

August 1999

The club is operating efficiently and offering a level of service to members that is probably unprecedented in its entire history. The committee, as well as those other groups of skilled volunteers who work for the common benefit (such as instructors, airworthiness personnel, tow pilots, etc.) were so concerned about maintaining this momentum that a strategic planning session was held on 23rd May. This was not a committee meeting nor was it a club general meeting. It was a workshop of a cross section of active members to address general issues of the present and the future without the procedural constraints of the regular monthly executive meetings, be they committee or instructors panel, which tend to get bogged down in detail. A copy of the issues which arose at that session was mailed to every member last month as well as being posted on the club notice board. The only outcomes which resulted from that discussion were the purchase of a second towplane & the hire of the Cirrus. These went through the normal channels & there has been no dissension. Amongst the many items which were minuted for attention (not necessarily action) was the feasibility study of developing our existing site to the maximum of its capacity versus selling out & moving to Dalby. Two teams of volunteers were formed, with each to fully examine each option & submit a report, copies of which are enclosed. This study has developed into an emotive & contentious issue which has, in some instances, become personal. This is unfortunate but entirely understandable given the commitment, loyalty & passion which some members give to gliding & to the club. In order to prosper, let alone survive, we have to have change. In order to avoid panic or despair, the change has to be democratic, managed and to the benefit of the club and to the majority of its members. A **confidential questionnaire** is enclosed with this issue of "CHAOTIC". It is most important that you complete it as soon as possible & return it to Murray Knight. The results will be collated & any extra comments noted. Full anonymity is guaranteed. All significant concerns, comments, ideas & queries will be treated seriously. No watershed decisions will be made without full regard to this input. Please consider the facts before you put pen to paper. We would like to thank the two teams who investigated the stay/move debate. It hasn't been easy for them (even though we naively expected that it would be.)

Flying (which is what it is all about)

We have had an absolute hammering from the weather but, just as despair & indifference were setting in, the last weekend of the month delivered an absolute gem. It just shows that "you have to be in it to win it." Notable flights : Lars Zehnder (GXC) - 2.18, Dudley Waters (XHC) - 3.19 & 2.05, Ralph Henderson (KO) - 3.07, Chris Aniftos (XV) - 2.44 & 5.09, Allan Latemore (WQR) - 1.58 & 2.41, Peter Thomas (XV) - 2.27, (MV) - 2.40, Chris Aniftos (XOW) - 2.14, Mike Codling (MV) - 1.58 & 2.06, Bob Ward (BW) - 4.38 & 3.51, David McManus (XOW) - 5.36. The weather was so good on the last weekend that it permitted pilots to switch aircraft & still fly in excess of five hours. David McManus obtained his Silver duration as well as covering 300km (unofficially.) Peter Thomas gained his Silver height whilst Mike Codling covered Silver distance to Jimbour & return. Congratulations to Bob Ward who has had his 1000 km flight ratified by FAI. Thanks to Roly Sundell for his efforts as duty pilot & John Knox for getting into towing.

Airworthiness Officer

Club aircraft require two signatures on the daily inspection box in the maintenance release after rigging. This is just an extra safeguard. The Airworthiness Course at Kingaroy runs from 21st to 25th August. Shane McCaffrey will be holding DI day & de-rigging courses on Saturday 21st August, starting at 9:00 AM.

Club AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Darling Downs Soaring Club is to be held on Saturday 25th September, 1999 at 7 PM in the Toowoomba Railway Refreshment Rooms (not the Rest rooms, Trevor, you can go to jail for that.) Cost will be \$25 per head for a three course meal. RSVP to Kevin Senz. **Notices of Motions & Agenda Items** for the AGM are to be received by the Club Secretary no later than 4th September. **Nominations** for all **Executive Positions, Canteen Officer, Tug Master & two Committee Members** must be received by the Secretary by 14th September. Nomination forms are available from the Secretary.

Treasurer

GFA annual subs of \$145 will be debited to members' accounts at the end of August & will appear on the statements mailed out in early September. Please credit your account this month to cover this item as we have heavy expenditure on aircraft purchases, Form 2 maintenance, etc.

CFI

The new Puchacz & tug should be at the field by the end of August. In spite of the poor weather, single seater bookings have been heavy with all three aircraft often reserved for both days of the weekend. The recent vote for amalgamation was counted with GFA members recording 55% 'yes' & HGFA 87% 'yes.' The

voting level in each membership was poor at less than 50% which was disappointing, given the importance of the topic. September & October are shaping up as a busy time for the club with the possibility of midweek flying for several weeks during September. Boonah Gliding Club is considering a cross-country camp in October and we may host the Teams Challenge in that month, as well. (I am working on it.) At the recent Safety Seminars one of the main points covered was mid-air collisions and the **absolute importance of effective lookout**. The RTO-OPS has stressed that this area should be addressed during check flights. It is essential that you develop a structured scanning technique in order to fly safely & efficiently. Apart from the safety & survival aspects, that 'other aircraft' could be climbing in a better thermal or be flying through better air than you, but you won't be aware of it unless you **look out**. The wearing of parachutes in club gliders & towplanes is strongly recommended. As a committee member, I find the current rumours sweeping the club concerning the feasibility study of a possible move to Dalby very worrying. Bob Ward was asked to conduct such a study which he has done. Please bear in mind that the club was once based at Oakey & was forced to move by the Army. It is unlikely that we would be forced to move again but we have been suffering airspace problems during some weekends with Gliders North being closed to us & South Alpha restricted. Only last month the committee & QSA had to fight off a proposal to place an MBZ (Mandatory Broadcast Zone) at Toowoomba which would have encompassed our airfield & operations. This was uncovered by a committee member. The Army & CASA had not notified us of their intentions. All members are eventually going to have to become proficient at in flight radio procedures as well as exercising positive cooperation with Oakey so we can coexist harmoniously & safely.

Instructors AGM & Dinner

Saturday 28th August at Bowenville Hotel at 6:30 PM.

Friday Flying

When completing the questionnaire, please indicate your intentions re flying every Friday through summer. We are considering this as a way of increasing our utilisation and decreasing the load at the weekends. Other essential actions are early arrivals & early starts. We shall then have three fibreglass two seaters which should help to carry the overflow of casual pilots whenever the three singles are booked. If you turn up early enough & help out you may be able to squeeze in an hour or so before the single goes off on task with its designated pilot. Then there is also the time left late in the day when they return. Never give up.

Dudley Waters

"Thanks. When they 'cart' you off to hospital and you are cursing because you think your soaring days are over, it's really the end of the world. I'm sure it wasn't the 'medics' that got me back into the thermals so soon, but the friendship of the not too long ago strangers who took time to visit, along with the 'get well' cards. Thanks DDSC. You are the special bunch that have fooled and confused the 'medics.' You will now have to put up and get up with me for a long time yet."

Welcome Back

Philip Teakle enjoyed a trip in the Puchacz with Peter Bell. Antonio Silva also had a full day last Sunday. There is now a Pitts Special living in the pergola on Saturday nights. I guess if it could get into the bar with its mate, it would.

Singapore Air Force open Days

AAC Oakey Thu/Fri 19/20 August.

Flying Hours - July

Club aircraft - 93h 47m, private - 84h 56m for a total of 178h 43m. Top performers were the Puchacz & the Cirrus for the A Team & Bob Ward & Lars Zehnder for the B Team. This is an excellent result considering the time of year, the poor weather & the number of pilots absent overseas, etc. These figures will eventually be graphed monthly against standing records & targets.