

- Tribute Fly In
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## Tribute Fly In

On Sunday 14 December 2008 the Queensland Vintage Aeroplane Group held a tribute fly in for the families of members who lost their lives under tragic circumstances. The most recent being the passing of Shane Winter, QVAG President for 16 years.

In attendance at the tribute fly in were over 230 people, who arrived by air and road. Reflective of the support and respect amongst members of the group there were at least 63 aircraft in attendance.

Mr Craig Justo, QVAG Vice-President, officiated the proceedings with a moving tribute for the families of Bob Copas, Guido Zuccoli, Malcolm Long, Barry Hempel, and Shane Winter.

Following the tribute, Mr Pat Harrington, a previous QVAG President, officially opened the QVAG club rooms at Watts Bridge, named The Winter Retreat.



Photo: courtesy Mick Rafferty

A pictorial tribute for our members now presides in the lounge area of The Winter Retreat.

## In remembrance

### Lyn Orphan

On Monday, 16 February 2009, Lyn Orphan passed away after a lengthy battle with Leukaemia.

Lyn, along with her late husband Keith, were heavily involved in the formative days of QVAG and earned a great deal of respect for the work that she did in the years that she was involved. A legacy of her work is that which remains today, a group that is stronger than it has ever been and one that continues to work toward the future of vintage aviation in Australia.

QVAG offers their regards to Graham Orphan, life member and stalwart supporter of QVAG.



Photo: courtesy Mick Rafferty

Following the formal proceedings, attendees retired to Hangar 1 for a light meal and catch up with other members, families of members, friends and supporters until mid afternoon.

A thank you is extended to all those involved in the organisation leading up to and on the day of the fly in. In particular, a special thanks is made to Craig Justo for organising the fly in; to Robyn Bernhardt for organising the catering (and the many hands helping to cook and serve); to John Sinclair and Ross Stenhouse for access to Hangar 1; to the SES for providing the shade shelters; and to many other members who contributed to the organisation of the fly in. All assistance provided is always sincerely appreciated. Thank you.

A pictorial tribute of the fly in is presented on pages 3 and 4 of this issue of AVAN. Thank you to Mick Rafferty and Frank Ragonese for pictorial record.

### Max Paynter

On Saturday, 24 January 2009, Max Paynter passed away after a lengthy battle with cancer.

While not a member of QVAG, Max had a long history in Aviation, through his ownership of Brisbane Aero Engineers and other companies.

In recent years, Max attended QVAG's Festival of Flight and was a keen supporter of vintage aviation.

## Outgoing Vice-President's Message *by Craig P Justo*

I sincerely hope that this Issue of AVAN finds all enjoying good health, good fortune and indeed, some very pleasurable flying experiences!

As one of my dearest friends, Lynette Zuccoli says quite often and I quote thus – “in the fullness of time”! Such was that which prevailed with the conduction of the fiscal year 2007-2008 Annual General Meeting. This was convened on Sunday 08 March and twenty Members gathered to receive a report on the affairs of the Group and elect a new Management Committee. Under the very capable stewardship of Roger Marks who kindly volunteered his services to Chair the meeting, it was conducted in a professional but relaxed manner.

The Group's Treasurer, Joanne Winter presented the audit of the fiscal year 2007-2008 and also, a current balance of QVAG's Accounts. Suffices of me to say that the Group is in a very healthy financial position and the security that comes from this has been due to the astute management of funds by the previous Management Committee. Throughout the history of this Group, we have never been as financially sound as we are now. And this seems to fly in the face of current trends where most of us are trying to deal with the issues that have arisen due to the global financial crisis!

With the new Management Committee duly elected, this to me was an especially pleasing result as with only one exception, all members of the new Committee have served the Group in positions of trust previously. This will allow continuity in the direction of the Group and also stability in the times ahead. I am sure that all Members will join with me and welcome the new Management Committee and provide the same support as that which was given to the previous Committee. Immediately following the conduction of the AGM, a General Meeting was convened and this then allowed for the new management Committee to address matters – some of which had been in abeyance for a considerable time. One of the most important matters to be discussed was the Calendar of Events that your Group will stage over the remainder of this year and as you will see, this is published in this current Issue of AVAN. Of importance, it was decided that our premier and flagship event of the year, the “Festival of Flight” will be staged yet again and due the kind appointment by the Management Committee, I will once again be co-ordinating the event!

In the matter of the previous Management Committee, as I held the senior position for the past six months (by default), I will take this opportunity to proffer a heartfelt thank you to each of those folks for the work that they did to ensure that the Group continued to function and go forward. That even under personal duress due the loss of fellow members, they continued to commit their time and in many instances, their personal resources to make things happen is even more commendable! Let me assure you, over the past two years there have been many challenges to overcome and I can say with some surety, I have no doubt that people of a lesser calibre would have walked away. That those folk met the challenges head on and completed what they undertook to do, has allowed of this Group to maintain its proud record of achievements and as importantly, maintain its standing and reputation within the broader community. And this is relevant to the preceding Management Committees of which I was a part of as well. For your unwavering support and commitment to the furtherment of this Group, I owe you a sincere and personal debt of gratitude!

This Group has faced some very serious challenges over the past two years and a great deal of time and effort has been consumed with many matters that beset the Group and in many respects, created unprecedented upheavals for the Management Committee. It is to the credit of the Management Committee that it was able to put these upheavals into perspective and throughout 2007 and 2008, the Group continued to stage functions (Breakfast Fly-Ins, "FoF" and Xmas Party etc.) in unison with the work that was being done on the Clubrooms. This saw six minor Fly-Ins and two more “Festival of Flight” events staged!

In the matter of the Festival of Flight, I cannot understate the importance of this event to the Group. Over the past fifteen years, this event has evolved into what it is now, the largest Fly-In event staged in the southern hemisphere. No I am not overstating its status - it is exactly that! Although there are Fly-Ins staged by “sister” organizations in other parts of Australia that attract larger numbers of aircraft, the facts are that the “FoF” event is a pure Fly-In inasmuch as there is no Air Show component! The success, recognition and respect that the “Festival of Flight” now enjoys has not occurred by chance – rather it has been through the hard work and selfless sacrifices of all Members who are dedicated to the objectives of this Group. And of course this extends to the Members who have supported this event by bringing along their aerial treasures! Without your very generous support of the event, the simple facts are that there would be no point in staging it!

From humble beginnings where it would be reported back to the Group that the balance of accounts following the event were in the Red, it is with some pride that I can claim to be a part of turning that situation around and due further astute decisions by subsequent Management Committees, for the past nine years the “Festival of Flight” has turned a profit. But due the reliance on the kindness of the Weather “Gods”, this is always a tenuous situation and Members may recall the “Festival of Flight” 2007 and how we came perilously close to being totally washed out. The Sunday was our salvation and yes, we turned a profit – albeit a small one. Of course the “Festival of Flight” 2008 was the biggest and most successful event ever staged by your organization. With that in mind, it is my belief that if this Group does nothing else over each calendar year, it is my personal view that it is an imperative that this event continues.

Continued page 3.....

## Outgoing Vice-President's Message *continued...*

As I intimated in a communiqué late last year, I did not make myself available for the position of President of the Group. I didn't believe that I was the right person for the job and nor did I believe that I had the personal qualifications to lead this Group into the future. Whereas it may have been viewed by some that I would assume the Presidency as a natural progression, my decision to not contest the Presidency was in the best interests of the Group. Indeed, I did not seek re-election as the Vice-President and nor did I seek election to a position within the Management Committee. My decision to vacate my position on the Management Committee was not taken lightly but many things influenced that decision and by way of explanation, it was for personal reasons and it is best left at that.

I believe that throughout the time that I have held Membership to the Group and served on successive Management Committees, I have acted in the best interests of the Group and I will endeavour to continue on in that vein. I have no immediate intention of abandoning the Group and indeed, I remain as committed to the interests and furtherment of this Group as that which prevailed in the early days of my involvement. This will extend through the ongoing renovations, maintenance of the Clubrooms, the Festival of Flight and whatever other events the Management Committee decides to stage and/or duties they decide to allocate.

It is with the strongest conviction that I state that I have been privileged and honoured to have served the organization and it is with some measure of pride that I left the Management Committee with the healthiest bank balance in the Group's history, a richness in assets and a strong Membership base. I will convey my sincere best wishes to the incoming Management Committee and I can but hope that yours is an easier path than that which has prevailed over the past two years. And a sincere thank you to all Members for your support, assistance, and friendship over the years. Long may the camaraderie continue and in the true spirit of aviation – onwards and upwards! Looking forward to catching-up with you in the very near future and in the interim, take care and the very best of wishes as always. With warmest regards and in all sincerity,

Craig (former Vice President – QVAG/AFM Inc.)

## Incoming President's Message

As you will know I am your new President. Thank you to all members at the AGM for voting me in as President. I know that I have some very big shoes to fill and look forward to the challenges that lay ahead.

I would like to offer a sincere heartfelt thanks to the outgoing Executive Committee. First to Shane Winter. Shane lead the Group for so long that at times we took his presence for granted. Now he is no longer with us we are coming to terms with not just his loss, but the tireless amount of work that he carried out for the Group. Second to Craig Justo. Craig has been Vice- President and our annual Festival of Flight Co-ordinator for more years then I'm sure he cares to remember. Third to Andy Heath. As Secretary Andy has carried out that role with great distinction and for that I thank him. I would also like to thank Joanne Winter for her role as Treasurer. Jo accepted the nomination and was voted in again as Treasurer. Although Jo has had to handle a great tragedy with the loss of her husband, she has always held the Groups interests on her list of priorities.

I will be keeping in touch with all members regularly as well as asking for your assistance and ideas about where the Group will head in the future. I look forward to serving you all as President of your Group.

Kind regards - Frank

## From the Editor

Hi everyone. Well, I've issued my first AVAN. Thank you to everyone who wrote to me with messages of support and also for those messages I have received through other means. This issue of AVAN was delayed to allow for the AGM to occur and for the new Executive to be notified in this edition (see page 5).

As I said in the last AVAN, your news is to be reported as well as news from around Australia and New Zealand. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any ideas about topics that could be included, or would like to submit an article, please drop me a line at [karenguest@ozemail.com.au](mailto:karenguest@ozemail.com.au) or give me a call on 0409 640 781.

Having been preoccupied with other matters, I have not had the opportunity to tap anyone on the shoulder, but again I say if I hear you are or have done something special, interesting, or just committing aviation. Just say yes I'll share what I'm up to! AVAN needs your input!

**Dedicated to the airworthy  
preservation of  
Australia's historic aircraft**

**AVAN needs  
you!  
It's your  
news.  
Support your  
fellow  
aviators.**

Safe flying to you all.

**Karen**

# 2009 QVAG Calendar of Events

**EVENT:** Working Bee / Social Gathering / Executive Committee Meeting **VENUE:** Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield  
**DATE:** Saturday & Sunday 4 & 5 April 2009

- **Saturday 4 April:** working bee / evening informal social gathering. All members are invited to assist in working bee. If you are able to assist, please register your interest with Frank on 0411 035 991 by 27 March (if attending the evening social gathering only there will be a small fee for catering).
- **Sunday 5 April 1030 hrs:** Executive Committee meeting and general members. The focus of the meeting will be to discuss longer term maintenance of The Winter Retreat. Self catering arrangements for lunch - bring your own picnic lunch—the bbq and utensils will be made available as required. Liquid refreshments available for purchase.

**CONTACT:** Frank Ragonese on 0409 640 781

**EVENT:** Breakfast Fly In **VENUE:** Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield

**DATE:** Sunday, 7 June, 2009 (Breakfast 0900-1030 hrs)

**CONTACT:** Frank Ragonese on 0409 640 781

**EVENT:** Festival of Flight **VENUE:** Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield

**DATE:** Saturday & Sunday 29 & 30 August, 2009

**CONTACT:** Craig Justo on 0407 740 734 or check [www.qvag.org.au](http://www.qvag.org.au) for updates

**EVENT:** End of Year Function **VENUE:** Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield

**DATE:** To be advised

**CONTACT:** Frank Ragonese on 0409 640 781

Additional events to be advised.

*"Always check the QVAG website for updates [www.qvag.org.au](http://www.qvag.org.au)"*

## For Sale / Items Wanted



As a service to members we are introducing an aviation for sale/items wanted section. If you have something for sale, or want to buy or find something, please forward all the details to me at [karenguest@ozemail.com.au](mailto:karenguest@ozemail.com.au) for inclusion in the next edition of AVAN.

### For Sale

Gipsy Major tapered crankshaft. Recent x-ray with all paperwork as serviceable. Ready to fit. Certified measurements

### For Sale

Cessna O-1G Bird Dog (c/n 21546). Confirmed combat veteran of the Vietnam conflict with two pilots winning DFCs in this aircraft. Formerly USAF serial number 51-11976. Painstakingly restored to original military specifications and multiple award-winning example of the type.

For full details, please contact Randal McFarlane on the following:

**Mobile: 0419 674 607 or Email: [rrgrrriffon@gmail.com](mailto:rrgrrriffon@gmail.com)**



### Wanted

Member, Ed Field is trying to source a S. G. Brown (not Brown Bros!) Aero Turn Indicator Model "A" (air driven type) for inclusion in his DH.60M Gipsy Moth restoration. Should any of our members and/or readers know of the whereabouts of an example of this instrument, Ed would be especially pleased to hear from you.

Ed can be contacted on the following:

**Mobile: 0404 213 537 or Email: [efield2@bigpond.com](mailto:efield2@bigpond.com)**

**The Brown Aero Turn Indicator is playing a big part in Civil Aviation progress**



**Mr. C. W. A. Scott used the Brown on his epoch making flight to Australia when it helped him to overcome all weather conditions.**

TWO MODELS—The two types of the Brown Aero Turn Indicator are illustrated here. Model A (above) is air driven, and Model B is battery operated. Used in conjunction with the ordinary compass, the instruments warn the pilot instantly when he is turning off his course, by means of the pointer which moves to the left or right. In addition, in the electrical model a red or green light appears.

The Brown has been installed on many aeroplanes which have made long distance flights that will become part of Civil Aviation history. This instrument was chosen because it had been proven to give greater accuracy in flight, to remove risks in fog, and to ensure a straight course by day or night, or when conditions necessitated flying "blind." That is why



**Aero Turn *Brown* Indicator**

S. G. BROWN, Ltd., Western Avenue, N. Acton, W.J.

KINDLY MENTION "THE AEROPLANE" WHEN CORRESPONDING WITH ADVERTISERS.





# Tribute fly in - *pictorial tribute*



Photo: courtesy Mick Rafferty



Photo: courtesy Mick Rafferty



Photo: courtesy Frank Ragonese



Photo: courtesy Frank Ragonese



Photo: courtesy Frank Ragonese



Photo: courtesy Frank Ragonese



Photo: courtesy Mick Rafferty



Photo: courtesy Mick Rafferty



Photo: courtesy Frank Ragonese



Photo: courtesy Frank Ragonese

## Tribute fly in - pictorial tribute *Photography courtesy Mick Rafferty*



Note: not all aircraft represented.

## Calendar of Events - general

**EVENT:** ANZAC Day Ceremony (Ceremony at the Flagpole Cairn) **VENUE:** Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield  
**DATE:** Saturday 25 April, 2009 (commences at 0730 Hrs)  
**CONTACT:** Michael Nelson Email: [mikejanelson@bigpond.com](mailto:mikejanelson@bigpond.com)

**EVENT:** David Hack Classic Meet **DETAILS:** Page 9

**EVENT:** Gatton Breakfast Fly-In **VENUE:** Gatton Air Park  
**DATE:** Sunday 17 May, 2009 (from 0730 Hrs. onwards)  
**CONTACT:** Steve Newing Ph: 0416 007788 or Email: [sbnewing@bigpond.com](mailto:sbnewing@bigpond.com)

**EVENT:** All-In Fly-In (Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield Open Day) **VENUE:** Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield  
**DATE:** Saturday 23 May, 2009  
**CONTACT:** Richard Faint Ph: (07) 3818 1988 / Mobile: 0412 317 754 or Email: [rfaint@auav.org](mailto:rfaint@auav.org)  
 John Innes Ph: 0417 643 610 or Email: [jbinnes@yahoo.com.au](mailto:jbinnes@yahoo.com.au)

**WEBSITE:** [www.wattsbridge.com.au/](http://www.wattsbridge.com.au/)

**EVENT:** Wide Bay Australia International Air Show **VENUE:** Bundaberg Regional Airport  
**DATES:** 03 -05 July, 2009 inclusive  
**CONTACT:** Ph: (07) 4155 0044 or Email: [info@widebayairshow.com.au](mailto:info@widebayairshow.com.au)  
**WEBSITE:** [www.widebayairshow.com.au/](http://www.widebayairshow.com.au/)



## News from New Zealand

This is a new section with a focus on New Zealand.

QVAG often receives the 'Talespinner' newsletter produced by the Ashburton Aviation Museum Society. Ashburton is located on the South Island just South of Christchurch. In the past, QVAG members have dropped in to say hello and chat a while. If you travel to New Zealand, the Ashburton Aviation Museum Society is a must visit. Visitors are welcome at the museum but Saturday at 10am is always the time to sit and chat, with friends and have a coffee.



Source: <http://www.ashburton.co.nz/aviation/aircraft.htm>

The latest news from Ashburton is that fundraising activities have raised funds for their proposed Superhangar. Work has commenced on placing the overhead tracking system for our massive Superhangar doors. They are hopeful that the 40m x 48m building will be fully secure by mid-April. The Southern DC3 Trust will then be able to hangar ZK AMY in there, when its not working out of Christchurch International.

The latest report on Wigram, via the Talespinner editor, is that on 28 February 2009 Wigram was closed for all time to air traffic. On a wet day, the Southern DC3 aircraft and the Fly Dakota aircraft usually based in Auckland, together with ex SAAF Harvard 7660, took off into the drab, rain laden sky, and did a final low and loud banked turn over the apron while the Caledonian Pipe Band played beneath them. Wigram as an active airfield has now passed into history.

More information about Ashburton: <http://www.ashburton.co.nz/aviation/index.htm>

## David Hack Classic Meet

The Rotary Club of Toowoomba North Inc are presenting the David Hack Classic Meet on Sunday 3 May from 9am to 3pm at the Aerotec Hangar, Spitfire Street, Toowoomba Airport. This meet will be a presentation of a collection of classic vehicles, including vintage cars and trucks, hot rods, military vehicles, motorbikes, classic cars and aircraft.

For more information: <http://www.rotarydavidhack.org/classicmeet.php>



*"The Meet brings together an exotic mix of **Aircraft** and **Vehicles** you would be unlikely to see in any other venue."*

## Executive Committee Matters

The QVAG Annual General Meeting was held on 8 March 2009 to elect a new President and Executive Committee.

The new members of the Executive Committee for the coming year are:

President	Frank Ragonese	Mobile 0411 035 991
Vice President	Mark Witton	Mobile 0417 615 852
Secretary	Karen Guest	Mobile 0409 640 781
Treasurer	Joanne Winter	Mobile 0417 628 070
Member	John Innes	
Member	Matt Baker	
Member	Leyu Fentie	
Member	Robyn Bernhardt	
Member	Phil Ridley	
AFM President	John Payne	

*"The QVAG AFM Executive Committee members are volunteers who work tirelessly for the Group in supporting fly-ins and the Festival of Flight."*

Further contact details on the QVAG Website: <http://www.qvag.org.au>

# Memoirs! *Barefoot to Boeings* By Brian Crane

## Introduction

Some time before the tragic passing of Shane Winter in September 2008, Brian Crane, a QVAG member, provided Shane and Jo with a book of memoirs. In their own words, Brian and Elsie wish for as many people as possible to read his story in its entirety "warts and all" to re-live the wonderful days as we have done. As editor of AVAN, and in liaison with Brian, his memoirs are presented here for your enjoyment. I trust you will enjoy reading about Brian's story as much as I am. Brian's **dedication** for his memoirs are to his wife Elsie and his children:

To my ever supportive Elsie, who, since April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1953 has been "The Wind beneath My Wings". Her patience with me and typing every word of this (In the jargon of secretaries) "confused manuscript" has been a labour of obvious love. Our children, Jenny, Stephen and Trevor, have like Elsie, without complaint, suffered my absence at critical times in their lives and I devote this record of my life to you all. You are the ones that helped to make it. My love and God Bless. DAVID B. CRANE.

## Foreword

These memoirs are recorded events, seen through my eyes at the time. Therefore, some people reading them may see events differently to me. It would be appreciated if perceived errors could be brought to my attention, so that correction can be made at editing prior to publication. There is not a lot of detail regarding family members. My comments/ observations being confined to areas where they related to my life, their lives are for them to tell. My primary object is, considering the enormity of the task, to get events on paper as accurately as possible. It may fall to someone else to edit this account of my life, for it is impossible to foresee a completion date. Desley Morrison comments a list of family members would be of benefit to readers so a picture is formed of relative ages. Winifred Campbell suggested reference to "average wages" would assist in comparison of money values quoted in certain contexts. However, unless this is in reference to my own salary/wages, this would be difficult. But I take the point, and perhaps the readers should make their own research regarding this for the relative period.

## Family Details

### Grandparents

Pop's father Frederick Crane [died 1940's age 96 in Sydney]  
 Pop's mother Eleanor Hudson [died age 56 in Sydney]  
 Pop's brothers & sisters Roy, Reg, Charles [killed WW1]  
 Winifred [married Will Grant], Ethel [married George Mathieson]  
 Mother's brothers & sisters Sandy, Lorna [married Andy Kerr]  
 Vera [married Ivan Sunderland]

### Parents

Father Sidney Raymond Crane [born 15/9/1884, died 1966 aged 82]  
 Mother Alison Patterson Eaton [born Nimbin 6/8/1891, died 1972 aged 82]

### Siblings

Douglas [16/6/1912] [dec'd. 9/12/53]; Fred [22/4/14] [dec'd] Joyce [dec'd]; Charles [26/11/15] [dec'd] Enid [dec'd]; Jim [30/1/18] [dec'd] Mavis [dec'd]; Alison [14/2/21] Don McRae [dec'd]; Dorothy [5/11/24] Jack Wilson [dec'd]; Brian [20/6/29] Elsie; Raymond [25/5/32] Valerie; Addrienne [1/2/ 35] [dec'd 8/8/72] Les Reeves.

## Chapter One

My loved ones have been applying considerable pressure over many years that I reveal a portrait of my life. Where to start, choice of a title and how much detail have all been subject to conjecture. Chronological accuracy is difficult to maintain due to memory fallibility over a large time span. Nevertheless the decision was made to try.

Date of birth was 20th June, 1929, right in the middle of the Great Depression. Of course, I was not aware of this, but no doubt my parents viewed my arrival with some trepidation as another mouth to feed. My birth was on the farm at Wadeville, N.S.W. I am told it was wet weather, my brother, Fred, having to meet the doctor on horseback. Apparently, I was the only one of the family to be born on the farm, probably explaining my life-long love of the land. The children were divided into two groups of the older ones and the younger ones. The older ones being, Doug, Fred, Charlie, Jim, Alison and Dorothy.

The younger ones being myself [David], Ray and Adrienne. As a result of the 5 year "gap", we were always referred to as "the kids." Naturally the elder ones identified together, but as we grew a little older we tended to resent the "barrier" as we saw it. This, of course (in hindsight) was most unreasonable of us. It was natural that the 5 year gap tended to create "two families" under the one roof.



## Memoirs! *Continued...* By Brian Crane

My parents would have experienced quite a financial strain rearing 9 children on a dairy farm. However, they must have done well, as even though money was never plentiful, I can never recall ever being hungry or cold. Pop's own history of coming from a sound financial industrial family in Sydney (G.E. CRANE & SONS, started by his Grandfather) and moving to the unknown of a dairy farm, marrying my Mother when she was only 19 is a story in itself.

G.E. Crane (George Ekins Crane) started the building supply firm in 1867 due to obvious shortages of key materials holding back the rapidly growing construction industry. This has grown from humble beginnings in Pitt Street, Sydney to a huge public Company with great diversification. For my Father to leave the obvious security of a sound industrial family to make his own way, was most courageous, as he knew nothing of the bush and farming. He took on working for a farmer in the Grafton area to learn the ropes.

Pop told of employing Hindu labour for 10 shillings a week. Some of them would be seen not working, as "hungry, sack (stomach) can't stand up boss". When you fed them, the excuse was "Sack, he too full, boss, can't bend him" Later on, of course, my elder brothers assisted in this work, which must have been hard for them in their younger days. No doubt their history of this time would make very interesting reading. Cream was carried by horse and packsaddle cross country to the butter factory at Nimbin. All transport in those days was by horseback.

Mother told of Pop's ultra-cautious attitude, and even in those days he would not sign cheques to pay accounts until the "bearer" was ready to leave home. One day she arrived in Nimbin with all these unsigned cheques, her patience sorely tried, as she had left a suckling baby at home, and the horse ride with full breasts didn't help her demeanor.

Despite their struggles, when Pop's Father sent him a cheque for 200 pounds, a lot of money in those days, he returned it uncashed as an obvious token of his independence. Pop said that the Depression was not really felt by them, probably because of their lack of money in the first place. Also, the farm and Mother's gardening ability and her own poultry obviously made them largely self-sufficient.

The original home was of hand hewn slabs, lined with malthoid and I remember this as the barn" in our childhood , having been shifted 2 ridges to the site of the present house and outbuildings.

House was large, the kitchen separate in those days due fire risk, connected by a covered and walled area, on which a large pantry, in which we were sometimes locked when naughty, existed. I can recall this pantry always full of homemade Jams, Chutneys, large bags of sugar, flour etc. and sometimes exploding ginger beer bottles'.

Also, the farm and Mother's gardening ability and her own poultry obviously made them largely self-sufficient. The original home was of hand hewn slabs, lined with malthoid and I remember this as the barn" in our childhood , having been shifted 2 ridges to the site of the present house and outbuildings. House was large, the kitchen separate in those days due fire risk, connected by a covered and walled area, on which a large pantry, in which we were sometimes locked when naughty, existed. I can recall this pantry always full of homemade Jams, Chutneys, large bags of sugar, flour etc. and sometimes exploding ginger beer bottles'.

In those days, life revolved around the kitchen. A big table, long stools one side and one end, Pop's rocking chair, which my Mother cursed because of bruised shins passing it , a large fireplace with a wood stove and an adjacent open fire made life very comfortable. Pop always adjourned to the lounge after tea to attempt to read his Northern Star paper or Bulletin in peace.

This was the time I can recall the family washing up and talking in front of the fire. My brother, Ray, and I, being real little buggers, almost every night used the same ploy to annoy Pop. The lounge room had 4 doors and a large settee and two chairs. We would enter via the door nearest the kitchen, proceed behind all the furniture until the door behind Pop's chair where we hoped to make our escape, and nudge his chair until he exploded. The procedure was always the same, leaping to his feet, undoing his wide trousers belt and grabbing for us hoping for a catch before his trousers slipping inhibited his progress. Generally catch one of us, mostly me, laying into our bums in a most deserved way. It amazes me that he put up with this at all, as I think I would have gone up the wall.

I can remember in my pre-school days the large extension of 3 bedrooms across the end of the house. Every aspect of this was exciting to watch as a kid. I can remember the timber lorry driver placing his tea and plate on the front wheel of the big Leyland, as it had no mudguards. Also, I can remember climbing up on the squatters chair at the end of the verandah, to find myself A over T (Arse over Tit) with a mouthful of red dirt , which I can still taste. A big day for us was the installation of our REMO radio. My sister, Dorothy, took Ray and I down the gully out of the way whilst the poles and aerial were installed. Powered by a 6 volt battery and 3 dry batteries, it was indeed a wonder of science to us , even though reception was very limited. Later years saw the purchase of a Stromberg Carlson cabinet type, but still dependent on the same power, a flat battery having to be sent away for charging.

## Memoirs! *Continued...* By Brian Crane

I would like to have known more of Pop's personal history, but by the time we younger ones were old enough to enquire he tended to "want to forget those days". A great pity I always felt. At times he would start to "open up" but as a naturally reserved man, he was not as openly communicative as we would have liked. Like men of his era, he was also undemonstrative, and I can never remember him physically cuddling us or expressing affection, but nevertheless we felt it was protectively there. From all reports, the Crane family were all relatively undemonstrative and reserved. Even in later years, letters were always signed "affectionately, Father" and of course couched in business like terms. I can remember my brother, Ray, and I after one of our very many misdemeanors, noting Pop on his way towards us, saying, "He's peeling a fitch (switch)" a sure sign we were for it.

Pop was always proud of his cementing, and I remember Ray and me helping on one job. He was cleaning off his gear after a job near the dairy and Ray was throwing up rocks and hitting them with a stick, he was always cricket mad. A miss-hit rock, closely missing Pop, landed in the middle of the wet cement splashing over Pop's clothes, face and glasses. Being surprisingly patient, Pop's only remark was "Go tell your Mother to make you a cup of tea". He patiently repaired the job, and whilst re-cleaning his gear had a white chook squawking as she waded through the setting cement.

As children, we loved to play with clay which we obtained from a specific area of a gully. Hours were spent under the tall tank stands adjacent to the outdoor laundry making accurate models from clay, at the end of such sessions removal of dried clay from the hair of our arms, quite a process. Wet weather found us making lengthy mud slides on the red soil hills. These were great fun, tracking round stumps and rocks, and the mud spraying up from our bare feet splattering our clothes. We wondered why Father used to get cross. In dry weather we used part of an old pine table top, or a curved sheet of flat iron to make slides on the dry grass on steep hills. Many a time we over-shot the flat braking area under ideal sliding conditions to finish up in the gully, or tossed on to the opposite bank. In the gully near where we obtained our clay was a small waterfall where I set up a series of waterwheels and pulleys.

We used old Brasso tins for the water wheels and string as belts, with old plain wire for axles of the various pulleys. Clay was used for damming, and pipelines were made from the stems I cut from Mother's pumpkins. After cutting the stems off, would re-insert the stub of the leaf into the vine end, hoping no-one would notice. However, being a bit dumb, I didn't realise the leaf wilting after a day would give the game away. It's a wonder my parents let me grow up.

A memorable and regrettable event was when at pre-school age I surveyed the dry grass about a foot high surrounding one of my Mother's chook pens. I applied a match to this in one corner, the resulting conflagration scaring the daylight out of me. Made myself scarce as the Chook Pen enveloped in flames. My Mother was unaware I was the cause until I told her in the 1960's, clearing up a mystery that she remembered from all those years ago. During the building of our toys, much initiative was called for. We used to go through the dirt floor of the tool shed and under the old barn on hands and knees to locate nails, which we straightened for use. To locate a straight nail brought a shout of joy similar to a lottery winner. Of course new clothing was rare, and a "seasonal fitting, like with our own children, ensured the quality clothing received adequate family wear.

### IN THE NEXT EDITION OF AVAN

#### *Memoirs! Continued .....*

..... *I always had a love of aviation and boats, and the adventures of aviators and seafaring men of the 1930's fascinated me .....*

..... *I was fascinated that they had friends who used to visit with their own aeroplane, although I never saw it, and they would simply fold the wings, push it across the road and into the garage .....*

*and if space allows*

..... *The start of World War I I had a great effect on our district, like so many country areas .....*

**Queensland Vintage Aeroplane Group  
Australian Flying Museum**

PO Box 794  
Archerfield Qld 4108  
Mobile: 0409 640 781 (Editor, AVAN)



**Dedicated to the Airworthy Preservation of Australia's Historic Aircraft**

## Brisbane Valley Rail Trail - on the right track

In 2007 the Queensland Government announced \$8.8 million funding over five years to construct three new regional recreation trails in partnership with the Ipswich City Council, Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Scenic Rim Regional Council, Somerset Regional Council and South Burnett Regional Council. Regional trails are an important part of the government's goal of protecting more land for public recreation and reducing the number of obese Queenslanders by a third by 2020.

The Brisbane Valley Rail Trail will provide an outstanding 148km regional trail for walking, cycling and horse riding serving the local and regional communities of SEQ. It builds on the existing Fernvale - Lowood Rail Trail, managed by Somerset Regional Council and the Linville - Blackbutt Rail Trail, managed by South Burnett Regional Council. The range of services, accommodation and facilities in towns along the route will ensure that all types of approved trail users, (cyclists, walkers and horse riders) will be catered for as soon as the trail is opened. Based on well documented rail trail developments in Australia the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail will become the premier rural recreational cycling experience in South East Queensland. **Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield is a noted attraction on the Heritage Trail.**

**There is an event in Toogoolawah on 28 November 2009 – the opening of the Esk-Toogoolawah section of the Trail and the marking of 40 years since the last steam train travelled the Brisbane Valley Rail line.**

**For more information about the Rail Trail visit [www.brisbanevalleyrailtrail.org.au](http://www.brisbanevalleyrailtrail.org.au).**

## Next Issue

The next issue of AVAN will cover the following topics and more:

- Report on Classic Fighters 2009
- *Memoirs!* By Brian Crane
- Focus on projects
- Focus on members

If you have any ideas about topics that could be included, or would like to submit an article, please drop me a line at [karenguest@ozemail.com.au](mailto:karenguest@ozemail.com.au) or give me a call on 0409 640 781.

## Membership Matters

A recent membership audit has shown that there are 139 members, including pilots, enthusiasts, friends and family. A welcome is extended to the following new members who joined during or since the 2008 Festival of Flight:

Brenton Amos (Bill); Andrew Bailey; John Frederick; Gerry Gledhill; Richard Hay; Jason Heath; Steve Newing; Colin Ryan; Ann Singh; Mervyn Sissons; Adam Wilson.

If you know someone who wants to join please refer them to the QVAG website ([www.qvag.org.au](http://www.qvag.org.au)) for membership information.

*"New  
members  
makes our  
Group  
stronger"*