



**NOVEMBER 2008**

**Shane Patrick Winter Esquire**  
**(13 January 1959 – 01 September 2008)**



On Monday 01 September, the Queensland Vintage Aeroplane Group and the broader aviation community lost a favourite son with the untimely passing of Shane Winter. Shane was a passenger in a SF-25C Falke Motor Glider when inexplicably, it impacted the ground as it was on short finals to Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield with devastating consequences. Tragically, Shane succumbed to the injuries that he received in this accident that also claimed the life of the pilot, Peter Boreham of Sale, Victoria.

Born in the northern suburbs of Brisbane, Shane learned life's lessons through the "school of hard knocks" and this prepared him for the best and worst that life could offer up! At an early stage, he did what many boys do in their youth – built model aeroplanes. From there his interest in aviation grew into a compelling passion and this was especially so with regard vintage aviation. Such was his interest that he became heavily involved in the Queensland Vintage Aeroplane Group (QVAG) in its formative years and as an adjunct to that, the "rebirth" of Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield. Evolving from those early times, in 1992 he was elected to the President's position and he maintained that position for the ensuing sixteen years. During his tenure of occupancy of that position, on each and every occasion that he stood for re-election, he was never challenged and indeed, he was returned with unanimous support!

In the matter of QVAG, Shane was the consummate stalwart and he took great pride in being the President elect and was fiercely defensive of the Group's interests. He was an ambassador and promoted the Group's objectives wherever he travelled in Australia and this extended to those times that he left our shores to visit distant places. Commendably, it was his selfless and tireless dedication to the "Festival of Flight" events that have seen them become the success that they have been! This year's event was the most successful "Festival of Flight" that had been conducted under his steerage and yet sadly, he was lost to us before he was able to receive the accolades that subsequently poured in to congratulate him on his efforts. Yet another of life's obscene injustices!

In the world of vintage aviation, Shane was an achiever in his own right. He had been instrumental in the restoration of two Austers to airworthy condition and at the time of his passing, he was working on the restoration of his Tiger Moth (VH-BCC). Additional to that, he was also constructing an airstrip on his property at Harrisville, Queensland. His contribution to the preservation of those aircraft and his unrelenting promotion of QVAG's objectives is a legacy that we will cherish in fond remembrance in the years ahead.

As one of nature's true gentlemen, he subscribed to old-fashioned values, harboured a somewhat perverse sense of humour and boyish larrikinism traits. But further to his credit, he treated people with due respect and in a dignified manner, he was never too busy to chat with elderly folk, offer encouragement to the young, his compassion was a palpable commodity and he was inspirational. In essence, he epitomised the all round top bloke - someone with whom you would wish to be associated! He was a devoted family man, larger than life in character and he will be sorely missed by all who knew him. Shane is survived by his wife Joanne, his four step-children, his elderly parents and sister.

**To you Shane, blue skies, tail winds always and forever flying!**

**Barry Ian Hempel Esquire**  
**(11 June 1948 – 31 August 2008)**



On Sunday 31 August, Australia's aviation community lost one of its most respected and accomplished pilots through the untimely passing of Barry Hempel. Barry was flying a YAK-52 when, for reasons still to be determined, it impacted the water off South Stradbroke Island. This accident was a double tragedy as it also claimed the life of the passenger.

Barry was raised on a rural property at Kyvalley, Victoria and in his early teens, he worked as a farm labourer to raise the money to gain his Private Pilots Licence. He had actually been flying since he was twelve years of age and at sixteen years (he was not old enough to legally drive a motor vehicle), he gained his PPL. For Barry, from there the sky was the limit! Before he had reached his twenty third birthday, he had qualified for his licence as an Airline

Transport Pilot and subsequently took up a position with Ansett Airlines of Australia. In 1978 and having worked his way up through the Ansett system (lastly as a Captain on Lockheed Electras), he left Ansett to establish his Flying School and Charter business at Brisbane's Archerfield Airport. "Hempel's Aviation" soon became synonymous with quality pilot training and charter operations throughout the Pacific basin. Barry set about passing on his knowledge and skills to those who wished to learn to fly and thousands of pilots subsequently earned their wings under Barry's guidance and went on to establish their own careers in aviation.

Barry was the consummate aviator and his ability to fly any number of aircraft types was renowned. Examples included in his Log Books covered a diverse range of aircraft such as Tiger Moths, Mig-15s, Learjets, multi-engined heavy piston powered types and various commercial airliners. Yet amongst those types, he derived the most pleasure from flying Vintage aircraft. In reality, Barry was born outside of the era in which he would have been perfectly suited - that being the "Golden Era" of aviation. In the "Biggles" and "barnstormers" moulds, he performed flawless aerobatic routines to adulating audiences at Air Shows and he looked the part, adorned with the "handlebar" moustache that was a characteristic of many aviators of the 1930s era.

Always ready to take up a challenge, in May 1992 he set off from Archerfield in his Air Charter Bristol F.2B Replica aircraft (VH-UDC) to fly it to Geraldton in Western Australia. Appropriately marked as G-AUDK to replicate one of the three Bristol 28 Tourers that commenced operations from Geraldton to Perth on 05 December 1921 with the fledgling Western Australian Airways Limited, not unlike Norman Brearley's early operations, this epic flight was plagued with problems. Many forced landings ensued en-route, the last being just short of his destination, Geraldton. Over heating problems with the engine necessitated a landing on the Brand Highway and a collision with a tree resulted in a wing of the aircraft being severely damaged. With his exceedingly generous nature coming to the fore, Barry subsequently donated the machine to the Western Australian Museum Geraldton and following its restoration to pristine condition, it is now proudly displayed in the confines of the Museum!

In confirmation of his interest in Vintage aeroplanes, Barry was one of the founding Members of the Queensland Vintage Aeroplane Group and his commitment and ongoing support of the Group was such, that he too was considered as a stalwart! As one of Australia's iconic aviators, Barry had earned the respect of his peers and his achievements were the stuff that legends are made of. Such was his passion for committing aviation, he had spent more than half of his sixty years at the controls of an aeroplane and doing what he loved most - flying. A devoted family man, Barry is survived by his wife Melanie, his two children and his elderly father.

**To you Barry, blue skies, tail winds always and forever flying!**

**Both tributes are provided by Craig P Justo, QVAG**

## THE VINTAGE EXPERIENCE - "FESTIVAL of FLIGHT" 2008

QVAG staged its seventeenth "Festival of Flight" Fly-In event over the period August 30 –31 respectively and without doubt, this was the largest and most successful "FoF" staged to date. In excess of 336 aircraft descended into the airspace around Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield to provide a veritable smorgasbord of Australia's aeronautical treasures of the past and indeed, a broad variety of those of the present genre. Primarily, the theme of the "Festival of Flight" is formulated around Vintage, Classic and Warbird aircraft however, as all in attendance would have seen, you can be assured of seeing a mixture of aerial contrivances. These portrayed in a tangible form, the technological advances in aeronautical designs that have occurred throughout the past eighty years.

Under near perfect weather conditions and with a picture perfect Airfield available to us to host the event, this year's "Festival of Flight" produced the sights, sounds and aromas of aviation at its best. These extended from the "clatter" of the Fleet Model 2's Kinner K-5 engine (a product of the heady days of the "Barnstormers") through to the throbbing of the Panther Replica's GE T58-8F Turbojet engine (a product of more recent times)! QVAG's event is an aviation extravaganza that provides the most discerning enthusiast and the casual observer alike, with a wonderful opportunity to appreciate some of the most charismatic aeronautical machinery to be built to date. Having chosen to restore and maintain these priceless artefacts, the weekend provides the perfect excuse for a dedicated group of owners and/or restorers to make the annual pilgrimage to Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield to showcase and "exercise" their machinery.

Vintage aircraft types from the "stables" of Beech, Boeing, Cessna, De Havilland, Fleet, Henri Mignet, Percival,

Pietenpol, Piper, Stinson and Taylorcraft graced the Airfield whilst the Warbird element was represented by "medium" and "heavy metal" types from Australian, American, Chinese, German and Russian manufacturing origins. The Warbird fraternity bought along examples of the following types: AT-28D Trojan, TBM-3E Avenger, CA-16 Wirraway, CA-18 Mustang, AT-6 Harvard, CA-25 Winjeel, OY-1 Sentinel, YAK-52, DHC-1 Chipmunk and FWP-149D.

For a Fly-In (as opposed to a commercially organised Air Show) to attract such an array and number of exotic aircraft is true testimony to the significance that their respective owners attach to this event. Under the Civil Aviation Authority's regulations, QVAG is not permitted to schedule a flying display programme (nor do we wish to) as the basis of this event is one of informality and relaxation. It thus provides an ideal opportunity for folks, even those who harbour the slightest interest in aviation, to get up "close and personal" with some of the finest aircraft imaginable and witness recreational aviation at its best! And in the matter of the die hard enthusiast, the "FoF" event is very much on the International "radar" nowadays as visitors from as far afield as New Zealand, England, USA and South Africa are known to have been in attendance!

As many of the attending pilots indulged in their passion for flying these machines, those who had occasion to witness these aircraft in their element were very privileged indeed! And for the most discerning of machinery enthusiasts, over 150 vintage vehicles attended to compliment their aeronautical counterparts!

The "FoF" is QVAG's premier event and as on previous occasions, it would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of the Members who put personal matters aside in the lead-up to and over the weekend of the event. This plus the kind provision of infrastructure such as the use of Hangar One, ensured that it was conducted in a manner that conveyed the professionalism of the Group. Indeed, such is the enthusiasm for this event that non-members are now getting involved and offering their assistance on the days. To all who provided their assistance, I will take this opportunity to proffer a sincere and heartfelt thank you.

We once again enlisted the assistance of various local organisations to assist us with the conduction of the event. Foremost amongst these was the Toogoolawah branch of the State Emergency Service (SES) who, besides bolstering our manpower resources, provided equipment such as radios and tarps that alleviated the need for us to source these from other suppliers. This amongst other things that were less noticeable made a significant contribution to the smooth running and incident free nature of the event.

And the catering to this year's event was once again favourably received. Besides the in-house catering done by Robyn Bernhardt, Barry Meurant and his team of helpers from the Brisbane Valley Christian Church produced the food for the Saturday evening Dinner (which was a sell out once again) and the snacks throughout both days of the event. Through the use of local organisations and where possible, the sourcing of equipment and supplies from local businesses, this event provides a substantial boost to the economy of the nearby communities!

And it would be remiss of me to not acknowledge the assistance provided by the Watts Bridge Board of Management. Indeed, I must make special mention of Rod Mills and Peter Freeman (QVAG Members) whose work on preparing the Airfield for the event was nothing short of a commendable effort! As in past years, Rod and Peter laboured long and hard and they were instrumental in the preparations to temporarily reopen the 12 – 30 Runway alignment to its original length of 5,000 feet! This ensured that there was an adequate runway length available to accommodate any contingency. Overall, the Airfield was presented in a manner that provided a sight of splendour and it was only through the preparations effected over the previous months, that it served to welcome aviators and enthusiasts alike throughout the event!

Given the success of this year's event and those that have preceded it, in August 2009, QVAG will once again host the "Festival of Flight" as a celebration of the achievements in aviation that have now spanned over one hundred years. Before you forget, please note in your diary that the "FoF" 2009 will be staged over the period 29 – 30 August 2009. Looking forward to seeing you there!

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## WBMA LEASEHOLDERS REPORT.

Through 2008 three leaseholder's meetings were held. These meetings have proved beneficial to those who attended in helping to break down any barriers by allowing time for people to meet in an informal social atmosphere. They also allow increased communication between the BOM and leaseholders. The times before, and after the meetings have proved popular as people share in a cup of tea or coffee and a muffin.

**These leaseholders meeting are planned to continue during 2009 with the guidance of the WBMA Leaseholder's Representative.**



## QUA NEWS



2008 has been a good year for the Queensland Ultralight Association. After seemingly endless rounds of discussion, planning, fund raising and false starts, we finally have the QUA Clubrooms up and running at Watts. Since the building was erected, club members have kicked in to add essential services such as water and electricity. Though modest by some standards, our clubrooms are proving a great asset for both the QUA and the wider membership of Watts Bridge, with several club meetings, functions and other events having already been held there.

A club such as the QUA is all about aircraft and flying. Once again, in conjunction with the "aerobats", we conducted our Fun Fly Poker Run and Christmas in July. This has become a popular mid-winter event, providing a good excuse to go for a fly at what is otherwise a pretty quiet time of the year.

Several QUA members completed or made significant progress on their homebuilt aircraft projects. Expect to see several first flights over the next few months.



By far the most positive outcome of all this activity has been the increase in membership that the QUA is currently enjoying. Now that we have a real presence on the airfield, new members have joined, bringing a new vitality, enthusiasm and skill-set to the club

In the New Year we will continue the regular club meetings at Watts, along with other activities in the pipeline. Everyone is more than welcome to come along to the meetings with an informal BBQ afterwards. Keep an eye on the Watts Web Calendar for meeting and event dates.