

Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield Incorporated.

Vol 1/98

WATT'S NEWS



Wirriways from 5 SQN RAAF were based at Watts Bridge during WW2, Photograph here are two that were at Watts Bridge '97.

**A Journal Devoted to the development and Operation of
Watts Bridge War Memorial Airfield**

The Airfield with a Past and a Future

Watts Bridge Airfield is located in the Brisbane Valley 4 NM east of Toogoolawah
Lat 27.06S Long 152.26E

The President's Thoughts

Well, here it is at last, we have finally managed to produce a newsletter for the airfield. It will develop over time into an interesting journal of news, interesting stories and other tit bits about Ultralight Aircraft, Vintage Aircraft, Gliders and Gyrocopters. We will be looking for photographs and stories, so how about helping out.

Of course we will be putting in a good deal about what's happening at the airfield. We have set ourselves a target to produce this journal 3 times a year. I see that with such a diverse membership in the association, we need a means of communicating between members.

The association has a very secure future unlike some other airfields, its not threatened with a fly-over through the airfield, its not stuck with a short runway and a salt laden corrosive atmosphere, its not privately owned and about to have expensive landing charges and about to face the possibility of a hefty increase in changes.

Rather its picturesque, with large runways including a crosswind runway. It has a friendly atmosphere. Its Watts Bridge, the airfield with an interesting wartime past and a exciting future. My particular interest is in vintage aviation with a more than passing interest in gliding. You couldn't say I am a big fan of ultralights or gyro's. However after years of sharing the airfield with these types of aircraft, I have learnt that their pilots love flying, just like I do and they like 'chew the rag' about all forms of aviation, just like me.

Over the years, I have seen the place grow from no buildings to 3 hangars with another 3 underway, a operations building for the vintage aircraft group, a septic toilet and shower block, a big shade shelter and emergency aircraft accommodation and a bore for water. I guess with my interest being with the Queensland Vintage Aeroplane Group Inc, the arrival of the QVAG operations building was quite a thrill. This building's purpose is to house the operations of QVAG and also to house an aviation museum. The building is far from finished, the most obvious change will be a large covered verandah to be built on the front of the building.

Moves are underway to speed up the leasing process, this process involves the Esk Shire Council. We are hoping that we can get our end underway and the signed lease documentation to the council within 3 weeks of receipt of the deposit. Hopefully the council will take less than a month after that. That's our target, and we are working hard to meet it.!

Ross Stenhouse - President

Recent Progress

Work has commenced on the filling the spoon drains, this should be completed within a few weeks, however we still won't be able to use the full length of the runway until the diversion road is built.

An underground pipe was laid from the bore to the toilet block. We still have to connect it to the tank. This should happen within the next month or so.

Conduit was laid connecting Hangar # 1, the QVAG Ops building and the toilet block. Power cables were laid in that conduit between the three buildings, between Hangar #1 and the QVAG building a 100volt PA line and a telephone line was also installed. This will allow these three buildings to be easily connected to the mains power when it arrives shortly. Imaging having a pressure pump feeding the toilet block from the tank so you can have a decent shower, there is a small electric water heater in shower block, quite capable of supplying warm water for a few showers over a normal weekend.

Membership Renewal Time

Have you done yours yet?

The annual membership
renewal fee is \$40

send to
WBMA

**c/- 15 Timbarra Crescent.
Jindalee 4074**

A Welcome from the Secretary

Hi Fellow Members,

Amongst a lot of positive moves over the last few months - this is another. For a long time the Committee has recognised our biggest lack as being communication with the members, letting you know what is happening, enabling you to be an involved member of the airfield rather than just a user of the airfield.

A big hiccup of course is cost of distributing a newsletter to a large membership. We simply have not had the money and in fact have barely been able to keep square with the essential accounts - lease, rates, insurance etc. To this end we all owe a deep debt to individual Association members who have dug into their pockets with either formal loans or short term advances to ease us through cash flow bottlenecks.

So, what has been going on at Watts ? Read on and find out!

Tony Hayes Honorary Secretary
Ph (07) 5423 1963

AIRFIELD DEVELOPMENT

A few months ago four years work came to a conclusion when our revised Development Plan was unanimously accepted by Esk Council and Town Planning Consent Approval was given for future development under sub-sub-leases.

A main objective is still to bring the airfield back to an entire parcel of land with original length runways once more. This will involve the closure of Silverleaves Rd and to do this we will require a period of time to demonstrate more buildings going up and consequent increasing importance of the airfield to the local area economy. In that manner we will be able to enlist local political help and pressure to achieve our aims.

POWER SUPPLY

Electricity is vital for growth on the airfield, but, it has been prohibitively expensive to bring 3 phase power to us (about \$45,000). This has now been resolved due to the generosity of Gus de Laat and Ted Seymour who offered a deal

with the Association and have done the leg work.

On present indications, by the time you read this we should have power on the airfield. This will have been routed so that it does not obstruct the approaches to any of the runways due to negotiations with local land owners. Terminating near the present Shelter, we then have a central location from which to distribute to the various airfield development areas.

The deal made was Gus and Ted paying ten years in advance for Commercial and Air Chalet sites but supplying power now instead of cash. The power therefore will belong to the Association, but even then usage guarantees are being under-written by Gus and Ted. A truly great contribution which I am sure you will all endorse with your personal thanks to two great guys.

OTHER DEVELOPMENT

Major projects are again driven by Gus de Laat. Gus's next priority is a central, permanent fuel supply for both aircraft and cars. Several types of fuel will be available plus oils and a small shop for general requisites, bread, milk etc. This will be followed by a Restaurant/Bistro complex which includes in its design a corner for use by Groups and Clubs to supply their own catering at events, backed by the resources of the Bistro (no more running out of food and drink). The Bistro complex will also include motel style units and a bunkhouse for short or longer term stays.

WHAT'S UP FOR GRABS ?

Heaps, and there are a number of attractive 'start-up' offers plus the opportunity for 'dress circle' locations if you are quick. Development plans will be on display at the Annual General Meeting in September (see notice enclosed).

The main factor of development at Watts is security of tenure for a whole range of people with different sized pockets. We wanted to get right away from the usual situation of clubs and businesses becoming more successful and then being priced out and held at subsistence level. At Watts you will be able to put your increasing success into better facilities and not have hungry landlords steadily gobbling your yearly surplus - because YOU are one of the landlords.

So, you can camp or caravan in the *Camping Area* for free; you can hire bunkhouse or

motel style units in the *Bistro Complex* when that is built over the next year; you can rent and develop your own site in the *Long Term Caravan Park* at \$7 per week for a minimum of 3 months and lower cost for up-front longer term deals (1 TAKEN); if you want something a bit more substantial then you can lease a 30 x 15 mtr *Air Chalet Site* for 30 x 30 years at \$500 per year and put up a week-ender and small hangar with road and taxi ways to your doors (5 TAKEN); or you can put up your own larger hangar in the *Hangar Area* at \$1.25 per sq mtr per year, taking only the space you need and off-setting your investment against rental of space to other members if you wish (6 TAKEN)

If you are into business then we have several choices: *Large Commercial Sites* serviced by taxiways, roads and direct frontage to aircraft parking areas - 2000 sq mtrs at \$2,000 per year on 30 x 30 year lease (3 TAKEN), or, (Just Released) *Smaller Commercial Sites* at 1100 sq mtrs at \$1430 per year on 30 x 30 year leases, serviced by roads and with direct aircraft parking area frontage. Or, we have sites between the Shelter and Hangar Area between 500 and 350 sq mtrs at \$3 per sq mtr per year on 30 x 30 year lease for development of offices, school and business premises etc.

Plus, of course, you can just be a member and fly!

CLUB AND GROUP NEWS.

VINTAGE. Activity has increased via 'no particular reason' fly-ins being held between the major annual fly-ins. In itself the latter has now established as a major National event and each year see's it just get bigger and better. The next one is the last week-end in August 1999 - do not miss it.

ULTRALIGHTS. The QUA now have a very visible presence on the airfield in the form of their own hangar - which they promptly filled and are now going to extend. John and Tany McCarron built their hangar at the same time as QUA (a joint effort actually) which was also promptly filled, so they will be building a second hangar shortly. The main QUA annual fly-in and competition continues to grow into the largest of its kind in the country.

A number of the new permanent resident aircraft at the airfield are 'refugees' from

Kooralbyn, where the main ultralight base and school was cut off from the airfield. A warm welcome to those new members and a first demonstration of an important part of Watts' future - a refuge for all as various pressures close other airfields to us.

BVLAC, the ultralight flying school on the airfield, has broadened activity to include sales and major re-builds. The flying side continues to attract most of it's trade from interstate and overseas (UK, Germany, NZ, PNG, Philippines etc so far). BVLAC also acts as central base and co-ordinator for the Thruster Operator Support Group which in turn is attracting and increasing flow of visiting pilots from all over Australia.

GLIDING. The Gliding club has stepped up frequency of visits to monthly and normally operate the third weekend of the month. Successful joint operations were recently held with the Jondaryan gliding club who also had the opportunity of sampling soaring on the ridge beside the airfield, in addition to thermals. The gliding operation has bedded in well at Watts - particularly as the gliders mainly operate at many thousands of feet, miles from the airfield - to the extent that even when there is a big turn-out you would not think there was much of a gliding operation going on at all.

GYROCRAFT. The Gyro club goes from strength to strength with major training activity on the second weekend of the month. Operations are steadily evolving, particularly with the introduction of two seat trainers which has significantly reduced the amount of 'strip running' required along the runway. The towed gyro glider now operates mainly on the cross runway for the time being to allow recovery of surface wear on the main runway. Gyro usage of the airfield has also expanded into some mid-week operation, primarily due to the emergence of commercial gyro training schools.

AEROMODELLING. The Aeromodelling club, after an industrious start last year building their 'mini airfield' within the main airfield, have gone into recess temporarily due to shortage of membership. A bit of a drive is now going on to drum up new members local to the airfield; plus a Samford group have a security of tenure problem and are expressing interest in moving over; plus the State and National

Aeromodelling control groups may also be interested in investing in the airfield. Radio controlled aeromodelling has proven to be no problem to 'full size' users - rather the reverse, with some full size disciplines invading the aeromodellers airspace within the confines of the SW corner boundary of the airfield adjacent to the entry road. No reason why we cannot all get on together and every reason why we should. Aeromodellers are pushed off flying grounds faster than full size, yet will do much to promote the airfield as being accessible to youngsters starting in aviation and attracting more visitors to support the local economy. How many of us started with at least a dabble in aeromodelling ?

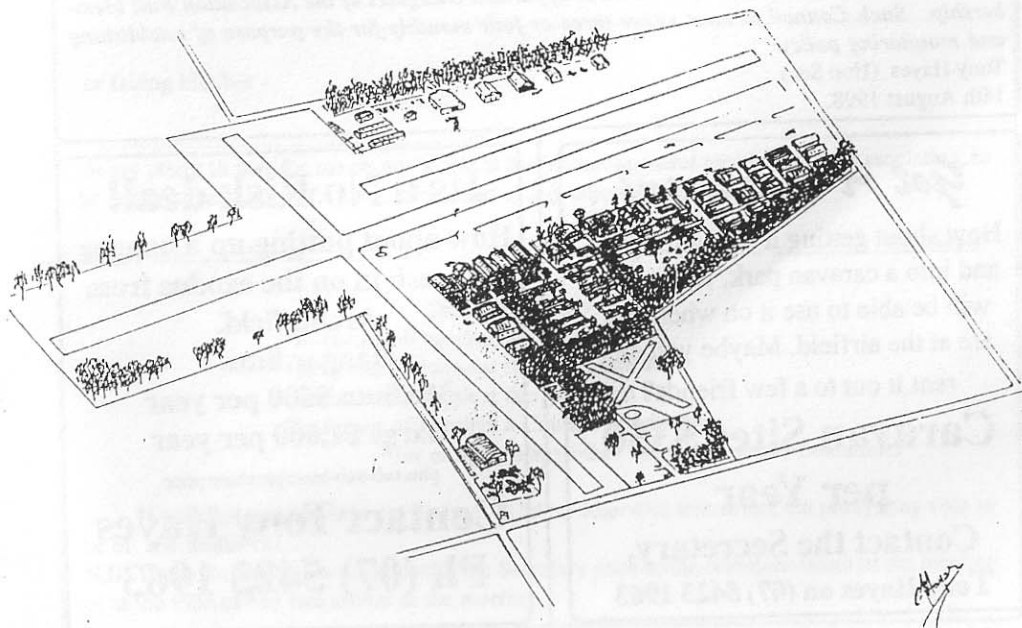
G.A. The Queensland Aero Club continue to hold their club competitions on a weekend second monthly and G.A. flying schools continue using Watts as a touch and go point for NavEx's and en-route forced landing checks. We are also

seeing an increasing trend of people ringing in to see if they may visit and have a picnic - spend a few hours on a really relaxing airfield, and that is what Watts is about while so many others are just cold, hustle and bustle.

RAAF. Activity has also stepped up recently with now two rather than just one Caribou coming in at a time for night flying training. We have also had requests for day operations and these have included combined operations with the Army (and U.S. Marines) on parachute dropping in various forms - usually to coincide with major military exercises. The military connection could be quite important to us when we come to big ticket items such as re-instating the runways to full length. Willingness to co-operate was evidenced by Amberley providing a Caribou for static display at the airfield's Public Open Day.

Artist's Impression of Watts Bridge Airfield at full development

drawn by Tony Hayes



NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
WATTS BRIDGE AIRFIELD -SUNDAY 13TH
SEPTEMBER 1998

QVAG Operations Building.

12 noon.

The annual general meeting of the Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield Inc will be held at the venue and time given above.

The purpose of the meeting is to transact required business to maintain incorporation, hear reports of Office Bearers, elect new office bearers, accept Home Base Group Delegate appointments, consider and vote upon Special Resolutions, and discuss the future of the airfield.

All members are urged to attend and we welcome nominations for the Committee of Management for persons with enthusiasm and skills to participate in managing the airfield's growing success.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS.

1. That the Constitution be changed to allow a committee meeting of the Association to operate on a quorum of 5 persons who have been duly elected by the membership or appointed as Delegates by Home Base Groups.
2. That the Constitution be changed to introduce a Junior Membership category.
3. That the Constitution be changed to permit a reduced membership fee or category for persons whose activity or business is not consequent to the operation of full sized aircraft.

NOTICE OF DISCUSSION POINT.

That the membership apply advanced consideration to a major change of the Constitution for Special Resolution at a future time - that the Committee of Management be reduced to seven appointed persons for on-going management of the airfield, and this committee be steered by a Watts Bridge Council comprising the Management Committee and three appointed Delegates of the Home Base Groups and three appointed Delegates of the Association Full Membership. Such Council to meet either three or four monthly for the purpose of establishing and monitoring policy.

Tony Hayes (Hon Sec)

14th August 1998.

Got A Caravan?

How about getting it out of the yard and into a caravan park, where you will be able to use it on when you are at the airfield. Maybe you can rent it out to a few friends?

Caravan Sites \$350
per Year

Contact the Secretary,
Tony Hayes on (07) 5423 1963

Its a No Risk deal!

How about putting up a hangar
and cash in on the exodus from
Archerfield.

Hangar Sites :

Medium \$500 per year

Large \$1,000 per year

plus sub-sub-lease purchase price

Contact Tony Hayes
Ph (07) 5423 1963

For Sale/Wanted

For Sale **Thorp T18 VH-ACE** 150kts 35l/h ETR approx 1530hrs For details Ph (07) 5547 7016 or fax (07) 5547 7599 ask for Gunhild or Armin

Management Committee Members

President -	Ross Stenhouse 15 Timbarra Crescent, Jindalee, Brisbane 4074 Ph (07) 376 558 Fax 3407 4607 Email rs037@energex.com.au		
Secretary	Tony Hayes PO Box 98, Toogoolawah 4313 Ph/Fax (07) 5423 1963		
Treasurer	Rob Pike		
Property	Ross Stenhouse		
Committee	Gus De Latt	Shane Winter	Matt Baker
Members	Ted Seymour	Terry Zadow	Bob Gray
	Craig Thomsen	Hans Oerlemans	

WATTS BRIDGE MEMORIAL AIRFIELD INC VOTING PROXY FORM.

I,of.....

being a member of the above named Association hereby appoint -

.....of.....

or failing him/her -

.....of.....

as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the (annual) general meeting of the Association, to be held on the.....day of.....,19... and at any adjournment thereof.

Signed this.....day of.....,19... ..Signature

This form is to be used

*in favour of/*against the resolution #1

*in favour of/*against the resolution #2

*in favour of/*against the resolution #3

*in favour of/*against a Council in principle

*for or against any other vote as the proxy determines

*Strike out whichever is not desired. (Unless otherwise instructed, the proxy may vote as he or she thinks fit).

N.B. Proxy forms must be lodged with the Secretary prior to the commencement of the meeting or at the time of any late arrival at the meeting.

Watts Bridge War Memorial Airfield

“The Airfield with a Past and a Future.”

**If undelivered, please return to
15 Timbarra Crescent,
Jindalee, Brisbane 4074**