

WATTS NEWS

A newsletter issued by the Watts Bridge Memorial Flying Field Air Chalet and Commercial Owners Group

November 2002

Welcome to newsletter No.2

This newsletter has been kindly sponsored by Jeff Underhill and this is appreciated. You will notice also that a Personality Profile segment has been added. Rodney Mill was a most reluctant icebreaker here (thanks Rod). As we publish a little in each issue about our group members it should build on what is already becoming a cohesive group. The hope is that members will be prepared to share something

of their background with the rest of us through 'Personality Profile'. Also you will notice 'Memory Lane' segments from what appears to be a most interesting past (our thanks to Gus). Naturally everyone is invited to contribute to our newsletter.

Mike Nelson ph 33599018

Email: mikejanelson@powerup.com.au

Watts Bridge Airfield Project Committee update

A meeting was held on Thursday October 3 that presented the second stage of the program. The preliminary draft was presented. Those present were representatives from the Esk Shire Council, Joan Burke and Warren Oxnam, The Southeast Queensland Water Corporation, Greg Steel, The Brisbane Valley Tourist Association, Julianne Creed, The Executive Officer of the Ipswich Area Consultative Committee Cindy Ford, Watts Bridge Airfield Representative Gus de Laat and WBMA President Ian Perkins.

After the draft presentation a timeline program was proposed. The dates are given below:

Sunday December 1 at 4.30pm at Watts Bridge: Presentation and discussion with WBMA Management Committee.

6.30pm: BBQ followed by a presentation to members of WBMA, Executive members of Ramblers and Aviation Clubs, participants in Business and Tourism workshops and SEQWC. The presentation will be followed by a general question/answer session.

Monday December 2 at 10.am Esk Shire Council/SEQWC presentation at the Esk Shire Council Committee Meeting Room. This will involve Councillors and Senior Officers and representatives from SEQWC, WBMA, Ramblers and IRACC. Distribution date of the final report is expected to be early in January.

Summary of Management Committee meetings

Sunday September 8

Tanys McCarron is working towards the development of a WBMA website.

Liability issues were raised regarding the QVAG event. Subsequent advice was given to all groups that Liz Cook was developing airfield protocols and procedures. (with input from all airfield groups). Once these are developed, all group events organizers should comply to reduce liability issues.

Bill Finlen believes that the Works Committee report circulated by Ross Stenhouse should become an important part of the business plan. Thanks to Jeff Underhill for the donation of the roller and thanks also to Peter Freeman for transporting it.

Tuesday October 15

The meeting was held at the Jets Football Club North Ipswich. Content of this meeting involved operating issues such as:

the changing responsibilities of management surveys and the need for professional approval of WB building plans

letters affirming site compliance where needed.

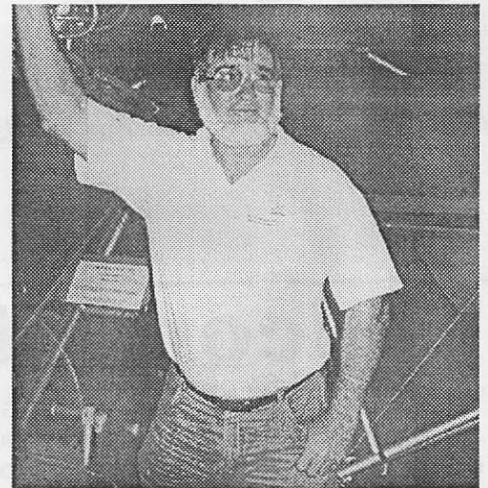
The Committee will write to the owners of damaged chalet sites requesting that existing debris be removed so that further damage is not incurred within the area with the approaching storm season

The Development Control Plan, and the Audit Progress Report were both approved.

Personality Profile: Rodney Mill

Rod's love of flying machines began as a boy. Back then it was control-line models. His passion (other than Noelene) took him through to radio-control models and finally, restoration of vintage Thruster ultralights. Of recent years Rod has developed an interest in that flying oddity, the Flying Flea. His building and engineering skills are well known. One can only speculate on what might finally emerge from Air Chalet Hangar number 8.

For 36 years Rod has been a refinery operator at BP Bulwer Island. Currently his position is that of senior controller/operator. Married for 34 years Rod and Noelene have three daughters who occasionally have been known to make disparaging remarks about big toys for big boys.



Summary of Air Chalet and Commercial Owners meeting Sunday October 13

Rodney Mill opened the meeting and the benefit of now having a newsletter was noted.

Gus gave a summary of the progress made by the Abnett steering committee. Clearly we are in a state of change. Gus felt that Bob Abnett has really got the picture as far as Watts Bridge is concerned. He is developing strategies that should provide more autonomy for WBMA management. This will bring additional responsibilities to a management system that has to transition from a fragmented group arrangement to a single entity.

It was proposed by the Project Committee that a new management structure more suitable to the present and future WBMA be formed. Gus stated that we now have access to professional advice not available previously. He concluded by encouraging our members to attend any Project Committee meetings, in particular, the December 1 meeting.

Some concerns were raised regarding airfield management in the light of the new requirements involving liability and responsibility.

Ross Stenhouse expressed the hope that the Development Control Plan would be ratified by the Management Committee as a matter of urgency as further work was being delayed by non-ratification.

Jeff Underhill and Bill Finlen raised the desirability of a universal Watts Bridge membership rather than the existing arrangement with its variety of membership options.

Tree planting was again raised and this meeting agreed to plant trees on a date to be advised in order to meet effluent compliance. Ross Stenhouse agreed to organize this.

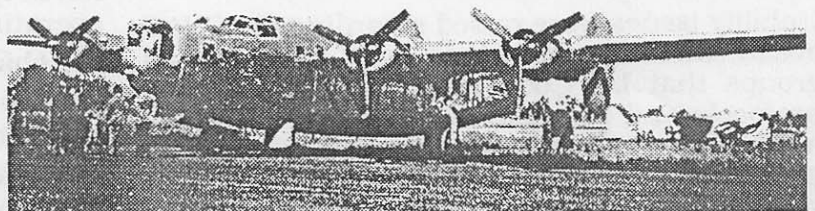
Next meeting details:

1pm, Sunday November 17 at Ross Stenhouse's Air Chalet No. 32

Memory Lane

This Liberator bomber epitomizes the capacity of the Watts Bridge airfield at that time. Also, it is recorded that other four engine aircraft such as the DC4 could operate out of this airfield.

The airfield was built by the RAAF in 1942. The main runway was 1500m and the cross runway was 1000m. In 1944 development was abandoned before the runways were bitumised. The land was leased to a local farmer and the airfield languished for many years. In the seventies it was included as a parcel for the Wivenhoe Dam. When this need did not arise there was no need for the SEQWC to retain this 250 acre parcel and it was leased out once again. (To be continued)



Final message from Works Chairman Bill

Don't put your old engine oil or any other unfriendly nasties down the sewer. It'll kill off all the good little bugs that make the system work.