



# Watts News

SPRING EDITION  
2014



## ***Congratulations Watts Bridge on a Fantastic Fly-In***

***Deb Frecklington MP Member for Nanango***

I'd like to congratulate the organisers of the Watts Bridge "All-In Fly-In" on a fantastic day. The day is not only an excellent event for lovers of aviation, but also an amazing showcase for the Somerset region.

I'd like to thank the Committee for inviting me to attend. I took my family along and we thoroughly enjoyed seeing the variety of aircraft and looking at all the displays. I also really enjoyed talking with the students from Toogoolawah SHS and learning more about their collaboration with the Airfield and the plane they are building.

The Committee and members continue to do a great job developing this excellent facility, which is located in such a beautiful location. I look forward to hearing more about the progress of the Airfield and I know the Fly-In will only continue to grow in popularity.



The recent Watts Bridge Fly-In held on 31 May was very well attended by the local community and a wonderful opportunity to showcase the airfield and its facilities. The event was attended by Somerset Regional Councillors Alan Bechly, Kirsten Moriarty and Dan Hall.

Somerset Regional Councillor Kirsten Moriarty said she was impressed with the work the Watts Bridge airfield group was undertaking with local Toogoolawah High School students, who are working on building replica WWI aeroplanes as part of their curriculum. "The students are learning valuable skills through this work," Cr Moriarty said.

"It was wonderful to see how they have developed their confidence through their involvement in this project and it really is a credit to the Watts Bridge airfield group that they are working with young people in the region." Cr Moriarty, a keen skydiver, said she was very interested in aircraft and enjoyed the opportunity to see so many planes at the fly-in. "It was a great event and I hope to see many more in the future," she said.

By Cr Kirsten Moriarty



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

This is the Spring Edition of Watts News. This year's winter flying season has come and gone. There is no doubt the Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield is steadily getting known to both the locals, visitors and pilots. Below is a summary of the winter activities we had at Watts this year.

The season started well with the great success of the All-In Fly-In. There was a visit by the Grumman Mallard which proved very popular with visiting pilots and visitors. The annual Brisbane Valley Sport Aviation Club's Fun Fly Poker Run followed by the Christmas in July dinner was also well supported and again the weather was kind to us.

The winter season ended with the phenomenal success of the Gathering of Eagles air meet. For this year's Gathering of Eagles, we had the re-enactors joining us for the first time. This event will be repeated again next year. Planning is now underway to make this event even bigger and better than it was this year.

The school's education and work experience program was also very well received by the local community. There are plans to make this program a feature of Watts Bridge.

The WW1 builders group is also forging ahead with their WWI aircraft construction and this has attracted a few new members to Watts Bridge. We should have more of these early aircraft replicas here at Watts next year.

The Queensland Vintage Aeroplane Group intends to host a seminar this coming October. The theme is the building of replicas and reproductions that are representatives of originals that are almost impossible to procure because of their rarity.



Scott and Chris Hendry were the winners of the Brisbane Valley Sport Aviation Club's successful Fun Fly Poker Run. Photo Gallery and a great You Tube video at [www.wattsbridge.com.au/events/pokerrun2014.php](http://www.wattsbridge.com.au/events/pokerrun2014.php)

Phil Cooper is planning to give a talk on his spectacular Bristol F2b fighter, which is currently under construction and is progressing along very well.

Cameron Ralph-Smith is now setting up his war bird workshop and we will be having more of these attractive aircraft visiting us with some of them based here at Watts.

The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service had a training day here at Watts recently. It was very interesting to see how these fixed wing aircraft operate and the water bombing training exercises were a spectacular sight to watch. We hope to see these aircraft here on a more permanent basis in the future.

### *Safe flying*

***Bruce Clarke*** President BoM

Photo galleries and extended editorials for the All-In Fly-In 2014, Fun Fly Poker Run 2014 and the Gathering of Eagles - Australia 2014 can be found at:

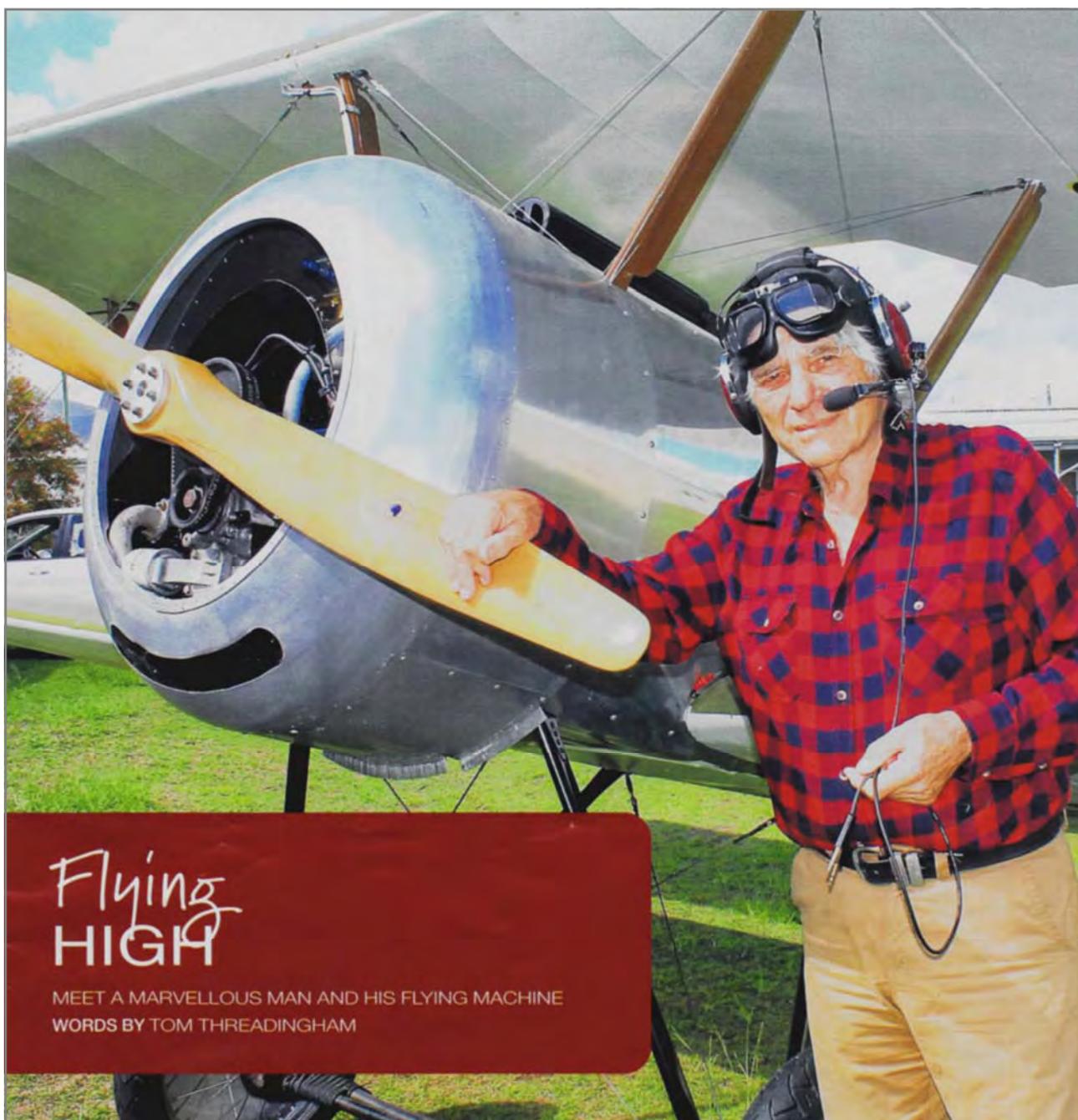
[www.wattsbridge.com.au/events/aifi2014.php](http://www.wattsbridge.com.au/events/aifi2014.php)

[www.wattsbridge.com.au/events/pokerrun2014.php](http://www.wattsbridge.com.au/events/pokerrun2014.php)

[www.wattsbridge.com.au/events/goe2014.php](http://www.wattsbridge.com.au/events/goe2014.php)

# Gathering of Eagles - Australia





## Flying HIGH

MEET A MARVELLOUS MAN AND HIS FLYING MACHINE  
WORDS BY TOM THREADINGHAM

Gliding the blue skies high above the earth with the clean fresh air whipping at your face is an experience many hobby aviation enthusiasts like Bruce Clarke are only too familiar with. For many, the skies are home, as they become lost in the freedom of flight and the thrill of experiencing the world from a different view.

However, Toogoolawah resident and hobby plane builder Bruce Clarke is just at home on the ground in the hangar as he is high above. Flying the skies of the Somerset region today, his love of aeroplanes started early in life. "My father was a station warrant officer (SWO) at Edzell, Scotland, at a bomber base in the war and I've been running around with aeroplanes for as long as I can remember," he said.

"It's always been a passion and I just grew up with them really."

Bruce was quick to turn his love of the skies into a job and began working as an aviation engineer with De Havilland in the UK and learned to fly in tiger moths. Throughout his life Bruce has worked at a number of places including Qantas and Singapore Airlines as a contracted aviation engineer and has helped build a countless number of aircraft for both commercial and private use. But it's only in retirement that Bruce has

become enveloped in the world of hobby plane building. I suppose it was only when I came to enjoy retirement that I had the time to start doing my own," he said. I just grew up with it really and building is, to build your own like this, you get to cover all aspects.

"When you're building for companies, quite often on bigger aeroplanes you don't get to build the whole plane obviously, you're only building parts. "But with this it's the total concept, I do it from building to flying. "And building these sorts of aeroplanes has always interested me."

The type of aeroplanes Bruce is talking about come from an era labelled as the four years of thunder during the First World War. "They call this the four years of thunder, it was given the expression because the development in those four years, from early aviation to the end was astronomical and the scale or development was enormous because wartime is always the mother of innovation, isn't it," he said.



"Because of the development it was the most interesting time period and I think it was more interesting than the later parts of the jets and things like that. This is where all the fundamentals were found out. "They were experimenting a lot more then and it built up so rapidly between 1914 and 1918.

"The First World War is when they really got a handle on aviation and the development was so rapid." Having already finished a 1916 Sopwith Pup, which takes pride of place within the hangar at the Watts Bridge Airfield, Bruce is currently looking to add another to the collection with a 1917 Nieuport 24 under construction. To build the First World War-style of aeroplane, which can weigh up to 330kg, can take between 600 to 800 hours for Bruce.

"We're actually using a modern method of buddy here aeroplanes look old but they're not, they're all aluminium, they're all using modern riveting techniques and we have known qualities in the stuff we use," he said.

Bruce's love of flying is equal to his love of being on the ground in the hangar. "I don't fly that often, I only fly once or twice a month because I get just as much pleasure out of the work," he said.

"To me it's the whole concept, I get just as much pleasure doing and building as I do flying.

"For doing this sort of thing there is really no profits and for the amount of work you're doing you wouldn't get the returns it you tried to sell it. "You do it because you like doing it."

At 73 years old, Bruce is a weathered and well experienced pilot, but he has not gone the distance without at least one tale of a close call. Bruce crashed his Nieuport during take-off at the Toogoolawah Watts Bridge Airfield about four years ago and broke his leg.

"The Nieuport had a different style of rudder and it requires a bit more attention," he said. "These older planes require a bit more attention when flying, than modern aeroplanes. They are not as directionally stable as a modern aeroplane. "I learnt a few things from that, not to be so complacent with these aeroplanes. Yes they are nice to fly but you have to treat them with respect like all machinery I suppose."

Reproduced from Centric Magazine, June 2014 edition .



**Caboolture Gliding Club 2014 at Watts Bridge** Nick Sheahon - CGC

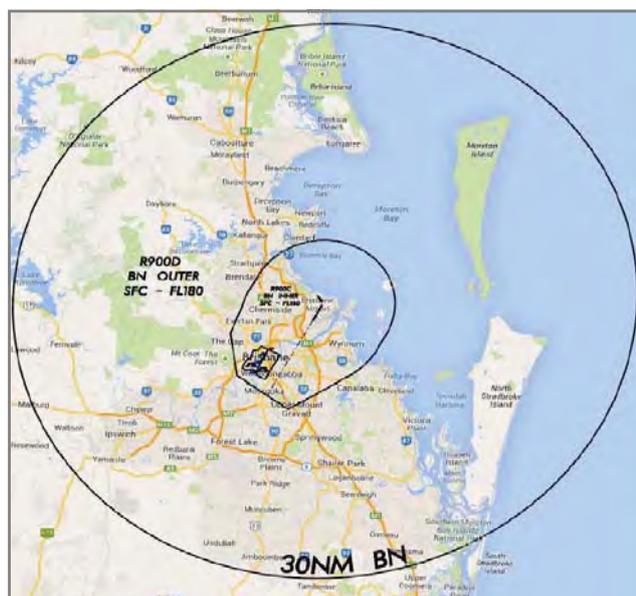
It had been quite some time since the Caboolture Gliding Club has made the short hop from the coast, across the dam, and after a false start earlier in the year, they returned to Watts Bridge over the long weekend of 7-9 June.

The daily operations consisted of a group of about 15-20 members, many of whom were making the trip for the first time. They brought their fleet of two Blaniks, an IS-28 and the single seat Club Libelle, all of which were towed from Caboolture by the Club's Pawnee tug. There were also a number of private gliders (and one powered glider) which included the vintage K6 and two-seat Kookaburra.

Some members were lucky enough to make the trip during the dual tows performed on the Friday and Saturday morning however, to be expected, most drove and brought the additional equipment and trailers required on a gliding club fly away. Some of these members took the opportunity to camp at the airfield while others stayed in Toogoolawah among the Ramblers Skydivers also in town that weekend.

While the conditions were unfortunately not favourable to generate the lift they were all hoping for, they still enjoyed three days of very busy shorter flights which were very productive, especially for the first time visitors.

By all reports the Caboolture Gliding Club enjoyed the visit, were very appreciative of the facilities and there are already whispers around their YCAB Pie Cart of a return trip later in the year to chase those longer flights.



**The G20 International Conference meets the Recreational Pilot.**

The international 'Group of Twenty' the G20 Conference being hosted by the Australian Government is scheduled to take place from 15th – 16th of November 2014. The security provisions deemed necessary by the Australian authorities to ensure the safety of the attendees include various modifications to the normal airspace around the Brisbane area.

Rob Knight - Editor of the BVSAC Newsletter has written an authoritative explanation of the G20 airspace requirements which is available for all to download from the Watts Website at :

[www.wattsbridge.com.au/files/downloads/g20.pdf](http://www.wattsbridge.com.au/files/downloads/g20.pdf)

## Toogoolawah State High School - Work Experience Program

The 25th of June marked the last day of the semester and Presentation Day for 6 students from Toogoolawah State High School, who had embarked on a work experience program at Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield.

As many of you would know, we have been running an Aviation orientated program from the Clarke's hangar for the last 14 weeks. The 6 students have been mentored in Safety and correct Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) in a workshop and around an airfield, Risk Assessment, Workshop and Aircraft Awareness and Basic Hand Tool and Equipment Usage and Care.

Well, that was the boring part, next the students learned about the different types of materials used in aircraft and the reasons they are used. We also started on honing their hand skills with the marking out of gussets, ribs and tubes, cutting to precise lines and measurements, folding and bending, construction and rigging of wings and fabric covering of flight and control surfaces.

As the weeks passed, the students were shown instructional DVD's on Lift, Aerofoils, Drag, Power and Performance so they better related to the design and construction of the components they were helping to make. Also covered was Weight and Balance as well as CofG theory as well as using the Sopwith Pup as the subject. Not all grasped this section at first, understandably, I guess but a little one on one and they got their heads around it.



Then it was down to the last 3 weeks, and it was engine day. We bulk stripped an engine that had had a slow seizure. As I dismantled the engine, we covered all facets of bulk stripping and FOD (Foreign Object Detection) inspections.

The second last week and Phil Cooper transformed into Virgin Australia's Check and Training Captain (uniform and all) authorized of course. Phil gave an outstanding presentation on careers in the aviation industry, as well as a flight down to Wivenhoe, Somerset, Glasshouse, Kilcoy and back to Watts twice (3 students per trip) BRAVO.

Finally, Presentation Day and Students, Parents, Teachers, Mentors and a few locals were present. Bruce and I presented the students with satchels containing a Certificate of Attendance, SOE (Schedule of Experience) documentation and a DVD of photos taken while performing different tasks. The Deputy Principal and Hannah, one of the students, said some kind words of gratitude about the program and expressed hope that it would continue.

I must say that in discussions with parents and education staff, they report that they have seen a great change in these young people from when they first started the program in that of having more focus and direction in where their lives might go.

I know some folk do not support this program, but I believe, if we can help young people become focused and direct them towards a possible career path in aviation, then that's a good thing in my eyes and yours too I hope.

In closing, I would like to thank all the people on this airfield who have supported the program. They know who they are.

A special thanks to Bruce and Mary Clarke.

**Craig Thomsen** QVAG/AFM Vice President





**DRIVE  
NEIGHBOURLY**

### ***Speed Limits at Watts Bridge***

The Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield Board of Management wishes to remind all members and visitors to Watts Bridge of the 20kph speed limit on all roads on the airfield. This limit is well signposted with signs on the front gate and along the roads. There is a legal obligation on everybody to observe this limit, the same as on any public road.

There are a number of reasons for this limit;

**Safety** – this obviously needs no explanation. Please remember there are often people walking along the roads, some of them children.

**Road damage** – excessive speed damages the roads and this costs money to fix. The more time and money spent on repairing roads the less there is to do other things on the field.

**Dust** – speeding creates dust and dust has a number of impacts. It gets into the hangers, into the water tanks and into our aircraft. This dust also has potential to cause health issues. Apart from this it is just plain unpleasant.

The Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield Board of Management has an obligation to take all reasonable steps to look after the health and wellbeing of members and visitors and as such all drivers are asked to comply with the speed limits. No one is special, we are all the same and the road signs apply to all of us.

We all forget at times, so if you see somebody obviously speeding a quiet word with them may be all that is required to remind them of the limits. Please slow down, think, and drive neighbourly.

---

### ***Safety Feedback on Refuelling of Aircraft.***

A member has suggested that members of Watts Bridge Airfield refresh their knowledge on refuelling of aircraft. CASA has two online videos dealing with General Aviation refuelling. We encourage you to refresh your refuelling knowledge by viewing the following videos.

**Bowser Refuelling:** [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhWggyHBd\\_c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhWggyHBd_c)

**Drum Refuelling:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4dujKldZX8>

The second video mentions the distance limits outlined in CAO 20.9

4 Fuelling of aircraft

4.1 Location of aircraft

4.1.1 During fuelling operations, the aircraft and ground fuelling equipment shall be so located that no fuel tank filling points or vent outlets lie:

- (a) within 5 metres (17 ft) of any sealed building; and
- (b) within 6 metres (20 ft) of other stationary aircraft; and
- (c) within 15 metres (50 ft) of any exposed public area; and
- (d) within 15 metres (50 ft) of any unsealed building in the case of aircraft with a maximum take-off weight in excess of 5,700 kg (12,566 lb) and
- (e) within 9 metres (30 ft) of any unsealed building in the case of aircraft with a maximum take-off weight not exceeding 5,700 kg (12,566 lb).

Full details available at <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2011C00881>

