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PRESIDENTS REPORT 2020 - 2021

This summer brought some fantastic conditions, although not always on our flying weekends. Flights of over 600km were recorded and heights of over 14,000ft were made. Our activity level was much higher than previous years and it's been good to see new faces around the club. We were unable to host our regular Orange Week comp but had a successful Coaching Week and State Comps.

AIRFIELD, CLUBHOUSE & GROUNDS

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we lost our caretaker/maintenance couple, so the maintenance has fallen back on to myself and others. On a brighter note, after many years of badgering the council, they advised they were in a position to top dress our pads. We only got one days' notice, so Ron quickly arranged to fertilize the pads and between us we meshed and rolled the top dressing. Very soon after we got 30mm of rain and you can see the results – looking better than ever. Since the beginning of the year, there has been little rainfall, so a lot of watering has been necessary. However, this dry weather has also meant that very few caltrop has germinated. Thanks to Craig continuing to spot spray, the gazanias have been kept under control on the pads. The November rains brought up a dense crop of spear grass, and thanks to the Council, the entire airfield was mown. At their request we also mowed the trailer park and caravan park. The ride-on mower was replaced with a brand new one in August. Thanks to Rod van den Brink who has watered and mown the clubhouse lawns regularly. He also looks after security among many other tasks around the clubhouse. Thanks Rod. The upgrade of the lighting was completed in April 2020 as per the 'free' lighting scheme. Many thanks to David and Lynley for providing the new lounge suite.

WORKING BEES / REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

We haven't had any working bees this year. We still need to complete repairs and fitting out of the laundry and storeroom. Thanks again to Ron Brock who keeps the tractor and going as well as weedicide of the lawns and pavers. The fuel tank is still rusting on the outside and needs to be repainted. There is a major leak at the bottom of the caravan park which is linked to the old domestic line. This has been turned off as it is only used to supply water to the last row of caravans. The door seals on various door keep falling off and thanks to David for continuing to repair these. Thanks to all who have helped keep the clubhouse and surrounds neat and tidy. The base radio in the pie cart had a new battery installed but still has problems with receiving – we may need to consider a replacement. Thanks to Lloyd & Kathy who did a thorough clean of the clubhouse and garden shed.

EVENTS / COMPETITIONS

As stated above, we hosted the SAGA Coaching Week and the State Comps in late December and early January. The COVID-19 pandemic meant Orange Week was cancelled at the last minute. Coaching Week was run by Craig and there was a very good turnout from most SA clubs. This was followed immediately by the SA State Comps. We were well represented by Craig, Haidyn, Patrick and Sid and David. Unfortunately the SA state trophy went interstate! We were represented at Horsham Week in February by Craig but this event was cancelled halfway through due to a COVID outbreak in Victoria. Craig made it home with just hours to spare. Craig also represented us at the Stonefield F1 event, which he also ran. At Haidyns suggestion, we held an intra-club competition over Easter which proved highly successful.

OPERATIONS / SAFETY

We didn't have any major safety concerns this year. Thanks to everyone for being diligent and safety conscious – it's a vital part of our wellbeing. Our Operations and Airworthiness Audits were carried out during the year and I am pleased to report that we passed with flying colours. GFA have now changed Annual Flight Reviews to Biennial, so you will need to be aware of the new conditions relating to this change. After last AGM, Craig Hudson declined to continue as CFI, so I took on this role from November 2020.

AIRWORTHINESS / CLUB FLEET

The LS7 sale was successfully completed after Mark performed the life extension on it. This cost us more than planned but made the sale more attractive. As outlined at the last AGM, the final payment was made on the Duo Discus. The Duo has proven to be very popular and easy to fly. I look forward to it being used more and more in x-country training and contest flying. The new S100 navigation and logger system will take some time to learn. The rest of the fleet remain in good condition and thanks go to all those who performed annual inspections this season. These will become a vital task as we are very short on qualified inspectors. The Discus has been fitted with a new Powerflarm and one is ready to be installed in the LS4. Thanks to Craig who oversaw the installation of the OGN tower – we can now track gliders up to 70km away. The tug had its annual and it has been recommended that we plan to repaint it soon. Thanks to Pete for flying it down and back and also when the alternator belt broke and had to be ferried to Parafield for repair. Thanks also to Rod for supplying a new battery.

MEMBERS / COMMITTEE

We welcomed new members this year – the first time for a while. David Pietsch relocated from Canberra back to Adelaide and has re-joined (along with his jet-powered JS1-C) David was born in Waikerie and began his flying career here before joining the RAAF and becoming a FA-18 fighter pilot. Graham Parker, a well-known competition pilot who has represented Australia has transferred from ASC to Waikerie and is a partner in an ASH29 currently kept at Waikerie. New member Wayne Collins has joined after discovering the thrill of gliding having had an AEF with us. Welcome Wayne, David and Graham. We have also had interest from a Benalla trained pilot, James Lord who resides in Orroroo and Sunraysia member, David Collins who is now based in Adelaide and wishes to join.

The committee continues to meet regularly and provide much input to the regular running of the club. Special thanks to Craig who manages the finances – an arduous job along with all his other commitments. Thanks also to Alan who applies for grants, WGC being successful in getting \$1000 from the Office of Recreation and Sport SA.

THE FUTURE

A new website should be up and running by the AGM. Thanks to Rodney who has been working diligently on this over the past year. Hopefully, we can get a 'tour' at the AGM. Obviously, there may be some teething problems, but you will be excited by this new site. Many, many thanks to Pete Siddall for hosting the original site that has done us so well over many years.

I look forward to another good season and heightened interest in x-country flying!

Bill Mudge

President, Waikerie Gliding Club Inc.

22/05/2021