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NEWSLETTER

Mar/Apr 2014

Cover Picture

Martha Cove by Anton van Wyk



Message from the President

Tony Batson

For those of you who have not heard, the Southern Microlight Club has an acting President. Who? Why me of course! Tony Batson! Former Vice President. Chris Bullen has been our president for the past year and a half and prior to that has spent some years on the committee. His contribution has been vast and in many forms. His dedication to the club has been unrelenting and whilst it took him some time to get his own trike, eventually, he got there. Work commitments have finally caught up with Chris and reluctantly he has made the decision to resign immediately. As Vice president, I have agreed to take on the role to the next election. I know the current committee will help me out. So, hopefully together, we will continue to steer the club forward.

A new year begins and for those who were lucky enough to get some extended time off from work, hopefully, good use of the time was made to get in some flying. For those who had to work, hopefully you used your weekends wisely. I am aware of some members flying activities over the holiday period. Some flew around Wilson Promontory; others flew from Latrobe to Yarrowonga. A trip to Lakes Entrance and Mallacoota was on some member's itinerary. A new trike pilot flew his trike from Yarrowonga to Tyabb, alone, for the first time.

I love hearing what our members have been up to. Unfortunately many of you never tell us what you have been doing. We may find out after a club meeting but not all can attend our meetings. Over the last year Trevor Lane, as editor of the Clubs newsletter, has done a fantastic job of lifting the professionalism of the Newsletter to a greater level. What we need now is for you to tell us where you have been flying. What have you been doing? A photo with a few words is enough to make it more interesting. A story is even better, but not a must. We are all interested in flying and we are all interested in what you have been doing. Your stories believe it or not motivate others to fly or fly to new locations. Together our stories create a mosaic history of what our type of flying is all about. We don't care what you do or fly. Tell us! So, I ask you to inundate Trevor with photos and small writings. Otherwise, you will have to hear more about me and my flying activities.

The Club finished 2013 with its Christmas party at Trevor and Jo Lane's. We had a great turn up and I am sure all enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere and company of our fellow club members, partners and children. Mitch was handed a special club award for being the Club member of the year. He was very surprised with the award. Thanks Mitch for your great contribution this year. George introduced the new Club Jackets and those that were on show were quickly snapped up. We are placing another order soon, so contact George to get yours placed. Thanks Jo and Trevor for letting us into your home and putting up with us. It was a great day. Safe flying!



New Club Tool: SWR meter

Ian Rees

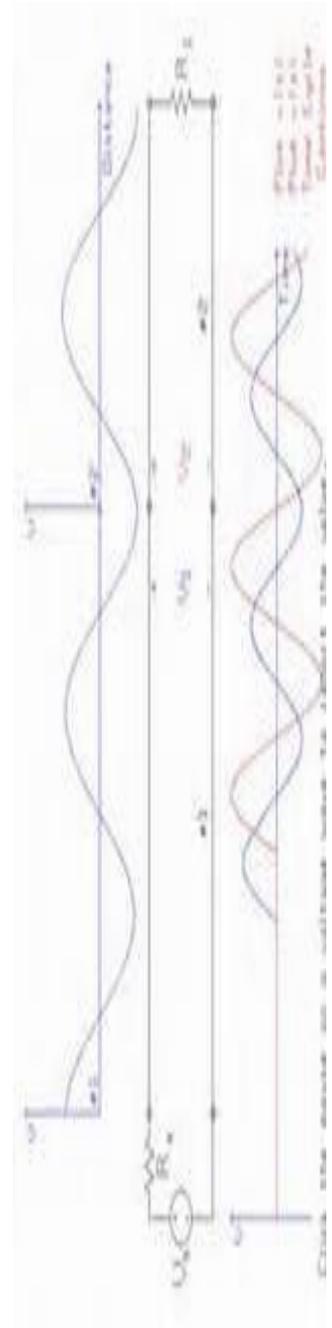
At the February club meeting, Chris Bullen was thanked by all the members for his great contribution to the club over several years. Chris did a great job on the committee, including a few years before he actually owned a trike. I'd like to personally thank Chris for his wonderful effort over the years he served the members.

Chris was instrumental in setting up a tool kit for club members. As a result of his hard work, we now have access to a wide range of valuable and necessary tools for performing trike maintenance. The last item purchased by Chris for the club to was a SWR meter. I spoke briefly about the product during the February meeting and thereafter the members voted to purchase the item .

Without getting technical, the SWR meter can be used to measure the quality of the radio antennae and cable system. It is quite easy to use but requires some level of understanding as to how to use it correctly.

I am happy to offer the club members assistance on how to use the SWR meter. Initially, this can be provided on an individual basis as members borrow the unit. Eventually, I would be glad to also include SWR training at the next SMC maintenance training course, normally held once a year. In the meantime, as club members become trained and skilled at using the device, they can on-train others so everyone can use the meter as required. If anyone wishes to discuss using the meter or borrow it, please drop me an email via the club secretary email address.

Ian Rees



Editors Note:

At the meeting I voted against purchasing this tool. I know that it requires some technical knowledge to use this instrument and interpret the results. Without the proper advice you could end up damaging your antenna or even radio. At the meeting Ian offered to give us some spreadsheets to help us interpret the data. I would like to publicly thank Ian for changing his stance on this and offering personal assistance. I really hope people take up his kind offer. As I said, this instrument if not used correctly could cause damage; and expensive damage at that.

Picture of the Month

At the beach, Steve Bell



A tribute to Reg Thaggard

Tony Batson

As many of you are aware, just prior to Christmas we had the unfortunate experience of being told of the tragic loss of one of our much loved members, Reg Thaggard. Whilst there is always speculation by some as to what may have happened, until the findings of the investigation are released, we just do not know what happened. What we do know is that Reg was a fantastic guy and a great club member. I had the privilege to speak on behalf of the club at Reg's Funeral. There was a fantastic turn out. So much so that 3 large rooms, plus outside standing areas were used to accommodate everyone. There is no way I, nor anybody else, can do justice in summing up Reg's life and his contribution to trike flying in a short article. Steve Bell has made a moving tribute to Reg and his flying in a short video. Make sure you watch it using the link on the clubs website. Tracey has seen it and is happy for us to show it to those who could not make the club meeting. I know Tracey was overwhelmed by the support of all of Reg's friends, family and the flying community. On behalf of the club we offer

Tracey and her family our continued support.

I attempted to honour Reg in some way, on behalf of the club, as a SMC flying member. Words alone are not enough. I list below some of my notes from my funeral speech in honour of Reg.

For Reg, flying was one way of maximising the fulfilment of his life.

For those who say " I wish he had never learned to fly, or wished he stuck to motor bike riding, or some other form of adventure sport, they do not know the Reg I knew; for it was through flying that Reg really lived.

His passion so strong, that even Tracey was surprised how he changed many parts of his lifestyle to follow his dreams. His passion so

strong, learning to fly one type of aircraft was not enough; he had to learn how to fly another type. His passion so strong, that the Reg I knew probably would not really have been satisfied for long learning how to fly only 2 types of aircraft.

The Reg I knew would have no regrets when it comes to flying. No matter what the circumstances or outcomes of his flying experiences.

To summarise, I think Brian Shul, in his book - "Sled Driver" says it best. Brian Shul by the way flew the fastest, highest jet in the world in its time. The SR-71 Black bird, Nicknamed the sled.

"The cockpit was my office. It was a place where I experienced many emotions and learned many lessons. It was a place of work, but also a keeper of dreams. It was a place of deadly serious encounters, yet there I discovered much about life. I learned about joy and sorrow, pride and humility, and fear, and overcoming fear. I saw much from that office that most people would never see. At times it terrified me, yet I could always feel at home there... Though it was a place where I could quickly die, the cockpit was a place where I truly lived." -

My first conscious memory of Reg is on the Melbourne Cup weekend fly in, 2011, at Murrindindi near Yea. The clouds were low, the rain was continuous. Very few members flew. During a break in the weather, in the distance, over the vineyard, on the far hill, I saw a Micro light. It was following the contours of the land. I was fixated, as I watched in awe, as the pilot brought that aircraft into land. When it landed I expected to see the Red Barron get out of the aircraft. It was Reg; his face grinning with a smile from ear to ear. Gee, that smile was big. I did not know Reg that well then, but he was instantly likeable. We gathered around him like school girls at a rock concert. "How embarrassing it was. We were all grown men!

During that day the pilots who had aircraft, displayed their skills at landing touch and goes in a small box marked out on the grass runway. Yes, Reg was the only one who managed to touch inside the box.

Reg attended many of our monthly meetings at the Manhattan Hotel near Ringwood. He never enjoyed public speaking, so he rarely spoke standing high before us. But, speak to him, one on one or in a social group and he was difficult to shut up. He particularly enjoyed the end of our

meetings when it was "the boys talking in groups about their flying experiences with a cold beer in hand. If you did not have a drink, he was only too happy to go over to the bar and get you one. Get him started on one of his many stories, and he would go into a deep belly laugh, unable to talk and sometimes breathe, as he tried to complete his story.

When Reg's students went solo, he always suggested his students attend a SMC meeting. He became a great asset for increasing our Clubs membership. Reg said to me many times in our chats, how he enjoyed catching up with fellow flyers at our meetings. I tell you this because he made it clear to me on more than one occasion, but not in these words, that this social interaction, with the flying community, whether it be Microlights or Gyrocopter pilots, was extremely important to him.

We often asked Reg if he had been working hard today. In shock and disgust he always answered "I am a Fijian". Meaning he wasn't chasing a fast paced life to riches, not like many of us westerners. Slow down take it easy, was his motto.

It is important for me to tell you how important Reg was to the sport of Microlighting. His value to us in so many ways was immense. His integrity, his honesty, his commitment to be a better flyer, helped the club and the sport prosper. In all cases that I am aware of, Reg's students all became his close friends after going solo. I say once again. What a guy!

I remember when I first saw Reg flying his Gyrocopter. It was at Yarram Airfield in South Gippsland. Like the leader of a flock of geese, he flew into Yarram with 4 trikes trailing behind him. When he landed, the whole airfield came out to look at his aircraft. Again like school girls we gathered around him to find out more.

At Locksley Field near Seymour, Reg flew in with his Gyrocopter at a club event. All Trikes were grounded due to windy conditions. Reg gave us a display of his newly acquired flying skills and boy did he have fun. He was always trying harder to further his flying skills.

Every time we saw him he invited us to go for a fly in the gyro. He wanted everybody to share the experience of flying in a Gyro, because he could not tell you what it was like to fly in it. You had

to experience it to understand; especially us Trike pilots.

I got my turn to fly with Reg in the Gyro at Wahrung Field near Nagambie. After Reg had flown in and finished off our BBQ delights, and our chocolate Tim Tams, (If you know Reg, you know he loves his food), he took me for a fly. As he always said. "You needed to fly in one to understand the experience". With my hands at the controls, I experienced what he could not explain. Yes, it was a very memorable experience.

Reg may not be the most famous person in the world. But he was more famous, more remarkable and more memorable to many of us who crossed his path in so many ways.

Reg relished every opportunity for adventure and loved to share his inspiration for life with all who came before him. He will be sorely missed.

One flying adventure in January 2014

Tony Batson

Australia long weekend was a good excuse for an extended fly. John Brent and I made a decision to fly to Yarrawonga from Latrobe. We had made the journey before. Every time we do this flight the flying is different and always a great experience.

John and I had planned to make it a 3 day flying weekend. Leave early Saturday, returning late Monday. The weather gods as usual had a say in it and the Saturday whilst potentially flyable, was forecasted to be a rough flying day. With winds getting up to 25-30 knots we elected to put off our departure to Sunday morning, Australia Day.

"Somehow the radio signal for turning the lights on and off at Lilydale were stuck on"

I made the decision to sleep in the hanger on Saturday night to ensure an early departure. When I arrived at the hanger on Saturday night, Ian Rees was packing up from a short fly after re-fitting his prop. He explained that Peter from Yarrawonga was holding an Australia Day BBQ at Yarrawonga. Great stuff! We "Gotta" make sure we are there in time for that.

I had made contact with Coldstream Airfield before arriving at the hanger; seeking permission to land and ensure I understood all of the neighbourhood friendly zones they had surrounding their airport. I had always felt a little intimidated by Coldstream Airfield, so I always

flew on to Dixons Creek to have my first rest break. However, it was time to step up and just work it all out. The sleep in the hanger was comfortable, but noisy. Even without a blowing wind, the hanger creaked, groaned, rattled and I am sure "moaned" to give me a restless sleep.

"We climb to our correct hemispherical altitude which is always a little tricky when you're flying almost directly north"

John arrived early and I was already awake eating a Mc Donalds breakfast. Joe Ferstl arrived just as we were about to leave. He was going for a local early flight. We left Latrobe with the Power station steam rising gently, vertical to the heavens. Perfect! Nil wind! We knew it was going to get hot later in the day, so we were keen to get going to enjoy these conditions whilst they lasted.

We made our way westward in perfect conditions. We turned NW for Coldstream just past Warragul, passing Labertouche and then following the power lines over Bunyip State forest. Not long afterwards, Yellingbo was to our left. Onwards we went; following the power lines past Seville East. Just prior to Gruyere the power lines turned westward. Like a directional beacon, we continue to follow the power lines, which will soon become our base course for runway 35. We had already made our inbound calls and could hear Lilydale traffic chattering away on the radio.

Somehow the radio signal for turning the lights on and off at Lilydale were stuck on. The radio continually announced that the lights are on. After rattling in our ears for some 5 minutes, a pilot announced for someone to shut the thing off. It is not until John makes his "on final call" that the radio stops. Coincidence, I am not sure. Coldstream and Lilydale share the same radio frequency. Peace at last. Staying at 1500 feet is conditional for Coldstream circuits. As I turn for final I see John landing on the grass. I decide to land on the gravel. After we taxi to a grass parking area, we discuss the size of the gravel on the runway; surprising larger than I had ever seen before. Oh! my poor prop.

"We talk to the young beautiful back packer from Germany"

We say hello to one of the Bob's on the airfield and make our way to the office. We know we are representing the trike community so make further enquiries to see if there is anything else we need to know about landing and leaving the airfield. After a short break we are ready to go; next stop; Loxley Airfield. Our departure is without incident and conditions remain perfect. As we depart, we feel the rise in air temperature. We climb to our correct hemispherical altitude which is always a little tricky when you're flying almost directly north.

Below us is Dixons Creek. We continue to climb to make our way over the top of Glenburn Gap. On the chat channel I can here familiar voices. I ask on the radio "is that Steve P and Brett Harrington?" An Affirmative response is the answer. They have just left Murrindindi and are heading directly into our path. We establish each other's heights and look out below as they pass side by side directly below. What a beautiful sight. It would have been a great photo; if only I had my camera ready.

Onwards north we go. We say good bye to the boys and are delighted to have come across some fellow pilots from the club. Not long afterwards we have Yea Township to the right. The inviting waters of the Goulburn River pass below. No matter how many times I fly over this river, it always makes me appreciate its grand beauty. In

front of us, at the top of the small mountain ridge ahead is the highlands. Not really a town but an area. There is smoke rising from the bottom of the hill. John spots a helicopter and then another. The area is scarred by a recent bushfire. As I approach I see below an approaching helicopter with a bucket hanging below. I climb higher to stay out of the way. I watch its bucket fill to its brim from the cold Goulbourn River, water overflowing, as it sways violently below. Ahead, I watch the spotter helicopter circle. Cautiously aware that we have flown above an active fire, we make haste to get out of the area; below we can see fire trucks lined up on the bush track. The fire appears almost out. However, continuous rising smoke seems to be at odds to the lack of flames. The firemen below work feverishly to ensure the fire is totally out.

It is not long before Locksley is in sight. No matter what the conditions, Locksley always is a rough ride in from the south. Yes, as we come over the ridge and onto the flat lands, the bumps begin. We notice a new runway being graded level on the site. It looks extremely large. We land on the old runway and taxi in for another quick rest. A talk with some hang gliding pilots, some back packers and an ultra-light pilot on his way to Echuca amuses us. Gee, it's great fun landing at these airports and meeting all types of people. We talk to the young beautiful back packer from Germany. She has been touring Australia for 6 months and is in her last days of holidaying here. I ring Trevor Lane to see if he is at Wharingfield, just a 10 minute fly up the road. He is not. He tells me Peter Douche is flying up to Yarrowonga as well. Apparently he put a question on the Clubs face book page to see if anybody else was going to Yarrowonga. One day I am going to remember to learn how to use the Club's face book page. I ring Ken Jellef in Yarrowonga to let him know we are on our way. I remind him to save a few sausages for myself and some salad for John. He says to hurry as he does not know if he can hold off the crowd from eating all the food. Or does he mean hold back himself?

"Both Tanargs; both beautiful I"

Onwards we go. We have a 10 knot head wind now. The northerly is warming and we expect a

bumpy ride into Yarrawonga. I always find the Locksley to Yarrawonga leg a little boring. John and I chat on the radio about some of the towns and sights below. Unusually, I am catching John. He is higher than me and I seem to have better conditions. It does not seem long before we can see Lake Mulwala in the distance. We are almost there. Or so it seems. Eventually we are close to Yarrawonga and decide to make a direct in approach for runway 01. It is not long and we are taxiing past hanger 19 and I am surprised by the large crowd in the hanger. I pick up the scent of the BBQ. "Hurry, let's park this thing"! Ken is there to welcome us and it is not long before we are joining about 50 other people for a BBQ and a feast of salads and desserts. So much food! I do not have a belly big enough to eat it all. But I will give it a go anyway.

"I follow John in to the short grass paddock come runway"

The company is great and the chatter is continuous. No sight of Peter Douche from Tyabb. I am surprised and guilty that we had not spoken before leaving. I spot George and Penny, feverishly tucking into the delights. We are entertained by George and one of his many stories. All true I am told. Peter has a free raffle on offer and we are all given door tickets. The first 28 tickets win a prize. I like my chances. Eventually with about 5 tickets to go my number is pulled out. Yeah! A set of pilot shoulder epaulets; perfect for my new role as club president. John waits for his ticket to be called out. But it never is. However, he does not seem disappointed. It appears he does not appreciate the prizes on offer. We check out Ken's new trike and admire Noel's trike also. Both Tanargs; both beautiful looking machines.

After about 3 and half hours we decide to leave. We have a short flight to a farm 10 nm outside of Wangaratta airfield. A friendly Microlight farmer, who regularly invites us to land and stay the night in his farm house, awaits our arrival. "Farmer Wayne" has a small strip which is always fun to land at. We leave Yarrawonga with the heat really turned up for us. A bumpy ride up to 4,500 feet keeps us alert. As we approach the mountain ridge near Wangaratta we see a glider, dancing

along the mountain side. One minute it is to my left, the next it is to my right. It is ridge soaring. John makes attempts to contact the glider to ensure he knows we are nearby. We both climb to stay out of his way. We cannot escape quickly enough. Again John tries to contact the glider. He is within 10 nm of the Wangaratta Airfield; surely he must be on their frequency. There is no answer. John is past him and I still feel in some form of danger. We still do not know if the pilot knows we are passing by. I try to make a wider berth, but the glider is too fast. Once past the glider we feel even more vulnerable. We now cannot see him. We curse about the lack of radio communication and make tracks as fast as we can to the nearby farm. I follow John in to the short grass paddock come runway. Wayne is there to greet us with a great big smile along with his son with his new motorbike. What a great day of flying. We cannot wait to pack the trikes down and relax with a drink and more food.

After a restful night, some bacon and eggs, we head up the road to get some fuel. It is not until 10 am before we are taxiing away from the farm house. The cow track to the paddock come runway is terrible. We can feel the heat already rising off the ground and we know we are in for a bumpy ride home. The short paddock take off is without drama. I orbit over the farm house to get some extra height before clearing the nearby range where we were preyed upon only yesterday by a local glider. The trip to Locksley is fine once we get up to 5,000 ft. The air is still cool high up. On descent at Lockley we incur the rough bumpy approach that was surely expected. With such a long runway, even in these conditions you can take as long as you want to land.

"Fuelled with an extra shot of adrenalin"

After a short break we are once again away. The temperature is expected to be 35 degrees today. It was now after 11.30 am and we still have just over 2 hours flying time to Latrobe. With the strong northerly being very active we are happy to have a tail wind for once. Over the fire we passed yesterday we could still see lots of smoke, fire trucks, lots of scorched hill sides, but no helicopters. As we neared Kinglake, we had to

descend to the new ceiling of 4,500ft; lower levels means thermals; strong thermals. Lilydale traffic on the radio is continuous. We tried to stay high as long as possible as we neared Coldstream. John seemed to be further east of Coldstream airfield following the strict neighbourly restrictions on a downwind approach for runway 35. Or was he unable to see the airfield. I did not ask. I felt confident we could be closer to the airfield and elected to make my way direct for a long downwind circuit. Unfortunately in circuit we had to be at 1500 ft. A rodeo ride past the airfield ensued on downwind. Unfortunately for me, John had made a course change and was now joining circuit on a long base above the high tension lines. I slowed to give him space. Together we "surfed" the sky, trying to maintain an accurate 1500 ft. whilst keeping plenty of space between us and the high tension lines just below. As John touches down, he warns me to be on my toes as I am in for one hell of a ride. "Bring it on"!

We taxi to some shade near the offices. Fuelled with an extra shot of adrenalin, we are on cloud nine when we get out of our cockpits. It is now above 35 degrees. Drinks, food and the use of the cleanest airfield toilets I have ever seen refresh us for the next leg to Latrobe. A good discussion with the airfields instructors entertains us for some time. On saying goodbye, a friendly Trike pilot/student, Dean, rolls up in his car and says hello. We talk for another 30 minutes and invite him to attend our next club meeting. It's now hot. Too hot! The northerly has really kicked in. I watch John take off and am not impressed with the conditions he has to experience to get off the ground: "My turn now". I wait for a lull in the wind. As expected, the lull turns to violent northerly wind as I roar down the runway. I rise quickly and continue northward until I am over Maroondah Hwy where we are allowed to make our turn. John and I climb slowly up to 7000ft. By this time we are over the power lines which cut through Bunyip State forest. I still endure thermals at 7,000 ft. but nowhere near as violent as below. The welcome site of the power stations in the distance mean we are close to home base. The airfield is quiet. Who would fly in these temperatures? As I touch down at Latrobe I make my worst landing for the weekend. A little bounce on the front nose disappoints me. Even in these conditions. As we cut our engines and disembark,

John and I shake hands to congratulate ourselves on another safe, successful adventure in our trusty 912 trikes. You just "gotta" love trike flying.





FOR SALE

Reg: T2-6123
Model: Airborne Outback XT-912
Wing: Cruze
Hours: 294, Will fly til sold.
Price: \$41,000
Included: Wing Bag, Wing cover, Trike Cover,
Radio, Headsets, Helmets, Training
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This would be a great toy for anyone who likes the more exposed feeling of flying without a pod or a first time flyer, training bars are included so you can even take instruction in it as I did and reduce the cost of your training.

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Lynx Dual headset with the inter- face included.

It has everything you need. It is brand new and has never been used or installed. Still in it's original packaging.

It cost over \$1600. asking \$1,000 for it.

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For Sale – Airborne XT912 Tundra Cruze 2008



Fantastic trike, low hours (420), great for new and experienced pilots. Short take off and landings, highly manoeuvrable. Uses less than 10 litres per hour making it a very capable cross country machine. Slower speeds are what triking is all about..

Located at Dixons Creek in Victoria. Transport can be arranged.

This trike comes with everything you need inc radio, intercom, suits, helmets etc all in EC.

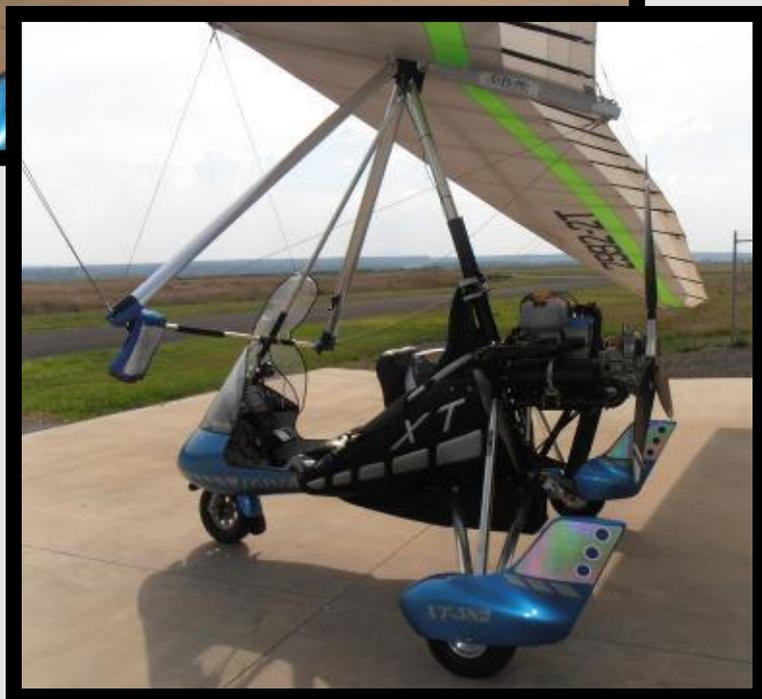
Trailer may be avail. Call or sms Brett on 0419 610 041 for details.

Price \$40,000 neg



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Airbourne XT 582, engine hours 190, with service history (will fly till sold)
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In excellent condition through-out
\$28,000 price including
Heavy duty trike trairling cover
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WANTED

Second Hand Streak 2 or Steak 2B Wing for a 582 Airborne Microlight.

If you have one you would like to sell please contact David Johnston on:

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Email: davidjohnston670@gmail.com

Club Polo Shirts



The Polo Shirts are available in Small, Medium, Large, Xlarge or XXLarge sizes and cost \$25.00 each, please add \$10.00 if postage is required.

E-mail your order to Tony and arrange post or pickup batson.tony@briggsandstratton.com.au

Pay your money to George at the Club Meeting or by Direct deposit.

Southern Microlight Club Incorporated

Useful information

Southern Microlight Club Inc. is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012

Southern Microlight Club Inc. is affiliated to the Hang Gliding Federation of Australia

If you would like to pay money into the club account for payment of membership fees, the purchase of polo shirts, or deposits for events; then please make a direct deposit to:

Account Name : Southern Microlight Club

BSB : 063109

Account No : 10405908

Please indicate your name and what you are paying for. If you do not have enough space in your banking website to put sufficient information, then please email treasurer@southernmicrolightclub.com.au with the details.



Southern

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Fun Memories

Friendship

Help

"When I am old I want memories not dreams"

Knowledge Sharing

Events

"Stop counting the years and start making the years count"

Adventure

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