

# BRISBANE VALLEY FLYER

APRIL 2026



Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield, Cressbrook-Caboonbah Road, Toogoolawah, Q'ld 4313

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Mystery pilot?



Man and Machine. Just flew in, told amazing stories and flew out.

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# NOTE

**The April meeting has  
been moved to the  
11/04/2026 due to  
Easter.**

## - Brisbane Valley Flyer -



Greetings Members,

Hello all.

Another month has come and gone, and before we know it, Christmas will be upon us again.

The past month has been much like the previous ones, with general maintenance and mowing continuing around the clubhouse and hanger. Our last meeting was well attended, and the BBQ afterwards was enjoyed by all.

As the April meeting falls on Easter Saturday (4/4/26) , it has been decided to move it back one week. The new meeting date will be **Saturday the 11/4/2026 at 10:30 am.**

We encourage everyone to come along and enjoy some fellowship with the other members.

Regards

Peter Ratcliffe

## - Brisbane Valley Flyer -

From the Editor.

Had a long day out on the Highway last week. Went up to Gympie by road to pick up an amount of Stitts POLYFIBRE consumables. Tony Kerr , the Gympie LAME is retiring and the business will be more rotary servicing in the future. Rotary wings in the Sunny Coast region certainly are the popular item. Called into Caboolture on the road home and the air was simply full of whirring. The Museum known as a WARBIRDS museum is in hibernation I was told. The showpieces still exist , but the group has nowhere to show them. The hangar has changed hands and a new operation will be based there. To the Beaufort Bomber. Still hoping but in a different guise. The group hopes to re dedicate the Museum under a different title but continue into the future.

My particular flight of fancy at the moment is canvassing if there is any interest in a self launching glider for Watts Bridge. Personally I am a fan of winch launching gliders 'cause it's so cheap. The most spectacular flight I ever made in a Blanik was 9500' from a cable break at 700'. You can't get much more economical than that. The idea of winch launching would , I fear, be unacceptable to Watts Bridge in general, so maybe a MotorFalke or a Grob G103. Having flown in both, I can assure everyone these machines create a different sort of recreational flying. A syndication maybe. For anyone who dabbles with hot rods, just imagine a 912S in place of the beetle motor in a Motorfalke.

As I was completely involved in the support act for enabling our Genetic scientist daughter to a conference in the USA, I missed the W4B Sunday 15th March. The saying used to be "every scientist needs a wife" now it's behind every Scientist, there is a good Grandparent". The point is sometimes important things happen, all on the same day. Or weekend. Our eldest daughter was a keen glider student as a High Schooler and so has kept her interest in aviation. Science is a demanding lifestyle and the freedom of flight is something she spiritually enjoys.

From photos and fb etc, looks like it was a successful day. The weather was a bit foreboding, but obviously held off just enough. When an event draws so much attention from the Regional Councilors, it has to be considered worth the effort.

# - Brisbane Valley Flyer -

A bakers dozen of problems.

1. Autumn has what sort of weather along the Queensland coast.?
2. When can visibility be very poor, but it's not raining?
3. Ever run into CAT below 10,000'. What must you do?
4. Carby ice what time of day?
5. Wind shear should be expected with which weather pattern?
6. Can NVFR be done under 8/8 cloud?
7. Queensland mine sites are everywhere out west. How far away can you see the lights at night?
8. What is one of the best things to have for a NVFR approach?
9. What do you look for when beach landing.?
10. How do you avoid collision when taxiing directly toward another aircraft?
11. Where do you look for unscheduled maintenance if working continuous crosswind landings?
12. What is special about NVFR under overcast.?

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Here is the rest of the story.

I think I have the story correct. The wood for this aircraft first flew in Queensland. It continues to fly here in Queensland and like the Origin Series it fights boredom.

Yes , it is a Boredom Fighter. Rotax powered and sure to give the pilot a thrilling flight. Who doesn't secretly want to be Billy Bishop or our own Harry Cobby. Just pretend anyhow. Except this one has a real engine. Built by the Pilot from scratch and built strong. The flying wires could pull Granny , well Ah, pull a hilux back on it's wheels. If you think I was taken with this beast ,I would say I was really taken. Sort aviation at it's purest.

## - Brisbane Valley Flyer -

Discussion from Quiz. Well as you hear from BOM, S/E flow most of the time. Runway 14 is at how many airfields on the Qld coast. Dust storms. Form a front moving through in Spring. CAT from willy willies out West. Very hard thumps and you don't know what's next, so slow down to Va. Carby ice is a nasty thing. After idling waiting for takeoff it can happen just that frightening bit after takeoff, and of course other times. Cold fronts moving through can have layers of air with almost opposite direction. Took of on 14 in a Thruster, climbed through some fierce turbulence ,then turned into wind hdg. 260" and had a gs. Of zero. Thrusters can teach you a lot of things. NVFR, go carefully. In totally with a solid Alto stratus at 10,000+. Dark as a dogs guts , but legal. Visibility miles because mine sites were visible 100 miles away. I found a BIG mudmap helped me. Example, Mareeba circuit direction is critical.

Beach landings , by choice or unavoidable all the same. Washouts and wet firm sand. You need the wettish firm sand , but you don't want the washout across the beach.

I fudged this the first time it happened. I was reminded that I was not driving a bloody Land Rover in a paddock.

When I worked in a wheel bay strong winds meant many tire changes. Airliner tyres are expensive , so my job was to swap tyres over on the rim to wear the other side down as well. The pilots did not like me pointing this out.

Last for me. NVFR sure made me work hard. Soo many small errors. The night of the solid overcast was like flying in a state of suspended animation. I know IFR pilots wouldn't worry but I am a low time day timer used to horizons. Flying into Central qld 20 years ago there weren't much to see. Just black. Was sure glad to have gauges to guide me. And a clock.

Hope this prompted some discussion.

How about some stuff you all have done . Let us know.

# - Brisbane Valley Flyer -



Recreate the heady days of the 1980s when the annual vintage aeroplane fly-in to Murwillumbah was the highlight of the year.

**ALL AIRCRAFT TYPES WELCOME**

Join the others who will be heading for Murwillumbah on the weekend of

**2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2026**

Fly/drive in Saturday and Sunday

*International Auster Pilots Club* trophy presentation

**Lions Club** Saturday evening hamburger, chips and drink \$20

Sunday breakfast hamburger or b&e roll with beverage for \$15 EFTPOS facilities.

Avgas available. Mogas by arrangement

**RSVP for catering** [austerjj@gmail.com](mailto:austerjj@gmail.com)

When will you arrive: Saturday or Sunday?

## - Brisbane Valley Flyer -

ABO . A watered down Fireman. HELL NO

A fireman who makes watering down happen.

Air Base OPERATOR. The people who keep 'em bombing. The ABO has become part of the firefighting team. A lot of the people you will see on an airfield working with Water Bombing asstte are VOLUNTEERS. These people have trained to a standard to be able to replenish the mix used on bushfire fighting when and where required. There are two types of additive to plain water and the Incident Controller will be one of the people calling for the type used. Ambient conditions have an effect on fire retardants etc so much of the decisions are made on experience.

There are full time QFS staff involved of course and they are often tasked with keeping Volunteers up to speed. Technology is alive in firefighting nowadays. Volunteers need recency training as much as anyone. The following pictures show marshalling , water on/connect and water off /disconnect drills. Unfortunately at this training we had a Fuso 7 tonne non flying tanker. Always the money.

The drills are the same and the filling equipment is as used on the day at a real fire. Just cost of aircraft is very high , so we had to wing it with the truck.

ABOs' have high vis yellow shirts and name plates. Noise is a problem. Hand signals are paramount. Like any layered operation, it takes time for a team to settle in. It's a real job. even though volunteer. It has to be right.

## - Brisbane Valley Flyer -



### Marshalling the Tanker.

Hand signals as for normal come to me. Most drivers watertank only need one actual marshalling in., but the collision risk has to be mitigated by the Marshall. Wing man is the usual on ground name. Collision can be anything. PRESS are particularly dangerous animals. Amateur drone operators have become a product of modern tech. One bloke took a photo that cost him \$64,000 when his drone impaled itself in a Air Tractor wing. Pilot to wingman to hose gang to pump. Pilot calls water off. Wingman must ensure complete disconnect and area where pilot cannot see is clear.

## - Brisbane Valley Flyer -



Add the mix. Maybe surfactant or retardant. Added to water by venturi mix in this case. Give the dose then back to full flow.

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Looks like water off here. Pumpy has to follow the shutdown so no pressure remains in the system. Impossible sometimes to get the camlocks undone if pressure is in the pipework. Usually wasting water is a bad idea too. Never enough when the heat is on.

As you can see all operators took each job in turn and all those waiting provided a severe assessment panel. Tougher than The Voice for sure.

Photos came through the QFS system and thanks to Dave Wandell , the Boss on the day for this. It's a curious system where everyone wears the same shirt and are just expected to get it done.

----- ooOoo -----

## - Brisbane Valley Flyer -

### Aircraft Books, Parts, and Tools etc.

Contact Rob Knight on mobile – 0400 89 3632

#### Tow Bars

Item	Condition	Price
Tailwheel tow bar.	Good condition	\$50.00

#### Propeller Parts

Item	Condition	Price
Propeller spacers, Assorted depths, all to fit Rotax 912 UL/ULS propeller flanges	Excellent	\$100.00 each
Spinner and propeller backing plate to suit a Kiev, 3 blade propeller, on a Rotax 912 engine flange.	Excellent	100.00

For all items, Contact Rob Knight on mobile – 0400 89 3632

Or email me at:

[kni.rob@bigpond.com](mailto:kni.rob@bigpond.com)

Wanted for AUSTER J5F. Oil pressure gauge. Old style round job, 1950's look. Small ish. 2 ½ inch approximately with British numerals.

Stitts POLYFIBRE Medium weight. Not much required for the elevators. Just slow , slow to get a hold of. Hoping someone has some left overs.

Call Mike Hetherington 0403012501, buut signal is sketchy. Please leave voice mail. Or landline 0754270827 at around 2000 hrs local. ( or 8pm) Cheers

## - Brisbane Valley Flyer -

### **Aircraft for Sale** **Kitset - Build it Yourself**

**Reduced Price**  
**\$1,480.00 neg**

#### DESCRIPTION

All of the major components needed to build your own aircraft similar to a Thruster, Cricket or MW5.

- Basic plans are included, also
- Hard to obtain 4" x 3" box section, 2 @ 4.5 metres long.
- Wing spar & lift strut material - 6 tubes of 28 dia. x 2 wall.
- 20 fibreglass ribs plus the moulds,
- 16 spar webs plus the moulds,
- 2 fibreglass flat sheets for the leading edges - 4 metres long x 1.1 metres wide.
- A ballistic parachute,
- A 4-point harness,
- Set fibreglass wheel pants, and
- More.



*Box sections and tubes*



*Support parts – Harness etc.*

**A very**  
**comprehensive**  
**kit of materials**



*Ribs, tubes, spats, etc*

Colin Thorpe. Tel: LL (07) 3200 1442,

Or Mob: 0419 758 125

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## **Aircraft Grade Bolts for Sale**

**Aircraft AN Bolts - \$500**

AN3, AN4 & AN5 bolts, all bagged  
- 500 bolts in total.

Today's cost – approximately **\$5,500**

A list can be supplied if required

**Contact Colin Thorpe –**

**0419 758 125**



## - Brisbane Valley Flyer -

### **Sky Dart Single Seat Ultralight for Sale.**

**\$4,500.00 NEG**

A single seat, ultralight, Taildragger. Built in 1987, this aircraft has had a single owner for the past 18 years, and is only now I am regretfully releasing it again for sale. I also have a Teenie II and am building another ultralight so I need the space.



*The landed Sky Dart III rolling through at YFRH Forest Hill*

TTIS airframe is 311 hours, and the engine, TTIS 312 – is just 1 hour more. Up-to-date logbooks available. 2 X 20 litres tank capacity. To be sold with new annuals completed.

It is easy to fly (for a taildragger), and a great way to accumulate cheap flying hours.

Call me to view, Bob Hyam,  
Telephone mobile 0418 786 496 or  
Landline – 07 5426 8983, or  
Email: [bobhyam@gmail.com](mailto:bobhyam@gmail.com)



*Landed at McMaster Field after my flight back from Cooma just West of Canberra. In the cockpit with me is GeeBee, my dog*

### **Single Seat T84 Thruster, disassembled and ready for rebuild.**

I have a T84 single seat Thruster project in my hanger at Watts bridge.

The fuselage is on its undercarriage, the wing assemblies are folded up and the skins are with them.

Included is a fully rebuilt Rotax 503 dual ignition engine and propeller.

And, most importantly – the aircraft logbook!

Asking price **Make an offer**

Contact John Innes on **0417 643 610**

- Brisbane Valley Flyer -

**For Sale**

**Foxcon Terrier T100**

This aircraft has not flown for a few years and need work to return to airworthy condition

Asking price **Make a reasonable offer**

Contact John Innes on **0417 643 610**