



Shire of Cardina continues to expand. Encroaching suburbs full of potential newbies?

FUTURE PROOFING THE P&DARCS

I started flying RC as a member of GAGS in Geelong. The club lost its field at the Belmont Common a few years after council put in a baseball diamond.

MARCS was the first RC club in Melbourne. Club lost its field recently. Doo gooding lovers of ancient grass won out there. I cannot help wonder would that be the case had it created and maintained a good corporate citizen profile. Opted out of that club years ago but I dips me lid to due diligence by the Secretary for reading out my letter suggesting the club put my key deposit towards a head job for the grumpy prick who made members

visits a misery. Apparently that got a bit of a laugh at the meeting.

New area approval regulations could well mean DAC and LDMFA are on borrowed time for anything over 2kg. Been a member of both. Called past Lilydale a few weeks back. Someone was doing an excellent job split essing his fourstroke Stearman within the confines. For me I'd fly a Fun Cub at either field but not anything larger.

Sold my \$500 share in MR-CAC's private field years ago. Got \$250 for it. The night Melbourne Radio Control Aircraft Club was launched was an experience

for a young bloke such as myself. One of the founders stood up stark naked in the spa and hit on a new member's wife to ditch the hubby and he would set her up in a flat. Wife told hubby. Couple departed quick smart never to be seen again. Night became most unpleasant when the protagonists wife found out. Lots of screaming.

To get away from politics creeping into the Doncaster Aeromodellers Club I found some land and registered Yarra Valley Flyers to operate my commercial flying school. Put a small six man team together and we knocked off the VMAA trophy. Which was a bit of



If we have to remain within our boundaries should we sell now and move?

fun. Membership fees from a dozen blokes covered the rent. My business paid for the mowing. Which was usually done Thursday or Friday. Nice short grass for the chaps to enjoy at the weekend. Dad threw eleven grand at an event. Laser grading the field for the Yarra Valley Air Races cost a thousand etc etc. Man was that an eye opening experience in petty politics from the hobby trade. With a few traditional pylon people telling us what we were doing wrong as well.

Today I am a member of three clubs. The NSW club I affiliate through flies off a turf farm. Its constitution allows for only ten members. Rather handy for keeping the Old Fokkers from ruining it.

Which is what happened to the Large Scale Racing Club. The constitution didn't allow for proxy votes. My dream of building a national air racing circuit stalled yet again.

A couple of years ago I joined Northern Flying Group. Host club for a VMAA 100 acre State Field is an easy sixty km drive from home. Excellent club great facilities overseen by a progressive committee. The new CASA requirement to have overfly rights in writing as part of Area Approvals won't affect NFG. I can continue to fly my 10 kg 250 kph models within the boundaries and punch up to 1000 feet. Not so sure about P&DARCS. Which is near Dad's place some eighty km South East from home. I

own a parcel of shares in the Co-Operative which leases the land to the club.

I was behind the jump at Fliteline Models when that venture started and high profile visionary people like my father were approached to use his name to promote purchasing shares in aeromodelling's future. A very interesting read on the website of the club's history by Monty Tyrell has a rather poignant point.

“Unfortunately the early birds sometimes feel it has been taken for granted by some”. The speech by Monty Tyrell's son at the 2021 Monty Event was spot on. **“It remains a credit to all concerned who have steered DARCS through to the present day”.**

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Landcare's Gary Tatti with son Mark. Gary built the Thunderdome for Bob Jane, runways at Lilydale Airport and fixed the same problem the Cardinia Dog Club had on the same soil as ours. Club would get change from the twenty five grand needed to laser grade and redo all three runways with the correct topsoil to cope sitting atop the clay. Gary quit the P&DARCS years ago after his ducted fan Spectre was damaged when the nose disappeared into one of the huge cracks

In order to survive for the next generation to enjoy this is what I think the club needs to consider.

If I was Club President setting about to change what appears **“We are the greatest therefore and people will come attitude”** that has crept in. The way the sensi-

ble idea for an access gate for older people to retrieve models from out landings was treated is indicative of that. Lack of big events is another. I've had many conversations of that ilk with the late Tony Farnan and others in the hobby trade over wasted opportunities. Having pride in your club is important but when people espouse

this being the best club in the country I cringe. It has the potential to be the best club although that depends why you go there. For me it has always been about the flying and the heart and soul of any club are its runways.

Rather than put our hand out to MAAA VMAA for dosh to fix the runways we could



Check out the grass at Dogs Victoria on the Frankston Dandenong Road



Club lost the plot on this one. Model recovery gate idea tharwted by pettiness. This has duty of care problems written all over it. What about the East and West strips?

FUTURE PROOFING THE P&DARCS



Mud is an occasional hazard but we could get rid of the bumps



Heavy models like Mark Tatti's twin turbine 30 kg Sukhoi SU 30 need smooth runways



Six times FAI F3d World Champion Chis Callow gets to fly of this turf

go back to what made a great club in the first place. Conduct events to raise money and the club's local profile at the same time.

Two big events per year could pay for new runways. A target of twenty grand nett profit per event is quite easily achievable. The Festival of Speed idea poo pooped by committee would shit that in. Transforming either the Monty Tyrrell or the Scratch built and Kit Rally into a big three day event along the lines of the South Pacific Scale Masters would work too. Publicising the fact their entry fee money would be channelled back into the fixing the grass strips might go some way to encouraging those who will no longer risk their expensive craft here. A single day event will not attract intra state and interstate modellers.

Stumping up a healthy \$10 dollar per person or \$20 per car gate fee then boring the

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Access road smoother than the runways

crap out of spectators making them watch a bunch of old geezers doing left hand circuits with a Piper Cub won't work. They won't come back. Not so if they are entertained and the answer to that is right there in that Monty Tyrell history piece on the website. Ron Blaskett's fee for the Dutton Airshows at Caulfield Racecourse 1999 and Sandown 2000 worth every cent. Ditto for Dave Cahill at recent Sandowns. Having someone providing techno info is great but you need someone trained in the art of speaking to the general public.

The other part of conducting airshows is to attract new members. The promo video is good but what about the really important part? Signing up new members. Essentially this is a sales process and our retail point of sale material is sadly lacking. What is on currently on offer is not worth handing over. Out of date and boring.



A professional announcer is vital

An information centre where a beginner could read through or grab a brochure without seeking out a club "sales person" would work a treat. Seeing someone standing there gives the opportunity for the more enlightened members to wander over for a chat. Better than an old Fokker who doesn't want change scaring them away. A ready box for beginners to let instructors know they are wanting to be taken up is badly needed.

There are two really big changes looming in our next CASA Area Approval. The devil is in the detail. If I was President of MAAA or VMAA it would be encumbent on me to base capital grant applications towards fixing PDARCS runways on its next application for

Area Approval. A Sydney based club has been working through the overfly rights requirement and has to shift its flight paths. I have no idea what the club boundaries are. What if we had to realign our strips to tack the levi bank to operate large fast heavy aircraft?

Not a problem as we have the land but flying looking into the afternoon sun will certainly affect the ability to sell more shares. That's a hard \$1400 sale to make. Even if we offered a bitumen or concrete runway. It seems hard enough now to sell a share. Not helped if high profile people don't buy one. Most people are taking up the pay as you go offer. I would not commit any major club expenditure until the issue of our boundaries is resolved.

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Space on this vacant wall should have information pertinent to getting into the hobby. Upon spotting a potential new member reading our Silent Salesman the more enlightened member can wander over for a chat and introduce them to the club. I would print up a simple two sided colour brochure in the form of a Boarding Pass with the basics of a trainer package with approximate costs, including joining



Two subtle changes to the Nth Sth strip could increase Sub 2kg operations and free up the main runway for competitors to practice at certain times, thus reducing the grumbling

The other lurker in Area Approvals is Ceiling Height. Busting the Ceiling Height is looking likely modellers could be subject to STRICT LIABILITY. This is where one has to prove one's innocence. Not innocent until proved guilty it's the other way around. As



Make them feel part of the action by signing them into the visitors book. Prospects could then be taken to this "Hangar" where a basic trainer combo is on display. A ready box for beginners to let instructors know they are ready to be taken up is a good idea

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Windssock and structure moved north would be good. Metal fence at a radio control aircraft club? Time saved on maintenance often lost to dealing with nuff nuff theories

Club President I would be encouraging members who fly above four hundred feet to start fitting altitude sensors right now. An opportunity for F3a and Scale Aero chaps to lead by example and put back in at the same time.

Setting the Altitude Alarm in my RCM News Racing Casutt to one hundred feet below the Ceiling Height is my defence if having to explain to a Magistrate what measures I took to prevent that occurrence. Ditto if I was to appear as President representing the club.

The other change would be to encourage commercial instruction. Our club has

a few young people worth encouraging them to take up the load of teaching beginners. Which could fund their hobby. It's a win win. Establishing a Beginners Ready Box might encourage some of the others who themselves once benefited from being taught to fly . One flight for me, one flight for a beginner

would go a long way to taking up the slack.

“I put the young man’s shoulder to the wheel” is a line in a cool Ross Wilson country style song. Strikes a chord. Ha! When the push to purchase this flying field was on much of the work was by done people still working.



Excellent grass strips at Charles Kingsford Smith field at Pittown Sydney. Only a 400 foot ceiling nevertheless a fantastic place to fly. Due to a neighbour denying overfly rights the club is realigning its runways

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Western Australia Model Aircraft Sports Centre at Whiteman Park



Runways self funded by Alice Springs Model Aircraft Club

Whether any of these ideas are of interest remains to be seen but more of the same? Not my problem it will see me out? Sixty might be the new fifty but unless changes are made I cannot see this club remaining viable in fifteen years time. Flying large models is a growth area within the hobby. There are some amazing aircraft out there but we don't see them at the club. Our strips really need to be improved if the club wants attract those fliers. Take a look what's on offer in Northern Territory and Western Australia. International competitors at an FAI World Cup praising the facilities a few years back were just being polite about the runways.

I cannot recall RCM News ever being asked to support the club. No mention of my father in the Mighty DARCS article from those early years is easy enough to explain. He had better gear and was just better at aerobatics, pylon and

helicopters than the Hobby Hangar- Futaba Sales gang. Max Tandy hovering his Micro Mould Lark over Dad's head whilst he flew the infinitely more impressive Kavan Jet Ranger around at a DAC Airshow. That sort of behaviour was typical. Tony Cincotta became noticeably absent at an airshow at VFL Park. Dad's model suddenly lost control and went in full throttle into a housing estate across the Sth Eastern freeway. Driving out to find the wreckage he spotted TC driving back in. Shot down again?

AGM a few months away I am not making a case to become Club President. Still working, don't have time and way too much inertia to overcome. Club has spent enough dosh on tractors but I would vote for someone with new ideas. How many are on the list wanting to sell their share would be interesting to know. Dad and myself have a few successful events behind us

and our new suggestions discounted (ignored) by committee is fair enough. My interest in contributing remains stalled until my father is reimbursed for the money spent on that half finished gate. Penny pinching is a good way to kill a club. People on committee pushing commercial interests by stealth is another. MAAA is leading the way on that score. Vendor neutrality and visibility is vital. Pretty shabby.

To attract locals and make it more inclusive of local community I would leave the sign as Burley Field but re-brand and pitch the club as Cardinia Model Airport or Cardinia Miniature Airport. Club President Bryan Harper's add on sale idea at Cobram Air Races enticed Saturday spectators to return on the Sunday. A secret code for free entry we got em again at the kiosk. Food made four grand that weekend. Encouraging youngsters to instruct would inject some badly needed young blood. They all have teenage friends.