



LOXTON AERO CLUB

PO Box 765, Loxton SA 5333

Winter Newsletter 2018

Recent fly-ins

Our monthly BBQs have been popular with many planes flying in from around the state, mostly from Murray Bridge, Goolwa, Gawler and Kingston SE. On one occasion 9 aircraft and 18 people flew in for an unscheduled BBQ lunch, which President Dave and helpers catered for. We seem to be a popular destination, and members love to meet and chat with pilots of all persuasions.



Phil Duthoit has recently relocated his Jabiru to Caboolture Qld. He plans to fly back to Loxton occasionally, and reckons it's easier to fly himself direct rather than use an airline and hire car etc. There was a good turnout for morning tea to see Phil off on Sunday 8th July.



Northern Trip

By Dave Pocock

Sometimes it's hard to get away, but my son had leave booked so we were committed to going somewhere even if it was Renmark. The week of 23rd July we waited for the poor weather to dissipate and mid-afternoon Wednesday we headed north under a low cloud base for Rawnsley Park. Having been there before we had a cabin booked - it's a pilot friendly place. Next day it was off to Leigh Creek for fuel and then on to Maree and Maree man. The wind was rising and as we got closer to William Creek there were big dust clouds rising off the lakes. This was a concern as the listed ERSA field was

only E-W. A call to the front bar - where else would the pilots be on a windy day, let us know we could land on 03 straight into the 25knot wind. Just as well as a cross wind landing would have been impossible. Trevor Wright was very hospitable helping us tie down, delivering us to the hotel for lunch

and later to our accommodation. Perhaps the highlight of the trip was our flight next day in very remote areas to the Painted Hills, Prominent Hill mine, along the power line to Roxby Downs across Lake Torrens and into another very windy landing at Leigh Creek. Our final day was an easy clear flight on a direct heading back to Loxton. If you are looking for somewhere to go the Flinders Ranges are close, hospitable and lots to see from the air and do on the ground.



AGM results

As you would have read in the minutes of the AGM, all positions were filled with most members retaining their current roles. One year hardly seems enough to get your teeth into things and start making a difference in the club's operations.

From the President:

With insurance put to bed for the year and our AGM behind us it's worthwhile talking about a few things for the coming year. Hangar space is available for long or short term rental. If you know of anyone who wants aircraft storage the Loxton Aero Club rent is charged on a 3 month basis in advance with shorter stays delivering a refund. We probably need to change the locks and have a deposit system to keep track of the movements of the shorter term stays.

If visiting pilots want hangar space they should ring to make sure it's available. The rates are \$10 for the first night including temporary membership then \$5 every night after that. - Dave

Hangar News

Roger & Kerrie Palamountain's homebuilt Tri-Z continues to present challenges to Certification. If it's not the oil cooler, it's a new prop. Then it's relocating the battery or it's rough running. Now it's hibernating for a few months until R&K return from overseas.

Arkaroola

By Rohan Scarfe

In planning what was to be perhaps the first flight away in Palamountain's Tri-Z, advance bookings were made for Pals and Scarfes to stay in the Arkaroola Village Resort in the beautiful northern Flinders'/Gammon Ranges at the beginning of June. As events overtook us, the time came and without the Tri-Z's certification, Palamountains had to drive 2 days to get there while Scarfes flew the Cherokee there in 2.2Hrs. This meant we had use of Pal's 4WD to drive the "Echo camp back track" and explore the gorges and rugged terrain of Arkaroola wildlife sanctuary.

In planning the flight I had wanted to divert westward toward civilisation, and follow the Flinders' Ranges northward from Hawker. This would overfly routes and destinations we had previously visited, with known serviceable airstrips and fuel availability, however the ranges sweep Easterly as they go North, and a direct route would take us straight over much "tiger country" north of Berri. After much planning/asking questions of other pilots/risk assessment, we decided to climb as high as possible and tracked direct YLOX-YARK always looking out for the homestead airstrips/fire tracks/clearings, dotted throughout the otherwise dense scrub north of Berri. After about 45 minutes of butt clenching, the scrub opened out to clear land as we approached the Barrier Highway and Manna Hill. From there the landscape opened out with plenty of landing options and the huge expanse of salt Lake Frome dominated our horizon.



Arrival overhead YARK saw the Palamountain's 4WD awaiting our arrival, and to ferry us all in to the village amongst the ranges. We had a wonderful long weekend of bush walking and four wheel driving, as well as deep and



meaningful conversation with the inimitable Doug Sprigg. On Sunday morning I flew Kerrie & Roger on a scenic flight over the terrain we had just driven and walked through, keeping an eye (and radio ear) out for Doug Sprigg in his Auster, also in the air showing some other guests around. YARK can be like Parafield Airport sometimes 😊



Our return flight started out OK at 7,500 feet, but we soon had to descend below some cloud around Manna Hill, and ended up at 3,500 feet over the scrub again. This time we tracked for Waikerie, keeping the clear land closer to our track until we could turn directly towards Loxton and home. Palamountains drove home the next day, and made it home in 10 hours.

Overall this was an uneventful flight; and isn't that what we all wish for? Nothing extraordinary, no unexpected surprises, no lessons to learn for future flights.But wait, I did think of an improvement for future use. As the airstrip at Arkaroola is in a bit of a valley, the circuit pattern had us pointing at a mountain on downwind, and I quickly asked my navigator how high these peaks were supposed to be. Of course we were operating on QNH, so

there was plenty of mathematics involved to work out our terrain clearances. On return from our scenic flight, I made a long straight in approach to runway 21, descending into a valley. It has since occurred to me that if I have a pilot (Roger in this case) in the right hand seat, or a competent first officer (Bev), then I could delegate them to call out our height above ground on final approach. With the approach over a creek that is lower than the threshold, there's enough going on in the pilot's head without having to do mental gymnastics as well. How cool would it be if the co-pilot just had the one job to do; subtract the field elevation from the indicated altitude and call out when we descend through each hundred feet, say from 500ft AGL.

Where are they now?

Members will fondly remember the many Central Air Services pilots who fly bird scaring each almond season from the Loxton airfield. They are usually recent CPL graduates and launch their flying careers from here. I thought it would be an idea to follow up on some of the recent pilots to see where flying has taken them. Here are their responses.

Dave Keogh:

Jarrold Benson actually let me know this company was hiring Aussie guys - the company is called Skywest Airlines and their headquarters is in St George Utah. I had heard about regional companies in the US being short of pilots but when I applied in July last year they were snapping guys up. They are still losing more pilots to the majors than they are recruiting. They have something like 17 bases around the country and I'm Based in Detroit which opened about two years ago. Skywest is like a contractor and has contracts to do regional routes for Delta, United American and Alaskan airlines. Skywest owns all its aircraft and currently have a fleet of Canadair Regional Jet (CRJ) 200s, 700 and 900s, and Embraer 175s. They were once the largest operator of Metro 23s then went to the Brasilia then onto the jets. So I'm on the CRJ of which you could be flying any or the 3 variants - they're all the same type rating although have a few differences - most notable being the landings due to the longer length of the 700 and 900. But out of Detroit it is mostly CRJ 200 flying all around the mid northwest. This trip I start today I have two nights in Illinois and one in Alabama. We go in and out of Minneapolis and Atlanta a few times - and recently I've been to Maine and Ottawa Canada. A fair bit around Michigan state as well - the shortest leg I've done is about 15 minutes from Alpena to Pellston and at 4000 feet is a lot of fun. Detroit to Flint and Detroit to South Bend are also short flights. It's a lot of fun and the 200s are a good machine although they get a bit hot in summer and as they're getting on a bit there are the usual maintenance things that come up every now and then



but the maintenance support is pretty good. They're a great company to work for and the captains and flight attendants are all great. A lot of young captains - some 23 or 24 years old. And they're great. Regional flying is an absolute ball but it doesn't pay as much as a major airline hence people doing their time here and moving on.

Ps I probably will try to get home to Atherton around Christmas but not sure when I'll be back down Loxton way. Would be nice to make a trip down but typically will only get two weeks off

PPS As much fun as this job is, bird scaring still remains the funnest job I've ever had! The captains all have a chuckle when I tell them about it.

Elodie Courtois:

I'm flying Cessna 210 for Thomson Aviation they are based in Griffith and do geomagnetic survey (you can check their website <http://www.thomsonaviation.com.au>) so I'm working all over Australia I have done contract from Nullarbor road house, Coober Pedy, Paraburdoo and now Tanami mine. And should do my turbine endorsement by the end of winter with them! 😊



Jarrold Vowles:

After Scaring those 'Black Rats' in Loxton and surviving I headed straight up to Darwin, stayed and worked there for a month sending out resumes knocking on doors around the place etc. Timing wasn't right. However, I got a lucky break from a company called East Air in Cairns, who were after a pilot spotting prawns in Karumba over the Gulf of Carpentaria. Within a week of leaving Darwin I'd been checked to line on a Twin Aero Commander 500 (same as the Bob Hoover machine) and banished to Karumba with a group of pilots, 5 Aircraft in total. Was based there for a month, gained 100hrs or so VFR cruising around for up to 6hrs airborne directing Trawlers and getting my head around the Aircraft. By the end we were all locals at the Animal Bar....



After that ended, they needed a pilot for their only remote base in Weipa. So I flew back to Cairns, got offered the job couldn't believe it! Still can't... , and up to Weipa, checked to line IFR. Since then Weipa has been my base. Every flight is IFR, which has included shooting approaches in IMC down to minima's, in rain, smoke, fog, haven't had to change me undies just yet, that might come in Wet Season!

Places we go vary every day, if you draw a line from Cairns West to Normanton across to Borroloola and up past the Tip of Aus that's the Area we fly (Cape York Peninsula), heaps over the Barrier Reef side as well, which is unfortunate...

Flying wise I do a lot of School bus runs for the locals, dropping them around from boarding school out of Cairns to the communities. Mine run Wednesdays out of the Bauxite Mines are a big part as well. The other day I had to drag out my passport for the first time in my life and launch myself into Daru Papua New Guinea to pick up 750kg of Live Crayfish to bring back to Cairns. That was an eye opener. So other than that, that's what I've been up to Lately. Hope everyone back South is good and plenty of Drin... I mean Flying is going on, Cheers Jarrold.

Josh Zdanowich:

Been flying for Katherine Aviation NT since bird season finished. Our main work here is charter work with some scenic flights of the Katherine gorge as well. Patient travel from indigenous communities into Katherine, mail runs to remote cattle stations and transport of government and council official and medical professionals make up the bulk of our charter work. I'm a line pilot on the C210 and BE58 baron and am also training captain on the C210 as well.



Jarrold Benson:

I worked for Chartair up in Katherine from March 2017 to March 2018 flying C210 and C310 aircraft. In March this year I moved back to Adelaide to be closer to my partner and I now fly freight for GAM out of Adelaide flying aero commander 500 (shrike commander) flying freight to Ceduna, Port Augusta and Mount Gambier.

Annual Subs due now

Subscription rates were approved at the AGM to continue at:

Single \$40 Couple \$60 Family \$75 Corporate \$75 Remote/Social (no voting rights) \$10

I will email accounts out to existing members soon, at your existing rate. Any changes, just let me know by return email. If you don't get an invoice or would like to become a member, simply send your details to secretary@loxtonaero.com and we'll make it happen.

Circuits or circuits?

By Kerrie Palamountain

I hadn't flown for 3 weeks and the day before we flew out for Italy the weather was ideal for some flying. I mentioned to Roger late morning that I was considering 'doing some circuits after my appointment to have my eyebrows waxed'. He didn't comment which I thought was strange, especially since this was to be the first time in my flying career that I was going to independently drive to Renmark by myself, get the plane out, etc, etc. Oh well, I thought, it's no big deal really going to fly by my little old lonesome!

I go to the gym regularly and twice a week do circuit training. Last Monday was 'legs' and I had been commenting to Roger that my thighs were killing me.

I returned from YREN after successfully doing 5 circuits and putting the plane to bed by myself for the first time. I felt a bit like I had graduated from baby-pilot school to toddler-pilot school and was feeling quite chuffed on my return home. Roger greeted me with 'Hi, how did you go and how are your legs?' What, I thought?! Who gives a toss about my legs- what about my flying? Roger then noticed that I wasn't in gym clothes! How observant! He then made some comment about the gym, I looked at him, he looked at me in complete confusion before all was revealed. No, I hadn't done circuits at the gym, but at YREN! After 45 years of marriage, communication remains a challenge!

Kerrie

Basic Flying Rules:

1. Try to stay in the middle of the air.
2. Do not go near the edges of it.
3. The edges of the air can be recognized by the appearance of ground, buildings, sea, trees and interstellar space. It is much more difficult to fly there.

