



Watts News

A newsletter issued by the Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield

MAY 2005



ANZAC Day

The second ANZAC Day Ceremony was seen by those attending to be even better than last year with 75 present. The familiar Watts fog seemed to add to the aura of remembrance as we solemnly thought of those who had died defending our freedom. As the last post and the reveille were sounded, all present caught the spirit of what ANZAC Day truly means. Bill Hempel, originally of 1 Squadron, (Malaya) raised the national colours while Rod McNaught delivered the ANZAC Ode. Squadron Leader Doug Kemp, CO 38 Squadron, represented the RAAF and spoke of the links still existing between the RAAF and WBMA. In response Ian Perkins, Chairperson Airfield Council, noted the new spirit of cooperation on the Airfield. Not only between external stakeholders but also now evident among homebase groups. Attendance by Airfield friends and neighbours was greatly appreciated.

Note: As the Breast Cancer Association of Queensland was kind enough to lend its sound system for our ANZAC Day ceremony, we feel it is appropriate to invite members to an event being organised by this charity. It is the Esk Family Picnic Races: 11am, May 14th, Esk Race Track. Tickets \$20, children under 16 free. Please support this charity that operates without overheads.



Harmony at Watts

On the weekend 23 to 25 April, Watts Bridge was a hive of activity from the smallest model to the largest single engine biplane in the world flying - Barry Hempel's Antonov.

For the first time models, vintage aircraft, aerobatics, ultralights and gliders using their allocated airspace were having a great time, with models flying from dawn till dusk, aerobatic practice overhead and gliders launching by winch and aero tow.

With all this activity in the sky and the camping area populated with families, children riding bikes and flying kites, a great time was had by all.

On Sunday morning the bi-monthly QVAG breakfast fly-in took place with 25 plus aircraft from ultralights to warbirds attending. Pilots and friends enjoying breakfast and catching up with their mates. Another full day of activities followed until dusk.

A relaxing BBQ and movie night was held at the QVAG clubrooms.

Monday morning saw heavy fog herald the second Watts Bridge Anzac Day Service Ceremony which was well attended by all groups.

After a moving ceremony hosted by Airfield President Mike Nelson, everyone retired for breakfast hosted at the QVAG clubrooms.

Due to fog, the fly past had been postponed and took place during breakfast. The vintage formation of a Tiger Moth, Auster and Chipmunk were flown by QVAG members John Sinclair, Barry Hempel and Mark Bolsover.

John Innes, QVAG



Aeromodeller's Weekend

Over the Anzac weekend QVAG Aeromodeller's section held its second annual model aircraft fun-fly in, of which approximately 70 avid flyers attended over the two days. The weekend was thoroughly enjoyed by participants from eight different clubs. Modellers started arriving on the Friday and the skies were full of non-stop action for most of the weekend. The size and variety of models was exceptional, these guys really put some time and lots of money into their toys. Serious stuff!!

This weekend would not have been so successful without the dedicated effort by too many to mention but special merit must go to Brian Pettigrew, Robyn Bernhardt, Anthony Nelson, Mark Witton and Barry Hempel for kindly supplying us with a handheld VHF radio. Last but not least my lovely fiancé Suzann and Toogoolawah SES for supplying us with shade shelters.

Matt "Schultzy" Baker



An unusual resident at Watts Bridge: The Flying Flea

Gus Morrison owns and flies this rare machine. Designed and built by Fred Byron it is based on Henri Mignet's concept of the thirties. As can be seen it has an all-moving mainplane acting as an elevator and a fixed tandem wing aft. Gus assures us that this one has none of the deathly characteristics associated with Henri's version. For further details talk to Rod Mill, a Flying Flea enthusiast. It lives in Rod's hangar.



The Watts Bridge Contingent at the Marlborough Airshow in New Zealand

Quite a number of Watts Bridge members attended Marlborough, New Zealand's Premier Vintage Airshow over Easter. One picture shows two of the five Fokker Dr 1s taxiing out during practice day. Also pictured are some of our folk the day after the airshow with one of the conveners, Graham Orphan, on the right. (Graham's association with QVAG goes right back to its beginnings). Those missing from the group are Shane and Joanne Winter who had just departed that morning. We look forward to renewing contact with Graham when he journeys across the Tasman for the Festival of Flight.



Anthony Rowell (National Graduate Champion, from Queensland, standing by his dream aircraft (Tom Moon's beautiful Extra).

Aerobatic Club Report for the Watts Bridge Newsletter

The Aerobatic Club has settled into the Watts Bridge scene now and although we don't have our own club house yet we are regular member of the groups that fly to and from Watts Bridge. We just need the money now to build the club house! Fortunately, those lovely people at QVAG are very tolerant with us and let us grab a coffee using their kitchen and facilities.

We've just updated our 'box' and for those of you who wonder what those strange yellow markings are just to the South East of runway 12/30 just try to do manoeuvres and stay inside the lines!

In Mid March of this year we had our first Mini Competition at Watts Bridge where we had the chance to practise in the box for real. The nice thing about the mini-competition is that you get a chance to fly the sequence once before being marked. Everyone agreed that it was good fun and produced a bit more tension as marks were up for grabs! Winner on the day was Ian Bent from Bundaberg in his beautiful Yellow Pitts.

With Easter early this year we all trooped off to Parkes in NSW for the National Aerobatic Championship feeling that we needed a bit more practice. Nevertheless a fantastic time was had by all and some good results for the Queensland team were obtained. However, although we did well it was not quite good enough to win the team trophy this year! Next Year!!

We now have a practise day every month and Watts Bridge is a great place to have this. For example, the last practise weekend was the last weekend of April and what a great weekend it was, Gliders, aeromodellers, aerobatics and the QVAG Fly-In on Sunday morning and all of them had patience with us trying to stay in our 1km square (some better at than others). Thanks to all members of these clubs who all helped to make the weekend enjoyable.



2005 Annual Queensland State Aerobatic Competition

Not long to go now! The Queensland State Aerobatic Championship is to be held on the long weekend end in June 2005 (11th to the 13th June 2005) so put these dates in your diary and come along and watch some competition Aerobatics. If you don't know what's going on just talk to one of us, we love explaining what's happening! Our friends from NSW have said that they will send a strong contingent to take all our trophies back home so we're hoping to give them a run for their money.

See you at Watts, Clive Tudge with an ex-Parrot (alias Tom Moon's pitot cover)!

Good News for future Airchalets

Following a survey of existing air chalet residential areas, SEQWater has agreed to an upper residential limit of 150 sqm and provision for a second shower and toilet with the option of placing the second shower/toilet facility in the hangar for cleaning up purposes after working on aircraft. Members will appreciate the additional comfort that the new enlarged area and facilities afford as more air chalets are built. This of course is contingent on maintaining non-permanency of residence and the owner-occupier rule.

And finally

We would like to acknowledge all the hard work Ian Sganzerla put in towards acquiring our new airfield roller. Ian, together with Jeff Underhill and Peter Freeman carried out repairs and modifications to the roller and arrangements were made to transport it at low cost to the airfield. This kind of action makes Watts Bridge what it is. Heartfelt thanks once again from all of us.