



CHAOTIC

Monthly Newsletter of the Darling Downs Soaring Club

April 2001

President

The 2000-2001 competition scene is coming a little closer to home with the Easter comps being held at Chinchilla. We expect at least six DDSC pilots and their aircraft and crews to head west for the competition.

Congratulations to John Buchanan for winning the open class at the recent Australian FAI Nationals. DDSC was also represented by Andrew Georgeson and Peter Holmes in standard class and Bob Ward in the 18-metre class. Again it's good to see DDSC well represented at these events and I apologise for not mentioning it last month.

Peter Griffiths and the 4DM have returned from their sojourn in Africa. As discussed at the general meeting in January we are hoping to organise a social evening when Lars and Griffio can tell us all of their travels and how they won the pre-worlds. It's just a case of finding a convenient time, as it's a long drive for Lars from NSW.

We are in for a long busy summer. As discussed at the general meeting, we anticipate two visiting groups from the UK this summer, with repeat visits from the British Army and the RAFGSA. Not only will this be good for us, but good for our visitors. The foot and mouth outbreaks have severely limited cross-country soaring opportunities in England this year, with the possibility that all competitions will be cancelled.

We expect to have six weeks of full time operations, which will severely test our volunteer organisation. As I said, these visits do benefit our club, but they also require their share of hard work and we may well need to call on a wider group of members to spread the load more fairly among the club members.

The duty pilot system is up and running and is making a real difference on our airfield. Getting it up and running was a challenge, but keeping it up and running will be a greater challenge. We are looking at additional ways to involve more club members in the system.

We have set 9.00 am as the time for the duty crew and those planning to fly to be at the field. Obviously if members can get there earlier, that's great. Even with everyone there at 9.00 it's probably going to be 10.00 am before we get in the air. Time tends to drift a bit at that time of the morning, but it becomes critical later in the day when we have to cut flights short, or some people miss out because we have run out of time.

Thank you to John Moore for contributing toward the cost of grassing the additional runway area.

Our get well soon wishes go to Keith Mercer as he continues his long journey back to full health. He is past the half way mark of his year long program, so if you think of it as an out and return task he has rounded the turn point and is on the homeward leg. We look forward to having him back on deck at McCaffrey Field later this year.

At the last general meeting we discussed the aircraft booking system. This booking system is an integral and necessary part of our operation at McCaffrey Field. The meeting confirmed that the role of the booking system is to enable aircraft to be booked for flying at McCaffrey Field. Members wanting to take aircraft away for competitions, fly-ins, fly away weekends or whatever, need to apply to the committee, which will decide on aircraft availability and resolve any competing claims. In the interest of timeliness, this need not be done at a meeting but can be done over the phone or by e-mail. A key consideration will be our ability to sustain operations at McCaffrey Field, if that is what we want to do, and to advise all members of any significant unavailability of aircraft.

Which brings me to the issue of communication among members. Communication with members can be difficult when they are spread over Southeast Queensland and beyond. The size of the club and the number of members involved also makes this difficult. In a small club of 20 members you can do a ring around fairly quickly, but to ring over 100 members is a little more difficult.

The club's main communication channels continue to be the CHAOTIC newsletter and the club general meetings every two months. CHAOTIC is published every month and all members are invited, and encouraged, to contribute to it. The deadline is the 25th of each month. It is the members' newsletter and it is there for all members to use.

The general meetings are another great opportunity to find out what is going on. At first I was a little daunted by the prospect of a general meeting every two months and of managing the club's business in this way. While they have long been a part of the DDSC culture, they are rare in other clubs. Having

worked through a couple of them over the last six months and become used to them, I am now a strong supporter of them. They are a key part of having an open and democratic club.

If you want to know what is going on, come along and find out. If you want to express an opinion this is one way to do it. Committee members have many and varied skills, but I have not noticed that mind reading is one of them – but I could be wrong. The committee will act on any issues that are raised at a general meeting that have majority support.

Of course some members feel uncomfortable speaking up at a general meeting. As always if you want to bring something that's bugging you to my attention then either phone me at home on 3843 6178 or e-mail me at rhenderson@eisa.net.au . I am always available to hear members concerns and will act on them where necessary, but I can't do anything if no one tells me there is a problem.

To aid communication I suggest we make greater use of the white board in the clubrooms, especially for coming events. In this way members who visit the club often will know what is going on.

There are comments from time to time about the use of the Internet and e-mail. The website and chat line were set up a couple of years ago by some very forward thinking members. As a non-Internet user at the time, I for one was unaware of the significance of this move.

These are now a vital part of our operation for those who wish to use them. E-mail and the chat line enable very quick, timely and cheap communication with a large number of people.

All members have lauded the success of last years RAFGSA expedition. The quality of our website and the ease of e-mail communication were key elements of the planning and successful completion of this expedition.

Use of the web is growing across the community. One of our target groups for new members is young people, in an effort to reduce the worldwide aging of the gliding fraternity. Recent statistics show that 77% of 18-24 year olds are now on line and this compares with only 40% of this age group just two years ago. But its not just young members who are adopting this new medium, there are at least two 'senior' members of our club that have joined the e-mail ranks in the last year. There are more urban dwellers than rural dwellers using the web, but the take up rate in rural areas is faster than in urban areas so before long it will have equalled out.

It is a bit like back when we had one K7 and one Puchacz. As time went on and members got used to the Puchacz, the K7 spent more time in the hangar, until eventually the K7 was sold and another Puchacz bought. In a couple of years, e-mail will not be an issue, however I am sure we will still be using Australia Post for some of our communication.

The e-mail system has many strengths, yet there are times when e-mail is not the right way to communicate, particularly with sensitive or personal issues. A quick phone call can bring much better results than a blunt e-mail, or a series of e-mails backward and forward. At times face-to-face communication, or face-mail as Russell Bennett calls it, is the only way to resolve something.

The hangar extension has been receiving its fair share of attention lately, but behind the scenes. Before we move to complete construction we need to finalise the design, sort out what it will cost, be sure that we have the ability to pay for it and that we will get a return on the significant investment of maybe over \$20,000 of members funds. Members are working to resolve these points and once that is done we will proceed. It would be good to have it finished before the first of this summers expeditions arrive.

Ralph Henderson

Flight Operations

We have noticed that some pilots are setting their altimeters to zero rather than QNH (1200ft for McCaffrey Field). The GFA and CASA have an agreement that we use QNH altimeter setting for reporting altitude just like other general aviation users. Using QNH reduces the risk of confusion when communicating your altitude with other aviators or when they are communicating their altitude to you. There is no mental arithmetic to do before you open your mouth or when working out someone else's altitude relative to yours.

It is club policy that parachutes all pilots wear a parachute in club aircraft. There are two exceptions. A medical reason, for example a back problem or wearing a parachute would put you over the maximum weight allowed for the glider you are flying.

We are lucky that McCaffrey Field is generally free of obstacles such as fences and trees. Other sites are not so forgiving. Neither do they have the same land marks. There's no paddock with a single tree and pond that looks like a good place to start a down wind leg and there won't be a house conveniently marking what seems to be a good place to turn on to base leg. This is no way to fly a circuit. There's no substitute for good circuit planning and we must always use 'angle/distance' method to fly a circuit. It works anywhere you might want to land a glider. We are aiming for a downward angle of about 30 degrees using our intended end of roll point as a reference. We maintain this angle by moving closer to

or away from our intended end of roll point as required. Be careful not to your approach too long as this makes it difficult to identify undershoot situations until it may be too late.

What are the three objectives of circuit planning?

- 1) To establish a landing area.
- 2) Select a landing direction.
- 3) To establish a safe approach over any obstacles.

Instructor Panel

Clifton Flyaway Weekend

DDSC committed to its second appearance at the Downs' former best kept aviation secret, the annual Darling Downs Sports Aircraft Association (DDSAA) Fly-In at Bange's Airfield, Clifton.

Last year, a record 125 aircraft flew-in, this year it rained. Whilst the event was not washed out, most of the aircraft were weathered-in at Toowoomba and coastal airports and only the fortunate, the brave, the special (helicopters) and the ones which arrived on the Saturday made it through.

We took one two-seater, Puchacz (GRI), which was dual-towed out of McCaffrey's Field on the Saturday flown by Denis Lambert in company with Murray Knight in Mosquito (FQR). The tug was C180 MDK, flown by Stow Kentish. Josh D'Arcy preceded them in Cirrus 75 IUZ and landed first.

The sight of Trevor's airfield from the air at 3pm was not exactly a pretty one as 35mm of "follow-up" rain had hit the night before. The sky was soggy with cloudbase at 5500' and scattered weak to moderate thermals. A rain squall was making its way up a valley - way in the southeast towards Warwick. Denis and Murray flew around the scenic countryside before landing within minutes of each other, as so often happens when the lift runs out. In anticipation of possible bad overnight weather, the three gliders were securely tied down.

The social activities got off to a good start with beer(s), a barbecue and plenty of live music. DDSC was represented that night by Tony, Jan and Andrew Barker (and Pepper); Richard Hoskings, Denis Lambert, Mark and Carlene Robertson, Dieter Gerschwitz; Peter and Kirsty Thomas; Carole, Murray, Deborah, Andrew Knight and David Hannam; Trevor and Janet Bange; Josh D'Arcy and Kevin Senz.

Sunday dawned fine and clear but it was just a dirty trick as thick clouds started to move in from the eastern ranges. They never amounted to anything but they put a stop to an awful lot of departures to Bange's from affected airfields and the runway surface didn't get a chance to dry out.

Hundreds of people turned up to watch the flying by the thirty, or so, aircraft in attendance and to walk around the static display. We had our three gliders on show and handed out at least 100 DDSC brochures. The Mosquito crew alone had serious enquiries for two one-week ab-initio courses. One of these was from a Killarney resident. Sadly, the Southern Downs Soaring and Aero Club aircraft and crew didn't make it up from Massie Airfield.

Stow turned up around midday and Kevin drove in a little later. One of the first away was Richard Hoskings who took FQR most of the way back to DDSC behind the 180 only to have to "hold" for 1½ hours until a rainstorm passed through. He had an enjoyable flight, climbing up the side of the clouds to 7500'. Josh had a couple of launches before making it all the way home on his own, after nearly landing out at Pittsworth. (Don't know whether this was due to some local "Siren" or the smell of home cooking.)

Last, but not least, was Denis in RI who splattered down just before the last rain of the day hit McCaffreys.

Another good social and flying event. DDSC and gliding gained good publicity and exposure, both to the public and to the serious aviation community. WIN TV Toowoomba aired a two minute coverage of the event and the

"Clifton Courier" ran features on two consecutive weeks. In future, we need to have a glider on permanent static display at these "airshow" type events.

Murray Knight

Dalby Flyaway Weekend

The club recently flew at Dalby as part of the Dalby Cotton Week Festival on Sun 18 Mar. We were invited to attend by Dalby Airfield Open Day organiser Andrew Luhrs, who also happens to be a club member.

The club dual-towed both the Grob and Puchacz (QX) over on Sunday morning flown by Peter Bell/Craig Jordan (Grob) and Denis Lambert/Michael Codling (Puchacz) towed in Cessna (CMN) by Rob Bradley. The tow over was uneventful under a solid overcast with a cloudbase of around 3000 QNH. Josh Darcy towed part way over in the Cirrus IUZ and landed to become the static display for several hours while Dave McManus flew over later in the day in the ASW-20 to add to the number of gliders on the line.

We had a steady flow of visitors throughout the day with many enquires and a number of serious questions concerning courses. We flew some members of the organising committee and also the owner of the Keyland Crop Dusting business based at Dalby airport, who contacted me later during the week to obtain some course info for himself and some friends.

The weather later in the afternoon cleared up nicely and nearly all flights carried out were extended soaring flights up to 4500 QNH in 4 kt thermals. A shade shelter, brought along especially for the event by Mark Robertson, provided welcome cover from what became a bright sunny day by 12.00pm. Chezan Hall, Sara Tromp and Alex Russell also came out to lend their support and take the opportunity to fly from a different site. The Cessna was also gainfully employed flying members and friends over the area during tows.

At around 3.00 pm we decided to call it quits for the day and dual-towed home for some local flying before putting everything to bed and heading home. The day was an excellent publicity vehicle for the club with hundreds of people able to see the gliders first hand and be given information about the club and what we do and where we are.

From a club members point of view it was also a very relaxed, laid back day without any pressure ... a real lazy Sunday.

Denis Lambert

Trevor Bange Awarded

On the Saturday night of the annual DDSAA Fly-In at his Clifton airstrip, Trevor Bange was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for his thirty-odd years of dedication and service to DDSC. Trevor served as Treasurer for fifteen years and has given many other services to the club in the form of instructing, glider towing, etc. He also supported the Air Training Corps for many years and helped organize and run glider-training camps for cadets.

The certificate was presented by Club Secretary Denis Lambert and depicted Janet waving off her airborne spouse with a picture of Trevor's Porterfield in the foreground. Janet received a floral tribute for her support of both Trevor and the club.

Murray Knight

Part 2: Near Miss

The sobering part of the glide from Miles happened as I was passing over Macalister. I was cruising along at 75-80 knots, scanning the clouds ahead, when suddenly ...there was a glider, almost straight ahead. Within a few seconds we were passing, it was about 20ft above me and we were about a wing span apart. It was the Nimbus 2, heading in the opposite direction.

When I spoke to the other pilot, later at the club, he told me he had been heading for Chinchilla and was flying at 80-85 knots. He had also seen me only a few seconds before we passed and we agreed that we were very lucky we were not lined up, because there was no way we would have turned in time. It would almost certainly have been a high speed head-on. It was frightening how fast the other aircraft appeared out of nowhere.

It's more frightening to consider how often we fly along these tracks from town to town, often right on track (thanks to GPS) and usually operating in similar height bands. Part of the problem is that another aircraft at your height is aligned with the horizon, and this is the haziest area of all.

In the past, on a couple of occasions, I have heard someone's transmission and realised we were headed toward each other, and called the other pilot to arrange separation. For example "you stay north of the road and I'll stay south". Maybe there's a good case for all cross-country pilots to have good working radios and to regularly call their position and track, say at turn points and major land-marks. It seems common sense to me, it's one way we can avoid leaving our safety to chance.

I was particularly lucky, because it was the first time I had ever flown the aircraft without wearing a chute. Because I hadn't intended flying I had left mine at home and all the club ones were being used.

Incidentally, the radio problem turned out to be a very simple fix - a grubby microphone jack. I had heard it receiving when I was doing the daily inspection, and assumed all was well.

Owen Jones

Rainbow Beach – Take Two

Such was the support for the February RB Flyaway Weekend and the ongoing interest, that we are planning to go again over the weekend of 19-20 May. So far, approximately fifteen people have indicated that they want to go and the committee has given the expedition their approval.

These weekends require very considerable organisation and promotion. We still require tow pilots and instructors. Please contact me if you wish to participate (camknight@smartchat.com.au or 3352 2083)

Easter Comps

The Easter Comps will be held at Chinchilla from 13-21 April. Peter Bell and Craig Jordan have booked the Hornet and Denis Lambert and Michael Codling have booked the LS7. Ralph Henderson is keen to take the Grob 103 and is after other pilots to fly dual with him. If you are interested contact Ralph.

Denis Lambert

Tow Pilot Training

Trevor Bange has supplied me with a list of people who are keen to train. Unfortunately, only a few of these people are known to me and none have yet contacted me with a view to start training. Possibly, they are unaware that the opportunity is now available.

My philosophy is that if someone wants to train, then they should come to me and I will do all that I can to help. But they do need to come to me, not the other way around.

There are a couple of things required to commence training, apart from the obvious licence. Firstly, a constant speed propeller endorsement is a must. The applicant must also possess a copy of the GFA MOSP Operations section referring to aerotowing and a copy of the GFA Aerotowing Manual. These are available from GFA at a reasonable cost.

Contact me on 3385 5108 or 0427 728811 or R_Bradley@bigpond.com if interested.

Robert Bradley

Pylon Race

I am organising a pylon race at the club on Sat 7 April. Briefing will be a 10.00am, with first launch around 11.00am depending on weather. Race will consist of as many laps as possible around a small fixed course (30-50 KM) in a time frame (usually 3-4 hrs). This can be flown in teams sharing aircraft or as an individual event. The comp is divided into two leagues, club pilots and nationals pilots with the organiser deciding which class you fly in if there is any confusion. The winners get their name engraved on the race plaques held at the clubhouse plus some bottles of wine. The comp is open to anyone and low experience pilots can fly with either an instructor or senior pilot. More detailed info will be issued at the briefing. Cost is around \$5.00 per aircraft depending on numbers.

Peter Bell will be organising a BBQ at the end of the days flying at a cost of around \$5.00 per person. Note that Peter feeds everyone well.

For further info e-mail using the chat line or denislambert@telstra.easymail.com.au or ring 4635 3468 ASAP to confirm booking.

Denis Lambert

Hangar Space

With the construction of the hangar extension nearing, expressions of interest in hangaring aircraft are now being sought. If you or you know of someone who is looking for hangar space, please contact me.

Denis Lambert

Meeting Minutes

A reminder that minutes of Committee and General meetings are available on the website and at the club. Stay informed about what is happening in your club.

Events Calendar 2001

1-6 April

Midweek Course
Peter Bell

5-6 April

Midweek Flying
Peter Bell

6 April

Instructor's Meeting
Peter Bell / Tony Cavanna

7 April

Committee Meeting
Denis Lambert

Pylon Race
Denis Lambert

Scouts Air Activities
Tony Barker

13-21 April

Easter Comps (Chinchilla)
Ralph Henderson / Peter Bell

21 April

Scouts Air Activities
Tony Barker

6-11 May

Midweek Course
Peter Bell

10-11 May

Midweek Flying
Peter Bell

11 May

Instructor's Meeting
Peter Bell / Tony Cavanna

12 May

Scouts Air Activities
Tony Barker

Committee Meeting
Denis Lambert

19-20 May

Rainbow Beach Flyaway Weekend
Murray Knight

Club Aircraft Hours

