

SMAC Newsletter Oct 2007

Well, some of us retired flyers have made the most of the best of the Spring weather, with a few old fools seen enjoying mid week sessions at the field, (there has to be a few benefits from years of slogging it out, hey?)

The anniversary dinner was a raging success. More than thirty members braved the highways to the Ashbourne Hotel for a convivial glass or two, and a splendid feast. I must say the service and the food were excellent, and are to be recommended to anyone looking for a good feed and a pleasant drive.

We had many tall tales and true of past years flying experiences, which made for very interesting conversation. How nice it was to see members and their partners away from the club, and to get a broader perspective on the lives of people away from modeling.

The evening was topped off by welcoming words from Noel Wenzel, one of our founding members. All in all a great night was had by everyone, and well done to those members that made the journey.

The up coming club Scale Day was talked about at length, and it seems a lot of you are looking forward to this event. I just hope we get a decent day, weather wise, for our first foray into scale comp.

Remember, you do not have to be the best, just be in it. I am sure it will be a fun day, and it will definitely hone your flying skills. So dust off your scale models, and make plans to be there. This event is set down for Sunday the 4th November, with a ten o'clock start. The day will begin with a pilot's briefing, and we will run in classes of novice, bronze, and gold wings, depending on entry numbers.

Congratulations are in order to Brad Merryweather and Matthew Waye who have joined Brian Lockett and Simon Kerswell in the ever growing ranks at Model Flight. Well done boys. (We're slowly takin' over da joint!)

The Antiques and Collectables Fair back in August saw the usual crew displaying some of their aircraft, and was considered a total success. The club's coffers were rewarded with a handsome amount of 'gold', that will more than cover the cost of recovering a section of the club/lunch room's roof.

This static display of ours creates lots of interest from the fair's visitors, and goes a long way in promoting our chosen sport to the uninitiated. Plus we enjoy doing it.

I believe Trev Woolfitt and Trev Heading will soon be getting their heads together to see if they can organize a 'park flyer' demonstration on the oval, and an 'engine startup' to further generate interest. The passing public made many enquiries over the weekend, as to whether we would be doing these demo's, so it may well be a big hit if they can be arranged.

I'm sure the "two Trevs" will keep us posted over the next twelve months as to how these plans are progressing.

The club would like to thank the following members for giving up a full weekend of their time.

Noel Wenzel, Bruce Donhardt, Trevor Woolfitt, Trevor Heading, Phil Birt, Bob Smart, Graham Willis, and John Watters.

I thought I would spend a few words in this newsletter talking about building models. Oh I can hear the groans! "Why bother?" I hear you say? Well the truth is, if you think about the hobby and how it has evolved, we wouldn't have a hobby at all if it was not for the pioneering work done by avid modelers sticking together sticks, tissue and rubber bands all those years ago, which started the manufacturers off making kits and drawing up plans.

The truth is, one gets a much better appreciation of how planes fly, the construction required to ensure strength, integrity, airworthiness, power, and balance etc, by doing it yourself.

The other truth is that although the hobby has grown beyond anything I could have imagined, due to the plethora of ARF models, 'park flyers', indoor models and cheap affordable helicopters available, and all ready to go straight out of the box if you want it that way, there are still hundreds of thousands of us old guys, and heaps of younger guys still sticking planes together the old way. The general consensus one hears at clubs and gatherings is that 'building' is finished. I contend that to be propaganda, and really has no basis in fact.

If one scans the hundred of posts daily on the major web sites, you will find information a plenty from builders and flyers of models.

This is not to say that the advent of the fantastic array of ARF's, and the new composite models that are becoming more and more available has not encroached on building. Of course it has, but to say that kit building is dying is just not correct.

Word is that a number of our members are actively building kits at this moment, starting with Bob Smart and his Airsail Auster, and John Watters with a Dynafly SE5a.

Not forgetting club members Michael "Marv" Kuss and Luke Hoad.

Marv, a relative newcomer to rc flying, has proven to be a dab hand at building with his very tidy Ugly Sticks. These buggers surely fly as well as they look. Marv was also seen a few weeks back with a very pretty little 'home built' hi-wing sports plane powered by, I believe, a .25. two stroke. Although she was only elevator/rudder, and a little twitchy on takeoff, once she was into the air she flew around with plenty of authority, and looked very scale like. An excellent build Marv!

We hope Marv will see some more designs of this calibre on his building board in the future.

Luke Hoad, now here's a member who's imagination seems endless. His constant presentation of self designed, and scale, foam warbirds, both propeller and fan jet, are always a delight to watch flying. Luke doesn't seem to have many failures, which is testament to his building and designing skills. One excellent model of his in recent times

that was quite interesting was a Russian four engine bomber, codenamed "BEAR". All built from scratch and in foam. Keep bringing them on, Luke!

Another member braving the uncharted, (well for him it is), waters of building is Luke Haeusler. Luke has taken on the task of building from scratch, a 60. size B-25 Mitchell bomber, and hopes to power her with a pair of 70. size four strokes. We wish him well in his endeavour, and look forward to seeing this girl on the runway.

New member David Lynden has also ventured into the unfamiliar territory of kit building with a very well constructed 'SLOWPOKE', and after seeing it fly, has succeeded with his efforts.

Scuttlebutt is, he's just taken delivery of a 'TAUBE' kit. A lovely replica of an early 1900's "stick and canvas" monoplane.

We can't wait to see this baby at the field.

Last, but not least, is Phil Birt with his multitude of WW1 and early examples of flight indoor models. These super lightweight planes have to be built right or they just don't fly, and Phil seems to have mastered the art. The comprehensive collection of these birds in his hangar is always a joy to see.

More evidence that that building is still alive.

So it doesn't matter whether it's balsa, ply, foam, fibreglass, corflute, icy pole sticks or whatever, building is building, and more power to it.

I think a great idea for a club day soon would be a chuck glider event. They are easily made, and would create a little interest in building. Who knows, it may just move someone to try their hand at a bigger project. Your thoughts please!

The 100 lap pylon/fun fly on 21st. Oct. was conducted in hot and very windy conditions with not a lot of carnage, and the participating pilots seemed to enjoy themselves. The BBQ was up to its usual standard, and was eagerly devoured. Many thanks go to the cooks, and to the ladies for their invaluable help.

A special mention must go to Margaret Crouch and her delicious carrot cake. Yum! Now whatever you do, don't mention the word "Scanner". I did, but I think I got away with it, (my apologies to John Cleese).

The Strathalbyn Model Aircraft Club would like to acknowledge and thank Alexis Scott, club sponsor and owner of FLY*IN hobby shop at Mt. Barker, for his very generous gift of a new JR XP662 transmitter and accessories, which will be used, in conjunction with the trainer donated by Bob Smart, as the official club training system.

Here are some pics from the dinner evening. Don't ask me for names, as the pics are taken at random, but I'm sure you will recognize the faces..

Take care, and great modeling. Remember, if you get sick of my ramblings, any content you wish to add will be greatly received. Just E mail with articles or items you would like to see added. mgb600@ozemail.com.au

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