honour to fly with Mark to Bangalore, India on the QF67 returning two days later.

It was one of those moments in my career that I will never forget.

Also acknowledging that without RNAC we may both not have had the opportunity to find ourselves in the flight deck of a Qantas A330!

Kind regards,

Andrew Brill,

RNAC Member Profile

Preamble by Trevor Bright: *The following article has been provided by RNAC member, Daniel Hespe. Daniel has volunteered to provide content on selected members as his contribution to Windsock Tales. This is a great example of being involved with your club. The idea is great, the subject matter is interesting, and I would hope this may inspire more club members to become more involved.*

Well done Daniel, thank you and very much appreciated…

Name: Andrew Brill

Location: Lake Macquarie

Occupation: Qantas pilot

1. **What drew you to aviation?**
   I was always involved in sailing; I always enjoyed the idea of being in control of a boat or windsurfer that involved understanding the wind and weather. After leaving school and finding myself disinterested during the first year of a science degree, I went flying in a C152 with a friend who was studying Aviation at Newcastle University. I realised that I could have a job that I enjoyed and tied in with sailing skills and theory. I enrolled in the Aviation course at Newcastle University and the adventure began.

2. **Where did you do your flight training?**
   I did my training at Cessnock which was then named C.A.T.A before it became affiliated with the University. I left after three years with an aviation degree, Commercial Pilots Licence and a Multi Engine Instrument Rating. All of the twin hours were on a Grumman Cougar.

3. **How did you come to be a member of the Royal Newcastle Aero Club?**
   This was 1993. Aviation jobs were far and few between. Warren Wilks was CFI at this time, I knew him from his ties with the university, he convinced me to do my Instructor Rating to help my job prospects.

4. **Years of membership at RNAC?**
   I first became a member back in 1993, however I had long periods where I was not active.

5. **Favourite memory/ memories at RNAC?**
   The people and friendships made along the way, having the honour of being mentored by Russ Evans, instructing students through the old Gosport speaking tubes on the Tiger Moth and some interesting night flying partial engine failures that got my adrenaline pumping.

6. **What are some of the advantages of being an RNAC Member?**
   The comradery, the fact that the use of the clubs' facilities are almost always available to you, and most importantly that instructors are available for ongoing training and checking.

7. **What is your favourite GA flight destination?**
   Back in the day, taking a friends C182 from Gladstone to Great Keppel Island for weekends when it was still popular with a bunch of mates.

8. **What is your favourite RPT flight destination both domestically and internationally?**
   Favourite Domestic would be Melbourne for the food and bars.
   Internationally is tough to decide, it would probably be tossup between Honolulu and Tokyo.

9. **Fondest aviation memory?**
   There are too many great memories to choose.

10. **What is your favourite aircraft type to fly, would like to fly and in existence?**
    This one is easy the Boeing 747. I have over 10,000 hours on 200,300,400 and SPs, nothing comes close. I am enjoying my time on the A330 now; however, I am looking forward to the A350 arriving soon.

11. **What part of your flight training did you enjoy the most?**
    Going solo for the first time.

12. **What part of your flight training did you find the most difficult?**
    My initial B747 Type Rating/ Restricted Flight Engineer Rating.
    There was a lot of information to absorb in 6 months.

13. **What do you think is an important skill in being a good pilot?**
    As Russ Evans drummed into me, knowing the limitations of your aircraft and knowing your own limitations. By knowing the limitations of your aircraft means understanding that an IFR C172 is not capable of flying in the same conditions as a 747. Everything in GA is a compromise. This needs to be respected.

14. **Do you have a piece of advice for members starting out their training?**
    Enjoy the process, learning takes different times depending on weather, budget, ability, and many other factors. You never stop learning in aviation, so you need to enjoy the learning process.

15. **What type of flying are you doing now?**
    I am currently an A330 Captain with Qantas, flying to mainly Asian destinations with the occasional trips to India and the USA.

16. **Where do you think RNAC could improve as a club?**
    I would like to see a venue were people could come and have drink and talk about their flying experiences with each other, unfortunately I have found that most aviation education takes place in the bar after a few drinks. Also, I would like to see more young people coming to wings night presentations to receive their wings and be acknowledged by their peers.

17. **Where would you like to see the club in 10- 20 years?**
    Hopefully we will have a modern building for socialising and a modern fleet with a flying school that makes aviation accessible and affordable to most people.

I would like to thank Andrew for his time in answering the questionnaire. He was very accommodating and happy to contribute.

If you have a suggestion for a member to be featured in upcoming Windsock Tales editions, please get in touch with me danielh_is@hotmail.com

Regards,

Daniel Hespe.

Andrew Wagner

RNAC Business Manager

Hello Everyone,

All aboard for Steamfest (13-14 April 2024)!

RNAC's Tiger Moth will be again, racing the trains during this year's Steamfest. Surely, we can bring home the trophy this year. RNAC will also be operating a marquee during this year's event to promote flying. We are calling for volunteers to help staff the marquee. Please call the office if you would like to help out either day or for a few hours.

ANZAC Day (25 April 2024)

We are planning for the Tiger Moth to participate in the East Maitland and Maitland ANZAC Day services again this year.

Hunter Valley Career Expo (17 May 2024 Maitland)

Plans are under way to participate in a career expo for local high school students. We will be promoting becoming a commercial pilot at RNAC as a viable and rewarding career path.

Heritage Fest (14th to 29th June 2024)

VH-RNI will also be making an appearance at Heritage Fest this year. The flyovers will take place at 11 AM and 12 PM over Church St. Maitland on Sunday the 16th of June, weather permitting.

Safe flying, Andrew.

Greg Kennewell

RNAC Flight Instructor, ARO and HAMCC.

Hello Everyone,

The Fleet.

The next couple of months will see several aircraft due for scheduled maintenance for short periods. Check Shlott for non-availability.

Fleet Cleaning.

Recently, thanks to member Paul Gates, the aircraft were treated to a thorough cleanup, wash, and polish. One of the great enemies of metal aircraft is corrosion caused by the outdoor elements. Regular cleaning can prevent this problem and save a lot of money in the long run. Your help is vital.

If any students/members are keen to assist in forming a cleaning team let me know and I'll take it from there. Much more fun in groups!

For all pilots and students - After your flight please wipe the bugs off the wings, struts, nose, and windscreen of the aircraft using the bucket and mitt provided in the hangar. Thank you.

Paul Gates polishing RNX.

Student Achievements

Congratulations to the following student members…

First Solo

- Hamish Craig.
- Nick Martin.
- Henry Hoye.

First Area Solo

- Jonathan Kelly.
- Rory Perkins

RPL

- Aran Ravishankar

Theory Exams

- PPL Theory Pass – Derek English
- RPL Theory Pass – Travis Bryant; Aran Ravishankar; Raythen Pillay.
- CPL Nav Theory Pass – Blake Haswell

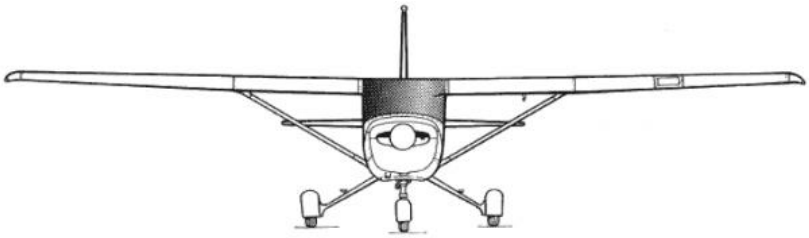
Nav Training

Coffs Harbour Safari.

3 Students used the recent Coffs Harbour trip to build navigation hours towards their PPL's. Well, done Ryan Bower, Roger Fortune and Jeff Dallinger for tackling the interesting weather conditions, dealing with quickfire ATC instructions at Williamtown and managing the ATC tower opening as we entered the runway at Coffs.

Should any students be interested in further safari opportunities, let me know. They are a lot of fun and are a great way of intensifying navigation skills, as the non-flying students do some back seat navigation doubling the learning, not to mention the armchair learning done on the ground as we chinwag about the day's experiences over dinner each night.

Regards, Greg



Liam Pouw

RNAC Flight Instructor.

Dear Members,

As most of our regular members/students may know, I have resigned from the RNAC. I would like to share with you all some of the experiences I have had while working with the aero club.

Club Competitions:

The club competitions and flying fun days have been a staple of my time with the RNAC, hopping in a C152 for a Sunday every month to score members and chat about what has been going on since the last club comp. The most enjoyable part has been meeting everyone who comes along and getting an insight into their lives and what their journey has been so far. The Taree Tri-Club Competition was by far the best club comp of them all, and although we came 3rd (I may have been too honest in my scoring), we all had a great time and enjoyed a night away in Port Macquarie sharing war stories at the pub and having our morning stroll for coffee prior to departure. A special mention must go to Doug Brooks, Bruce Robinson, Greg Scott and Keith Lobb for the effort and dedication they put in to making these social events what they are.

Horsham Survey Trip:

Last year, Director Richard Morrissey and I departed on a two-day trip down to Victoria/SA to conduct aerial mapping of some rail sites for a contract with a large rail operator. The trip was conducted in VMR and saw us conduct surveys of 5 sites and taking over 1000 photos to make 3D models of the sites. Overall, the trip was about 10 hours of flying, with strong headwinds on the way there and a very quick trip home via Griffith. Although Horsham is probably a town not many have heard of, the airport had great infrastructure and the pub had cold beer and great food. It was a great experience to visit parts of the country I had never seen, as well as conduct my first ever interstate trip.

Charter Flights:

Throughout the year, I conducted a number of charters to places such as Wollongong, Canberra and Barraba, as well as several scenic flights around the local area. These trips provided great experience in commercial decision making around weather, duty times and passenger needs. The 182 is a great machine for these sorts of trips and made for a smooth and easy trip. Attached are some photos from my charter trips for your viewing pleasure.

I'd like to finish by thanking the members, staff and board for making my experience such a great one, without all of you my experience would not be the positive one I am writing about. My time at the aero club has given me the experience and abilities to progress my career and I will always appreciate the opportunity given to me by the club to join as an instructor. I will still be an active social member of the club and I encourage everyone to get involved with club competitions, Friday night drinks and the monthly social night at The Metropolitan Hotel in Maitland. If you aren't part of the members Facebook group get in contact with Daniel Hespe or myself to be added.

All the best

Liam Pouw.

Suzanne Ford

RNAC Office Admin.

Welcome to our first edition for 2024…

We are all back into the swing of things for the new year. Our new merchandise has been selling like hot cakes… I have put an order in for fuller T-shirt sizes in both navy and white so they should arrive this month for those members that were enquiring about them.

If anyone is interested in volunteering as a Duty Pilot drop me an email or call me and I would be more than happy to answer any questions about volunteering.

Keep our Scenic joy flights and Trial Flights in mind for the perfect gift idea or if family or friends are looking for ideas for you for birthday or Christmas they can always deposit any amount against your card file that can be used for flying dollars. Just call the office if you require further information.

Again, a reminder for our members web access, details below.

https://rnac.com.au/

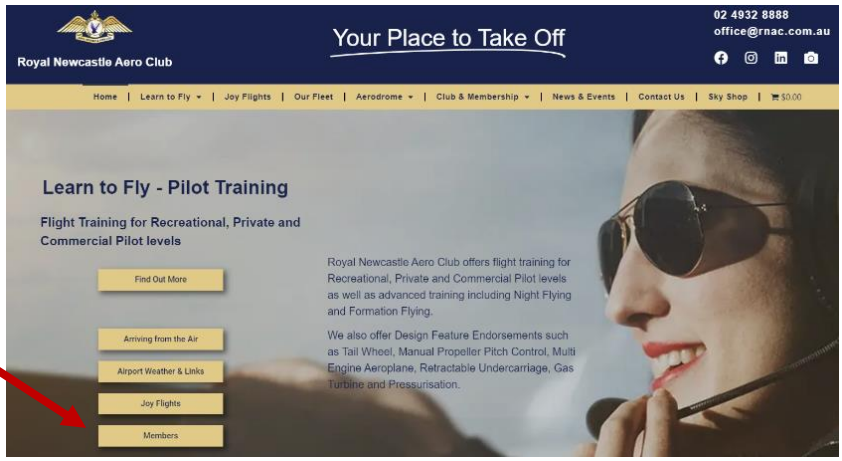
Username: **member**

Password: **Avi8or#05**

Take care and safe flying.

See you all soon…

Suzanne.



Avsafety Seminar

29th of February 2024.

It was a very hot evening, with a spectacular thunderstorm but this year's Avsafety Seminar was well attended and appreciated by all. Terry Horsam and Shaun Holmes provided a very detailed briefing on flight planning with a focus on fuel management.

Harrison Steggall from RAAF Williamtown provided an update on the current changes to the local airspace restrictions and procedures relating to same.

It was a productive evening. On behalf of the attendees, I would pass on a sincere message of appreciation and thank you to CASA – Aviation Safety for this initiative.

Kind regards, RNAC President, Trevor Bright.

RNAC Social

RNAC Member, Daniel Hespe

Hello Fellow Members,

The Royal Newcastle Aero Club has a proud history when it comes to the Social Club and its members. You only have to sit down with a member who experienced the “Glory Days” and see the smile on their face when reminiscing about times past and their connection with other members of the day. A lot of things have changed since those times; life is fast paced, distractions, spare time is at a minimum and the declining condition of the Social Club facilities all contribute to the reduced social scene of today.

When it comes to social meet ups currently available for the RNAC members, there is the Monthly Sunday Club Comp Day, which is open to all members and students regardless of where you are at in your flying journey (a great morning of flying followed by a BBQ lunch), Friday afternoon drinks in the Bernie Sarroff Bar and the occasional fly away and safari. These are all great events, though, even with their existence, there seemed to be little growth or increase in the social connection between new and existing members.

With this is mind we will be adding a monthly meetup to the RNAC calendar. To be held on a Thursday evening from 6pm at the Metropolitan Hotel Maitland. This will be the Thursday directly following the club comp every month. This is an opportunity for new and existing members to catch up over a drink and a meal, talking all things RNAC and aviation. With the club being based in Maitland, it’s great to have an establishment like the Metropolitan Hotel come onboard and offer the club members discounted meals and drinks for these monthly Socials. These nights are open to members of all ages and partners.

Be sure to join the Royal Newcastle Aero Club Members Facebook group and keep an eye out for the monthly social event reminders. https://www.facebook.com/groups/rnacmembers

With the goal of increasing the present-day social scene, leading to more regular members events (I’ve got some ideas though would love to hear your suggestions) and a more active social presence for the club, it would be great to see an increase in attendance to all the events currently available.

I am passionate about the future of the club and think that an active members social scene is integral to continuing its legacy. With the contribution of all members, we can help shape the future of the Royal Newcastle Aero Club.

I hope to see you at an event soon.

Daniel Hespe

RNAC Member

Doug Brooks

RNAC Club Captain.

Greetings Members

Let me welcome you all to a New Year. I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

We finished the year off with a flour bombing round in December with a great variety of different designs of bombs being displayed on the day. Unfortunately, not one of them hit the target.

The closest to the target belonged to Bruce Robinson at 5 metres from the target. The best design went to Summer for her house designed bomb (inspired by the movie “Up”).

Summer with award winning house before setting off for a bombing run.

Roger Ramjett with the safest seat on the field. (not one of the bombs hit the target)

January was the welcome back round with a blind circuit with a spot landing on the end and go around for a 2nd circuit with a steep-turn on the downwind, then an engine failure when level with the keys for a forced landing to finish.

The Cessna 152 will plenty of clearance over the fence on the spot landing.

The first weekend in February was a coastal getaway to Coffs Harbour with four aircraft departing Friday morning and another two departing on Saturday morning. One of them was RNX with Instructor Greg Kennewell and a number of students working their way through nav-training on their way towards their PPL.

It was a good weekend with a number of people taking part in horse riding along the beach, early morning walks along the beach, swimming in the surf, a walk around the main shopping precinct and a few drinks with the evening meals. Everyone departed on Sunday morning for Maitland with some of the aircraft heading down the coast and some heading inland.

Saturday afternoon drinks before dinner at the Jetty Hotel Coffs Harbour.

February's club competition was held on Sunday the 18/02/2024. This was the first round of the club championships with nine members taking part in the instrument climb, forced landing and spot landing competition. The results of this will be kept confidential until after all four rounds have been completed. The winners will be announced at the next Wings Dinner in November this year.

Cessna 152 in the Forced Landing Competition.

There will be a number of upcoming events over the months ahead. We will look at holding a Trivia Night with the date to be confirmed.
Bruce Robinson has been working on a trip to Broken Hill and Wilpeana Pound for the long weekend in June. If anyone is interested, please contact the office and we will send out the information about the trip.

RNAC will be holding a Tri-Club Competition in September with Taree and Port Macquarie to make the trip down to Maitland to participate.

The Wings Dinner and Club Competition Awards Night will be held in November this year - date to be announced.

Regards Doug.

Doug Brooks
Club Captain
Royal Newcastle Aero Club

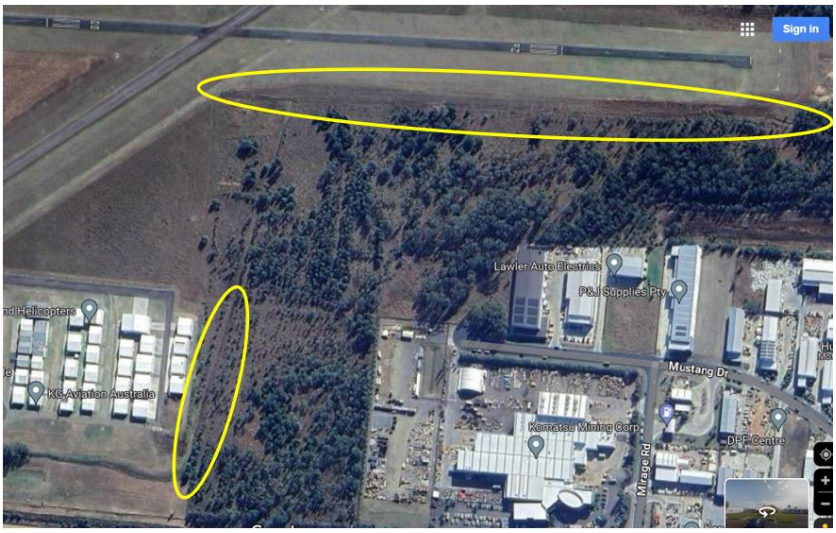
RWY 08 / 26 Open Drain Reconstruction – Feb 2024

Contribution from RNAC director David Gilford…

BLACK Lines – Previously excavated vegetation overgrowth.
YELLOW Lines – Yet to be excavated.

The RWY 08/26 'Open Drain ' along the vegetation corridor fence line is the final section for the majority of RNAC stormwater to flow through to the Vegetation Corridor, then into the MCC retention ponds.

One other section of drain behind the O Row Hangars is yet to be excavated, after which all drains surrounding hangars and buildings will have been cleaned out, suitable for periodic maintenance.



Alan Asplund from BLC Excavations used his tractor / slasher & 5.5 Tonne excavator.
First it was necessary to cut the grass overgrowth from the 08/26 taxiway to the fence line, to determine the existing 'drain' location & condition.

With no obvious drainage channel remaining operational, excavation started from the east end (at the Vegetation Corridor, previously excavated), working west to the 08/26 and 05/23 intersection.

The shallow dish drain can be maintained using a tractor slasher, or equivalent.

Upstream water, from the Nth-Sth channel behind the O Row hangars and the east precinct, has been blocked from flowing downstream to the Vegetation Corridor, waiting for this section to be excavated.

The 08/26 & 05/23 Intersection. Surface water originates from the Windella boundary & is piped under the runway intersection.

Preparation & excavation was over 3 days (Mon 19 – Wed 21). The area between the drain and the Grass Taxiway is a slight upward slope towards the taxiway, including some wide depressions. Spoil has been spread towards the Taxiway.

Once dry, the spoil will be ‘raked’ on the next visit (within 1-2 weeks) using a Bobcat and spreading attachment, & we’ll assess whether any excess needs to be removed to ‘the Quarry’.

The excavator will continue to clear the drain behind the O Row hangars. If time permits, BLC will do a maintenance mow removing recent growth within the other drains.

There is a sufficient allowance within the Airfield Maintenance budget covering this programmed work.

(To be continued ……)

David Gilford

24/02/24

Lunch with the Tigers

Good afternoon,

This year **Luskintyre Aviation Museum** is looking forward to hosting our 'Lunch with the Tigers' once again at Luskintyre Airfield after a successful 2023. These days are a wonderful experience, sharing the love of vintage aircraft and machinery with fellow enthusiasts. We hope you can join us, bring your families, and enjoy a day out and BBQ lunch supplied by our local Rotary club. The day will also include guided tours of Luskintyre Aircraft Restoration's workshop, hangars and museum and demonstration start-ups of gorgeous Tiger Moths, Stearmans and other vintage aircraft.

Gates open from 10am- 3pm and the open days for 2024 are below:

- Saturday 2nd March 2024
- Saturday 4th May 2024
- Saturday 5th Oct 2024

If your vehicle or flying club are able to join us on these dates, can you please reply to this email with the dates you intend on visiting and rough numbers for parking and catering purposes ☺

We hope to see you there!

Kind regards, Kate.

LUSKINTYRE

Aircraft Restorations
252 Pywells Rd
LUSKINTYRE NSW 2321
PO BOX 50
LOCHINVAR NSW 2321
AUSTRALIA +61 477 120 002

Reflections – Part 2…

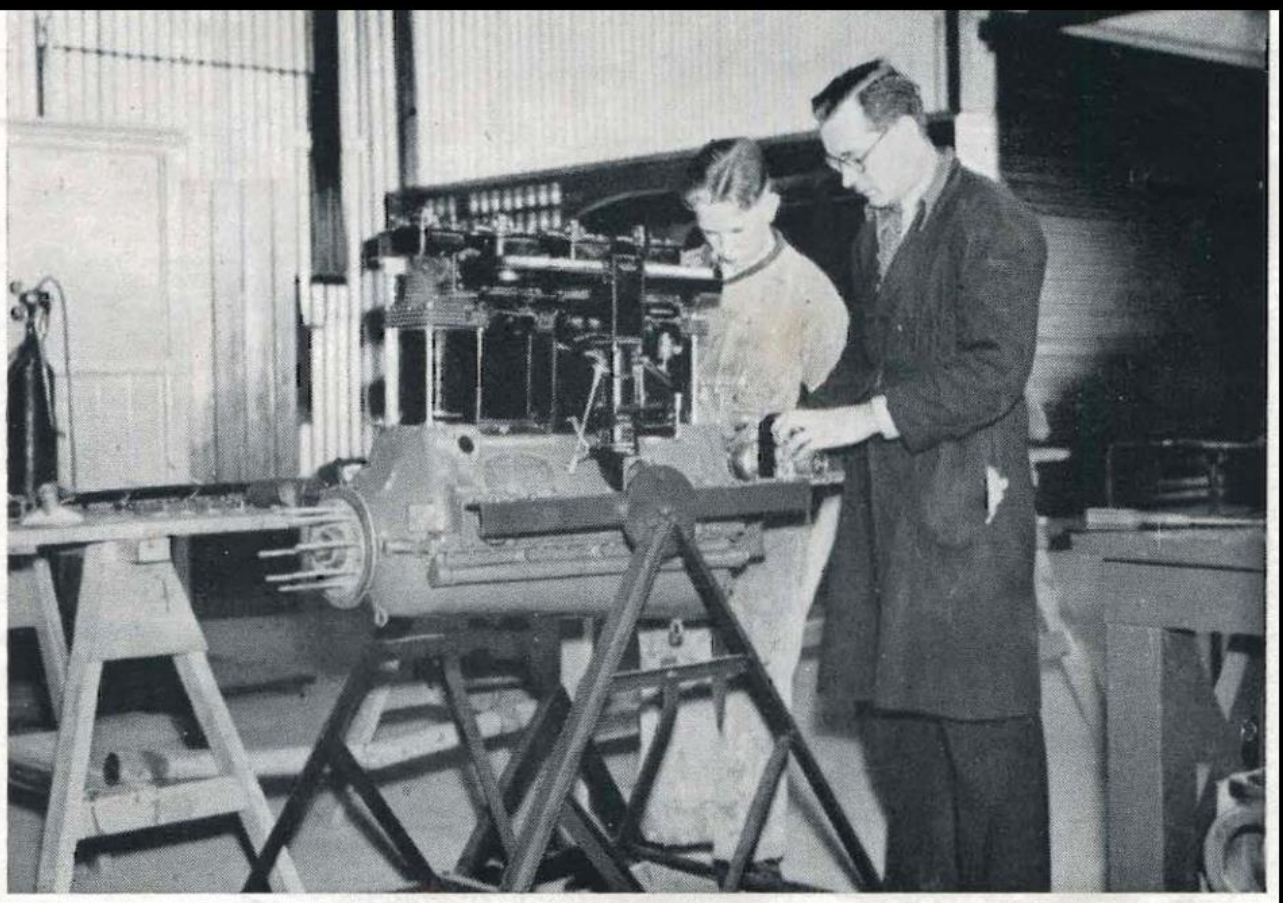
Contribution collaboration from RNAC President, Trevor Bright. Slides created and provided by RNAC Life member – Peter Meguyer.

Again, in recognition to the incredible work carried out by RNAC Life Member, RNAC former President, RNAC former CFI and RNAC Administration building builder, Peter Meguyer. The following article is an extract from Peter's, 2023, Wings Night moving slide presentation.

Windsock Tales #043 introduced the first 10 years of our club. This edition covers the time immediately prior to WWII and the war years.

Our history is rich in activity and contribution to aviation, community, and the war effort at that time.

Image copied from "Wings Over The North"

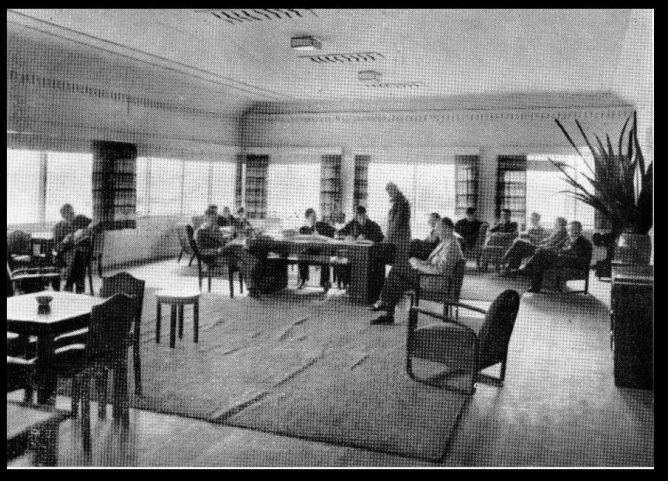


ENGINE SECTION

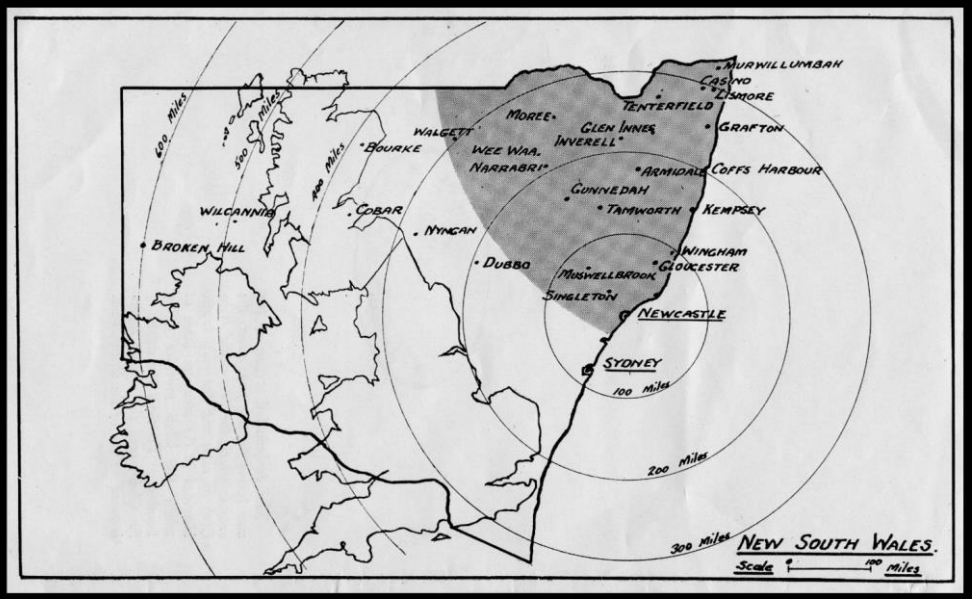
J. A. Thomas, the Club's "B" licence ground engineer, tackles a spot of work, with a junior standing by. The workshops are tangible expression of the Committee's desire to make the Club as self contained as possible.

Broadmeadow, the first home for our Aeroclub…

Manager's residence & members lounge copied from "Wings Over The North"



Country Centres copied from "Wings Over The North"



Aircraft & formation copied from "Wings Over The North"

1938.
A Newcastle Aero Club formation team flies homewards as dusk gathers over the Hunter River.

Interesting comparison…

FLYING STATISTICS — MAJOR AUSTRALIAN AERO CLUBS

	1934		1935		1936		1937		Six Months to 30/6/1938	
	Hours Flown	"A" Licen's	Hours Flown	"A" Licen's	Hours Flown	"A" Licen's	Hours Flown	"A" Licen's	Hours Flown	"A" Licen's
Royal Victorian Aero Club	2250	20	2630.05	31	3543.45	47	3657.55	27	1920.15	15
Royal Aero Club of New South Wales	2419	14	2602.00	26	2891.15	33	2933.05	26	2064.55	26
Royal Queensland Aero Club	2864	30	4631.05	67	5791.15	54	6223.00	47	3478.20	25
Royal Aero Club of South Australia	923	15	1265.15	23	1136.05	15	1415.30	14	802.15	18
Royal Aero Club of W. Australia (Inc.)	1003	7	1180.40	10	1086.45	17	2202.30	35	1512.55	26
Tasmania Aero Club	1067	13	1289.45	9	1276.10	8	1023.15	7	660.05	12
Newcastle Aero Club	119	—	791.20	6	2022.35	22	3321.45	28	2054.10	13

POSITION OF THE NEWCASTLE AERO CLUB AMONGST MAJOR AUSTRALIAN AERO CLUBS YEAR BY YEAR.
1934, 7th; 1935, 7th; 1936, 4th; 1937, 3rd; Six Months to 30/6/1938, 3rd.

SOME OF NEWCASTLE'S FLEET
1939.

As the world entered World War II, Club assets were impressed into the conflict as its members were scattered throughout the world.

1940's

Club members were scattered throughout the world as the world entered World War II, Club assets are impressed into the conflict.

PRIME MINISTER'S WARNING.

Apathy to War.

MELBOURNE, Sunday.

"This war is no mere affair of the theatre, but the slow beginning of a great and vital struggle, and in that great combat we will be the first prize," said the Prime Minister, Mr. Menzies, to-day, when he gave another public warning against apathy by Australians towards the war.

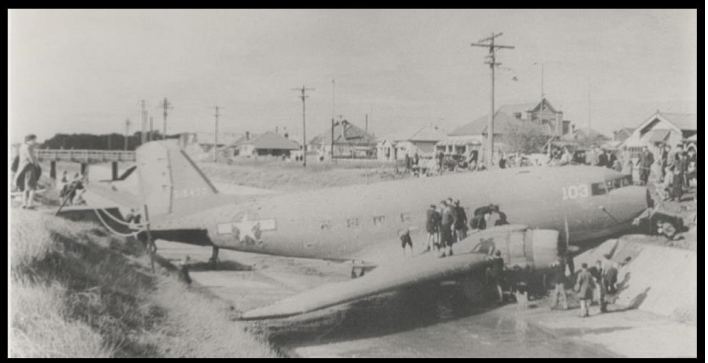
Addressing a pleasant Sunday afternoon gathering in the Kew Drill Hall, Mr. Menzies said that hundreds were persuading themselves that it was no real war. Because so far nothing had happened, it did not follow that nothing would happen.

"It must begin. It cannot fail to begin unless one side is prepared to surrender," declared the Prime Minister. "If victory does not come, where are we? Australians are the equal of any other people in the world, but we are only 7,000,000—about one-fifth the population of Poland—and Poland lasted three weeks.

"No one in his right mind imagines we have any future and independence unless as an effective and co-operative part of the British Empire. If Britain wins then we win. If she loses we are gone."

During World War II many aircraft types operated on the field with several wartime accidents.

The workshop manufactured wooden wing tips for the Mosquito fighter-bomber with engineers assigned to overhaul Wackett & Oxford trainers.



Beating the Odds at Aseki

By Ben Dannecker

Following a telephone approach by a retired senior air safety journalist, the author was prompted to come forward and share this remarkable tale of survival in an aviation incident that occurred in the pre-independence Territory of Papua New Guinea (TPNG) more than forty years ago.

Setting the stage

Operating into and out of short, one-way, steeply sloped mountain airstrips at maximum aircraft weight in tropical Papua New Guinea, is not for the faint-hearted. In fact, such activity could only be termed as high risk flying, evidenced by the inordinate amount of PNG air accidents and incidents, many of which were fatal. Papua New Guinea weather is notorious for unexpected changes such as rapid cloud buildup (cumulus granitus in local parlance) and any time after mid-morning one can expect cloud and rain to develop in many areas. It was often possible to be caught between two layers of cloud with nothing to go on for navigation other than deduced reckoning.

Due to the circumstances described here, I came very close to meeting my maker on a hot February day back in 1970 during flying operations between Wau and Aseki, one of several close calls during my New Guinea days. Sadly, a number of my contemporary pilot colleagues didn't make it from missed approaches or closing weather, being swallowed up by the jungle or the sea, and we regularly flew DCA-sponsored searches for lost aircraft.

Definitions

- **Missed approach:** Overshoot maneuver initiated whilst still airborne on approach to land.
- **Go-around:** Rolling after landing and then subsequently electing to take off again due to unforeseen circumstances.
- **Touch and go:** Pre-planned practice maneuver of taking off again immediately after landing.

Background

I was based at Lae, New Guinea, flying passenger & freight charters with Macair, having already logged about 200 hours on the company's new, less than a year-old Beech Bonanza 36, VH-MKF. This was the only commercial Bonanza working in TPNG and was duly replaced at year's end by the ubiquitous and eminently more suitable Cessna 206.

On this occasion, Wednesday 25th February, I was flying a brand new, three-month-old Cessna U206D, VH-MKG on a planned series of shuttles between Wau and Aseki in the Morobe District - freezer goods and general cargo including drums of diesel fuel into Aseki and then a backload of coffee bags to Wau, for onward road transport to Lae.

I was en route again from Wau sometime after lunch on my fourth shuttle that day, about half of the scheduled trips, being the first with no forward load. About two-thirds along the way to Aseki, picking my

way below the clouds and rain, the weather deteriorated to the point where I would be unable to return to Wau. I was now committed to proceed to Aseki.

The Approach

The approach into Aseki for Runway 34 was commenced under cloud from between two cliff walls, which form the opening of a dead-end canyon, giving about half a kilometer width, known locally as “the gate” and there was blue-black cloud below the hilltops and driving rain everywhere.

Upon lining up for a straight-in landing on Runway 34, I noticed that the Aseki weather was clearing and that an aircraft (Aztec) was already parked there at the top of the strip at right angles, as is customary for such mountain landing grounds. On short finals I noted that a strong tailwind was present with the strip completely soaked by the rainstorm just passed.

The Go-around

What immediately got my attention on touchdown was the fact that the aircraft was aquaplaning with no apparent means of slowing down, and the Aztec was looming closer. Remaining completely focused, I instantly elected to go around as I didn't want to write off two aircraft at the same time.

After applying maximum power with pitch and throttle controls fully forward, I reselected the electric flap switch back to the take-off position and then concentrated on flying out of the situation in which I now found myself, retrimming as required.

Aseki Runway 34 has two earth mounds at the field boundaries, each I believe 12-metres high, one on the left side and one at the far end, from the excavation of the landing area. After I managed to just clear the left mound in a climbing turn, I immediately lowered the nose and dived into a gully running broadly parallel to the strip. Picking up speed I managed to stabilise control of the aircraft and flew out of danger to make another approach.

Second time lucky

This time I touched down right at the end, using full flap, high power, and very low speed for the precautionary landing. The strip was soggy but there was no aquaplaning, allowing me to come to a normal halt at the top of the strip, parking behind the Aztec VH-SIL.

Oddly enough, there was no one there, as everyone had run over to the gully to rescue me from the presumed wreckage. A missionary came up in the meantime with a welcome cup of tea and a biscuit. In the excitement, I forgot to cancel SAR, but the Aztec pilot did so for me on his departure later that afternoon.

Analysis

This almost impossible uphill go-around on a “hot and high” rough bush airstrip was achieved solely due to three crucial factors:

1. The aircraft was very light at minimum weight, with the sole occupant being the pilot.
2. The brand-new Cessna U206D was fitted with a 300 h.p. 6-cylinder fuel-injected Continental IO-520F engine and 2-bladed Hartzell propeller, giving 2,850 r.p.m. for take-off, resulting in an optimum power to weight ratio, even at high density altitude.
3. Whilst still carrying close to flying speed during the aquaplaning event, the pilot applied full power and selected take-off flap, retrimming the attitude as required, reducing drag to a minimum.

Therefore, by a massive stroke of luck and some swift airmanship, all the required factors came together at the precise time, permitting me to live to tell the tale forty years on.

Suffice to say that, had the other aircraft not been parked at the top of the strip, I may well have elected to continue with the landing and may possibly have managed to stop just short of colliding with the embankment. However, after an interval of forty years this could now perhaps only be viewed as conjecture.

Upon my return to Macair's Lae base the next day, a few beers with pilot colleagues at the local Aero Club went down very well!

Aftermath

Aseki village and airstrip is situated in the notorious Kukukuku tribal area, known for its fierce headhunting reputation. After landing successfully, a government patrol officer came up and asked me if I wanted to see the famous Aseki burial caves with mummified bodies, high up a cliff face accessed via a narrow path. On arrival there, we saw about half a dozen such bodies in makeshift chairs or standing against the wall, all supported by wooden staves. Quite a change from what I had just experienced!

The following month on 18th March, again in VH-MKG, I flew two loads of live Bird of Paradise specimens in cages from Konge to Lae, to be transshipped onto a Territory Airlines Cessna 402 for the Baiyer River Sanctuary. Konge was a one-way strip located along the side of a high cliff wall in the Indagen Valley, with ever-present unpredictable wind shifts to contend with. However, the missed approach was a simple exercise, just turn slightly left and drop into the valley for another go! Take-off was even simpler, as one had instant altitude as soon as you fell off the end of the strip!

Trip 1 was uneventful, tracking almost straight back to Lae, visually avoiding any high ground. Departing Konge on Trip 2, whilst still in the valley, rapid cloud buildup caught me unaware, requiring a climb up through the murk, breaking clear at 13,000 ft. Visually noting the higher peaks poking out of the blanket of cloud coupled with our DR position, we then found a hole near the north coast of the Huon Peninsular, allowing us to descend safely and thereby enabling us to track under the cloud back along the coast via Finschafen to Lae.

Postscript

Sadly, the Turbo-Aztec "C" model VH-SIL, was later involved in a fatal accident departing from Nadzab when a wing burned off in flight following a fire in the turbocharger.

Last Words…

It's a record, 29 pages for this edition of Windsock Tales…

A big thank you must go to the members that support this newsletter. The content has expanded, and I think has become more interesting and informative than ever before.

If you would like to comment or contribute, please send me an email: trevor.bright@tpg.com.au

I would expect the next Windsock Tales to be distributed mid-June 2024. Safe flying…

Kind regards, Trevor.

Trevor Bright
RNAC President
PO Box 491
Rutherford NSW 2320
Phone: 02 4932 8888
Royal Newcastle Aero Club