

# Out of the Blue

Waikerie Gliding Club Newsletter

November 2007

## Notices

### 1. Credit Facilities

The Club has reluctantly provided a credit facility for members convenience for purchases made in the Bar or for meals etc. The credit facility has been provided without the rigor of any formal system, resulting in some members forgetting what they purchased, when and how much is outstanding.

Due to the extra effort required and difficulties in recovering some of these minor debts, the facility is now withdrawn. Payment is required at the time of purchase.

If members find themselves short of cash, it is recommended they approach another member to borrow money – this is likely to be easier to remember and followup.

John Hudson

### 2. Polo Shirts

A range of new **POLO SHIRTS**, which feature the Club name, "Waikerie Gliding Club" embroidered above the breast pocket, are now available.

The short sleeved POLO SHIRTS come in a small range of colours and various sizes (S, M, L, XL, XXL), at a cost of \$26.00 each. They are available in the Office.

## Operations

### 1. FLARM

The Club has purchased 5 FLARM units which will be permanently installed in **IKO, XOK, XJB, GHP** and **WGC**.

It is important to appreciate that these units may be damaged by exposure to the extreme temperatures to which they may be exposed to in the aircraft cockpits when left in the sun. To this end, covers will be made to shield the FLARM units from direct sun to reduce the likelihood of damage.

The best way to avoid damage is to **always** use the canopy cover when leaving the glider.

A Briefing session on the use of and interpretation of FLARM will be held in the very near future. In the interim, some NOTES on FLARM are included in this Newsletter.

### 2. Liquor License - Update

Following the Clubs application to the SA Liquor Licensing Court, a new License has been granted.

This is a significant License (in the hierarchy of Licenses) and brings with it a high level of responsibility to all members. The significant aspects are;

- No person under the age of 18 years is permitted behind the bar
- To be served alcohol **under any circumstances**.
- The responsible service of alcohol.

Application is to be made by the Club to join the SA Government sponsored "Good Sports" program, which promotes safety of juniors in sport and the responsible service of alcohol.

### 3. Sale of Hornet

The Club's Hornet "Golf Mike Uniform" has been sold to David Goodley, a member of the Benella Gliding Club.

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## DIARY DATES

<b>Annual General Meeting</b>	Sat 17 <sup>th</sup> May (2pm) 2008
<b>Next Committee Meeting</b>	Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2007
<b>Member's Flying Days</b>	Saturday 15 <sup>th</sup> 16 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2007
<b>Public Hol's L/Weekends</b>	Check WGC web page

## Christmas cake

525g sultanas  
250g currants  
250g raisins, chopped  
250ml brandy  
250g unsalted butter  
300g brown sugar  
5 eggs, whisked  
250g plain flour  
60g self-raising flour  
1 tsp nutmeg  
3 tsp cinnamon  
Extra melted butter for greasing  
250g blanched whole almonds

A two-day project. In a large mixing bowl, combine dried fruits and brandy, cover and leave overnight.

Next day, preheat oven to 140C.

Whisk together the butter and sugar until pale and creamy. Beat in eggs. Sift together flours and spices and gradually fold into mixture alternatively with the dried fruit.

Prepare a high-sided, 20cm round cake tin by greasing the bottom and sides with melted butter and lining both with two layers of brown paper and then two layers of baking paper. Make sure that the paper is at least 5cm above the rim of the tin. Fill the tin with the cake mix.

Stud the top of the cake with the almonds in a circular pattern. Bake on the lowest shelf of the oven for 4 to 4 hours. Check after 3 hours by inserting a wooden skewer in the middle. Skewer will come out clean when cake is ready.

Take cake out of the oven and pour over another 250-350ml of brandy while the cake is cooling. When cake is cool, turn out of tin and wrap in foil.

Best made several weeks before Christmas. Every week, slowly pour over another 100ml of brandy.

## Congratulations

Congratulations to Graham Francis, who celebrated his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> October.

## Calling all Crew

Still some crew gaps in summer operations that are planned over January, Feb 08. Thanks to those who have nominated for the Christmas, New Year holiday period. Have a look on the web and nominate your services and availability to the club as soon as possible please.

## Our Open Day

The Club's **Open Day**, held on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2008

Despite the advertising and newspaper articles, not many people visited the Club on the day. A major accident on the Sturt Highway, which resulted in the highway being closed for most of the day and traffic diverted, is likely to have deterred some people.

Despite this, the few people who did visit were suitably impressed and are likely to return.

## For Sale

Waikerie Gliding Club owns two Caravans located in the Caravan Park at Waikerie. These vans have not been used for some time, and are offered for sale to interested members, on the basis of **"as is, where is"**.

- a) Orange coloured van, Rego Number TPZ489 expired, \$1200.00.
- b) Green coloured van, Rego Number TST404 expired, \$1500.00

One or two additional vans are available; for further information contact John Hudson.

## Committee Meetings and Members Flying Schedule, 2007/8

### Members Flying Days Comment/Discussion Topic

#### Flying weekend

<b>14.12.07</b>	<b>Committee Meeting</b>
15.12.07 - 16.12.07	
<b>16.12.07 - 22.12.07</b>	<b>Joey Glide, Gawler</b>
<b>26.12.07 - 12.1.08</b>	<b>Fulltime Ops</b>
29.12.07 - 30.12.07	
<b>29.12.07 - 05.01.08</b>	<b>Maurie Bradney</b>
<b>Week</b>	<b>SA State Comps</b>
<b>5.1.08 - 12.1.08</b>	<b>Coaching Week</b>
<b>13.1.08</b>	<b>Clean up Day</b>

## Jack Shanks

### **This terrific article provided by Graham Francis**

At 12.30pm on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November 1956, Jack and his wife, Betty, departed Jamestown in the local Aero Club's Tiger Moth with an ETA of 2pm Waikerie.

Friends waiting at the Gliding Club grew anxious when the aircraft became seriously overdue and by 4.30pm search and rescue action was under way.

Never heard of Jack? Neither had I until that weekend.

He had been Club Treasurer 10 years earlier and President (1947/8) while he was working in the local branch of The Bank of Adelaide. After several transfers he was promoted to Manager, Caltowie Branch. That transfer had the added bonus of being close to an Aero Club.

When Jack closed the Bank doors at 11.30am, that November morning, the young couple were looking forward to spending the next few days in the Riverland. The previous weekend he had gone over the Tiger carefully and prepared it for a long trip and topped up the fuel tank ready for a quick departure.

In the late afternoon of the 10<sup>th</sup> there were planes flying into Waikerie, then departing northwest. The evening radio news announced that an aircraft was overdue. There was no real concern because the search had barely got under way before last light forced it to be adjourned until the next morning. It was thought that the Tiger Moth had experienced engine failure and Jack, who had some knowledge of the river districts, homesteads and local roads, had landed somewhere on or near track.

Next morning planes were in the air at first light. As the day progressed it soon became clear that conditions for searching were a little more difficult than first thought and operations were then transferred to Renmark and Mildura. Fifty years ago very few light aircraft carried radio and Waikerie airfield had no facilities to support an air search, which was soon to include the RAAF. From memory, at that time there was only one partly used 44 gallon drum of aviation fuel in the rear of the hangar. It was rarely used.

In those days the country along the river was still sparsely populated. There were very few patches of irrigation. If the aircraft had put down early in the flight then it might be hidden in a valley in the hills or in the rough grazing country between the hills and the Murray. However, nearer to the river, Jack may have turned towards Morgan. Further on he might have crossed the river towards more populated territory.

The river itself presented problems because it was in full flood and most of the lagoons and river flats, between the cliffs and high ground, were inundated with floodwater. In those conditions the river took on a very different shape and the usual straights and bends had disappeared. What little land that showed above the floodwaters was coloured grey, exactly like the Tiger Moth.

By Sunday evening search policy had changed. The search contingent now numbered 18 aircraft including a Lincoln bomber, a Dakota and other RAAF planes together with private light aircraft and Waikerie and the Riverland were receiving both local and national media coverage.

The area was experiencing weather described in "The Advertiser" as "intense heat". S & R had learnt that Jack and Betty, being keen gardeners, were taking a cauliflower and 2kg of beans to their friends together with 6 bread rolls, a packet of cheese and some biscuits. They also had a bottle of lemonade with them. If the glass bottle had survived a rough landing then they had some fluids. That was the good news. But they also received some disquieting information. Jack had prepared the aircraft the previous weekend, but unbeknown to him, another member used it during the week and didn't refuel it.

The public began to take the matter seriously and when money is involved (especially the Bank's) rumours began to circulate. For example:

a) The couple were in financial difficulties and they had flown interstate.

b) They had cleaned out the bank's cash safes and left the country. (In a Tiger Moth?)

When murder/suicide was suggested the public realised just how destructive the gossip had become and stopped speculating.

On Monday morning the Bank's Head Office in Adelaide gave immediate priority to the problem at Caltowie. There was a junior staff member at Caltowie but Bank procedure stipulated that the branch keys were to be in the possession of the Manager at all times and Jack obviously had these. So the duplicate set (held at Pt. Pirie Branch) had to be obtained and just as importantly, someone of managerial status or more senior needed to be found and sent to Caltowie. Procedure also dictated that in suspicious or unusual circumstances the cash, securities, customers' safety deposit items and anything else of monetary value needed to be audited. (Just in case!) Even in a small branch this was a very lengthy task and usually saw the relieving officer working late into the nights.

During Monday the search area between Jamestown and Waikerie had been widened without success so thoughts turned to common navigational errors. There had been a crosswind component on the Saturday. Had Jack made a wrong adjustment? Aircraft were sent out with this in mind. As at last light on Monday - no result.

Tuesday morning the search was extended further to the north and east of Mildura and even exploring territory out to the maximum range of a Tiger Moth.

At 11.15am a Lincoln bomber, from Sale in Victoria, found the couple on the banks of Mindona Lake, a normally dry part of the Anabranche of the then flooded Darling. The aircraft had been sighted in long dry grass. Betty and Jack were camped near the water, 7kms away with "Help, No Gas" written in 2m high letters on a nearby sand dune.

At this point it seems appropriate to pause and reflect on their situation. To appreciate just where they were found look at your WAC map and draw an imaginary line between Jamestown and Mindona Lake. Consider the country they were flying over and imagine what you would have done if it were you discovering that you were lost. This is especially relevant this year when we are experiencing fantastic weather conditions and flying deeper into "tiger country" ourselves.

While the Lincoln crew flew on to find a homestead that was not abandoned the Dakota flew over the couple "20 feet off the ground" to confirm that they were well, whereupon Jack wrote "Thanks, we'll stay here" in the sand. An hour or so later a Bristol Freighter from Edinburgh flew over and dropped blankets and food by parachute.

Later, a flying postman who had been delivering mail and supplies to isolated homesteads dropped several oranges on his way past.

The Lincoln crew eventually found a sheep station 30kms to the north, which was not isolated by floodwater and dropped a parachute message requesting a ground party be sent south.

Later in the day one of the search planes, a Percival Proctor managed to land near the lake and the Dakota circled the area to unite the ground party, the Proctor crew and the Shanks'. The place was now becoming like Rundle Mall but despite being well equipped with blankets, food, oranges etc. they weren't interested in camping out again and spent that night in Mildura.

Betty and Jack didn't get to Waikerie that trip. Wednesday morning they were flown back to Adelaide Airport to be united with their 2 young children. VH-BTC, undamaged, was refuelled and flown back to Parafield by the Jamestown Aero Club's CFI.

In a newspaper report Jack said he realised his mistake when he couldn't see the river after 1 hour and 25 minutes flying and turned south but the fuel ran out at 1,500ft after 2 hours in the air.

In a very short time the incident was forgotten, except for those non flying types who kept reminding Jack of his past indiscretion.

To those close to him, Jack was known to be a competent and skilful pilot. Prior to taking up gliding, he flew Liberator bombers during WW2 serving in the British Isles, India, Burma and islands north of Australia. He would have commenced his training on Tiger Moths and it was known that during his career had his share of forced landings, including engine failure on take off. Unless Betty and Jack had been killed in a crash then their chance of survival had been good. I eventually met and worked with Jack for a short time in 1962. We had a few beers together on several occasions but I could not bring myself to discuss the subject and he didn't mention it. Later, I worked in the Head Office department dealing with branch lending and auditing matters and was able to read his Official Report. Undoubtedly the unwritten story would have contained much more insight to the incident. What it felt like to walk a further 7kms to a homestead only to find it abandoned and empty. Fish, rabbits, emus and kangaroos were all around but they had no way of catching them. They had fire but no cooking utensils. What did unboiled floodwater taste like? What were their plans when the food ran out?

He died some years ago and I wish that I had talked to him about the flight over those few beers. But I have recently spoken to Betty, who is now 84 and well remembers that weekend.

She told me that when the engine ran out of fuel Jack put the Tiger down cross wind on the stall in a small clear patch of ground. He apparently prided himself in his ability to do good landings and said "Well, what did you think of that?" She misunderstood the question and gave the wrong answer to which he replied "You could have at least told me it was a bloody good landing". They rationed their food to last 7 days but were already very tired of uncooked beans and cauliflower when they were rescued. She also remembers seeing a large number of dried skins that had been recently shed by snakes in the area where they were which made them both very uneasy night and day. Jack was an easygoing person who quickly accepted that he had made a navigational error by setting a 20 degree wind allowance in the wrong direction. However, it was never made public that, despite the Tiger Moth being serviced at Parafield not long before the flight, when it was flown back to Parafield for checking after the incident the compass was also found to have a 19 degree error. This and the lesser fuel load probably made a bad situation worse. Oh, The Bank's money - still in the safes when the Bank Inspector arrived on the Monday.

The Bank keys - Jack didn't have them with him. According to the Official Report he received a reprimand from the "Bank" when he revealed that he buried them under the garden tap in their vegetable garden in Caltowie before leaving for Waikerie.

**PS** I never did ask how he earned the nickname "Pranger" which he had acquired during the war years.

## High School Sports Expo

Another great day was had with a group of Riverland High School students on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September, when 8 students used the opportunity to try gliding. The group, comprising 5 girls and 3 boys all took the controls to "fly" the glider. All the girls then wanted to try something "cool" and were shown some gentle aerobatics.

Thanks to David Lawley, Peter Siddal and Shirley Mudge for their involvement on the day.



**Sarah Hedley preparing for her flight in the Club's Twin Astir during the Sports Expo.**

**'OUT OF THE BLUE'**

**SEND YOU'RE NEWS ARTICLES, ITEMS OF INTEREST OR ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE TOPICS TO:**

**[gjack@tpg.com.au](mailto:gjack@tpg.com.au)**

# FLARM

## Introduction

The *See and Avoid* principles, involving the development and continuous use of sound LOOKOUT and SCANNING techniques by glider pilots is the primary means of COLLISION AVOIDANCE.

The development of sound Situational Awareness by pilots is another good aid to collision avoidance. Situational Awareness is built using all available information sources, including LOOKOUT, the radio and (where fitted), FLARM.

FLARM cannot be relied upon as a primary means of COLLISION AVOIDANCE due to the fact that,

- a) Not all gliders are fitted with FLARM.
- b) Not all aircraft (very few in fact) are fitted with FLARM.
- c) FLARM may suffer interference, ie from Mobile Phone.
- d) FLARM units may fail (flat batteries, fault, not turned "ON", etc)

There is nothing to take the place of a high level of LOOKOUT and appropriate SCANNING techniques.

FLARM operates by transmitting position information and receiving position information from other FLARM units. The low power of the transmitted signal results in a relatively short range.

## Operating FLARM.

It is important to understand the lights (LED's) in the FLARM display.

When turned "ON", the unit proceeds through a start-up sequence,

Every LED flashes Green.

The "Alarm" sounds briefly.

Every LED flashes RED.

After this test sequence, the Power LED will continue to flash green, to indicate power is ON. Should this LED change to a flashing RED, it indicates the supply voltage is outside normal limits (high or low voltage).

The GPS LED will remain a steady RED until a GPS signal is received, when the LED will turn OFF. (If this LED remains illuminated, a GPS signal is not being received and position information cannot be transmitted.

The Tx/Rx LED will remain a steady RED until the FLARM unit begins transmitting its position data. Should this LED be steady GREEN, it indicates it is not receiving any other FLARM unit but is ready for operation.

There are two (2) other "sets" of LED's,

- 1) A circle of 9 LEDs (inc one in the centre). These indicate the approximate position of "conflicting" aircraft – left or right, in front or behind. The LED in the centre indicates conflict directly above or below.
- 2) A vertical row of lights which indicate
  - above, > 200 metres.
  - same level, +/- 200 metres
  - below, > 200 metres.

## Interpreting FLARM Indications.

It is now obvious that the FLARM units LED's are able to change colour (RED or Green).

The LED's will operate together with an audible alarm depending upon the forecast *time to impact* (TTI), ie

First alarm level, 18 – 20 seconds (TTI)

Second alarm level, 13 – 15 seconds (TTI)

Third alarm level, 8 – 10 seconds (TTI)

The alarm level will persist as long as the alarm level is appropriate.

<u>TTI</u>	<u>Alarm Level</u>	<u>LED/Audible Alarm</u>
> 20 Secs	None	
18 – 20 secs	1	Steady RED LED.
13 – 15 secs	2	Steady RED LED, Audible warning.
8 – 10 secs	3	Flashing RED LED, Audible warning.

ALWAYS REMEMBER FLARM WILL NOT PROVIDE AN ALERT TO ALL OTHER AIRCRAFT – ONLY LOOKOUT CAN ACHIEVE THIS.

When SCANNING the field of view, include the FLARM unit in the scan - the earlier you are aware of another glider / aircraft, the earlier avoiding action may be initiated.

FLARM operation may be adversely impacted by other electronic apparatus, including mobile phones, consequently, pilots are advised to turn these OFF if possible while flying.

**John Hudson**