

*The Southern Cross Journal*  
*September – October 2006*



**NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS GLIDING CLUB**  
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Our President, Dave Boulter, has recently joined a new company and is at present in the UK on business. His usual 'Thermal' will be included in the next issue.

*Memorial for Neil Cocks*

Consideration is being given by the Committee to establishing a memorial for Neil. The exact form that this will take has not yet been finalised, but an announcement will be made in due course.

*Congratulations*

Will Schmidt recently received his B certificate.

David Comacho went solo in August. David had flown solo with another club but had been absent from gliding for a number of years.

We also had the unusual occurrence of three first solos on 27<sup>th</sup> August, in fact it is the first time that anyone can recall this happening. The soloists were Tristan Watson, Laura Bramwell and Ross Anderson. All three aged fifteen, in fact it was Tristan's fifteenth birthday.



*Tristan, Laura and Ross display their first solo certificates*

Dave Callahan has completed his power instructor rating. Well done Dave.

If anyone has made their first solo flight, or for that matter, any other notable flight, please let me know so that details can be recorded in the next Journal.

### *The AGM - Reminder*

Will be held at the club on **Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September at 7.30 pm**, preceded by the customary barbecue. Let's have a good attendance.

### *We've had a great winter for flying*

There have been so many good days that it would take up a lot of space to make detailed comments. However, the following rundown from Bernie Baer of one particular day is fairly typical.

14.08.06

Chris Becek flew Camden/Warragamba/Water tower turnpoint (East of Appin) to get his 50 Km distance.

Kurt Rall had over 2 hours in the DG-300, Mark Barnfield over 3 hours in the Astir, I had 2 hrs 40 in the Junior, Will Schmidt over an hour in the K13. A Blue day with 3 - 4 Kts to 6,000', pretty much exactly what the NOAA site predicted. . I had a short climb from about 5,700 to 6,200' in weak wave

North of the Oaks.

Regards, Bernie.

And there was this one from Bill Pain:

19.08.06

For your info, prediction was spot on with cloud base reaching 7200'. It was a cracker with fairly consistent climbs of 3 to 4 knots with a few really good ones with 5 kts plus. Flew to 20 km short of Marulan with minimal time spent out of gliding range of Camden, so barely went XC!

Let's hope that the summer flying will be just as good – or even better.

### *The big red windsock*

About a month ago I was flying with Richard Shemtob when we were surprised to hear a radio call from an airship saying that it was inbound to Camden. Not the usual Camden traffic! The airship pilot went on to enquire whether his ground crew had arrived at the airfield. How nice to be waited on in this way. Wouldn't it be great if on making an outlanding your crew with trailer were there ready to collect you.

Anyway, the airship was at Camden for more than three weeks, and I expect that most of our members saw it, and watched its comings and goings with interest, as did quite a few outsiders who were attracted by the unusual sight.

Several people commented that when it was moored to its mast it made a really super windsock which could be seen from a long way off.

The Camden Groundsman says that it will be coming back again a bit later in the year.

### *Thermalling with a UFO*

A couple of weeks ago I had a mutual flight with Jim Gothard. There were other gliders airborne and we saw one over Narellan that was obviously climbing so we decided to join it. Just as we began circling a black object, which I took at first to be an eagle, went past us. It curved around

and circled with us, passing quite close a few times and we were eventually able to distinguish what it was. Then gradually climbed away above us.

Now I don't mind being out-climbed by another glider, but to be outdone by a black plastic bag is not good for one's ego!

Why was it circling? Was this to do with the rotating thermals which have been talked about in Aus Soaring? This is fair dinkum – ask Jim!



*Captain Kirk of the Starship Enterprise?  
No it's only our old mate  
Eddie Pahic trying out the  
pilot's seat in the Holden  
airship.*

### *Outlandings*

Some outlandings are more excusable than others. It was recently reported that a Ryanair Airbus A 320 on a flight from Liverpool in England to Derry in Northern Ireland had landed some miles short of its destination at a military airbase at Ballykelly. A spokesman for the airline said that the pilot, who had been making a visual approach to Derry had made a mistake!!.

Well, if the professionals can do it I'm sure that no one will complain next time one of us ordinary mortals makes a mistake and lands somewhere other than at Camden.

Incidentally, this isn't the first time that an airliner has touched down at the wrong airfield, some years ago a PanAm Boeing 707 making a visual approach mistook Northolt for Heathrow!!

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### *Members news*

One of our most enthusiastic members, Chris Becek is leaving us to take up a job in Melbourne. Quite the opposite of being in the air, Chris will be employed on a tunnelling contract, maintaining the tunnelling equipment.

Chris has not only been amongst our most regular members, he has also been remarkably successful in the fairly short time he has been flying. As an example he made a 4 hour 25 minute flight in the Astir on 25<sup>th</sup> August which was the longest flight of the day by a fair margin and also, as noted earlier, he made a 50km Silver distance flight from Camden in August.

Best wishes Chris, and we hope that we'll be seeing you again in the not too distant future.

Richard Shemtob is currently on holiday in Europe, and is booked in for a mountain soaring course in France. I understand that after a couple of days initiation in a two-seater the students take part in lead-and-follow exercises, flying through the alpine valleys. He should have something interesting to tell us on his return.

We haven't seen much of Elle Bentley-Woods recently, but on Tuesday she dropped in to say hallo and very kindly brought a large carton of beer. Elle has moved away from this area and now owns a shop in Gulgong. I'm sure that all her friends at Camden wish her success in this enterprise.

## *The wave camp*

Eddie Kropkowski spent the last three days at the camp, and he has given the following account of events while he was there:-

"I arrived at Bunyan around midday on the Thursday – the camp had commenced the previous Saturday with absolutely no wave conditions, only weak thermals.

The number of attendees was down considerably on previous camps due, no doubt, to the weather pattern prognosis indicating the absence of any worthwhile wave. When I arrived I managed a 19 minute flight in the DG303 struggling to stay up for even that long with 1 knot lift.

The next morning (Friday), Jim Kent, Don Palmer, Michael Moore and myself were having a pleasant espresso coffee in a Cooma Café at 8.00 am, when suddenly a frantic call from Bunyan came on our mobiles, alerting us to the fact that the good wave conditions were on. We all scrambled back to Bunyan to prepare for flight.

The wave was definitely on, but only to around 12,000 feet which all of us managed to achieve. It was a day when one could stay up for up for hours. In fact one pilot from Queensland was airborne for 8 hours. The locals called the conditions benign as the winds were only 25 to 30 knots. Wind speeds of up to 50 knots are the norm at this time of year, producing wave up to 30,000 ft. Our intrepid aviator Paul Mander managed a long flight to Jindabyne and Perisher valley in his motorized ASH25 and managed to achieve 13,000ft.

The next day Saturday, was a carbon copy of the previous day. Unfortunately Phil Endicott tried to emulate Paul Manders' feat of the previous day by pushing on towards the main range but only managed to outland in a paddock near Lake Ecumbene. From memory I don't think the Pilatus has the equivalent glide ratio of the ASH 25!! After retrieving Phil from the paddock we virtually called it a day - derigged the Clubs gliders and returned home.

All in all despite the lack of any worthwhile wave earlier in the week everyone enjoyed themselves immensely. We concluded the event with a big dinner at Cooma RSL club where some 20 pilots turned up and had a great social evening".

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## *Retrieving gliders after landing*

### *Morning briefing.*

Giving a morning briefing on a Wednesday recently Geoff Uther said that the tractor would be used for retrieving the IS 28, and the Honda car for other gliders. He indicated that it was the responsibility of pilots, before flying, to ensure that the tail-dolly for their particular aircraft was in the Honda, to ensure that it would be there and ready to use for the retrieve. Seemed like a good idea to me, to make this point. It reduces the risk of retrieves being made without the dolly, which tend to result in the glider being steered by pulling or pushing a wing-tip.

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## *Safety matters.*

### *Puffing the pitot.*

The Junior was grounded recently as, during the Daily Inspection, one of our newer members blew into the pitot instead of puffing gently. The ASI needle went right round the dial and stayed there. It seems that he had never been briefed on how to do this simple task. So, if anyone has any doubts, please ask someone experienced to explain what is required.

### *Hangaring gliders.*

The DG 1000 suffered damage (fortunately very minor) when the IS 28 was being hangared alongside it last week. The 28 was on its tail-dolly for some distance after entering the hangar, then as the dolly was being removed, the long tow bar on this particular dolly swung upwards, contacting the underside of the DG's wing.

This is a topic which comes up fairly regularly, but perhaps members need to be reminded that the tail-dolly should be removed as soon as the glider's tail-wheel is in the track. Also, don't forget, firstly, that the hangar doors should always be opened as far as the wheel track of the adjacent bay. Secondly, moving gliders into or out from the hangar should not be rushed. Thirdly, when entering the hangar, if the glider's main wheel isn't running into its wheel track, move the glider outside and start again. Trying to so move the tail around inside the hangar to bring the main wheel into line is inviting trouble.

*A note for our cross-country pilots*

Roger Wright sent the following e-mail which will be of interest.

14.09.06

Hi There Woody,

Just a brief note that you might bring to the attention of the Instructors and club members, I was landing at Mittagong Airfield yesterday using runway 06 when at about 300 feet on finals I struck quite severe turbulence. The wind was from the north west at about 5 to 8 knots. I noticed that a couple of aircraft based there used 24, including a light twin. It might be worth a mention in the Journal.

Best Regards, Roger Wright

*Tocumwal closure.*

We are naturally sorry to hear of any gliding site being closed, but Sportavia at Tocumwal in particular has been very popular with a number of our members. Its closure is therefore a matter of great regret.

As a commercial undertaking, Sportavia was naturally not a cheap place to fly but they had a great variety of aircraft available for hire. Also, the helpfulness of the staff reduced the effort needed to get the glider to the launch point and to get airborne.

But apart from flying, there were always interesting people to meet, many of them from overseas, there was a good bar, a dining room and very comfortable accommodation.

As members will have seen from the e-mails circulating, the Sportavia fleet is currently up for auction. There might be one or two bargains waiting to be picked up.

*Eddie Pike – a brief profile.*

Eddie has long been one of the club's most stalwart members. Being both an instructor and a tug pilot who has quite regularly been prepared to stand in for others at short notice, he has been of enormous value to the club. That aside, however, he is great company and has a wry sense of humour.

Eddie's first aviation experience came when, as a boy, he had a memorable flight in a twin-engined de-Havilland Dragon biplane, but his introduction to gliding came in 1961 when one of his school mates invited him to come down to Camden for a flight. He travelled out on the old steam train and had a winch launch in a long wing Kookaburra – and he was hooked. However trips to Camden could only be made when he'd saved enough cash, but then he heard that the club had a scholarship system. He applied for one and this was granted in 1962, enabling him to fly more frequently.

All dual training at that time was conducted in the long and short wing Kookaburras, but after going solo pilots moved on to the Kingfisher, a smaller version of the Kookaburra. Incidentally, the short wing Kookaburra has a best L/D of 20:1, so by comparison our 28:1 K13s would have been considered to be quite high performance machines.

Being an all-round aviation enthusiast Eddie obtained his PPL in 1970 and qualified as a tuggie the following year. This power experience was to prove useful in his subsequent career, as will be seen. He also became an Assistant instructor in 1971 – the first step towards his present Level 3 rating.

However, in his normal working life Eddie's first job was as a primary school teacher, then in 1969 he joined the Police Service, firstly going onto general duties and then to motorcycles. However in 1986, having a CPL gave him the opportunity to transfer to the Police Air Wing. Among the Air Wing's duties was clocking motorists between fixed markers on the road and radioing details of offenders to a stop car on the ground, (pretty sneaky in my opinion!!). He eventually became Supervisor of Operations. Eddie retired from the Police Service in 2003 - but this is getting ahead of the story.

Having been a tuggie for a couple of years Eddie took on the task in 1973 of rostering the tug pilots and scheduling maintenance of the aircraft, and in 1974 he became the CAA (now CASA) delegate for the purpose of issuing glider-towing permission. So, it was under his training and guidance that some of our older tug pilots obtained their ratings. Throughout the 1980s Eddie was on the Committee as the club's Tug Master.



*Eddie relaxing at Camden*

Not content with flying gliders and normal powered aircraft, Eddie completed the trifecta by becoming a helicopter PPL in 1994. He also has an ultralight ticket.

Eddie has been an instructor with the Cadets since 1974 and holds the rank of Flight Lieutenant. He generally instructs at about eight Cadet camps per year.

In all, Eddie has a total of almost 3000 hours in gliders, and had a Gold C with two diamonds. The possibility of the third diamond – for height- came on what looked like a very ordinary day at Forbes a few years ago. Suddenly it started to boom and Eddie, flying a Ka6, climbed to the legal limit but could go no further due to lack of oxygen equipment – a frustration that many others have experienced.

Apart from his impressive total of gliding hours he has also clocked up some 4,000 hours in powered aircraft.

In conclusion, this seems to be a good opportunity to thank Eddie for all that he has done for the club over the years, and to wish him well for many years flying to come. The Cadets, with whom he has also spent so much time, would no doubt express similar sentiments.

## *The Club Diary*

Date		Organiser	Event
September 23 <sup>rd</sup> 2006		Dave Boulter	Annual General Meeting
October 2006		Woody or Jay	Radio Procedures Training session
October 2006			Summer Season/Camp briefing Night
October 2006			Family & Friends Weekend – Family and friends all fly at Club Rates
November 19-25 2006			Narromine Cup Week
December 2006			Radio Procedures Training session
			Christmas Camp – location TBA

For those items where the date hasn't been stated, this, and the time, will be announced in due course.

## *Presentation Night*

Although almost three months since Presentation Night on 29<sup>th</sup> July it is worth recording that we had a good turnout of about thirty members. The trophies awarded and the list of recipients was included in the July –August journal.



Those present to receive their trophies were Bill Pain, Jim Kent, Ross Anderson, Don Palmer, John Jurotte and Geoff Croy.  
(Apologies for the poor quality of the photograph)

## *BAC Airports: it's on your head*

The editorial under this heading in the September / October edition of Australian Flying talks about the ridiculous rent rises that have been imposed on aviation operators at Camden and Bankstown airport, and the possible effects of these rises. There is also a lengthy article on the same subject including the effect of pressure from the airport owners to move aviation businesses from Bankstown to Camden – for obvious reasons.

Not only have the rent increases been grossly excessive they have been backdated and as Dave Boulter has pointed out, the businesses concerned, including our club, can't go back to last year's customers and ask for further payments to cover the backdated additions.

Dave has spent a lot of time working with CAPCOM , The Camden Airport Community Group, which wants pressure to be brought on the new owners to live up to the expectation that Camden and Bankstown are to remain primarily for aviation use. Letters to our MPs are probably the only way that we'll bring any pressure to ensure that we get a fair deal, and then only if sufficient people take the trouble to write. So, it's up to us to make a fuss. It may not do any good, but if we are apathetic it's certain that we'll continue to get a raw deal.

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## *A thought on badges*

On a lighter note, did anyone watch "Thank God you're here" last week? It's a comedy show and on this episode they were debating matters relating to the Boy Scouts. One suggestion was to do away with badges on sleeves – that's old fashioned. Have them tattooed on their arms.

Do you think that this would go down well with our younger pilots? Starting with the A badge, the additional seagulls could be added in due course for B and C, and the wreath for Silver C.

Pilot wings on the chest perhaps – great at the beach or the pool. Any takers?

*Until next time, have some great, and safe, flying.*

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