



# Australian Vintage Aeroplane News

Newsletter of Queensland Vintage Aeroplane Group / Australian Flying Museum Inc.



Above: The Dakota is always a people-magnet at Mareeba Airshow and the engine-run is a feature of the event. (Photo—C D Smith).

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## Message from the Editor:

- Have you something to share with other members?
- Would you like to contribute to **your** newsletter?
- Do you have something to sell?

Please send your articles, photos and classifieds to:

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## Membership Matters

- If you know someone who would like to join, there is an **on-line membership form** on our web-site.
- If you refer a new Full Member to the Group, we will give you a **stainless steel insulated mug** in return!

Please note the new  
QVAG web-site address—  
[www.qvag.com.au](http://www.qvag.com.au)

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## FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

G'day all, welcome to the new QVAG Financial Year and with that comes the need to renew your membership. The year has got off to a good start with a high level of membership renewals occurring.

In a way it was a bit of a test for the new committee; we were concerned that the problems that occurred earlier in the year would have a very pronounced effect of numbers, however I am glad to report that so far that hasn't been the case.

As most of you know, the Festival of Flight won't be held this year, however the airfield will be conducting the "Gathering of Eagles" on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> August. QVAG is strongly backing the concept embodied in the "Gathering" because it provides the perfect opportunity for QVAG members to gather in and around the clubhouse and chew the rag with other members about that passion – AVIATION!

So please can we have a max effort by members and former members to attend this day, its special as it is a day we can remember past QVAG members who have passed on and left this world. I am expecting that the numbers of recreation/modern aeroplanes will be similar to the event earlier in the year (130) so with 50-60 vintage/Warbirds this has the potential to be a major "must attend" event and a great opportunity to renew old friendships.

I am proud of the fact that I joined QVAG in 1976 (membership number 33) and have been a member ever since. I won't claim to hold the record for the longest continuous membership because I can think of a few members that pip me by a year. I can't even claim that I am the member who is

most passionate about old aeroplanes because even though my level of passion is high, I know quite a few members who either equal or exceed that level of passion.

I am really stuck for laying claim to any records, so I will claim that I am the only member who owns two Austers (VH-BGU and VH-KSK).

Speaking of Austers, earlier today (at the first Sunday of the month gathering at the QVAG clubhouse), I took a person who once owned a Tiger and an Auster for a few circuits. Now I can hear the crowd saying, "so what's so special about that?"

Well, this person flew ME-109's in 1944 and you guessed it, he flew for the losing side; after the war, he migrated to South Africa and subsequently to Australia.

Also at today's "Gathering" a former QVAG member, John Hornibrooke and his wife flew in in their Piper Tripacer VH-SRD. I haven't spoken to John for over a decade, so a very pleasant hour was spent talking to John and his better half. John is enthusiastic about the concept of having the clubhouse open on

the first Sunday of the month and I suspect he will be a semi-regular participant at these events.

More Watts Bridge news is that QVAG committeemen, Matt Baker and Craig Thomsen have joined the Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield Association as full members because they want to reactivate the aero-modelling strip and fly their models safely at the field.

These two have also volunteered to assist the airfield association with the maintenance of the tractors and mowers. Matt and Craig are both diesel fitter/mechanics and feel that they have much to offer in that department. Well done Matt and Craig!

Finally mark on your calendars the first Sunday in December for the QVAG Christmas Party, more on that and the AGM in future newsletters.

**Cheers**  
**Ross Stenhouse**  
**President**

### 2011 QVAG / AFM Inc. Committee

<b>President:</b>	<b>Ross Stenhouse</b>
<b>Vice President:</b>	<b>Vacant</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Peter Biddle</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Phill Ridley</b>
<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Craig Thomsen, Carron Phillips</b>
<b>Membership Officer:</b>	<b>Carron Phillips</b>
<b>Website Liaison Officer:</b>	<b>Peter Biddle</b>
<b>Public Relations Officer:</b>	<b>TBA</b>
<b>AVAN Editor:</b>	<b>Christian Smith</b>
<b>Events Coordinators:</b>	<b>Positions Vacant</b>

**WBMA Airfield Council Representative: Vacant at this point in time.**



## EDITORIAL

G'day again, we've had a pretty short turn-around this time so I've been caught a bit short of material but hopefully as the newsletter schedule settles into a regular rhythm again it will allow more time for contributions to arrive for future issues.

You'll notice that the e-mail address for contributions (on the cover page) has changed and you are welcome to send your material direct to me.

Please consider contributing—I simply don't have the time these days to source material as I am on the road and out of town regularly with my job.

Whilst I do occasionally spot interesting aircraft in the regional areas (and will report on them), in reality there's not a huge amount of vintage aircraft active in North Queensland—and I have always felt that a newsletter should be primarily the product of the Club members, featuring their own aircraft and stories above any "generic" material from outside. Over to you ...

**Regards,  
Christian Smith**



**Above: Accommodation for the commentators was fairly basic!**

## MAREEBA AIRSHOW (NQ WARBIRDS)

The annual NQ Warbirds Mareeba Airshow was held on Sunday 12th August. Glorious winter weather made for a great flying and viewing day and a fair-sized crowd attended, along with a number of GA and RA-Aus fly-in arrivals.

The usual restored and classic vehicle displays added to the spectacle, with all of the NQ Warbirds collection flying at various times throughout the day.

A visiting T-28 Trojan from Toowoomba joined Murray Moule's example for a formation flight with Mike Spaulding's Kittyhawk. The two Winjeels, Nanchang, Chipmunk and Harvard all gave displays as well.

The Corsair fuselage was also on display, illustrating the progress already made on this project but also highlighting the still-lengthy job ahead.

An engine run by the static Dakota "Jungle Skippers" created a cloud of smoke but also a satisfying rumble as both engines burst into life. It would be great to see this old girl back in the air again!

**Christian Smith**



**Above: A rumbling radial and plenty of smoke on start-up—the Winjeel fires up.**



**Above: Section of the crowd with Mike Spaulding's P-40 Kittyhawk on the background.**



**Above: "Ahh, Security ... we have a situation here—armed intruder on the airfield!"**



**Above: Trojan wipe-down.**

## MAREEBA AIRSHOW (NQ WARBIRDS)

Right: Mike Spaulding taxis his P-40 Kittyhawk prior to its handling display.



Left: T-6 Harvard owned by NQ Warbirds taxis along the crowd-line.

Right: de Havilland Chipmunk owned by NQ Warbirds fires up for another local sortie.



Left: Cairns businessman Murray Moule in his T-28 Trojan, which is based at Mareeba and operates with NQ Warbirds.

## MAREEBA AIRSHOW (NQ WARBIRDS)



Left: Beautifully-restored Yak-18T owned by Mark McDonald of Atherton. Mark gave a polished display, putting the Yak through its paces for the appreciative crowd.

Right: NQ Warbirds Nanchang at rest.



Left: NQ Warbirds Corsair project showing progress on the fuselage so far.

Right: Toowoomba-based T-28 Trojan “Miss Stress” visited Mareeba for the event.



All photos this article—C D Smith.

## QVAG CLUBHOUSE HISTORY

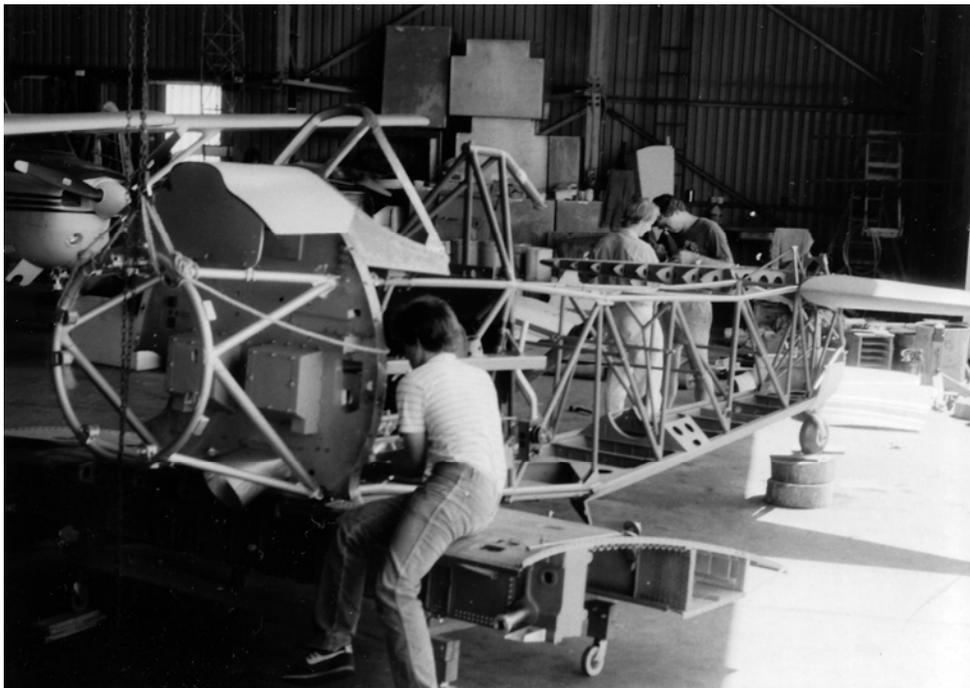


The photo above shows part of the RAAF buildings at Archerfield during the late 1940's early 1950's. Beatty Rd is the road running through the photo. The buildings were in the SE corner of the airfield and the QVAG/AFM building is in that group. Have a look at the <http://www.wattsbridgehistory.com/QVAGclubhouse.html> , there is a drawing in there showing the layout of the buildings. Our building is No. 25.



The AFM Museum Building at Watts Bridge was originally part of the RAAF establishment at Archerfield. During the early 1950's it was used by 23 City of Brisbane SQN. The photo below is believed to be shot inside that building and helps put some context around the its use. It was transported from Archerfield to Willawong, Brisbane where for many years it was used as a house. QVAF/AFM were gifted the building by Atlas House Removals who also transported the building from the Willawong site to its current location at Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield.

## MATT DENNING'S BOOMERANG



Above: A photo of a young Matt Denning getting his Boomerang project into shape for display at an airshow at Archerfield in the 1980's. Matt subsequently completed the Boomerang project to flying condition and flew it for quite a number of years doing handling displays at various air shows. QVAG can lay claim to fostering an environment whereby members were morally supported by other members and thus the member achieved great things. As part of his project, Matt became internationally recognised as a world expert on the engineering aspects of Boomerang aircraft.



Below: Another photo of Matt Denning and his Boomerang taken about 15 years later than the "under construction" shot. Here we have the completed aeroplane and Matt is answering questions from the spectators at a QVAG Festival of Flight event at Watts Bridge. Matt's CAC-13 Boomerang was delivered to the RAAF in May 1946 and struck off charge in 1948. Matt started to restore "Suzy-Q" back in 1975 and it made its first post-restoration flight 14<sup>th</sup> February 2003 at Toowoomba - that's a 28 year restoration. Matt sold his aeroplane to Temora Aviation Museum in 2006. Matt's tenacity with this restoration shows just what huge effort it can be to restore a complete old aeroplane. It also shows that you don't need to be rich to restore, just dedicated. *(Ross Stenhouse)*

## WELL, WHAT CAME OVER ME, I OWN AN AUSTER!

Well, I was the proud owner of an Auster and the habit of years of saying "It's a cold night – throw another Auster on the fire" would have to be broken. Shame, I enjoyed scoffing off at Austers, the Steel Aeroplane, not a real lot to burn.

On to the more serious side of owning an Auster, over the years I had heard all the stories about Austers and how difficult they can be to land.

To some extent, I wasn't all that sure if this was a rumour put about by Auster drivers to impress other pilots or if it was true. The day was rapidly approaching when I would have to do it myself and I must confess I felt a bit nervous about the landing bit.

The big day arrived, VH-BGU, a J5B was to be my test of courage. I have hundreds of hours flying my trusty Tiger Moth VH-JRS so hopefully this experience would stand me in good stead.

Flying a Tiger Moth is a pretty easy thing once you get used to it, no flaps to worry about, stall speed of about 40 knots and a climb speed of 55-60 knots and cruise at 1920RPM, that's it. Taxiing a Tiger in windy conditions can require a bit of thought and a lot of care. Cross-wind

landings in the Tiger are always a challenge and the cross wind limit of 10 knots is a pretty hard limit.

Want to lose height in a hurry on finals in a Tiger, a bit of side-slipping and that excess height is easily taken care of. On the weight and balance side, only one passenger and they sit over the C of G so no significant balance issues to consider, same for fuel. Full fuel, max passengers is not an issue either.

Now the Auster has three-stages of manual flap, it has brakes and VH-BGU has a Gipsy Major engine. VH-BGU has a fully castoring tail wheel and originally this was a concern because I haven't had any experience with that sort of tail wheel.

I wondered how I was going to tame my fears, would the castoring tail wheel make the aeroplane difficult on the final section of the landing roll?

My approach to addressing those fears was to do a few fast taxiing runs to get the "feel" of the aeroplane on the ground. With the benefit of hindsight I think taxi runs were a good move. They gave me confidence that once on the ground this aeroplane was pretty tame.

The book says to climb the J5B at 55 knots and use the first stage of flap for take off. In most aeroplanes take-offs aren't an issue and those years of flying the Tiger had made the use of rudder an automatic response.

The book also says that with 3 stages of flap deployed, the stall speed is 28 knots. That seems mighty low for someone who has never flown an aeroplane under 40 knots, the thought under 40 knots baulked me a little.

The big day arrived; take-off had been performed and was uneventful. I soon was flying downwind at 85 knots. My Auster has a max flap extension speed of 55 knots and once I was on late final was when I started to notice the difference with the Tiger Moth, the Auster is far less draggy and is much more difficult to slow down to 55 knots to put out the first stage of flap.

Still by exercising a high degree of stick and rudder skills 55 knots was achieved without issue, soon, I was on finals and time to put out second stage of flap at 45 knots.

Slowing down further to about 40 knots; I soon reached the time to put out that third stage of flap. The effect of third stage of flap is quite pronounced; the



## WELL, WHAT CAME OVER ME, I OWN AN AUSTER!

third stage is drag flap and necessitates a pronounced increase in power.

Back in my student days, my instructor used to say, "Regulate height with power and speed with attitude" and with that thought guiding my thinking I continued my approach, speed was now about 35 knots as we passed over the fence and the landing was uneventful.

A sense of achievement was felt as I had done my first Auster landing and lived to tell the tale. The spooks had been put to bed. I have done many more landings since that time with the Auster and can confirm that Austers are a bit tricky to land and have a tendency to float down the runway.

I have tried flapless approaches, one stage of flap landings and two stages of flap landings. My preference is for a full flap landing, get the speeds correct and once on the ground dump the flap and the old girl just doesn't want to fly.

Putting the landings to one side, I must confess that I find the Auster a great plane to fly. The controls are light, responsive and balanced and its easy to like this aeroplane. It doesn't deserve the bad reputation it has and like a pet bulldog, its appearance grows on you.

However for local flying and taking your mates for a short joyride, the Tiger Moth is still King.

**Ross Stenhouse**



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## MAREEBA AIRSHOW (NQ WARBIRDS)



Above: Not a genuine Warbird but this brand-new 100% Spitfire replica, built by Paul Beattie and owned by Pat English of Cairns, is cause for a double-take. There's no Merlin up front but Pat says it is strong enough to take one, if your wallet is deep enough to feed it! (Photo—C D Smith).

## Calendar of Events 2012

Date	Event	Venue
Saturday 25 August	Gathering of Eagles fly-in, in association with WBMA	Watts Bridge airfield
Saturday 1 Sept 1000hrs	QVAG/AFM Committee meeting	QVAG clubhouse, Watts Bridge
Sunday 2 Sept 1000hrs	Morning tea	QVAG clubhouse, Watts Bridge
Saturday 8 Sept	Wings Over Warwick Refer to <a href="http://qraa.info/">http://qraa.info/</a>	Warwick
13 – 16 September	AusFly—refer to <a href="http://www.ausfly.com.au/">http://www.ausfly.com.au/</a>	Narromine
Saturday 6 October 1000hrs	QVAG/AFM Committee meeting	QVAG clubhouse, Watts Bridge
Sunday 7 October 0800hrs	Working bee	QVAG clubhouse, Watts Bridge
Sunday 7 October 1100hrs	QVAG/AFM Annual General Meeting	QVAG clubhouse, Watts Bridge
27 – 28 October	Wings of Yesteryear fly-in in conjunction with the Kingaroy Peanut Festival (to be confirmed)	Kingaroy Airport.
Saturday 3 November 1000hrs	QVAG/AFM Committee meeting	QVAG clubhouse, Watts Bridge
Sunday 4 November 1000hrs	Morning tea	QVAG clubhouse, Watts Bridge
Saturday 1 December 1000hrs	QVAG/AFM Committee meeting	QVAG clubhouse, Watts Bridge
Sunday 2 December 1200hrs	QVAG/AFM Xmas lunch	QVAG clubhouse, Watts Bridge





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**MAREEBA AIRSHOW (NQ WARBIRDS)**



Above: This amateur-built Skybolt was seen in the GA line-up at the recent NQ Warbirds Mareeba Airshow. (Photo—C D Smith).

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**\*\*\*\*\* Classified advertisements are free to members! \*\*\*\*\***