

# QUEENSLAND ULTRALIGHT ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 2004 NEWSLETTER

Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield, Silverleaves Road, via Toogoolawah Qld

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**2000 Hr Sapphire**

[Quite] A few years ago my aeroplane gained a certain degree of notoriety when it was featured in John Reed's Pacific Ultralights magazine, becoming know to all as the 1000 Hr Sapphire.

Well, it's time to update that story !!

Sapphire 25-0057 has now passed the 2000Hrs in-service mark. And let me tell you, running the second thousand hours up has been just as enjoyable as the first. Trips have ranged from Cairns to Mildura and west to Broken Hill, touching down at many points in between.

Actually, it's interesting to observe the total change in "ultralighting" since I first bought the Sapp in 1991. In those days the majority of aircraft were 50 Knot rag-n-tube machines such as the Drifter and Thruster amongst others. In those earlier days I

had to hang back to keep up with the majority of the flock. These days, if any thing, I am the "slow boy" in company with Jabirus, Sabres, Stings etc. And yet, call it whimsical if you like, I firmly believe that in those days, as a group of recreational pilots in the early 1990's, we had more fun and went further and flew more hours than we ever do now. For these reasons I believe that there is still a very real need for the lower cost ,single seat, fun flying ultralight aircraft.

And would you believe that I still have folks come up to me at fly ins etc and ask:  
"Do you *really* like the Sapphire?"

What would you reckon ?? ☺

Richard Faint

**PRESIDENT:** Michael Smith (07) 3206-3548 **SECRETARY:** Glenda Faint (07) 3818-1988

**TREASURER:** Richard Faint (07) 3818-1988

# WING IT TO WAGGA

By Mike & Priscilla Smith

It had been decided that we would head to Wagga Wagga for the centenary of flight fly-in. We couldn't leave till Friday 12<sup>th</sup>. Would the weather let us get to Temora that day? Leaving Jacobs Well at 7:40 am we headed out over Beaudesert, climbing then to 8500 to cross the ranges at Stanthorpe and on to Moree. A bit of tiger country on this track but unfavourable cloud made our original choice of Clifton-Inglewood-Moree impossible. However, at 8500ft the air was smooth and we had a ground speed around 100 knots all the way to Moree.

After fuelling up and a bite to eat we headed off, planning to overfly Dubbo. During climb to 6500ft the weather ahead didn't look promising. A band of thunderstorms moving west to east. About 20nm from Dubbo we were confronted with an almost solid black wall in front and stretching as west as far as the eye could see. Just moments away from the decision to abandon the plan and turn back to Moree, an incredible parting of the clouds occurred.

I don't know if Moses was in the area but I've never seen anything like it. There appeared to be a window of opportunity--literally. A rectangular opening in a solid wall. We decided to take the opportunity. With carby heat on and throttle back to 1500rpm we did a very rapid descent down to 3500 and scooted through the window. It was like passing through the iron curtain, and although there was some haze in the distance there was no rain and only very scattered cloud.

Narromine and Dubbo had been absolutely dumped on. South of Dubbo we could see water flooding the paddocks on one side of the Newell highway and dust rising on the other. Amazing. With the bad weather behind us we climbed back up to 6500ft to complete the journey to Temora in increasingly clear sky and smooth air.

On arrival at Temora we could see only one lonely plane on the airfield, this was the Sabre belonging to Andrew Tanner. Andrew comes from the sunshine coast and had arranged to meet us at Temora. At least we wouldn't be the ONLY plane from Queensland. As we were unloading our overnight bags and stretching our legs we saw an-



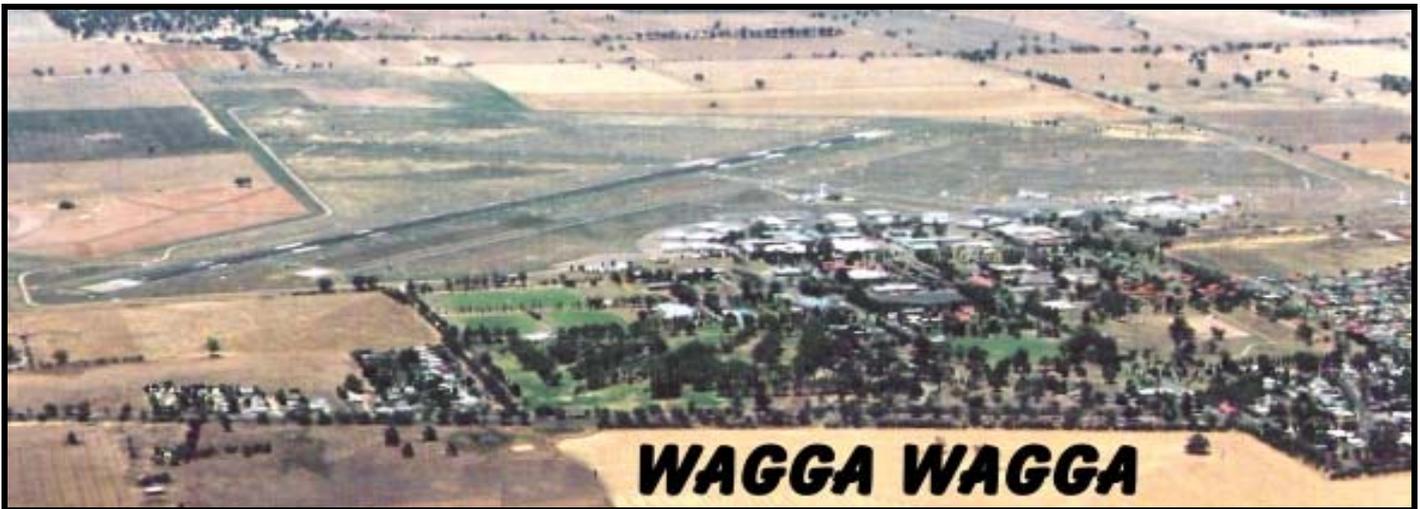
other ultra light join the circuit and shortly Trevor Burns and Ken McLennan taxied up in their Jabiru. Trevor and Ken also managed to beat the weather from their home town at Taree on the NSW north coast.

The Temora aero club has a really great facility at the airfield and they also look after the fuel supply, so with the help of Rob Mazlin from the club, we fuelled up, slotted the two Jabirus into their hangar, and fronted the bar for a welcome cold beer. During our spot of rest and relaxation, two Drifters arrived. These were piloted by Ian Byrne and Bruce Taylor from the Ballina Ultralight club and they soon joined us for some refreshments.

After a comfortable night at the Goltere motel, the big day dawned with clear blue skies. 9:30am d/s time an informal meeting of our little group of five aircraft and seven people worked out our take off times to allow for the 15knt s/w wind so that we could all arrive at Wagga Wagga at the planned time of midday.

Arriving at the MBZ boundary the adrenalin started flowing. How many aircraft would be in the circuit? Would it be ten, would it be two hundred? Would the RPT SAAB arrive on time at 1200 hrs? I then heard AUF group 1 led by Eugene Reid, join the circuit from the south ( Holbrook ) at their allocated altitude of 2700ft. I gave our AUF group 3 call joining circuit from the north ( Temora ) at 3200ft.





Moments later group two from the west ( Narrandera ) joined circuit at 2700ft.

Right on time the SAAB called inbound the MBZ and asked for details of aircraft and altitudes. He was soon advised of our positions and he replied with 'copy AUF groups, I will descend to 1500ft and do a straight in approach for runway 23. As soon as the SAAB had landed Eugene then began the AUF landing sequence, starting with group 1 and followed by group 2. As group 3 were just finishing their landings, a second RPT a DASH 8 arrived in the MBZ. The landing sequence was halted while this aircraft landed then group 4 continued their landings.

All pilots then gathered for media photos and TV news,

after which Eugene Reid gave a welcome speech to all and presented the mail that had been collected to colonel Stephen Opel from the USAF. The colonel thanked us for inviting him to the day and accepted the mail for forwarding to the National Air and Space museum in America.

Lunch and dinner were catered at the airfield and plenty of hangar flying was done during the rest of the day and evening.

Next morning Priscilla and I, and also Andrew in the Sabre departed Wagga Wagga shortly after first light and headed for Moree. As usual headwinds on the way down, headwinds on the way home. Approaching Dubbo I calculated we would only have 5 litres left in the fuel



# WING IT TO WAGGA

tank on arrival at Moree, not enough for comfort, so a quick drop in to Dubbo for a top up and back up to our cruise height of 7500ft. The radio telescope at Parkes and the observatory at Siding Springs near Coonabarabran glistened in the morning sunlight as we passed smoothly overhead. Soon we were descending down into Moree for a final fuel stop and some morning tea. While there we got chatting with Tex and Vicki Barrett who were on their way home to Thangool in their C172. They gave us an invitation to visit their home strip anytime.

Off again on climb to 7500ft. Ground speed is about 3 knots less than below 5000ft but the perfectly calm air makes it worthwhile. Over Stanthorpe again we marvel at some of the fantastic cloud shapes that often build up on hot summer days. With the peaks of the great divide behind us, Kooralbyn passes underneath and Beaudesert is on the nose. Here we begin our descent down to 3500ft. The air starts to get rougher and we need to dodge the odd rain shower. As Tamborine village passes underneath we can see Jumpinpin in the distance. Unfortunately our trip is nearly over. Priscilla switches the radio to 126.7 and we give our inbound call to Heck field. There is no reply and we can't see anyone around, the only activity seems to be at Tyagera. We drop down on the dead side and join circuit crosswind for runway 36.

After putting the plane in the hangar we head off in the car to Beenleigh and onto the M1 motorway. The freedom of the skies are gone, the traffic, the lights, the hassles are back. I start to get that let down empty feeling I get at the end of a good flying trip. Buzzer!

Still, a good trip had been accomplished with the help of a bit of planning. I had done an old fashioned flight plan and my able co-pilot Priscilla handled all the settings on the GPS and radio and looked up all the relevant pages in ERSA. That made piloting a breeze for me and very enjoyable.

The Jabiru has its faults, but to get from A to B in the shortest time, it has few peers.

## THE FIGURES

### Heck Field - - Moree - - Temora

519NM (plus a few diversions)  
Engine running time: 5.4 Hrs  
Fuel consumption : 19.4 Lts/hr @ 2600 RPM  
Altitude : 8500ft  
Indicated airspeed: 94Kts

### Wagga - - Dubbo - - Moree - - Heck Field

564NM  
Engine running time: 5.9 Hrs  
Fuel consumption: 20.6 Lts/hr @ 2800 RPM  
Altitude: 7500ft  
Indicated airspeed: 96-97Kts

# QUA

## Monthly Meeting

### Monday 2nd February

### SAAA Club Rooms

### Archerfield

### 8:00 PM



**WAGGA LINE UP**



**There's only one way to adequately describe the Watts Bridge Christmas Extravaganza - and that's as a HUGE SUCCESS !!**

**Hangar One was packed to over-flowing with well over 150 diners intent on having a great party evening. Santa parachuted in from 10,000 feet with great gifts for the kiddies.**

**The Toogoolawah Lions Club then got down to business serving up a great three course meal after which the band took to the stage and entertained into the wee hours. Those seeking a slightly quieter (and cooler) evening retired to the outside seating areas.**

**To try and beat the summer heat and also avoid clashes with other festive celebrations, this year's "Extravaganza 2004" is scheduled for November 27th. Be there !!**



# **CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA**

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## MINUTES OF MEETING

DECEMBER 2003 - MEETING COMMENCED 8.00p.m.

NUMBER PRESENT 16

**APOLOGIES** Gavin McGrath & Richard Sweetapple  
**VISITORS** Greg Keliher & Ian Hodgkinson  
**CHAIRPERSON** Mike Smith

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING** ACCEPTED AS TRUE AND CORRECT  
MOVED BY BEVAN DRYDEN  
SECONDED BY DON MELLOW

**PRESIDENT REPORT** NIL

**TREASURER REPORT** Account Balance \$16,220.19  
MOVED AND ACCEPTED AS CORRECT  
Moved by Richard Faint, 2nd Lloyd Salisbury

**SECRETARY REPORT** Glenda Faint  
Reminding everyone to come to Watts Bridge for the Q.U.A. combined Christmas Party December, 13<sup>th</sup>  
News needed for next Newsletter.  
John McCarron nominated for Personal Profile  
Internet Aircraft Websites  
New Airspace Discussed  
Andy Dunlop had mild Heart Attack, 2 stents inserted into Coronary Artery. Well Wishes for full recovery.

**GENERAL BUSINESS** A.U.F. Board Meeting February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Proxy form for Change of Name.

**NEW MEMBERS** Robert Shaw & Greg Kim

**DELEGATE FOR WATTS BRIDGE COUNCIL** Richard Faint

**THANK YOU TO ROBIN SALISBURY FOR BRINGING SUPPER.**

**MEETING CLOSED** 8.26 p.m.

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## ***GAVIN'S INTERNET LINKS .....***

There's no denying that the internet is a wonderful resource for "aeroplane people". Information, news and views on every topic imaginable is available from a huge number of commercial, special interest and enthusiast sites. Only trouble is finding them. You can spend a lot of time searching for what you want. QUA Member Gavin McGrath suggests - "Why not print a listing in the QUA NEWS??" Sounds like a good idea - So to get the ball rolling Gavin went through his bookmarks and came up with the sites listed below. There's got to be many many more out there. Let me know your favourite web addresses so they can be listed here for everyone to lookup.

<http://www.bravo.net.au/~samrv6/index.html>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ultracruiser/>

<http://www.greatplainsas.com/>

<http://www.flyhummel.com/ucarticle.htm>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ws-202/>

<http://www.angelaircraft.com.au/>

<http://members.eaa.org/home/homebuilders/building/list.html>

<http://members.eaa.org/home/homebuilders/building/list.html>

<http://www.perfectpolish.com/>

<http://www.eaa1000.av.org/avweb/avindex.htm>

<http://www.hciaviation.com/>

<http://www.sportair.com/articles/Building%20an%20Aluminum%20Airplane.html>

<http://www.spoonworld.com/>

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