



Watts News

*A newsletter issued by the
Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield*

www.wattsbridge.com.au

December 2010



President's Report for December 2010

Greetings to all members and after all the wet weather, we are operational again except for the parallel strip on 12/30. Some of the parking areas and taxiway areas are still a bit soft but will not affect the general traffic flow of the aircraft on the airfield.

There are now more hangars being built and more interest is being shown by aviators wishing to be based at this picturesque facility. We even have commercial interest being shown and as we do have a commercial portion to our lease, this should be encouraged.

Bill Finlen is threatening to fly his recently restored Tiger Moth and what a magnificent job he has made of it. Ross Stenhouse now looks like becoming the Auster King of Queensland as he now owns three of these lovely vintage machines.

A reminder to any of the home based groups that if they wish to hold a fly-in or event on the airfield, they should read section 8.1 of the Flying Operations By-Law to prevent any misunderstanding of the requirements. Let's look forward to some more flying events next year and hope the long range weather forecasters have got it wrong.

The BOM wishes our members and their families all the best for the festive season.

Bruce Clarke



AIRFIELD LOSES A FRIEND

WBMA members were shocked and saddened to hear of the death of Air Chalet owner Barry Uscinski, who was killed in the crash of his beloved Spitfire replica aircraft near Gympie Aerodrome on 22nd November 2010.

Although Barry was living in the U.K. he would travel to Watts Bridge 3 or 4 times a year to fly his Spitfire replica and to "recharge his batteries". To those who crossed his path, Barry was a likeable larrikin, one of the characters of the airfield and was affectionately known as "the professor". Barry's now empty Air Chalet serves as a reminder of happier times gone by.

Below is a copy of the interesting eulogy to Barry by his lifelong friend Wally Wood, who occasionally stayed in Barry's Air Chalet. Barry was truly a remarkable and capable person and will be missed by his fellow aviators.

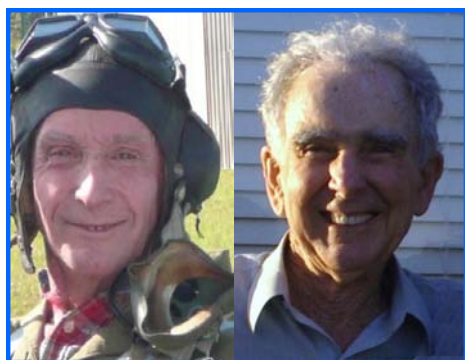
Personal Memories of Barry Joseph Uscinski

Born 12/11/1935; died 22/11/2010.

by Walter B Wood

I first meet Barry in 1953 when I enrolled at St Joseph's College Brisbane. We lived in Camp Hill, just one street away from each other. Immediately we became firm friends. In his youth, He was quite the larrikin and great fun to be with; always getting into mischief, laughing, joking, telling yarns; and engaging in discussions about almost every topic under the sun. We played the violin together in the school orchestra and were both cadet pilot officers in the Air Training Corps. Barry was a brilliant student and academic. He was dux of the College and achieved 3rd in the States examinations. At this time Barry's father would not allow him to fly, however I achieve my private pilot's licence before leaving school. Barry acquired his pilot's licence in the mid 80's when in England. Joining the Cambridge Flying Group and became a regular and an extremely skilled aerobatics pilot in the Tiger Moth. By the time Barry left College he could speak Polish and Russian fluently and a little Chinese mandarin. These he learnt from his father and the employees from his father's engineering works at Coorparoo.

In 1954 Barry joined the Jesuit Order at Watsonia in Melbourne where he studied for 9 years before retiring from his religious studies. While at Watsonia, Barry achieved his Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics & Physics. During this time he kept in regular contact, with brilliantly written letters describing his experiences and escapades. He was always a great



Barry and Walter

story teller like his father. Once Beverley (my wife) and I spent a week in Melbourne, during this week Barry went AWOL from Watsonia by scaling the walls with makeshift ropes and meeting us in the street outside. He directed us to a number of local restaurants where he introduced us to the pleasures of the liqueur Dom Benedictine. We could not swallow more than a sip of the liquid so Barry helped us along by sculling all three glasses one after the other. How he scaled the walls of Watsonia on our return and climbed to his second floor room without serious injury confounds us to this day. Returning to Brisbane for a few short years after he left the order he completed a Masters degree in physics at the University of Queensland, before moving on to Cambridge University in the UK in 1965.

He was at New Farm in 1963 to see Beverley, me and baby Anne-Maree, set sail for PNG for a 9 years stay. Barry's wonderful letter writing again kept us in constant contact. In 1964 Barry was the proxy Godfather for our son Dominic.

At Cambridge, Barry worked in the Mathematical Sciences. His research work was highly classified. During the cold war NAT funded his research with solving the theoretical problems of Russian submarine detection in the North Atlantic under the polar icecap. After the fall of the iron curtain, Barry's research was funded by the EU and dealt with understanding of the ocean current dynamics of the Mediterranean and North Atlantic. His office was Spartan, and contained a table and chair, a white board, a computer for emails, and pencil and paper. His main equipment was his own brilliant brain.

In 1976 Beverley I and our 2 children visited Barry in Cambridge and met his wife Barbara and daughter Kasia for the first time. This was the first time we experienced Barbara's wonderful hospitality, sense of humour, and marvelous Polish cooking. Barry delighted in showing us around Cambridge taking us to places nearby noted as being the haunts of famous English poets including Lord Byron and his pet bear.

Whenever we travelled to the UK or Europe, Cambridge was always our base. Barbara would cook her sumptuous meals and Barry would usually take me flying in a Tiger Moth over Sussex and East Anglia. He frequently became involved in verbal sparring with Beverley (who is a drama teacher and actress,) by quoting excerpts from Shakespeare; Shelley; Keats; & Byron; to see if she could recognize the origins of the quotations. Likewise whenever Barry or members of his family visited Australia they always stayed with us. While in Australia, Barry would fly tiger moths & Yak aircraft with Hempel aviation at Archerfield. I was frequently in the 2nd cockpit flying over Moreton Bay or the beautiful coastal hinterland.

Once Barry was in a local aerobatics competition and was in the middle of doing a slow roll in a Tiger when he suddenly dropped some distance out of his seat before his un-tightened seatbelt took effect. He was in radio contact with the ground and was describing his maneuvers as they were performed, everyone heard the loud "F—" expletive that suddenly exploded from the speakers. Needless to say he was soundly chastised by the organizers of the competition when he returned to base after his performance. Barry has laughingly repeated that story many times ever since.



Barry and Barbara enjoy classical music (every time Barry came to Australia he would borrow my violin and relax by practicing a considerable classical repertoire) and last year while their guests in Warsaw, Poland, we enjoyed a presentation of the opera "Faust" and a fantastic open air piano recital of Chopin in the palace gardens.

We also knew Barry to be a skilled home renovator from the many changes he had made to his Cambridge home over the years. After taking delivery of his replica spitfire 4 years ago Barry had a new hanger constructed with a 2 bedroom Air Chalet at Watts Bridge aerodrome near Toogoolawah. Over the past years during bi-annual visits to Brisbane to fly his spit, Barry with his great friend Peter Raffels, painted the hanger and Barry skillfully installed all the kitchen and bathroom fittings in the chalet. Beverley on Barry's invitation took over the task of furnishing and decoration of the unit. This was finally completed in time for Barry's most recent visit to Brisbane. He was delighted with the colorful end result.

Barry had a great love for the Australian bush. During the late 50s and early 60s he bushwalked extensively around Victoria and south east Queensland.

In recent times he was forever ranting about the spread of suburbia around Brisbane and the destruction of the neighboring native bush, all of which were so readily visible from the air. He loved visiting the country towns in the Brisbane & Lockyer River Valleys and in partaking of the tasty home cooked meals in the nearby Toogoolawah pubs.

Barry!
you have always been the best and most loyal of lifetime friends.
Farewell dear friend.
May your spirit be forever free
May you continue to enjoy roaming the clouds and the blue sky with which you have always been as one.



Barry's wife Barbara (left) with family and friends at Watt's Bridge



AGM ELECTION RESULTS

Following the recent AGM the following were elected to the Board of Management

President	Bruce Clarke
Vice President.	Rod Mill
Secretary	Liz Cook
Treasurer	Cheryl Brown
Maintenance Officer	Peter Freeman

We already know what a great job they will do.
Thanks, keep up the great work.



Immediately following the A.G.M. members were treated to ongoing aviation movies, and a delicious barbecue, supplied by the members which helped make the event a much more social occasion. During the afternoon the family of the late Barry Uscinski called in and enjoyed some Watts Bridge hospitality. An attendance of approx 40 people ensured the occasion was a success.



Enjoying the AGM Barbecue



President gives his approval to delicious barbecue



Peter Raffels and Bill Finlen relaxing after barbecue



Ken about to add the high "octane" to the barbecue



Making new friends



SNIPPETTS



Our condolences to Val and Rob Plackett. Val's mother passed away recently in New Zealand. We understand Val and Rob will be spending Christmas in NZ then returning for some well earned Chipmunk flying!

Work has commenced on Peter Freemans' hangar in the private hangar area. Earthworks have been done and "the bolts" are in place.



How great it was to look upwards and see the heavy metal of Mark Shiptons' T6 Texan last week. Hope to see more of that fabulous Waco also Mark!



Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield was recently the grateful recipient of an Australian Federal Government Volunteer Grant for the purchase of a Stihl FS-130 Brush cutter. The brush cutter is already being put to good use maintaining the airfield.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

LOVE IN THE AIR

The WBMA was treated to a wedding with an International flavor when David Thorn married Yvonne Ndirangu on Sunday 10th October 2010.

Although the airfield was under the effect of wild winds and driving rain, the happy couple were able to obtain some pre wedding glamour shots with the assistance of Bill Finlens Tiger Moth emporium.

Happy snaps were captured using Bills Tiger Moths as backdrop, with the new yellow Tiger being used to great effect.

The couple then departed WBMA and proceeded to the nearby Caboonbah Udenominational Church, where the nuptials took place.

Quite a few WBMA members attended as guests at the Church, (which is in a delightful setting) and later at the reception in the Church grounds. Yvonne's family flew in and were suitably impressed with the Queensland weather!

David who owns an Air Chalet at Watts Bridge is a B777 Captain with Emirates and Yvonne is a cabin crew purser with the same airline. GOOD LUCK for future.





DATES TO REMEMBER



Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield Inc. AIRCRAFT MOVEMENTS 2011



All-In Fly-In WHEN: May 21st, 2011

All pilots and aviation enthusiasts are invited to the Watts Bridge Airfield Open Day, celebrating the rich diversity of all forms of recreational aviation. Watts Bridge Memorial Airfield, situated in the Brisbane Valley is the home base for a wide range of aircraft including Vintage, Aerobatic and Recreational Aircraft as well as Gyroplanes, War Birds and a variety of Homebuilt Aircraft.

The All-In Fly-In is an all day event with on-field catering and coffee available. Entry is free with no landing fees. For more information contact Richard Faint 0412-317-754 or better still visit the Watts Bridge Website at www.wattsbridge.com.au

LOTS MORE DATES NEXT ISSUE

Big Wet Continues

Watts Bridge has certainly taken a pounding during the big wet. Total rainfall for October was 303mm, November 18mm and at the time of the newsletters publication, December had a recording of 185mm.

The main runway 12/30 has a gravel centreline, and can usually be relied upon to stay open in wet conditions. Water run off from this gravel causes the adjacent taxiways to become soft and at times unserviceable.

Inspection of the airfield is carried out by volunteer staff, particularly after heavy rain and the airfield status is recorded on the WBMA website. There may be times when volunteers are not available to inspect the airfield therefore pilots who have any doubt about its serviceability should carry out their own inspection on foot ... (not by vehicle) ...or contact the Caretaker.

The airfield is holding up well to the wet conditions thanks to good drainage. Trouble spots maybe a small area in the centre of Runway 03/21 and all taxiways and parking areas with pools of water taking time to clear after a heavy downfall .

Remember : Safety First! Pilots who chose to operate on areas which have been closed, may need to come to some arrangement with their Insurance company!

www.wattsbridge.com.au



Volunteer searching for missing Windsock



Work on the public picnic area is steadily progressing, with the West and Eastern sides now looking much straighter and safer than before.



If you're out flying this Xmas eve remember the old guy has right of away.



Have a safe and happy Xmas !!!