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PRESIDENTS REPORT 2018 - 2019

This has been a rather quiet year flying wise, the weather hasn't been brilliant and the extended dry summer has taken its toll on the airfield. We did host our annual Orange Week, a Coaching Course and the Junior Nationals (Joey Glide). These along with the Rock n Roll weekend contributed to our income. As in the past we make more money from hosting events rather than our own flying activities. This, however, puts a big workload on just a few members. Thanks to all those who assisted.

AIRFIELD, CLUBHOUSE & GROUNDS

As noted, this summer has been extremely dry and the airfield is suffering. I found that managing the sprinklers had become a real chore and the committee agreed that if I could no longer handle it we should just let the pads die. But with Coaching Week and Joey Glide, I just couldn't let that happen. The juniors were very appreciative, some having just come from a dustbowl at Leeton. Once again the caltrop has been under control, but with a decent wet summer I'm sure they'll sprout again in big numbers. We sprayed the gazanias but it was either too late (October) or the dosage wasn't quite right as they are still thriving and taking over the pads. Where they have died in places there is just hard dirt. Other unirrigated areas are full of sand heaps and ridges. I plan to mesh and roll these before the next heavy rain.

The clubhouse and surrounds are in good order and many thanks to those who have cleaned, tidied, mown etc. in preparation for the events held during the year. Unfortunately we have lost the services of Robert Bruce due to ill health. He used to mow the clubhouse lawns and mow the pads. Our trainee, John Spronk has been able to repair a travelling sprinkler, a job I'm sure we can give him often!

As reported last year, the Council applied to have the airfield de-registered and re-classified as an Authorised Landing Area (ALA). This was successful and it means we are no longer under CASA regulations. The lease has still not been finalised and our promise of getting a ground lease was rejected. In compensation they have said we will be granted a 42 year lease (max.) I'll believe this when I see it!

Mark Morgan has pressed ahead with the construction of his specialised spray booth which looks fantastic. Whilst preparing for this he found termites in the wall behind the offices. Fortunately they were in their early stages of destruction and have been appropriately treated. The implement lean-to on the side of the hangar was damaged during a storm and was rebuilt through a Council insurance claim.

MEMBERS KITCHEN / WORKING BEES

We still need to complete repairs and fitting out of the laundry and store room. Thanks again to Ron Brock who keeps the tractor going. Our tireless helper, Ann Woolf passed away during the year and a lot of the jobs she did have fallen to myself and a few others. These include issuing gift vouchers, accommodation bookings, cleaning linen, putting out bins and dealing with the recycling. There will always be something to be done, so please try to support our working bee weekends whenever you can.

EVENTS / COMPETITIONS

As stated above, we had the Rock N Roll weekend in May 2018 (and another just completed), Orange Week in November, and a Coaching Course and Joey Glide in January this year. Many thanks to the members who volunteered with the running of these events. Unfortunately the weather didn't live up to what we had in 2017 and all these events didn't have the best of conditions. The coaching course run by Craig Vinall was

poorly attended but those who did found it worthwhile. We did advertise full time flying from after Xmas up to coaching week but it was not well supported. Joey glide was an 8 day event and only 3 days were able to be tasked – just enough to get a result. Once again we were represented at Horsham Week in February with by Craig, Greg, Peter, Haidyn and Patrick with mixed results. Craig and Sid represented us at Stonefield for the SA State Comps in March.

OPERATIONS / SAFETY

With the small amount of club flying this year we didn't have many safety concerns apart from the Discus incident where the canopy opened in flight. Craig and Patrick were able to assist with instructing with their L1 ratings and hopefully will be upgraded to L2 this year. I'd still like some of our other instructors to help out on the roster – even if for only 2 or more Saturdays a year.

ROCK AND ROLL FESTIVAL

Thanks to all those who helped de-rig and re-locate the gliders and to the private owners for the inconvenience. Also to those who helped vacuum, dust, wipe and wash linen in preparation of the accommodation. We expect to raise about \$2200 from hangar hire and accommodation.

The RnR committee requested us to upgrade the lighting around the hangar and car park which has been done in time for this year's event.

AIRWORTHINESS / CLUB FLEET

Thanks again to those who assisted in maintenance and annual inspections of our fleet. Thanks to Mark and Martin who did the Discus in their own time. The Discus incident led to a few minor repairs and other repairs unrelated to the incident were carried out. The LX8000 in the Discus had to be shipped back to the manufacturer for repair. The ASK21 had a series of "uncommanded releases" which led to an investigation of the fault. This was remedied successfully. John Hudson and John Ridge are in the process of completing tow out gear for the 21.

We were successful in applying for a grant of \$5000 thanks to Alan Wilsons efforts and have used this money to purchase a parachute and 2 Power Flarms. Craig has set up a system called the Open Glider Network (OGN) whereby all Flarms can be monitored and hence gliders tracked. He discovered that many of our existing Flarms were not giving correct or sufficient output. Hence the purchase of the Power Flarms which we will continue to buy to upgrade all our fleet.

During the year the Committee decided to put the LS4 up for sale. Several factors led to this decision, not the least being a re-finish due in the near future. Low utilisation was also a factor. To date we have 3 strong enquiries. We are still in the market for a high performance two-seater and I keep an eye on the progress on the Duo-Discus owned by Mark.

Many thanks to Lloyd who has re-furbished the hand fuel pumps, hose reel and several other jobs connected with the tug and fuel. The fuel tank is being run down in preparation to it being inspected inside to see if the paint is peeling. If so, this will be a major expense this year.

MEMBERS / COMMITTEE

During the year, we welcomed back former member Bob McKenney and new member Shane Callaghan. Once again members put in work, sometimes unseen and I appreciate those who continue to do so.

Thanks to my fellow committee members who have committed to their tasks this year. As noted last year, our Secretary (and Airworthiness Administration Officer and Public Officer) John Ridge wished to retire, but continued in a more subdued role. We still require his replacement along with Peter Paine who has been Vice President for many years. Last AGM we failed to fill a casual vacancy on the general committee and were unsuccessful in finding someone during the year. I urge everyone to consider taking up any of these roles. The club charges were reviewed during the year and it was decided that members attending on club business were to have free accommodation if required.

THE FUTURE

As noted above, we may have the services of 2 more L2 instructors to help spread the load, but I don't want them to have to do it all. With the loss of key members during recent years we continue to struggle to survive. If this trend continues I don't know where we'll be in 2 – 5 years from now. The committee is aware that the tug is a costly item and an engine overhaul or replacement is not that far away. If we were to sell the LS4 and purchase a high performance 2 seater, our healthy finances would evaporate. Hopefully such a purchase would generate more interest/income.

I look forward to members input and suggestions.

Bill Mudge
President, Waikerie Gliding Club Inc.

11/05/2019