

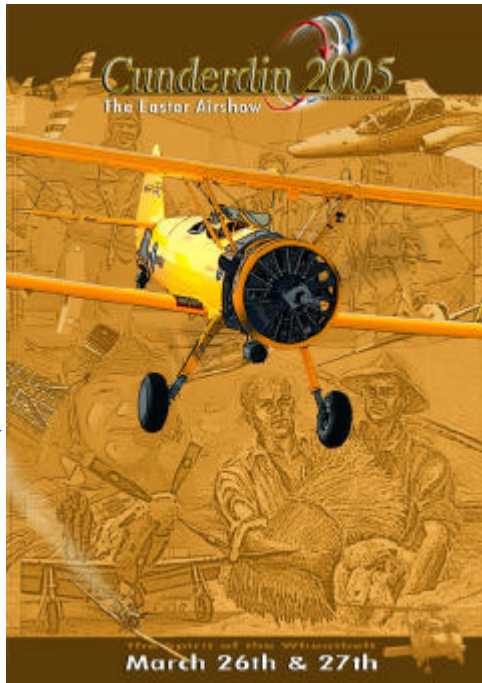


WELCOME

The Alliance welcomes new member Mr Gareth Lloyd of **Ultralight Flight Training** who has set up operation at the Beverley airstrip. Gareth moved from NSW specifically to set up his flight training school after identifying the market potential in WA. Behind the scenes work is also under way for the Easter **2005 Cunderdin Airshow** with Rod Carter

and committee striving to exceed expectations with only 9 months to showtime. The AAA is becoming recognised by business and authorities as a great resource for economic benefits to the Avon region. We are currently working with the Town & Shire of Northam to highlight aviation interests in the Avon as part of the new Perth Convention Centre **"WA On Show" Expo** scheduled for 27-31 August 2004.

We extend a welcome to all our friends to come out and enjoy the **Blue Sky** adventures of the Avon.



Graeme Wishart

President, Avon Valley Aviation Alliance

GLIDING

Having spent seventeen wonderful years enjoying the thrill of flying gliders in spring and summer, it still amazes me how just plain beautiful it can be taking a quiet and gentle flight in winter. In particular a flight I very much enjoyed took place on Sunday 16th May. The morning was overcast with the occasional shower bringing much needed rain to the wheatbelt. My flight took place in the early afternoon with a duration of only 20 minutes. The showers had cleared leaving behind some glorious vivid white cumulus clouds cast against a backdrop of darker gray clouds to the west. The contrast in colour from the front seat of the Gliding Clubs of WA's twin seat glider had to be seen to be believed, with the sun shining on the white clouds against a background of ominous gray punctuated by patches of azure blue sky. No pollution here, well not today anyway.

The tow plane towed us to 3000 ft above the ground whereupon the umbilical tow rope was released and the freedom of true unpowered flight commenced. We were now free to glide back down in perfect clear air. The air was silky smooth devoid of all turbulence, and the glider flying at just 45 knts seemed to glide so effortlessly without noise and without concern. We gently turned this way and that, taking in this magnificent view from on high and wondering why the rest of the world seemed in such a rush. Who needs to win lotto? Who needs a million dollars? Why would you do drugs? Why work so hard? It all seemed so irrelevant for 20 wonderful minutes prior to our gentle landing back on Cunderdin Air field.

Glider Flights in a winter wonderland are available all year around at Cunderdin, Beverley and Narrogin. To book a flight, or purchase a gift flight voucher, check out Avon Valley Aviation's web site at

www.avonaviation.org.au

Rod Carter

Part two...

NORTHAM AERO CLUB

After his flight around the World, Claude started an informal association of pilots having also flown around the World. It is called the Earthrounders. They meet every second year. In 2003, Claude was the host of the Perth meeting attended by 42 pilots and crews from all over the World. Claude also created a website to keep his fellow members informed (<http://www.earthrounders.com/>)

In 1995 Claude started to learn to fly helicopters and in 1997 he bought his first helicopter, a Robinson 22 VH-NDT. He took delivery in Sydney and flew it back home in 4 days. Finally in 2003, he bought a Robinson 44 VH-HXT in Queensland. Claude flew it home in 3 days. The R22 is a 2 seater cruising at 85 knots. The R44 is a 4 seater with a range of some 300 miles and a speed of 106 knots.

With these different flying machines, Claude has amassed many World speed records. With the Aerostar, the most interesting are 200 knots between Hawaii and California and some 315 knots between Perth and Forrest in the middle of the Nullarbor. With the R22, it reached a speed of 98km/h between Sydney and Perth and 112km/h with the R44 on the same course.

What next? When asked, Claude does not say but he must be getting ready for something else... These days when we think the world is shrinking to become a big electronic village, adventure still exists if one can get away from his/her keyboard and do something different. Question: What does it take to set a speed or duration record? Answer: A pilot, an aircraft and an observer at each end. The best part is the flight. Learning to fly is an achievement in itself but it can be enhanced by adventurous flights, attempts at records and the like. The Northam Aero Club is proud of the achievements of its members and is an ideal place to start or to continue an aviation career, be it for fun or for reward. Happy flying... **Ross Clarke**



PARAGLIDING & HANG GLIDING

Hanging Out in the Avon

The Avon Region has been the focus of inland flying for Perth based pilots for about 30 years. Hang glider pilots were the pioneers of the numerous foot

launching sites which include the popular Mt. Bakewell at York and "The Range" on Robin and Karen McKays property outside Toodyay. The younger sport of paragliding commenced in the Avon in the mid-80s and since then its popularity has steadily grown to a point that it can be safely claimed that along with parachutists, participants of both flying disciplines are probably the most prolific repeat visitors to the region. As both sports developed, the option of tow launching out of paddocks was realized and through the generosity of numerous Avon farmers pilots now regularly "pin off" in thermals at around 1000ft and go XC (cross country) at heights up to 10,000ft.

An early WA XC hang gliding record of 290kms set by Ray Chatfield stood for 18 yrs when he launched from Mt Bakewell and flew to Perenjori. That record was finally broken in Nov.'02 when Phil Wainwright tow launched from Wyalkatchem and flew 313 kms to a point North of Canna. State paragliding XC records are now being broken regularly as wing efficiency develops. In January '03 Mike Dufty managed 168kms from Mt. Bakewell to Miling which stood until the following Spring when Justin Post tow launched from Wylie and flew 235 kms to Perenjori, a very respectable distance by national and international standards which suggests the Avon region has plenty more to offer yet.

Julian McPherson

SKYDIVE EXPRESS NEWS

Skydiving



Brooklands Work in Progress

- Bill Dearle's Tiger Moth. Ex RAAF. VH-WFN Down from the rafters and on the go again for undercarriage fitting and fuselage spraying. RAAF silver with markings. Three wings to build.
- Henre Peterka's Boeing Stearman ex US NAVY. VH-YST Seven cylinder 220hp Continental radial engine. Fabric fitted to fuselage awaiting painting. Wing and tail surfaces finished. Painted all over orange with blue and white stars. You won't miss this one.



- Four cylinder inverted inline DH Gipsy Major 130hp overhauled. Lyn and Di's own Winjeel ex RAAF post war trainer. A85-423. VH-WMK. Airframe paint stripped.
- Pratt & Whitney Wasp Junior nine cylinder 450hp supercharged radial engine overhauled. Hamilton Standard constant speed propeller zero timed. To be resprayed in RAAF silver.
- Phil Nolan's Winjeel. Ex RAAF. A85-451. VH-WMN. Commenced dismantle and inspection. Engine removed.

Both of these Winjeel's were transported from Point Cook to Brooklands by Gary Traynor who is a regular skydiver at Skydive Express.

John Seman

BEVERLEY SOARING SOCIETY Beverley Gliding Club

With a change of weather we glider pilots look down on the Avon region to see the farmers hard at work with freshly ploughed paddocks. In spite of the conditions we can glide and soar during winter but tend to restrict our cross country flights to the local area. It is also preparation time for our annual wave camp at the Stirling Range Retreat, Bluff Knoll. Preparation work includes getting dual tow endorsements to enable two gliders at a time to be towed behind the Pawnee tug. Pilots must have this special endorsement before using this technique which allows for sharing the cost of the long tows while flying gliders into the wave. Winds blowing onto the faces of the Stirling ranges are forced to rise causing ridge lift along their upwind side and, at times, wave lift on their lee sides. As the wave conditions enable heights of 20,000ft to be achieved all the aircraft have to be fitted with oxygen equipment. Pilots also have to be instructed in the use of oxygen so everyone is working hard on all the preparation work for this exciting annual adventure. Beverley and Cunderdin gliding clubs combine to camp at the Stirlings for two weeks in July. This event has been conducted for 30 years and tends to be the winter gliding highlight.

Graeme Wishart



WINDWARD BALLOON ADVENTURES

Season 2004

Our 2004 season is Up, Up and Away having commenced on Saturday the 3rd of April. April turned out to be one of Windward's busiest months ever with delightful weather and lots of bookings. We set a new record for the most number of passengers flown in a month during April. We had a visit from Margot Lang editor of the Travel section of the West Australian. She was on a 3 day famil tour of the Avon Valley in order to do some stories in the West on the Avon this year. Watch out for some articles from early June in Saturdays West - Travel Section. The first winter rains arrived during May on Mothers Day and unfortunately we had to cancel our Mothers Day flight however since then the Valley has greened up

and it looks spectacular from the air. There is a lovely patchwork of colours to be seen with some rich earthy tones where the farmers have plowed their paddocks contrasted by soft green pasture fields and some golden yellow fields with last years crop stubble. Winter is probably the most spectacular time for a balloon flight over the Avon Valley.

In between the winter rains are cool clear days with beautiful blue skies and some mist in the valley to make the scenery just delightful. Jackets and scarfs are a must as winter mornings can often be single figure temperatures in the valley. We have a couple who will be getting married in the balloon in a couple of weeks time.

They are travelling over from South Australia to exchange vowels at 2000 ft above sea level in a wicker basket under a bubble of hot air.

How romantic is that? ...**Damien Hays**

JOIN US...

Aviation.....Addiction....Anonymous...

Are you addicted to all things aero? WE CAN HELP YOU...AAA need a new administrative genius to take on the highly rewarding task of preparing the Minutes/ Agenda and this fabulous newsletter...One or two hours a month is all it takes...Interested?

Email Tash at : tashholden@wheatbelt.wa.gov.au

Your Alliance NEEDS YOU!



LOOK UP! What's On in the Avon Valley

- **Nudie Hot Air Balloon World Championships:** 26th June – 3rd July, Mildura, Vic.
- **Sky Diving State Championships:** September, York, W.A.
- **WA on SHOW Expo**—AAA display August 27-31

AVON VALLEY AVIATION ALLIANCE CONTACTS

President Graeme Wishart (Beverley Soaring Society)

Secretary Ross Clark (Northam Aero Club)

Treasurer John Seman (Skydive Express)

Committee Damien Hays (Windward Ballooning)

Julian McPherson (Hang gliding, Paragliding, Microlighting)

Rod Carter (Gliding Club of WA, Cunderdin)

Tash Holden (Wheatbelt Development Commission)

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9622 7222 tashholden@wheatbelt.wa.gov.au

What's New!

The group's internet site:

www.avonaviation.org.au is now on line and ranking (with some search engines and depending on the search) in the top 10. Help Avon Valley tourism and make a link to this site and if you think you should be linked from this site or have any suggestions just email the webmaster (email link on the website).

****Our Next Meeting : 6:00 pm July 21st 2004 at NESS Industries 567 Newcastle Street ...PERTH**