

# GYMPIE AERO CLUB



## NEWSLETTER #5 DECEMBER 22, 2009

### CASA CEO DINNER

On the evening of December 5th Gympie Aero Club hosted a dinner at the Australis Resort in Noosa. We had 2 guest speakers, Brad Smart from Smart Enterprises and John Mc Cormick, CEO of CASA. The dinner was attended by just under 100 guests, who were well entertained and informed by our 2 guest speakers.

Thanks to the assistance of a kind donation of \$1000 by Ray and Di Gresham the club made a \$600 profit for the evening. The organisers would like to thank both guest speakers and members who supported the event. A special thanks also goes to John who was kind enough to make himself available to anyone with a question after completion of the dinner despite having to drive back to Brisbane to join his sick wife who unfortunately was unable to attend. A summary of remarks made by him in his talk about CASA and where he sees us all heading is following later in the newsletter.



BRAD SMART



MC IAN WITH PRESIDENT JENNIFER



PRE-DINNER DRINKS



JOHN MCCORMICK

## A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Hi everyone.

Well here we are again, nearly Christmas and another year completed in the history of our aero club.

Hasn't it been great with all the activities we have enjoyed, which has included our annual progressive dinner, the competition day, plus dinner with the C.E.O. of CASA - John McCormick.

I believe our club is well on the way to being a leader in innovative ways to increase the fun and safety of flying in South East Queensland, and that should be something we can be very proud of. Our competition day was of course very entertaining plus honed our

flying skills, the evening with John McCormick was very special, as not only was it very informative, but it left us thinking about many different aspects of flying which can affect us from the way we fly now but also into the future, and our flying progressive dinner, "great flying, fantastic food and good company," what more could an aviator want?.

We will look forward to seeing you all again next year, especially at our first meeting as your committee has been working very hard assuring that the next six months is going to be even bigger and better, so we have lots of activities to announce, but more importantly we need every members input to put us on the path to even greater success.

Have a wonderful Christmas and many happy landings in the new year.

Jennifer

## INTERESTING WEB LINK

### NEW RUSSIAN AIRCRAFT

The Be-200 amphibious multirole aircraft can be configured as a freighter, a passenger aircraft or an amphibious water drop firefighting aircraft.

Check out the link below:

<http://www.flixxy.com/beriev-be-200-altair-multipurpose-amphibious-aircraft.htm>



## FUEL REPORT

Due to an increased demand for fuel this month we have sold double the amount for the month - almost 2 month's worth. Maybe the price has something to do with increased sales? A delivery is expected next week and Bob assures us he will be negotiating the best possible price for the club, however prices have risen slightly since the last delivery. Keep on buying that fuel!

Last newsletter we took you on our flying trip in our CT from Gympie to Kununurra and around the Bungles. Now we complete the journey .....

deb and ian wagner

## TO THE KIMBERLEY AND BACK THROUGH THE CENTRE IN A FLYING TAPOLE (part 2)

Well rested we departed Kununurra with full tanks and flew over Wyndham's mud flats and the aboriginal township of Oombulgurri on the Forrest River. As we headed north we passed Buckle Head and flew over the most magnificent coast line. We'd expected mud and mangroves but instead found beautiful sandy beaches, huge river mouths lined with mangroves and clear aqua coloured water. From Cape Bernier we headed inland over the King George Falls and across some of the most remote countryside to Truscott, a large sealed airstrip built in 1944 by the RAAF and still surrounded by wrecks of war planes. Our arrival here was not expected, nor did we stay for long after we were advised that landing fees were \$680 regardless of the size of aircraft. The strip is in private operation as a service strip for the oil and gas platforms offshore, pearl farms in Vansittart Bay and for coastwatch surveillance. We had a friendly chat with a company representative before making a hasty departure to avoid the necessity of paying landing fees.

Our next stop was Kalumburu, formerly known as Drysdale River Mission, an aboriginal community founded by Benedictine monks from New Norcia, WA, in 1937 after moving from their Pago mission site on Napier Broome Bay. The mission was bombed in WWII and the present priest, Father Anscar McPhee, has built a

museum full of the history of the settlement and its inhabitants. Father Anscar's museum tours are so popular tourists are flown from Kununurra on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday, the days he conducts his tour. The man has the most engaging laughter and a passion as large as his heart. Accommodation was in "dongas" behind the mission with a communal camp kitchen. There are 2 stores in town, one run by the mission selling mainly cooked food, ice creams etc and the other run by the aboriginal community selling basic items people might need in food and hardware lines. The airstrip is sealed and in excellent condition, and only about a kilometre out of town – an easy walk.



Very early in the trip we learnt that we had to be airborne soon after dawn and back on the ground by midday to have a smooth enjoyable flight in this part of the country. With this in mind, we left Kalumburu in the early hours of the morning and flew in silk smooth air over more spectacular breathtaking country – mudflats, mangroves, white sandy beaches, clear crystal blue water and millions of islands. We flew to the mouth of the Mitchell River and followed it up to the Falls then on to Drysdale River Station for fuel. From here we flew along the Woodhouse River towards Kings Cascades, then along Prince Regent River which stretches in a straight line as far as the eye can see. We followed it to its mouth in St George Basin and Rothsay Water, then to Unwins Island, Hanover Bay, Port George, Augustus Island, Brecknock Harbour, Kuri Bay, Foam Passage, Collier Bay, Koolan Island, Yampi Sound, along the Buccaneer Archipelago and around to Cape Leveque. Winds gusting 30 to 40kts made landing on the narrow sandy strip at Cape Leveque interesting – the landing was a success but getting bogged in the bulldust at the edge of the strip when turning to backtrack tarnished our performance somewhat.



Cape Leveque is a unique place, and simply beautiful. We stayed in the Kooljaman Resort and from our log cabin on the beach we could lie in bed and watch the sunrise, and in the evening walk to the other side of the headland and watch it sink beneath the western horizon. The beach has patches of blood red coloured sand juxtaposed against the predominant white sand, and clear blue water.



It was a short hop from Cape Leveque to Broome, just over an hour's flying along a magnificent coastline. This was to be the last of our coastal flying. From Broome we tracked inland over Fitzroy Crossing and up to Mornington Wilderness Camp. We had unfortunately noted down the co-ordinates of the old Mornington strip, which was very obviously unserviceable when we circled over it, the strip was covered in low scrub. What followed were a few anxious minutes as we flew over very inhospitable looking countryside searching for the new strip. A tourist map we had onboard gave us the clues we needed and we were very relieved to locate the new strip 9.5 miles away. Mornington welcomes arrivals by air and collects travellers and takes them back to camp. Of all the places we stayed on the trip, Mornington is the one we would definitely return to. We canoed down the Dimond Gorge on the Fitzroy River and learnt of much of the research work being carried out by the conservancy.

From Mornington we flew to Charnley River Station, formerly known as Beverly Springs, and 2 days later back to Broome in time to catch the "staircase to the moon" – a phenomenon that occurs when a full moon rise coincides with low tide on the mud flats of Roebuck Bay. Our next leg was inland to Halls Creek, and very early the following morning we departed at daybreak to catch dawn over Wolfe Creek Meteorite Crater. We continued South and followed the Tanami Track past goldmines and on to Yuendumu, an aboriginal community 293km north west of Alice Springs. The community has an art gallery not far from the strip which is well worth a visit – we came home with our own canvas of desert art by a local artist.

Flying Yuendumu to Ayres Rock took us over Kings Canyon and Lake Amadeus. Landing fees at Ayres Rock were the most expensive we came across for the entire trip, excluding Truscott of course, but the experience of flying late afternoon around both Uluru and Kata Tjuta is not to be missed. We were lucky to have the airspace all to ourselves on that particular day.

Unfortunately our leg from Ayres Rock to Coober Pedy did not take us over the Painted Dessert, so we will have to return one day. Enroute refuelling was done at Cadney Roadhouse and Coober Pedy was not hard to find less than 1 hour later. The landscape looks like a moonscape, diggings scattered everywhere. We were accommodated underground for 2 nights and toured the diggings, the Breakaways and the dog fence. Coober Pedy was one of the most interesting and spectacularly different places we visited on the entire trip.

From Coober Pedy we flew to William Creek for fuel and mixed it with all the charter planes and tourists lined up to fly over Lake



Eyre, supposedly full of water and life from the rains earlier in the year. We flew at 1000' over the southern end of North Lake Eyre, mainly to avoid all the charter planes at 500' who gave their location in local names not noted on our charts. The view was impressive with a huge expanse of salt flats merging into an even larger expanse of water. Bird life was not very prevalent in the lower sections, however as we made our way north up the Warburton Groove we struck a huge mob of feral camels on the shore and further on again the numbers of flocks of birds increased. We tracked across part of the Simpson Desert, marvelling how early explorers had managed to trek on foot across this most inhospitable land, dune after dune, seemingly going on forever. Eyre Creek surprised us with its vivid almost iridescent green ground along the channels where water had been flowing, in stark contrast to the sand of the desert, a result of the growth of wildflowers taking advantage of the availability of water.

Birdsville Hotel was our accommodation for the night, the closest accommodation to an airstrip we had for the entire trip, just a stroll across the road. Our last 2 legs for the trip were to Charleville with a landing enroute at Quilpie, and then direct to Gympie.

This flying adventure took us 31 days to cover 10,590km with 57 flying hours. As a new flyer in the skies, I logged over 51 of those hours and returned with much more experience as a pilot. We used a total of 1050L of fuel, 22% of that was Avgas - used when Mogas was unavailable. We burnt an average of 18.5L/hr, and paid an average price of \$1.64/L Mogas and \$2.55/L Avgas.

It was an incredible journey, experiencing temperatures in the high 30's in the Kimberley to ice on the wings at Ayres Rock and winds in excess of 50kts. Murphy's law says never to expect a favourable wind, despite the forecast, and Murphy was correct for most of the trip ending up with an average headwind of 17kts overall.

We logged a SAR time for nearly every day of flying and found our iPhone using Telstra's next G network indispensable for forecasts and communications. Australia is such a huge and magnificent place, and there can't be a better way to see its diversity than from a light plane a few thousand feet above ground. Plans are already underway for the next trip, maybe the Pilbera and southern parts of the continent this time - or maybe we will follow Mac to the North and try some Barra fishing.



LAKE EYRE CAMELS



EYRE CREEK GREENERY



## EXERPTS FROM JOHN McCORMICK'S SPEECH

Listening to his speech it is very obvious that John McCormick is very much aware of the importance of RAAus and the part it plays in not only training pilots for the future needs of Australian aviation, but for providing affordable aviation for the average person. He stated that of the approx 2 million hours flown annually by Australian registered aircraft (that's equivalent to about 12 days of hours flown in the USA) over 25% are directly related to training at the basic levels that RAAus/GA supports. He stated that Australia is far from setting world-wide standards when it comes to regulations.

"We will not kill GA or RAAus or the aviation industry in this country will die - that will not be good for Australia and is not what people would want".

He further commented... "CASA is not in the business of putting people out of business. We are not here to stop people flying but we can't get bogged down in consultation hoping to lead to a consensus. As safety regulators we will do what we have to do under the Civil Aviation Act to protect air safety. We'll do what we should do, not what we'd like to do."

He spent the previous weekend at Bundaberg flying various variants of the Jabiru because... "You cannot make regulations unless you understand something about the subject you are intending to write regulations for".

What did he have to say about various subjects?

He said - "RAAus is not ready for CTA and 760 kgs just yet. Not that it won't come eventually, but a lot of more important matters need to be attended to before CASA can look at these two things. CASA will be looking at them with duty of care in mind. We will not write regulations that some Judge down the track will say... CASA you wrote this but you really meant this. We will get the regulations right and to suit the situation."

**1. CTA.** In a nutshell when RAAus pilots accept that all aircraft must be fitted with radios for the safety of other airspace users, regardless of where they operate, then the subject of CTA will eventually be revisited. Fitting of radios will be made compulsory in the very near future regardless of where or how you operate. He doesn't accept the argument... "It is too expensive to carry radios", especially when you look at the money spent on communication technology in the average household. He mentioned... "100% of Trikes have a radio facility, even if it is just to talk to each other."

There is also no doubt that in the future if you want CTA access, then every aircraft that goes into CTA is going to need a transponder and I understood from what he said this will also become a regulation. This is already the case in NZ and some other countries. He also made it clear that if you are thinking of fitting a transponder in the near future then make it a "Mode S" transponder. He said... "This will not be for some time yet, but we will be looking at it - we have to!"

Not only will we need transponders for CTA access but... "They will have to be checked for accuracy and certified or ATC will not accept you in CTA". There is no doubt if you want these freedoms then we will have to comply or put very simply - they will be denied.

**2. VFR Lanes.** He understands the problems that occur with RAAus not being able to access VFR lanes, but... "How do we write that into regulations? When we do, it will be for all pilots, not just those currently fitted with radios. It is a big issue that will require some considerable time to sort out. In the meantime a PPL will get you through CTA if you really have the need."

**3. 760 kgs.** "760 kgs just doesn't fit the regulations and we can't get it to fit in the current form!" It will be looked at again in due course and assessed in a "measured manner". Duty of care is big problem here as he sees it.

**4. ASIC Cards.** It was made clear that this is not, and never has been a CASA responsibility. "ASIC's were not in our plan, it came from Aviation Security. Hopefully the ASIC as we know it will die". He

stated that a good window of opportunity exists in the very near future (May 2010?) to revisit the whole question. He went on to say... "We are currently looking at other ways of achieving the same outcome within the existing framework of licencing".

**5. Alcohol testing.** The question was asked... "Why can't we have a beer fridge in our hangar without the threat of prosecution?" Again there is a window of opportunity to review the current regulations and program as it will shortly run out of funding by the Federal Government. His opinion... "You should be able to have a few beers around the B-B-Q at your hangar and not run the fear of prosecution because it is supposedly affecting safety or security!"

Other matters discussed were – GAAP procedures, the closing of airports and airport facilities such as runways (not a direct CASA responsibility, but it is of great concern and the government is looking at these things very closely) and the ageing GA fleet. "These are all matters that need consideration and decisions to be made when time and man power allows."

## **WE WISH YOU A SAFE AND HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR**



*and may whatever santa brings you not turn around and bite you on the bum .....*

