

# FLY ABOUT



OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE NORTHAM AERO CLUB (INC)  
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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Last busy bee:** Last Saturday we had a very busy, busy bee, a lot of work has been achieved, including the foundation for the Memorial Briefing Hut. We are now waiting for FESA to come and shift it inside our compound. Thanks to all who attended: the Putland gang, Matt, Sven, Simon.

**Casa seminar:** A very successful seminar held by Casa Officers. More than 36 pilots or aviation enthusiasts attended. The topics were flying at non-controlled airports and flying in and out of controlled airspace. For some reasons the latest was changed to Situation Awareness, another interesting subject. This was followed by a BBQ paid by Casa. Thanks to Les for organising the beautiful meats and to the cooks and bar persons who served throughout the event.

Mark Richardson of Casa offered to answer any questions regarding those subjects. He can be contacted on 0434 220 568 or on [mark.richardson@casa.gov.au](mailto:mark.richardson@casa.gov.au)

**Annual Presentation Diner:** The Diner will be this year on June 28<sup>th</sup>. Please reserve early. That will make it easier for the catering.

**Shire:** There will a meeting of the Steering Airport Committee soon. The last details of the change-over will be discussed. A meeting of all Lessees will take place on the 28<sup>th</sup> May at the Shire (7:00pm) to explain the changes to the airfield status.

**Infrastructure and second taxiway:** The work on the underground power line that should have started much, much earlier, (perhaps in April 2006) has not started yet due to unknown delays.

**International School:** As all can see, the first aircraft is now parked under one of tent. The Instructor is away for a short time. We hope that as soon as he is back he can start instructing our members.

**New hangar:** Jeff Longworth is wasting no time in building his new hangar. Pity some builders do not build theirs at the same pace.

Claude Meunier  
0417 816 168 - 96 225 574

## Club Captain's Report

The club competition for May was held on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup>. 'Twas a glorious day for flying! Eight-eighths blue sky, no wind and altogether quite pleasant. Four competitors lined up for the Poker Flight challenge – Errol, Ray, Ian and myself.

Duty runway appeared to be 14 so Ian was first cab off the rank and we blasted off towards Claude's farm (Grass Valley International) for the first leg at 2500' indicated. An excellent landing at GVI up the hill saw us then turn 180, take-off and head for the Grass Valley wheat silos. Back to the strip for a landing on 14 followed by the dealing out of five playing cards saw the conclusion of the first competitors efforts.

Points were awarded for air-work, airmanship and the poker hand one was dealt. Appropriate radio calls (especially pertinent given the recent attendance of all competitors at the CASA safety seminar!), aircraft checks, maintaining required altitude all figured in the scoring.

The winner, embarrassingly, was myself, with Ian coming in second. Obviously a bit of luck involved given the poker hand component, but all competitors had fun. Only one passenger came out for a fly (Debra) who seemed to be having a most excellent time until the Club Captain..... well, let's just save that story for the bar, eh what??!!

Next comp will be Sunday June 8<sup>th</sup>. Come one, come all, and as always, plenty of room for passengers. Claude will be running the next competition, so we can all expect something a little different to keep us on our toes, I'm sure.

May the wind be on your tail, in your sails, or inflating your balloon.

Simon Cooper.

## ARKAROOA RULES, OK?

Dr Frank and I flew our Mooney M20J to South Australia in April to attend the Australian Mooney Pilots' Association AGM fly-in at Arkaroola, an unusual and fascinating eco-resort in the Flinders Ranges.

We flew nearly 1200 nm from Northam and picked up good tailwinds at FL135 for the first leg to Forrest – our groundspeed was 180 knots at one point, which feels really good in a J-model. Frank did the first stage and I took over after a cuppa and fuel at Forrest, where we landed after a 48-minute letdown at 250 fpm. The tailwinds eased off as we went east, but still gave us a respectable groundspeed. Our portable oxygen equipment performed well, keeping us in the safe range of oxygen saturation.

We chose to land on Arkaroola's 650-metre shale strip and had no problems, though I can understand why the majority of the 19 Mooneys flying in opted for the sealed surface at nearby Balcanooka. There was a vehicle waiting to take us in to the eco-village and they even let me put the Mooney in their hangar – an early indication of the friendliness that characterised the weekend. We landed four minutes before our scheduled arrival time – an amazing fluke after eight hours in the air. Not a bad day's flying, though the bladder was a bit stretched.

It didn't take us long to find the Mooney mob – we just headed for the bar, proving that we had more in common than the same make of aircraft. It was interesting to talk to the owners of just about everything from a C up to the dreamship Bravo. There were a lot of Js there, and we were able to swap stories and get a lot of really useful info from their owners. One, Chris Wrightson, gave us a CD of the aircraft's maintenance manual.

Friday started with a spirited walk up Acacia Ridge, a 560-metre outcrop that gave a commanding view of the surrounding countryside. It was hard work, but the physical effort of trekking was amply rewarded. It's amazingly arid country, but supports an eclectic range of plants with names like witchetty bush, dead finish, mulga and native orange. We were told Arkaroola hadn't had meaningful rain for 10 years, and it was sobering to look at the flora that survived, and to learn how they do it.

The geology is something I hadn't seen before. Rocks pushed up by volcanic activity and tectonic plate collisions aeons ago form stark hills and deep canyons of spectacular ruggedness along fault lines that define the Flinders Ranges. Radium was mined at Arkaroola in, I think, 1910, with the ore taken out in saddlebags humped by camels (sorry about that).

Uranium was mined a bit later on, and the biggest uranium mine in the world, Olympic Dam, is 100 nm or so away on the plain.

The bloke who owns and runs Arkaroola, Doug Sprigg, is a mine of another kind: information. He is incredibly knowledgeable about the history and geology of the country and infectiously enthusiastic. You couldn't fail to be carried along by the tremendous affection he has for the place. He's also a pilot and proud owner of an Auster J1B – the same model I used to own. Plus a Cessna 207 for taking tourists up.

Apart from a machine-gun stream of facts about Arkaroola, he also gave us a talk on operating lean of peak exhaust gas temperature. Most pilots are taught to run rich of peak, which is foolproof but inefficient. It's a complex and contentious subject, but he covered it in a way that made it comprehensible to even the most non-expert. To over-simplify, running lean of peak means you burn less fuel (less cost) and lower your cylinder head temperatures (longer cylinder life). But if you don't do it exactly right for your particular engine, you can stuff it up.

It's of limited use in our aircraft because the engine is not turbocharged and therefore the benefit is reduced at higher altitudes. However, running our Lycoming *at* peak EGT – approved by the factory for the IO-360 – is an option we are moving closer to. It was also edifying to learn that below 65 per cent power you can run the Lycoming IO-360 at pretty well any fuel flow that keeps the engine running smoothly.

On Saturday we went on a brilliant tour of the ridges in 4WDs. Wow, some speccy sights and heart-in-mouth climbs up tracks that appeared near-vertical. Then, in the afternoon, another walk up a gully of stark beauty to one of the only two waterholes left on the property. Talk about rugged! It must be awesome in flood – the last one was in 1974.

We finished up with a visit to one of Arkaroola's two observatories, equipped with 14-inch telescopes that allow you to see past the Milky Way. It's quite astonishing to observe the heavens in an environment completely free of background lighting.

Frank and I took off on Sunday morning into cloud, rain and headwinds. We flew over Woomera and battled our way slowly (120 knots or so) to Forrest. It took nearly five hours and we were pretty happy to set down. The forecast for Northam was grotty, and we would have arrived after dark, so we chose to overnight at Kalgoorlie. We landed at Northam next day with just 30 minutes to go to our 100-hourly! – *Tony Rees*



## **The most important part of the message...**

A few years ago when we were all younger but not as wise... the radio phrases would start by:

-“ All Stations Whoop whoop, this is Cessna xyz, blah, blah...”

And every pilot was very keen to describe his/her aircraft, colour, doing this or that, and unfortunately the name of the airport they were operating to or from would be lost in such a flow of words.

Recently our beloved and clever leaders realised the shortcoming of this type of radio calls and implemented a new version of avionesese, like this:

- “Traffic Whoop whoop, Cessna XXX, blah, blah.....”

And the message would end by repeating the name of the airfield or place:  
.....”Whoop, whoop”, or “traffic whoop, whoop”.

That was very good for the first months and everyman and his dog would know where that radio call was coming from, paying no further attention if the “location” was hundred of miles away.

Unfortunately, after some time, the good habit disappeared and anyone listening on the airwaves will witness the fact that even airline pilots are dropping that last bit of information: the “location”, the location where the call is made.

Location, location...

Of all the many words of such a radio call what is the most important word?

Precisely the LOCATION! Who cares if it is a Cessna 172 or a Cessna 182, what is important is to know WHERE it is operating, is it within 5 miles or 100 miles. The rest is important but not as vital.

Why do we make radio calls? Good question, is it because we have been taught to do so, is it “to be legal”, is it, just to do “something”, believing it has to do with safety? We make radio calls to tell someone, anyone, where we are and what we are doing. And if we just mumble words in an uncomprehensive way we are not passing the message. And what is the most important part of the message?

LOCATION. LOCATION...If we make radio calls that are unreadable, why take the trouble of doing it? We might as well turn the blooming off and forget it ...The idea is to make the other pilot understand where we are and what we are doing. Or shutup. I was listening the other day to such traffic where professionals pilots (rego like FNx!) and the voices of foreign students. I was amazed of the very small number of radio calls made properly where I could decipher the “location”, among a flow of words. My very first instructor, Colonel Edson D. Raff (US Ret) drilled in my mind the fact that people (pilots included) love to hear their own voices, regardless of the usefulness of what they say...

So, on our next radio call, let us make the point of doing it in such a way and manner that whoever is listening knows WHERE we are and what we are doing.

Happy radio calls...whoop whoop.

Circuits and Bumps :

Great crowd for the Casa Seminar, was it coz of the free BBQ...?  
Thanks to the cooks and other volunteers who worked very hard  
behind the scene...

After 46 years of flying....

Who saw the gorilla???

Congrats to Grif Putz for his first solo in the Jabiru...

Seen Jaz at the seminar... he will finish his hangar one day...

Jeff's hangar nearly finished after only one week... role model for  
some...

Infrastructure work on the second taxi way to start soon, in April  
2006...or 2007...or 2008...or 2009...

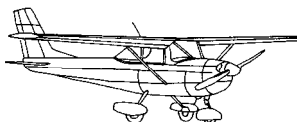
New aircraft in the International School tent...what next???

Diner coming soon... RSVP please for catering...

Prezi gets his helicopter back ...

**NAC welcomes new members:**

**Bernard Fernandes, Adrian van  
Schouwen and Martin Jacobson**



**We hope you will enjoy the flying  
and social activities at the Club**

# Club Calendar

**Club Competition – 8'th June @ 0900**

**Committee Meeting – 9'th June @ 1900**

**Annual Presentation Dinner – 28'th June @ 1900**

## Bar Roster

**Opening hours**  
**Saturday 5pm –7pm**  
**Sunday 5pm—7pm**

### May

**24'th – 25'th Joy**  
**31'st Gren**

### June

**1'st – Gren**  
**7'th – 8'th Claude**  
**14'th – 15'th Steve**  
**21'st – 22 'nd Sven**  
**28'th – 29'th Les**

### July

**5'th - 6'th Matt**  
**12'th – 13'th Gren**  
**19'th – 20'th Simon**  
**26'th – 27'th Crofty**

**Please make arrangements to swap with someone if you are not available on your rostered day(s).**

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