



# Watts News

*A newsletter issued by the Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield*

**NOVEMBER 2005**

## **QVAG's 14th. ANNUAL "FESTIVAL OF FLIGHT"**



For the past fourteen years, the last weekend in August has seen a flurry of aerial activity at Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield. The reason for this is the "Festival of Flight" - an event hosted by the Queensland Vintage Aeroplane Group (QVAG). Coinciding with the staging of the "Festival of Flight", this year the Group also celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary of its establishment and 30 years of achievement in promoting aviation.

The Group once again met the challenges (and there were a few) and the event was conducted safely, efficiently and with the kind co-operation of all who attended. Although the sun shone throughout the whole weekend and for a refreshing change, we weren't socked-in by morning fog at Watts Bridge, unfortunately this was not case over on the coast. Many of our loyal supporters braved the strong winds on the Saturday and attended the event however, the conditions that prevailed on the Sunday precluded the thought of flying for many! The weather on the Sunday affected overall attendances of aircraft but the Committee was still very pleased with the results.

QVAG is very fortunate inasmuch as it has a core group of stalwarts that contribute their time and resources to ensure the event is conducted in a manner that reflects the Group's commitment to promoting aviation in general. And the event is such that it attracts aircraft that are second to none in their presentation and indeed, variety! Veteran, Vintage, Classic, Warbird and modern designs that consist of rag and tube, timber, all-metal and composite structures stand side by side on Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield to allow the richness of Australia's aeronautical heritage to be showcased to the World. Yes, the "Festival of Flight" is an event that has established an enviable reputation and is now recognised as being amongst the world's best Fly-Ins. Indeed, it receives world-wide post event exposure through various publications and of course nowadays, the Internet.

As on previous years, many individuals strapped into their aircraft and proceeded to conduct substantial hours of flying to attend the event. Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Mackay were just some of the departure points for aircraft that attended the “FoF” 2005 and of course there were many who had twenty or thirty minutes flying time to Watts Bridge. The end result was that the Airfield was adorned with aircraft types that spanned seventy plus years of civil and military aviation. And I am loathe to single out a specific aircraft for special mention so I will confine my comments to a simple statement of fact - all were worthy representatives of their particular marque.



QVAG was once again privileged to host a Caribou from nearby RAAF Base, Amberley's No. 38 Squadron. The crews and their machines are regular visitors to Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield however said visits are usually conducted in the dead of night! So it was a nice change and indeed, an impressive spectacle to see the Caribou arrive and depart in daylight. The Group very much appreciates the kind consideration of the crews to attend the event and post event advice received from the crews is that they will be there again next year.

## **BOOMERANG!!**



*by day*

Given that QVAG was celebrating 30 years of existence, the traditional Saturday evening Dinner was intended to be a very special occasion. Indeed, for those who attended the Dinner, a special treat was provided by Matthew Denning with the night running of the Boomerang engine. Simply spectacular and for those who took a break and went outside to witness this, you have to consider yourself as being very privileged. To the best of my knowledge, on that occasion you were the only people in the World to be witnessing the night time running of a R-1830 Twin Wasp engine fitted to a Boomerang aircraft.

Throughout the daylight hours, the aerial activity that has become synonymous with the “Festival of



*and by night*

Flight” saw the comings and goings of aircraft and many aviators in attendance took the opportunity to “polish” up on their airmanship. This in turn allowed all in attendance to witness some very charismatic aircraft in their natural element. One activity worthy of mention here is the rebirth and obvious growth in formation flying. Whereas in previous years, we could count on one or two formation arrivals and departures, this year we were treated to eight that I know of. Each of these formations provided an impressive spectacle and advice to hand is that we will see more of this type of activity for arrivals and departures at Watts Bridge.

The Group is focussed on fostering and promoting the spirit of aviation and we believe that the “Festival of Flight” 2005 was successful in achieving just that. And that success was only achieved through the support that we receive from the Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield Board of Management, Toogoolawah



branch of the State Emergency Service (SES), the local chapter of Lions and the Esk Shire Council Perhaps some reward for your support can be gauged through a conservative estimation that the “Festival of Flight” 2005 injected no less than \$15,000 into the local economy.

And to QVAG's 15th. Annual "Festival of Flight". Planning for the 2006 Fly-In has already begun and next year is a significant Anniversary for two related types. 2006 is the 75<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries of the De Havilland DH-82 Tiger Moth and

De Havilland Canada DHC-1 Chipmunk respectively. Whereas we will still be endeavouring to attract any and all aircraft types to the “Festival of Flight” 2006, we are hopeful of attracting large number of these types to Watts Bridge Airfield in August 2006.

Craig Justo story and photos.

## **AEROBATIC CLUB REPORT**



How about this for a beautiful little aeroplane! You may have seen this recently at Watts Bridge as Brendan, the proud new owner, has had it hanged there for a short while. He has just purchased it from Chris Sperou from down Adelaide way and it has seen many Aerobatic Competitions and Air Shows with Chris at the controls. Brendan is based at Maroochydore but will be seen at Watts Bridge practising over the Aerobatic box which is just to the East of the 12/30 runway.

### **2005 Annual Queensland State Aerobatic Competition**

Well we held the Queensland State Aerobatic Championship on the long weekend end in June (11th to the 13th June 2005) and it was a very absorbing contest with the lead of the various grades changing throughout the weekend. Unfortunately quite a few of our trophies went down to our friends from NSW but never mind a great time was had by all.

### **New South Wales State Championships at Temora on 7th to 10th October 2005**

A few of the Queensland Aerobatic Club members made the journey south to Temora on the weekend of 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> October 2005 and it was an excellent weekend with thrills and adrenalin rushes to be had by all. Our Captain of flying, Mal Beard, was Chief Judge and Tracy was Scorer but we didn't expect too many favours!

As Liz said in her email on the contest “challenge your intestinal fortitude to a session in the box with some of Australia's most experienced aerobatic judges watching your every move...” (Oh, I prefer to do that sort of thing on my own!).

### Next Practise Weekend at Watts Bridge

If any of you are around at Watts Bridge while the Aerobatics Group is active just drop in to the Vintage Aircraft Group’s clubhouse and meet the guys; we love to tell you what the crazy manoeuvres in the sky are all about.

Once again, many thanks to all at Watts Bridge who make us feel ‘at home’.



And here’s one of our next budding Pitts pilots (or as Mal Beard prefers to call him, “the student from Hell”!) (Any resemblance to the writer of this piece cannot be denied!)

See you at Watts, Clive Tudge

Website: [www.aerobaticsaustralia.com.au](http://www.aerobaticsaustralia.com.au)

### QUA JULY POKER RUN.

Sunday 24th of July saw fifteen aircraft compete in the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual QUA Fun Flying Poker Run, picking up cards at several airfields through out the Brisbane Valley. There was a diverse collection of aircraft represented from the basic 95.10 ultralights to modern sophisticated kit planes as well as several GA aircraft. It was good to see people joining in to make the day worthwhile. A time to talk and catch up with QUA members past and present as well as visiting competitors upon arriving at Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield. In the QUA’s Les Faint Memorial Hangar, Glenda and her helpers provided hot soup and other refreshments to all the people who came.



Congratulations to Allen Buckley from Heck Field who won the PokerRun 2005 with the winning hand of a pair of 2’s !.

Richard Faint, story and photos

## The President's Message



**Where hard work, perseverance and patience begin to have an effect: The light at the end of the tunnel**

Most would agree that there is a new spirit of unity at WBMA. Progress is a hard slog but there are glimmerings that we are entering a new phase of growth and security. The following points are offered as evidence:

- ◆ Funding of the land-use plan is now in place. Total funding is approximately \$20 000. Our thanks to the Board of Management and the Stakeholder Group for securing this combination grant.
- ◆ After months of consultation and delays the leaseholder's meeting. was held in the SAAA building Archerfield on Wednesday November 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 7 pm. (Our thanks to Liz Cook in particular for overcoming so many frustrating delays.) At this meeting the new sub-sub lease document was presented, discussed and confirmed.
- ◆ The final version of the Airfield Development Application is now complete and by the time you read this it will have been submitted to SEQWater and Council of the Shire of Esk for ratification.
- ◆ A statement from Jupiters Casino on funding for the Public Amenities Block should be announced in December. Jupiters have told us what components they would not fund and have asked for further information on other aspects. Our thanks to Mark Corcoran for a well written application. Also, Bill Finlen provided the application drawings. We are all holding our breath and hoping fervently that Jupiters will provide most of the funding.
- ◆ Leaseholders met and have agreed to accommodate existing site anomalies, Alan Tannock will now complete the airfield survey.

Fortunately for mowing purposes, just as the rain arrived, so did completion of repairs to the large tractor.

Aerobatic pilots among others are enthusiastic about the new runway markers and our hardworking maintenance officer, Vice-President Rod Mill, is encouraged by so many members 'pitching in', and making huge contributions to airfield maintenance. Bill Finlen, Peter Freeman, Jeff Underhill, Ian Sganzerla and many others are making Watts Bridge a really special place. Our thanks to everyone concerned.

The next info bulletin will be published just as soon as we know the outcomes to many of the items pending.

A reminder that the AGM is upon us this month, to be held at the airfield: Ron and Ros Dunn's, # 24, at 10 am on Sunday November 27<sup>th</sup>.

And finally the compliments of the season to all.

Mike Nelson President, WBMA



### STOP PRESS – 1940's STYLE WEDDING AT WATTS.



QVAG Members Matt "Schultz" Baker and Suzann Abel were married at the historic little Caboonbah Church on the hill on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2005. The wedding party was then flown from Ramblers into Watts Bridge by Barry Hempel aboard his AN2 Antonov "Big Bird" for their reception. The following day they celebrated their first breakfast as Mr & Mrs Baker with members and friends at the QVAG breakfast fly-in, joining 74 others for breakfast. We all wish them well in their life together.

This map is re-published as a reminder that good neighbourly relations are essential to the development of Watts Bridge airfield. Members are reminded to avoid direct overflights where possible, particularly where neighbours have built close to flightpaths.

