



BALLARAT RADIO MODEL FLYING CLUB Inc.

Web site: www.startek.com.au/brmfc

Inc. No. A0001288M

NEWSLETTER – July, 2008

Committee 2007/2008

<i>President</i>	Glenn White (0412 641 188)	<i>Public Officer</i>	Roger Carrigg
<i>Vice President</i>	Nick Katsikaros (0438 559 985)	<i>Safety Officers</i>	Graham Waterhouse (0417 377 099), Peter Evans (0438 643 949)
<i>Treasurer</i>	Rick Pimblott (0417 424 819)	<i>Newsletter Editors</i>	Glenn White, Roger Carrigg
<i>Secretary</i>	Roger Carrigg (0437 842 277)	<i>Field Maintenance</i>	Max Rowan (0408 501 584)
<i>Publicity Officer</i>	Gordon Hicks (0427 033 981)		
<i>Returning Officer</i>	Rick Pimblott		

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The **Annual General Meeting** of BRMFC is to be held **at the flying field** on **Wednesday July 23rd 2008** commencing at **7.30PM**. Please come along to the meetings and support your club and be part of the decision making process. Don't forget to bring a plate for supper afterwards.

The ordinary meeting will then be held with the newly elected committee.

Agenda Items for the next meeting

1. Wind Farm
2. Field Maintenance – Spraying field
3. Enhancing Flying Skills –Videos
4. Mid Year Club Dinner
5. ARF Scale Competition – Committee Report
6. Meeting Venue

Mid Year Club Dinner

A dinner has been organized for Saturday 26th July at the Queens Head Hotel. See **Coming Events** for details.

Annual General Meeting

As already noted above, the AGM is to be held on Wednesday 23rd July prior to the ordinary meeting. This is where the current committee, present their reports and the committee for 2008/2009 is elected.

Please do your best to make it to the meeting. It is encouraging to see a good roll up at the AGM.

It would be nice to see some nomination forms submitted to the returning officer. A nomination form was included in the May newsletter. The following positions are up for re-election. (The positions of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer are for two year terms and are staggered.)

- President
- Secretary
- Safety Officer
- Safety Officer
- Publicity Officer
- Returning Officer
- Public Officer
- Newsletter Editor
- Newsletter Sub editor
- Field Maintenance Officer

Presidents Report

Here we are again at the A.G.M. and another year gone. I think that you will all agree that the club has had a good

year. Our money raising efforts have been well rewarded and we had a very successful Open day all helping to swell our bank accounts.

Once again I would like to thank all of the other committee members (and those behind the scenes) who have given up their time to keep the club running as smooth as it is. **Things don't "just" happen.** Fortunately we have a good team that can make it happen.

I know that there are going to be some major changes in the club over the next few months so keep in touch with what's happening and don't be afraid to have your say or voice your opinion. Just when we seem to be getting on top of things we get another spanner thrown into the works, this time in the form of wind turbines. It looks very likely that we may have to move to another location within the next couple of years

The next meeting is the night of the AGM. The older you get the quicker it comes around; it's the time of year that we ask members to nominate to participate in the running of the club. Funny how there seems to be a lack of hands, must be the cold weather! I am not sure what positions are vacant this year but it would be nice to see some new faces.

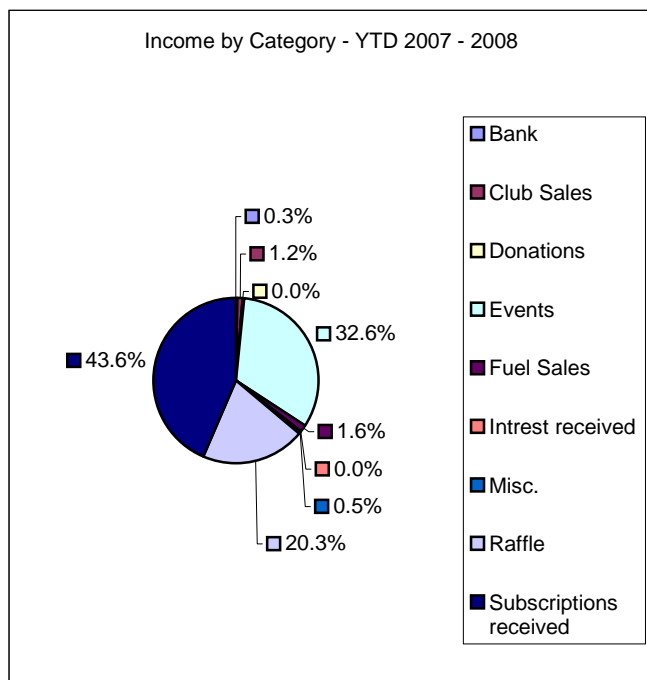
Talking of faces, you must be sick of seeing mine. I think it would be nice to see someone else take a turn as club president. I know that we all have the clubs interest at heart and work towards improving our assets and our hobby in general but it would be nice to see a new face chairing the meetings and maybe some new ideas to take us into the future. Give it some thought and I will see you at the AGM.

Cheers
Glenn White.

Treasurers 2007/2008 Annual Report

Yet another financial year has passed, this year we have made a profit, this was due mainly to our events & raffles, which are our major fund raisers. (32.6% of our income) I would like to thank those members who assisted at our events.

We must remember that without these successful events we would not be able to enjoy the excellent facilities we have at the field.



See the *Spending by Category* chart at the end of the newsletter. *I couldn't get it to format to fit within the column width and ran out of time.*

Rick Pimblott
Treasurer

Secretary's Report

The Secretaries job is not a particularly glamorous one. It involves mundane things such as sending and receiving club correspondence, taking the minutes at our meetings etc.

Where practical, all club records are kept in electronic format which makes the information much more usable. The minutes of meetings are emailed to all club members who have an email address. Interestingly over 80% of members now have an email address. We also email the newsletter to more than 50% of members, which is an enormous saving on postage.

I've been in the job for ten years now so it's really time for someone else to have a go. We all get stale after a while and fresh blood can only benefit the club. On that note, if you are prepared to give it a go get someone to nominate you. However, I'm prepared to continue on if nobody else "throws their hat in the ring" but it will be on a caretaker

basis with the view to finding someone to take over the reigns in the near future.

Roger Carrigg,
Secretary.



Subs 2008/9

Just a reminder that subs **MUST** be paid before the **1st August 2008** if you wish to fly. If you have already paid please disregard this notice.

Please fill in all your details on the form so they can be checked against the club membership database. The payment form was included in the last newsletter and there are also some forms out at the field on the notice board and on the club web site. Club bank account details are on the form so you can make a direct deposit online or via your bank teller.

Send completed form with your payment to the Secretary Roger Carrigg, 11 Lawrie Drive Alfredton 3350.



Points of interest from the last meeting

Extract of newsworthy items from the minutes of the last meeting. Note: Some events/activities may have concluded or been modified as circumstances change.

1. Wind Farm

The Secretary advised the meeting that the club received today (25th June 2008) from WestWind Energy, the report by the Department of Planning & Community Development on the WestWind Energy Planning Permit Application for the Lal Lal Wind Farm.

The documents received from WestWind Energy comprised the Lal Lal Wind Farm Planning Permit Application Report summary in booklet format, the entire 250+ page report on DVD in PDF format and a covering letter. The topographic layout map in the report summary shows three wind towers that are of concern to us, two particularly. The location of the two towers in question, were not on previous layouts that we have seen officially although Murri Anstis came across a map a few months ago showing similar tower locations. It states in the report summary that WestWind Energy is not expecting this project to be ready to commence construction before 2011. On that basis we have at least two years and possible 2½ to 3 years before things start to happen on the ground.

Possibly one of the major concerns of wind towers to our flying operations would be possible radio interference caused by the electromagnetic radiation emitted. Murray Ellis suggested that we contact Adrian Laurie (MAAA Frequency Sub-Committee) to see if the MAAA has had any experience with wind towers yet. (No doubt wind towers will become an issue to aero modellers in many parts of the country as the push towards green energy gains momentum.)

The meeting agreed that we need to confirm the layout of these three wind towers.

Action: Secretary to contact WestWind Energy to clarify the location of the three wind towers. Secretary to contact Adrian Laurie MAAA Frequency Sub-Committee regarding wind towers.

26th July: An email was sent to WestWind Energy seeking the accurate location of the wind towers with reference to land features. The following reply was received later the same day. Stay tuned!

Dear Roger,

Thanks for your e-mail and yes, we know where your club operates on Lal Lal Estate. We admired the great turnout and displays you had at your last open flying day.

I pass your message on to Pamella Francis, who will provide you with the requested information in due course. We will have to extract a detailed map of your operating paddock out of our GIS system and our GIS engineer will be back in the office next week.

Kind regards

Tobi

Tobias Geiger, General Manager, WestWind Energy Pty Ltd (ABN 94 109 132 201)

2. Field Maintenance

It's been recognized for some time now that we need to do something about the cape weed on the strips. Max Rowan advised the meeting that he priced a broad leaf weed killer from Hewitt & Witty and that 4L will be needed at a cost of \$55.

Max said that Graeme Allen has offered the use of his boom sprayer and that he will contact Fiskens to make sure it is okay by them and to see if they have any preferred or recommended weed killer to use. The meeting agreed that we should proceed with spraying the cape weed and now is the time to do it.

Action: Max to check with Fiskens and purchase weed killer.

(Max and Graeme are to spray the field on Saturday 5th July.)

3. Playground Equipment

Murri Anstis has constructed the timber framework for the sandpit and pegged it in place. Max noted that it is too close to the fence preventing ride-on mower access. It was decided to remove the pegs and shift the timber framework further north past the adjacent tree to allow easy mower access. Once that is done we can order washed river sand from Buninyong Sand & Soil. (2.4m x 2.4m x 0.2m deep = 1.15m³ say 1 m³)

Action: Murri to move sand pit frame and Max to order 1 m³ washed river sand.

4. Outdoor Furniture

We need to replace the table/seats (2) that were constructed from untreated pine some years ago. The seats have rotted and are unsafe and as such have been removed from where they can be used.

Murri is to measure up one of the old ones and work out a bill of materials and cost estimate to construct two table/seats using treated pine. (Murri built the old ones 7 or 8 years ago using 4x2 pine that Max scrounged from somewhere.)

The new table/seats will be needed for next summer.

Action: Murri to work out a bill of materials and cost estimate to construct two table/seats using treated pine.

5. Enhancing Flying Skills

This was raised by Nick K. at the February meeting with the aim of providing a pathway for new members to improve their flying skills post bronze wings.

It was suggested by Matt Porter at the last meeting that we should hire a couple of appropriate videos from the VMAA library and organize a video night somewhere sometime.

Action: Secretary to see what is available from the VMAA video library that teaches flying skills.

6. ARF Scale Competition – 26th October 2008

As stated in the June newsletter P&DARCS is holding a round of South Pacific Scale Masters Classic Scale & ARF Scale on August 24th therefore Classic Scale will **not** be part of our ARF event.

The meeting decided to form an organising sub-committee to handle the event preparations. Matt Porter, Murri Anstis, Gordon Hicks and Max Rowan volunteered (more like cashiered) to form the sub-committee. Sub-committee is to hold regular meetings and report progress to our monthly meetings.

Matt is to try and secure a prize ideally an ARF scale kit which might be won along the lines of a door prize so that all entrants have an equal chance of winning. Trophies supplied by the club will be awarded to the winning contestants.

7. Club Fees 2008/9

The Secretary reminded members at the meeting that fees are due on the 1st July. Several members paid their subs at the meeting with a few taking advantage of direct deposit. (If you haven't yet paid your subs by the time you read these minutes please attend to it ASAP.)

8. AGM & Committee Nominations

Rick Pimblott (returning officer) asked members to send nominations for 2008/9 committee positions on the nomination form included with the May 2008 newsletter. (If you wish to stand for one of the positions get someone to nominate you and send the form to Rick.)

9. Mid Year Club Dinner

The Secretary stated that we held a mid year club dinner last year at the Queens Head Hotel in Humfray Street North on Saturday July 28th and it was a successful event with 17 attending.

The meeting agreed that we should do it again this year. The same weekend this year is Saturday 26th July.

Action: Glenn White to book Queens Head Hotel in Humfray Street North for Saturday July 26th.

10. Meeting Venue

The subject of meeting venue was raised in the June newsletter suggesting holding meetings during April to September in town. This was done in response to rising petrol prices and the possible impact on attendances. The members at the meeting showed little interest and seemed quite content to continue holding meetings at the field.

A couple of possible venues mentioned were the function room at the Black Hill Hotel and the Eastern Railway Hall. It was decided to mention again in the next newsletter requesting members to make their preferences known by way of a formal reply.

Action: Editor to place in July newsletter asking members to reply stating their meeting venue preferences.



VMAA News

MAAA National Championships 2010 – The VMAA has taken up the offer to host the 63rd MAAA National Championships. They will be held over late December 2009 through early January 2010 in the Albury/Wodonga area. The Twin Cities Club is being asked to assist.

A steering committee has been formed to investigate the merits of purchasing the state field from the MAAA and develop a presentation to put to the affiliated clubs.



New Models seen at field (not quite)

Russell Aggett has spread his wings and gone into full size flying. He recently purchased a Jabiru and is currently learning to fly it. Russell has been kind enough to provide us with some info and photos on his new endeavor. We take this opportunity to wish Russell every success with his flying.

The plane that I have purchased is a LSA Jabiru registration number 55-0731, it is a factory built plane, has a 2.2 four stroke motor and 2 seat dual controls. The Jabiru has a climb rate of 1500 ft/min, a cruising speed of 95-100 kts, and burns about 15L/hour. It has a 60L tank so it has about 3½ hours total flying with about 10L in reserve. Its total take of weight is about 475kg.



Russell Aggett's Jabiru at Ballarat Airport.

I bought the plane from a guy at Lethbridge airfield which is just past Meredith on the way to Geelong. I started to

learn to fly on the 19/3/08 and have 13 hours of dual flying up and have just started to land the plane so I still have quiet a few more hours to go before I go solo which all up from start to solo is 25 hours. After that, I've got more hours to get up before I can take a passenger with a limit to how far I can fly, then I have even more hours to be able to go cross country with unlimited flying, so all up its about 50 hours.



Russell Aggett's son looking over the Jabiru.

The plane is hangared at the Ballarat airport at Inbound Aviation hangers that is owned by Roger Gration. Manny Peralta is my instructor. Manny is Roger's chief instructor and has many flying hours with the RAAF as well as civilian flying. Well that will do for now if any body has any questions or maybe some of you might want to have a look at the plane feel free to ask.



Crash Report

Nothing to report which is good.



Tips & Tricks

Battery Charging – A Cautionary Tale

By Nick Katsikaros.

With electric planes becoming more popular and new battery types coming into use there are a whole range of new hazards to catch out the unwary. I offer my own stupidity as a cautionary tale.

I have a small electric Pitts (a gift) that has made an occasional appearance at the field but is more often used for a quick fly at the park in the calm before sunset. It came with an 8 cell 600mAh NiMH flight pack and a 2 hour wall charger – affectionately known as a “wall wart”. Normally I use a proper 12V “peak detect” field charger that cuts out before overcharging and I charge the battery outside the plane. On this occasion I was going out so it was easier to leave the plane hanging on the wall with the battery inside, put the “wall wart” 2 hour charger into a simple clockwork timer and walk away.

I came home about 1½ hours later and there was a strange smell in the air – “Dad, your plane exploded”. After about an hour there had been two loud “pops” and a burning stink in the air. Luckily my son realised what was going on, pulled the plug and took the plane outside. If he wasn’t on the ball I could have burnt down the house.



The remains of the battery pack. The ends have blown out of the first two cells.

The battery was a mess; two cells had exploded and had literally torn the pack apart. The remaining cells were all bulging at the end due to the build up of internal pressure. Luckily most of the mess was contained inside the plane but the foam battery compartment had all but vanished into a mess of charred polystyrene. The body was full of black “charcoal” bits and the inside looked like it had been hit by a shot gun; in some places the hot shrapnel had gone right through the body (10mm foam).



“Battle damage.” The hot innards of the battery have melted through the foam.

So what went wrong? A few weeks before I had charged the pack expecting to go for a fly but hadn’t got around to it. So when I started the charge it was already at least ¾ full. Secondly, I fast charged it without using a proper peak detect charger. Thirdly, I charged it inside the house and unattended. Fourthly, I charged it inside the plane; which in my case helped contain the blast but a balsa plane could have burst into flames and burnt down the house. Lastly, I had assumed that if the charger was supplied with the plane it was safe to use.

I was lucky that the battery was NiMH (nickel metal hydride) and not a LiPo (lithium polymer) type which would have definitely burst into flames. I like to think that I wouldn’t be stupid enough to do the same with a LiPo but maybe after a while I would have been complacent enough to use the supplied charger.

The problem is not restricted to flight packs. NiMH is fast becoming the standard battery type for receivers and transmitters. Fast-charging and over-charging is the problem. The new battery types are less robust than the old NiCd; which can also explode if abused. When you over charge a battery the energy turns into heat and if you fast charge the heat builds up faster than it can get out and the cell will explode. Fast charging is anything faster than the wall charger supplied with your radio set, generally about 8 to 12 hours. “Peak detect” chargers switch off when the battery is full and are the only way to fast charge.



What was left of the battery bay; showing the charred polystyrene. Up to 2cm of foam was melted away.

New battery technologies are great for performance but you need to get to know how to charge and use them safely and always use the right equipment. Take battery packs out of the plane to fast charge them. Don’t fast charge unattended, and especially don’t use the wrong equipment – even if it was supplied with the plane! Cheap planes come with cheap equipment and there is no guarantee that it is safe. (For example some ARF kits are supplied with inadequate hardware or the wrong CG.)

So the moral of the story is “it can happen to you” and it will happen to you if you bend the safety rules.

Nick Katsikaros.

An excellent article Nick! Something for everyone to take heed over.



Coming Events

Mid Year Club Dinner

Glenn has made a group booking at the Queens Head hotel for 7.00 pm on Saturday July 26th

Please email or phone Glenn to reserve your place no later than Friday 25th.



Event Calendar

July 23rd BRMFC Meeting (AGM).
 August 10th VFSAA Scale Rally – Greensborough.
 August 23rd/24th VFSAA Scale Rally – Albury.
 August 24th South Pacific Scale Masters – P&DARCS.
August 27th BRMFC Meeting.
 Sept. 20th/21st Mammoth Scale Fly-In – Shepparton.

Sept 24th BRMFC Meeting.
October 26th ARF Scale Event – BRMFC.
 November 16th OS Engines Day – P&DARCS.
 Nov 29th/30th Fun Fly & Swap Meet – Hamilton.
April 5th 2009 BRMFC Annual Display Day.
 May 10th 2009 OS Engines Day – P&DARCS.

That's all for now. Good flying.
G.W & R.C.

