



The Hunter Valley Flyer

Official newsletter of Scone Aero Club Ltd.
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WINTER 2004

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SUNDAY AUGUST 8

CLUB FLY-IN LUNCH MUDGEE

The Aero Club is staging a massed fly-out to Mudgee Airport for lunch at The Blue Wren restaurant and winery.

Mudgee is less than 70 nautical miles away. Cost for lunch will be \$35 per head, plus a contribution for whichever aircraft you ride in (to be sorted out with your pilot). We need **numbers and lunch money** before Weds August 4th.

If you don't want to fly or can't get a seat, just drive over – but don't miss this great Club event.

Seats are presently available in the following aircraft: Nev Partridge's immaculate Cessna C185 and Steve Bell's high performance Cessna 172 XP Hawk.

Already filled up: John Nader's Cherokee, Brooksy's Zephyr, John Thorley in the Gazelle and Geoff Pinfold in his Cessna C172.

If you need a seat, or if you are flying and can spare a seat, please ring Ben ASAP on (02) 6545-9250.

From the President:

A mixed bag of news...

Greetings all and I hope you are making the most of the cool, smooth conditions we are "enjoying" this winter. Clear skies and early evenings also make great conditions for night flying, and although we can't fly the Gazelle at night the "daytime only" status of Scone Aero Club is, hopefully, soon to change.

Flying in Autumn was frantic with the club flying nearly 100 hours between the months of April and May. June and July have not been as active despite the fact we now have (on a casual basis) an extra Ultralight instructor and new Club member Dave Bergus of Pay's Air Service.

Dave has been kind enough to cover for me since mid-June and will continue to do so until I get my medical certificate back, a minimum of 10 weeks after the operation (September 10th on present reckoning). If you want to book a lesson with David you can call him at home on (02) 6545-1170 or on his mobile on 0427-448-802.

Several members (myself included) are pushing hard towards the development of a "beer garden" on the Western side of the aero club and a refurbishment of the Club's interior. The main motivator for this project is to help widen the appeal of the Club as a social venue and to make our appearance more professional. As always we are aiming to minimise the costs but to achieve professional results we will need your

assistance. More on the project elsewhere in this newsletter, and on the Club's new website at www.sconeclub.com.au

Finally, the Annual General Meeting is coming up in September or October (depending on the speed of the auditors) and, as always, we are looking for the attendance of as many members as possible. We have already had an indication from one standing board member that he will not be standing for 2005, so there is at least one extra nomination required. Already a few members have raised their hands so it is good to see new interest in the running of the Club amongst the members. Even if you don't have time to be a full-time board member, perhaps you can help organise fly-aways, barbeques or other events.

On a personal note, many members have sent cards and called following my recent (and thankfully short) stay in hospital. I would like to thank you all for your support and assistance over the last 6 weeks.

Enjoy those winter winds and I hope to see you out at your Aero Club one Friday night, or on August 8th for lunch.

Ben Wyndham
President 2003/4

GA Training progress

Moves have been made towards the securing of an Air Operator's Certificate for the Scone Aero Club Ltd, permitting us to act as a commercial provider of aerial services. The application is for permission to conduct Private and Commercial pilot training, Night VMC training, aerobatics and formation training as well as a range of "Aerial Work" operations such as fire spotting and Search and Rescue.

Training will be conducted in a Cessna C152 Aerobat VH-KKU which has been cross-hired for the job and will be here next month; training will also be available in a C172 and of course, in your own aeroplane if you so desire.

Proposed Chief Flying Instructor for the flying school side of the operation will be Mr Colin Brown, who is currently part-time CFI at RAAF Williamstown Flying Club and will also be part time for Scone; a neat juggling act! Col has been a flying instructor since the late 1970's and prior to that worked as a teacher. His flying experience has encompassed Victoria as well as Cessnock and Cooranbong before going to RWFC where his son, also a flying instructor, has just been selected for RAAF aircrew.

The bad news of all this is that CASA is very serious about ensuring that an "adequate organisation" is maintained for the conduct of

these operations. We will be under scrutiny and will need to be on our best behaviour. If you have experience in Quality Assurance, Risk assessment/management and safety audits your help and advice could make a huge difference to your Club.

AUF/RAA training

The ultralight pilots amongst us will already be aware that the organisation previously known as the Australian Ultralight Federation has recently voted to change its name to Recreational Aviation Australia.

RAA regulates ultralight aviation in much the same way as CASA regulates General Aviation – in fact CASA has ultimate responsibility for ultralights but as long as we aren't killing ourselves and the general public then the industry self-regulates, like Gliding, hang-gliding and parachuting, under a dispensation. This leads me to an important point: it might be an ultralight but the Civil Aviation Act, the Civil Aviation Regulations and the Civil Aviation Orders still apply to YOU and your aircraft. Ultralights carry a certain notoriety amongst the non-flying general public and flaunting the rules will not only tarnish the club's reputation and affect our business, but bring down upon us the wrath of the "Gestapo". Take it from one who knows.

AUF training will of course continue to grow alongside the GA operations, feeding students into the GA system and bringing in new members with its low cost. Recent achievements include Hayden McHugh-Warner's first solo, and Pilot Certificates for Peter Cameron, Richard Wilkinson, Snowy Bragg and Luke Bailey. Sal Garland also made her first solo. On seeing the delight of her proud instructor she merely noted "Well if I knew it meant so much to you I would have done it sooner!"

Successful TIF weekend

The Club ran a successful open day and TIF weekend in conjunction with the Newcastle Sports Parachute Club on the ANZAC Day weekend. 14 TIFs were conducted over the weekend resulting in 6 new students for the Club; all the TIF candidates from the last 6 months were surveyed afterwards for their reactions and impressions of the Club. With the NSPC planning more operations at Scone in the future this seems a successful way of attracting members.

Special thanks to Sally Garland, Bob Moore, David Jackson, John Thorley and the other helpers who made the weekend run so well – 10 out of 10 survey respondents stated that the club

was well presented and well represented by its members, a response we should all be proud of.

The next TIF weekend and open day is scheduled for October and will hopefully be preceded by a series of "careers" talks at local High Schools to develop interest in the younger generation. Onwards and Upwards.

Price Hikes

Now for the bad news... as we all know, the American operation to ensure free-flowing supply of oil from Iraq seems to have mysteriously driven up fuel prices. In the aviation insurance industry, "competition" and "deregulation" are also delivering what John Howard might call "more consumer choice in the marketplace" by creating a monopoly on ultralight insurance. As a result, our premiums for flight instruction in the Gazelle have risen from about \$3,000 pa to over \$5,400 pa and conditions of use have tightened.

The bottom line is that, in order to keep the fridge cold and the lights on, we are forced to raise the price of all flying operations at the Club by \$10 per hour. This is the first price rise since Ultralight flying started at the Club in late 2001, but it is still regrettable. Rates in the Gazelle are now: Dual \$125.00 VDO, Solo Training \$105.00 VDO and Private Hire \$85.00.

Thruster for sale:

Hopefully most members are aware that the Thruster is for sale, and has been advertised recently in The Land, on the internet and the RAA magazine. The board has decided that at its current rate of utilisation (less than 1 hour/month) the money could be better invested elsewhere. Although we paid more to acquire it, the board is advertising it for \$12,500 ono.

If you are interested or you know somebody who might be, please call John Thorley on (02) 6543-2944

Membership news:

Since the last newsletter the call for renewal of memberships has come and gone. If you have renewed your membership, thank you. If you haven't then (strictly speaking) your membership ceases and you need to re-apply for membership. If it has slipped your mind, renew your membership today at Scone Eyecare or Muswellbrook Eyecare.

New members since the last newsletter include: David Bergus, Scone; John Wassens, Giants Creek; Robin Foxcroft, Scone; Lesle Lindner, Scone; Hayden McHugh, Gold Coast; and David Threlfo, of Scone.

Congratulations to Club director Stu Inglis and his partner Judy Nyikos on the birth of their son Ryan John Inglis; to Steve and Kate Bell on the birth of their daughter Sophia Elizabeth; to Mark Pracy Jnr. and his partner Stevie, who are expecting their first baby early next year.

Mark has also recently completed his LAME examinations after completing his apprenticeship at Scone Aircraft Maintenance making him, potentially, a young man very much in demand. Congratulations Mark.

Also holding the family banner high, Mark Pracy Snr will be one of Australia's newest Grade 3 flight instructors before these words are printed. Mark completed his Commercial and Instructor training with Air Combat Australia in Bankstown – congratulations Mark Snr!

Long Trips: Recent and Coming up

There have been a couple of interesting trips lately as people stretch their navigational legs. John Nader and Bob Moore had a 10-day trip in John's Cherokee WFS, heading NW to Mt Isa, then West across the desert to Alice and the Rock, before working back home via Coober Pedy and William Ck. Very much a "trip of a lifetime".

Steve Bell and Mick Seale have also broken out of the training area, all-but completing their Navigation training in Steve's 172XP. Their trip headed up to Longreach then across to Townsville, down the coast to Airlie Beach, and then zig-zagging inland and back to the coast to make sure we maximised their exposure to controlled airspace procedures.

John Thorley is planning to head up to Birdsville for the race meeting on September 3rd, and is looking for other aircraft to join him and make up a Scone contingent. The race meeting really is a fantastic day and the trip is one of the "must-do" trips for an Australian pilot. We would urge all members who are interested in joining in the trip to ring John on (02) 6543-2944.

