

# ASC e-News



*Electronic news from the Adelaide Soaring Club*      *1st April, 2021*

We had an interesting month in February and there was a wide cross section of events to write about. This month not so much, however, looking behind the scenes – there is always something happening. The LS8 took to the air and the very positive comments from pilots flying it for the first time, were great to hear. Whilst some of the more muscular pilots found it a bit squeezey, she skinnier ones, not so much. All in all the consensus was that it was a great addition to the gliding fleet. Then the Dimona slowly made its presence felt in the workshop. It certainly promises to be a boon for out-landing training.

On the LSA side, after a very long interval, word was that the Roko had completed its repairs and an annual inspection. Looking at the paperwork I saw my name as the last pilot to fly it in April, 2020. It was now March, 2021. I checked it out at Aero Services in the afternoon and then arranged to fly it back to Gawler the following morning. Next day I took my time to be comfortable in it again and then used 21R to depart downwind from Parafield, back to Gawler. It flew beautifully but requires two new trim tapes to cover the gaps between the wings and the fuselage before it can be used. Frustrating, but should be fixed soon. ( Now done). All pilots who are rated on it should then do a familiarisation flight with an Instructor and those that want to fly it, should make a booking. We also found that the mechanical ASI was over reading in excess. Paul sent it back to Parafield for repairs. ( It has now been fixed and re-installed. All good.)

**SAFETY** Should always be uppermost in the minds of aviators. Members will know that we have been using **OPS SCENE** to bring matters to members attention. No reason of course why **E-News** can't be used to remind us of the things we should be paying attention to. Paul Marshall, as gliding CFI has included an article for glider pilots.

Karl Faeth

## OPS SCENE

### **Security of objects and ballast.**

The freedom of flight is a wonderful experience that all us pilots enjoy, but for our personal safety we have to ensure that the objects we carry do not have the freedom to fly on their own.

Recently we have noticed a number of incidents where objects have not been properly secured in the club's air-craft.

- Pilots have installed batteries without correctly securing them.
- Pilots have installed ballast without locking the ballast box.
- We have also noticed foreign objects placed in aircraft, with little or no thought for where they could end up.

Pilots who hold a Daily Inspection (DI) endorsement can fit batteries and ballast to the glider, but they must ensure that the items are secure

The club's gliders have access panels to inspect the control circuits and in the case of the 'Discus' the access panel is used to gain access to the second battery. DO NOT place items in the glider until these open access panels have been inspected, closed and secured. Remember the area around the open access panel should be kept sterile to prevent objects from entering these sensitive areas. When D'I'ing and aircraft pay special attention to items that may have fallen into these areas. Also make sure that all items carried in the aircraft are appropriately secured.

Here it might be useful to remind pilots about the Gliding Federation of Australia - Manual of Standard Procedures, guidance on security objects in gliders.

- "Anything mounted behind the pilot must be restrained against the crash loads specified in the type's certification basis. Note that a 2kg portable battery could be like a 30kg weight falling on your head during an accident. – don't put weights behind your head – it is not crashworthy!"
- For Aerobatics – all loose articles are removed from the sailplane or made secure in the sailplane.

While it is unfortunate that mistakes have been made in securing objects and ballast, it is great to see that when the issues have been detected by pilots they have taken the time to report the issues. Once we know about problems, we can all learn from the mistakes and take steps to prevent any further occurrences of these safety issues. Remember our Safety Management System (SMS) is only as good as the club members reporting culture, keep up the good work.

Paul Marshall

ASC Gliding CFI

## LSA SCENE

A couple of things to remember. I keep saying to members –

On the taxi after a flight – **flaps up and fuel pump off**. Easy to remember and it is nice to clean the aircraft up. Also of course, remember to **park in the landing direction** if possible.

The other one, and it has happened to me too, always **switch off the Master**. Easy to miss particularly when switching it back on to check the **Tacho** or **Hobbs** for the time sheet.

Great to keep the aircraft clean but remember to use a chamois to dry the windows afterwards.

We have all been reminded in the last few days that the weather can be fickle and just when we are enjoying flying in smooth air, there is a sudden jolt and we find out if our harness has been tightened properly. The wind was varying between 05 and 13, however it was always cross wind. So it was great for cross-wind training for students and testing cross-wind skills for pilots.

All aircraft have cross-wind limits and our Jabirus have a limit of 14 knots, so on a few occasions the cross-wind was close to the limit.

We always confer with the gliding duty Instructor as to the preferred run-way for the day but it was not easy to be confident that our decision wouldn't be challenged in due course. It was really good to see some pilots come to the conclusion that an appropriate decision was to stay on the ground and fly on a nicer day.

The photo below shows what can happen if we get it wrong. The aircraft was parked in front of the hangar and another pilot mentioned that the port wheel seemed to be at an odd angle, A closer inspection revealed that the undercarriage leg had split in line with its laminations. The damage very probably caused by sideways movement in a cross-wing landing.

**A reminder – always check your aircraft after a sortie, particularly when things didn't go to plan**



**VISITORS TO GAWLER**

Coming into the club the other day – there was a sight to behold. Our Airfield Manager, Tom Leech had advised us that the Cessna Club was planning a visit to Gawler as part of an annual fly-away that the group plans regularly. And there they were.

I counted 23 aircraft that were parked on the grass in front of our veranda. They were neatly parked and tied down – a very impressive sight. Flying that week – it was a sight seldom seen from the air at Gawler, our great airfield inundated with aircraft.



## *The secret life of Gawler aerodrome: The story continues...*

Remember the History Corner last year which centred on Gawler aerodrome's role in WW2 as a centre for radio intelligence-gathering? **Rob Richter** has investigated further and adds to the story, below. Read on...



*Rob R with Pat Dowling at her home in Jamestown*

I was recently fortunate enough to interview Pat Dowling, nee Collins, an ex-wireless operator who worked in radio at Gawler airfield during WW2. Pat is the first person I have known who had actually worked in that facility and I was certainly keen to find out a few facts. With the help of Michael Trainor we found that she is a fit 99 year old, very close to 100, living independently at Jamestown and has a very sharp mind.

I defy any-one to come up with any authentic written history regarding Gawler Radio and what its function was. The "Australians at war" web site has the following entry:

*During WW2 the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs made available Observation Centres across Australia for the monitoring of various frequency bands. These Observation Centres were fully manned by the Post Office with qualified Radio Operators who carried out radio surveillance work. These qualified radio operators formed what was known as the 1 Australian Discrimination Unit.*

*Observations Centres for the Radio Security Organisation were located in [sites including] Adelaide.*

***(Can anyone tell me where the Adelaide Observation Centre was located?)***



Trained at Ascot Vale in Victoria, Pat was originally stationed at Adelaide Wireless/Telegraph, .Unit.

The wireless station was known as the Gawler Telecommunications Unit. Pat was a competent Morse and radio operator and confirmed to me that the station was loaded with specialty listening radios which were monitored 24/7, listening for everything, including allied messages. Mostly encrypted correspondence was sent via teleprinter to Melbourne. The young located in Kermode St North Adelaide. This was a covert listening station under the control of the Posts and Telegraph but was manned by RAAF personnel, mainly women (WAAAF – the Women’s Australian Auxiliary Air Force). I understand that the civilian branch of radio security simply did not have the staff to cope with the volume of radio transmissions. Pat was transferred to the Gawler Airfield during the period 1944 to 1945 when the Adelaide unit was enlarged.



*Pat, with fellow WAAAFs, enjoying a break. She’s on the left, dealing for Monopoly*

The women at Gawler were familiar with all allied codes as well as the Japanese codes and while not understanding what the messages were, they forwarded them verbatim to where they were able to be read, i.e. Melbourne in the first place, and possibly thence as far afield as Hawaii and even Bletchley Park. Pat confirmed that there was always a ‘civilian’ supervisor present and very rarely were there any air force personnel with any rank. The Gawler station closed on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 1946 and Pat took early discharge prior to 1946 due to family reasons.

The reason that I was keen to talk with Pat is that I had recently been asked to give a talk on the airfield history and as there would be a number of notable historians in the audience, I had to

get it right. The more I researched, the more of an enigma the airfield history became. Particularly in respect to the Radio facility – why was it so large? Why were there so many staff? Why was there so much specialty listening equipment? Why were there two powerful remote stations, RX and TX? Why was it established when the Army signals group was winding down and moving North? It simply did not add up. The airfield establishment has to be separated from the radio unit.

To understand the development of the Gawler Airfield, and the local military history, one must read and understand the “Brisbane Line,” a concept that both the military and politicians to this day still strenuously deny existed. Stating the denial of its existence, I asked Pat if she had heard of it, the reaction had to be seen to be believed! From a relaxed position, she sat back in the chair, her eyes widened and seeming very surprised she simply stated, “That caused a lot of trouble that did!” I restated the denial by all in authority as well as a royal commission finding, and once again she stated, “It existed alright.” In response to my question if it went from Brisbane to Perth or from Brisbane to Port Augusta, she was certain that it was only to Pt Augusta. Knowing that, the airfield history began to make some sense.

Main aerodromes were to be built at Myponga, Gawler and Tarlee. Satellite aerodromes were to be built at McLaren Vale, Mount Compass, Templers, Lewiston, Hamley Bridge and Marrabel. Maintenance Echelon airfields were to be at Kuitpo, Nuriootpa and Riverton with major repair units at Sedan and Calperum Station, Renmark. Interestingly work had begun on the facilities at Lewiston and Nuriootpa, and that suddenly ceased, why? The timeline of Japanese losses and failures including the Battle of the Coral Sea, Milne Bay and certainly the loss of Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto changed the outlook on the invasion of Australia.

In March 1943, fourteen days after the formation of 86 Squadron at Gawler, General McArthur made another famous speech stating this time that the “Battle for Australia will now be fought in New Guinea.” It was during this speech, that MacArthur did mention the “Brisbane Line”. Three days short of two calendar months, May 1, 1943, 86 Squadron, being at Gawler, was deployed to Ross River thence to New Guinea, just enough time for pilots to be converted to the P 40 Kittyhawk. Four months later 21 Squadron reformed at Gawler and was operational for only twelve days longer than two calendar months from September being deployed to Lowood, Brisbane, Nov 25<sup>th</sup> 1943. £174,347 was allocated for facilities and infrastructure to support an operational squadron, however, by 1944 less than half of the allocated money had been spent and indeed, never was spent.

Gawler airfield then languished for some time with little activity but soon came into use by the USAAF (380<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group) with R&R to Adelaide doubling as “Fat-Cat” flights from Fenton in the N.T. utilising the long range capabilities of the B-24s.

The bottom line of the “Heavy” Radio at Gawler, is that it had absolutely nothing to do with aircraft movements save providing a signal for the location of the field for incoming aeroplanes, that being from the little ‘pill-box’ structure over the road at 05. When in use it did have a substantial antenna and when signalling (D/F) was manned by one person. However the main radio group was certainly linked to the Army and Navy signals groups, all information being sent to a collation centre.

**Rob Richter**

*Information sourced from Pat Collins, SA Aviation Museum history group, Peter Ingman, ASWG History, Australians at War, Camp Sandy Creek, N TSA Gawler Branch*

## LATEST COVID-19 NEWS

It is still with us. Vaccinations are starting and the lookout is promising for the future. However, it is prudent to maintain our vigilance and continue with the precautions we have been using.

## FLINDERS CAMP 2021

Those who are planning for and looking forward to attending this great sojourn, please make sure you are on the list. Due to incredible accommodation demand, the dates are a bit earlier this year. Please note:

**DATES ARE 24<sup>TH</sup> JULY to 1-3 AUGUST, 2021.**

## THANK YOU DAY

As a club, we have of course some excellent paid employees, **BUT** we would not operate the successful organisation that we are, **without our volunteers**. So our great Airfield Manager, Tom Leech, put to the Committee that we should have a club day where we thank and acknowledge our large number of volunteers. The Committee of course, readily agreed and after an earlier weather hiccup, Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> March, was declared **Volunteers Day**.

A lovely cool morning. Scott Crew mentioned it would be good to get back into the Roko and I agreed. Found a problem during the DI and fixed it. Beautiful in the sky at that time and a great flight. Nice circuits and a practice engine failure with an excellent landing and a check done. Found that the mechanical ASI did not agree with the Dynon so a defect to be fixed, soon I hope. ( Now fixed).

Had a good number of members rock up to enjoy aviation with an LSA handling display, a dual glider launch and aerobatics followed by more noisy aerobatics with some very low with smoke for a very dramatic effect.

There were a couple of belated awards with a gliding award to Hayden Borchard and LSA award to Jeff Schuster for his very humanitarian flight last year to William Creek to bring Bradley Leksas back home after a leaking radiator in the Roko.

Sylvia and Anthony put on a great lunch and I must say that the grilled prawns were magnificent. Great to see some of the more Senior Members drop in and among them was Graham Readett, and Graham Logan.

Young Tess Houtman was interviewing a number of pilots for a project she is doing and I was on the list – but apologies. I had tickets to the Port – Essendon game and I had to leave.

Great line-up of aircraft on Volunteers Day.



A line up of aircraft on view on the Volunteer's day.



It was the ASC Volunteers Day, it was early in the morning and here is one of the club's best volunteers doing what he does best. Andrew Wright, suitably attired, cleaning PIT's bottom.

## GLIDING EVENTS

Frank Johann is organising another one of our very popular events for glider pilots.

Aerobatics    Sunday 23/5/2021

Start Time - 9.00am sharp.      Ground training will be involved with both courses before flying and anyone can attend this..

Flight training for Ratings:

- Recommended Experience / Competencies:
  - Good flying currency - really being on top of the aircraft
  - Proficient at boxing the tug slipstream on tow.
  - Proficient in high tow specifically for dual aerotow.
  - Standard ASC Post Solo flying syllabus being completed & ideally Discus rated.



- These will help to ensure you can get the best outcomes if you are seeing rating, as this is advanced flying.

Please keep these dates free for the respective courses if you would like to attend.

Any queries please contact me directly [fjohann@internode.on.net](mailto:fjohann@internode.on.net)

## BAROSSA AIRSHOW – 11/4/21

**YES** .....after a few years Lay-Off – this great community event is back. **AND** The ASC will be there again. Our input will be a static display with photos and a glider and a Jabiru for the public to have a close look at. **AND**

There will be another excellent glider aerobatics display and sport aircraft handling by Instructors. A lively descriptive and informative commentary will be supplied by our Tom Leech. The event will be hosted by the Barossa Valley Rotary Club. More information at [barossaairshow.com](http://barossaairshow.com)

## COMMUNICATION AT ADELAIDE SOARING CLUB

<b>ASC WEBSITE</b>	<a href="https://www.adelaidesoaring.org.au">https://www.adelaidesoaring.org.au</a> Information about the club for visitors and official information for members.
<b>ASC OFFICE</b>	<a href="mailto:office@adelaidesoaring.org.au">office@adelaidesoaring.org.au</a> 08 8522 1877
<b>ASC ANNOUNCE</b>	<a href="mailto:communications@adelaidesoaring.org.au">communications@adelaidesoaring.org.au</a> For official information within the club and can only be used by club officials. All members are required to have a site to receive these messages.
<b>ASC MAINTENANCE</b>	<a href="mailto:maintenance@adelaidesoariong.org.au">maintenance@adelaidesoariong.org.au</a> For contacting the official ASC Aircraft Maintainer.
<b>ASC MEMBERS</b>	<a href="mailto:members@adelaidesoaring.org.au">members@adelaidesoaring.org.au</a> For members to post items relating to club matters. Members can opt out.
<b>FACEBOOK</b>	The ASC has a Facebook page and also a club Facebook Group.
<b>ASC E-News</b>	To convey information about club activities. Usually presented monthly.
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	The Committee meets monthly and meeting minutes are posted on Notice Boards.

## OFFICIAL CLUB CONTACTS

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