TRIKE NEWS
Newsletter of the
Southern Microlight Club
February 2010
www.southernmicrolightclub.com.au

NEWS

I have been pursuing the HGFA for details of the amount of levies paid by Microlight Trike pilots since the inception of the Southern Microlight Club. I have assurances from Craig Worth that I will receive this information but to date no information has been forthcoming.

The object of the exercise is to make a claim on those funds paid by our members and currently held by the VHPA. As near as I can calculate our average membership over the years has been 46. Gary Wheeler and I attended the December VHPA Meeting and they have been advised of our intentions. I have also raised the issue with Craig Worth of future Victorian State levy payments being directed to the SMC.

I am actively pursuing this issue and hope to have better news in the next newsletter.

I trust all members have had a happy and healthy festive season and have managed some quality flying time.

SMC WEB SITE

Stephen Bell has kindly volunteered to update the SMC Web Site which has been largely neglected for some time. My name and e-mail address has been swapped for that of David Jacka as the main contact for anyone who may enquire and the Manhattan Hotel has been posted as the venue for meetings.

I agree with Stephen that it is important for the Club to maintain an internet presence and it may assist to attract new members.

Stephen also now has joined the Flowerdale Flyers.

SPEAKER FOR FEBRUARY MEETING

John Kidon has consented to be our speaker at the February 2010 Meeting. John will speak about the rules of flight. I am sure a timely reminder to most of us about what we should and should not do in the air. Do not miss this important and informative session.

ARTICLES

Steven Bell and Ken Jelleff have kindly submitted the following articles. Thanks Steven and Ken.

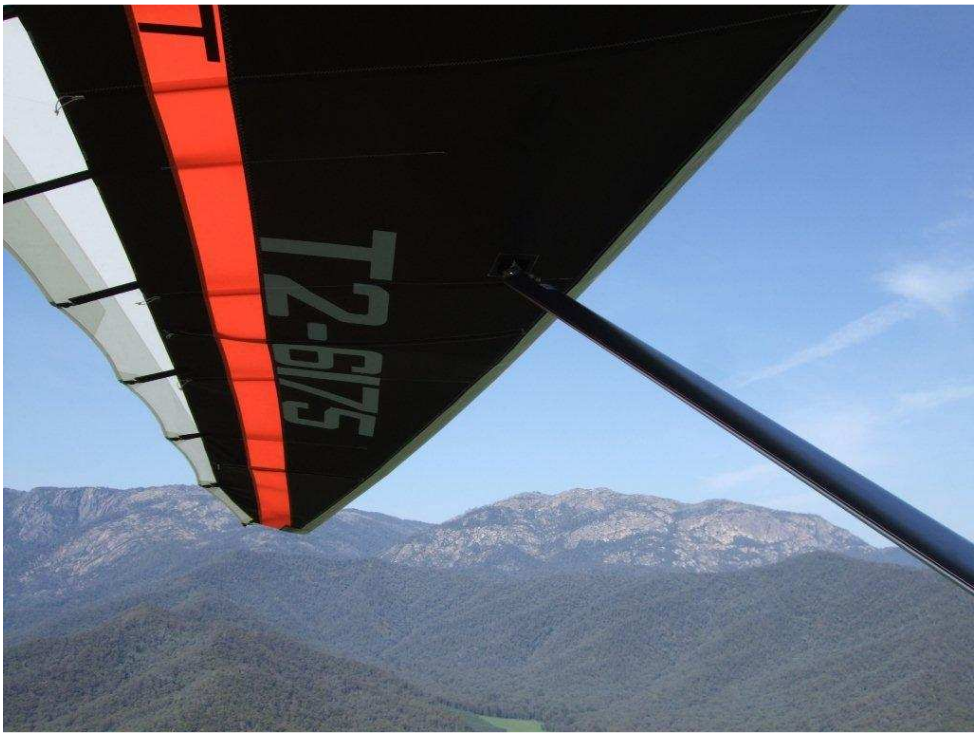
MELBOURNE CUP WEEKEND AT BRIGHT

Steven Bell

Over Melbourne cup weekend a few pilots went along to Bright for a bit of flying. Rick Duncan from Airborne happened by with one of the check it out fandangle new XT912 Strut Braced Wing aircraft.

Rick was happy for anyone who was interested to have a test fly and was kind enough to even take newcomer Joe who is intending to commence lessons next year. You can tell which one is Joe as he was experimenting with mike positions.

Everyone was very impressed with the new wing and a few mutterings were passed along the lines of "gotta get me one of those". The new wing trims at around 70 knots and cuts through turbulence very well. I didn't actually go up in it so all this is just hearsay. If you want more info Steve Ruffles will be happy to oblige.



“Joe” with a new slant on mike positioning.

XT912 Strut Braced Wing aircraft.

And again.

BRIGHT TO MT KOSCIUSZKO

Photos by

Ken Jelleff

& Max Glynn

Passing over the Kiewa Valley enroute to Mitta Mitta

Arriving in Bright on yet another Boxing Day with Trike in the back of the ute and trusty Jayco Expander trailing behind, I wondered what great flights may have been in store for us during our 2 week stay.

Out on the airfield early next morning to setup in the lovely fresh air with a hint of dew on the grass and not a cloud in the sky. Our first flight for the holidays immediately after setup was toward Hotham Heights for a panoramic view of the Alpine area we'd be journeying around over the fortnight. The deserted airfield disappeared below us after our 8:00am departure, and the gentle ascent past Porepunkah revealed perfectly still conditions with no variable layers of misbehaving air at all. A gentle right hand turn took us over the township of Bright, still awaiting the usual swelling of the post Christmas holiday makers.

Another gentle Right hand turn saw us heading high over the Great Alpine road toward the sleepy hamlet of Harrietville with the ridges of treetops either side of us just feeling the touch of the first early morning rays of sun. Climbing through 5,000 ft I was surprised to notice very little change in air

temperature, which usually makes one glad to be enclosed in the freezer suit, however this morning we could have been quite comfortable in shorts and t shirt.

The inversion continued for another 10 minutes during our steady ascent toward the now looming Mt Hotham before there was a distinct drop in temperature.

A wonderful introduction to a flying holiday, as we slowly circled the Hotham Ski Village with the newly risen sun shining down on the Mt Feathertop and the ranges receding into the distance with Bogong poking its imposing head up in the distance.

After 14 years of various types of flying around these mountains, the pang of excitement and exhilaration felt by being privileged to view the area from high above was as keen as ever.

After this initial flight, Pauline and I enjoyed another 17 hours of flying to the various locations around the Bright area during our holiday, however, after catching up with Max Glynn, who is currently hangared in Eagle Schools Hangar, an even keener pang of excitement overcame us as we discussed and planned a flight I had dreamt about for some time now, this being to fly over the summit of Australia's highest land mass, Mount Kosciuszko (7,310 ft.).

Mitta Mitta

Max and I met for coffee in Bright and with charts spread across the table and GPS's beeping away. We installed waypoints for routes into our Garmin 296s and I knew we were in for a special experience. The weather charts revealed the possibility of stronger winds in the aftermath of some thunderstorms

during New Year and so the following morning I decided to test the air and part of the route with a short 40nm flight past Dartmouth Dam. As expected, at a respectable height above the surrounding mountains with only 30nm to fly to Kosciuszko, the Southwesterly wind was giving me a ground speed of 88 knots, not the ideal day to enter Australia's highest plateau. I thought the accompanying turbulence and rotor might have diminished the experience a little.

The following morning however was a different story. The Southwest, on the charts, showed signs of a distinct weakening, with a slow moving Northern drift about to dominate for a few days, perfect conditions for our summit attempt.

Next morning we surgically extracted our Trikes from Steve Ruffles'' crowded hangar, (it fits 7 but only just), and started our 912s ready for the early 7:00am departure from the noise sensitive Porepunkah airstrip.

Dartmouth Dam

Mist in the Alpine Valleys approaching Kosy

After departure from Porepunkah we followed our pre-programmed route in a straight line for Mitta Mitta some 28nm to the NE. As we rose to our early cruise height, we were pleased to find nil wind which allowed us to maintain a steady 63kts ground speed. Across the Kiewa Valley and past Gundowring, the sun had just broken the distant mountain range revealing the tentacles of the Dartmouth Dam off to our right with the many valleys still covered in a blanket of early morning mist and fog, giving them a surreal appearance like something out of Lord of the Rings. (Was the city of Rivendell really right next to the Dartmouth Dam). As we continued our slow ascent we entered the brief section of the journey with no landing options, and despite the steady reassuring purr of the 912, it was an effort to relax and enjoy the spectacular scene unfolding below, with rugged rocky escarpments jutting from the dense canopy of endless undulating eucalypt. Max was enjoying the scenery from a thousand feet or so above me and as we chatted on the radio, I marvelled at how the presence of a fellow trike nearby in the same predicament could make light of a potentially hazardous journey.

The Snowy Mountains plateau was looming very quickly now, and with the sun beaming down behind it, it was a spectacle indeed. It was here I began swearing loudly at the realization that my digital camera decided its battery was too flat to continue. It showed full charge last night, but hadn't been used for a couple of weeks. Bugger!! Luckily a quick call to Max revealed he was still busy snapping away, so at least we'll come back with some proof of our flight.

Trike approaching Dartmouth Dam

In nil wind we slowly circled Australia's highest peak, at least we think we did. The truth is that the Kosy Plateau has quite a few bumps on it, and so just to be on the safe side I made sure I passed over each one of them. The now risen sun created purple shades in the gullies which ran across the plateau, with little creeks still running from the recent rainfalls, and a road, (yes, a road) also winding its way in and out of the gullies. Well, I suppose at only 7,310 ft, it is not quite Everest, but our satisfaction was undiminished. Bidding the mountain goodbye we followed the next step of our route west to the Hamlet of Corryong for a rest break. After 20 minutes and a slow descent we touched down on the surprisingly wide and long bitumen runway at Corryong and made good use of their deserted facilities, (after relocating the resident green tree frog from its home under the lip of the toilet bowl).

Despite the lack of marching bands and cheering crowds to help us celebrate our little achievement, Max and I shook hands, knowing that the photos taken will never do justice to the fantastic scenery we had witnessed whilst flying over such magnificent country, but the images locked in our heads will be replayed over and over many times. **Ken Jelleff**.

Kosciuszko Summit Village complete with light show

Max's 11,000 ft view of summit (spot the trike below at 8,000)

INTERESTING DEVELOPMENTS IN FLIGHT

THE GLOBAL HAWK

This is a photo of the Global Hawk UAV that returned from the war zone recently under its own power. (Iraq to Edwards AFB in CA) - Not transported via C5 or C17..... Notice the mission paintings on the fuselage. It's actually over 250 missions.... (And I would suppose 25 air medals).

That's a long way for a remotely-piloted aircraft. Think of the technology (and the required quality of the data link to fly it remotely). Not only that but the pilot controlled it from a nice warm control panel at Edwards AFB.

Really long legs -- can stay up for almost 2 days at altitudes above 60k. The Global Hawk was controlled via satellite; it flew missions during OT&E that went from Edwards AFB to upper Alaska and back non-stop.

Basically, they come into the fight at a high mach in mid thrust, fire their AMRAAMS, and no one ever sees them or paints them with radar. There is practically no radio chatter because all the guys in the flight are tied together electronically, and can see who is targeting who, and they have AWACS direct input and 360 situational awareness from that and other sensors.

The aggressors had a morale problem before it was all over. It is to air superiority what the jet engine was to aviation. It can taxi, take off, fly a mission, return, land and taxi on its own. No blackouts, no fatigue, no relief tubes, no ejection seats, and best of all, no dead pilots and no POWs. (And hopefully no crash landings over cities!) Pretty cool, but I bet flying a trike is still

more fun.

THE AEROSCRAFT

Even though the Aeroscraft dwarfs the largest commercial airliners, it requires less net space on the ground than any plane because it doesn't need a runway. The airship takes off and lands like a helicopter, straight up and down. This is not a Blimp. It's a sort of flying Queen Mary 2 that could change the way you think about air travel.

It's the Aeroscraft, and when it's completed, it will ferry pampered passengers across continents and oceans as they stroll leisurely about the one-acre cabin or relax in their staterooms. Unlike its dirigible ancestors, the Aeroscraft is not lighter than air. It's 14 million cubic feet of helium hoist only two-thirds of the craft's weight. The rigid and surprisingly aerodynamic body, driven by huge rear-ward propellers, generates enough additional lift to keep the behemoth and its 400-ton payload aloft while cruising. During takeoff and landing, six turbo-fan jet engines push the ship up or ease its descent. This two-football-fields-long airship is the brainchild of Igor Pasternak, whose privately funded California firm, Worldwide Aeros Corporation, is in the early stages of developing a prototype and expects to have one completed this year.

Pasternak says several cruise ship companies have expressed interest in the project, and for good reason - the craft would have a range of several thousand miles, and, with an estimated top speed of 174 mph, could traverse the continental United States in about 18 hours.

During the flight, passengers would view national landmarks just 8,000 feet below, or, if they weren't captivated by the view, the cavernous interior would easily accommodate such amenities as luxury staterooms, restaurants - - even a casino.

To minimize noise, the aft-mounted propellers will be electric, powered by a renewable source such as hydrogen fuel cells. A sophisticated buoyancy - management system will serve the same purpose as trim on an airplane, allowing for precise adjustments in flight dynamics to compensate for outside conditions and passenger movement. The automated system will draw outside air into compartments throughout the ship and compress it to manage onboard weight. The Aeroscraft would not fly high enough to need pressurization.

The company envisions a cargo-carrying version that could deliver a store's worth of merchandise from a centralized distribution center straight to a Wal-Mart parking lot, or, because the helium-filled craft will float, a year's worth of supplies to an offshore oil rig. 'You can land on the snow, you can land on the water,' Pasternak says, 'It's a new vision of what can be done in the air'

Aeroscraft
Purpose - Long-range travel for passengers who are more concerned with the journey than the destination.
Dimensions (feet): 165' H x 244' W x 647' L

http://www.aerosml.com/main.htm

INTERESTING LOOKS

This Newsletter has some attachments that people might find interesting.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is at the Manhattan Hotel, Canterbury Road, Ringwood, on Tuesday, February 9, at 1900hrs for a meal and 2000hrs for the meeting in the Board Room.

CONTRIBUTIONS

I welcome contributions from members. Any story or item of interest adds to the pleasure we all get from our association. Do not be shy – Nobel Prize for Literature standards are not expected. Dianne McNamara had sent me a number of articles I will publish as space permits. Thanks Dianne.

Newsletter Closing times:

Last Tuesday of the month.

Advertising enquiries and any articles or items of information to:

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