April 2024 No 344

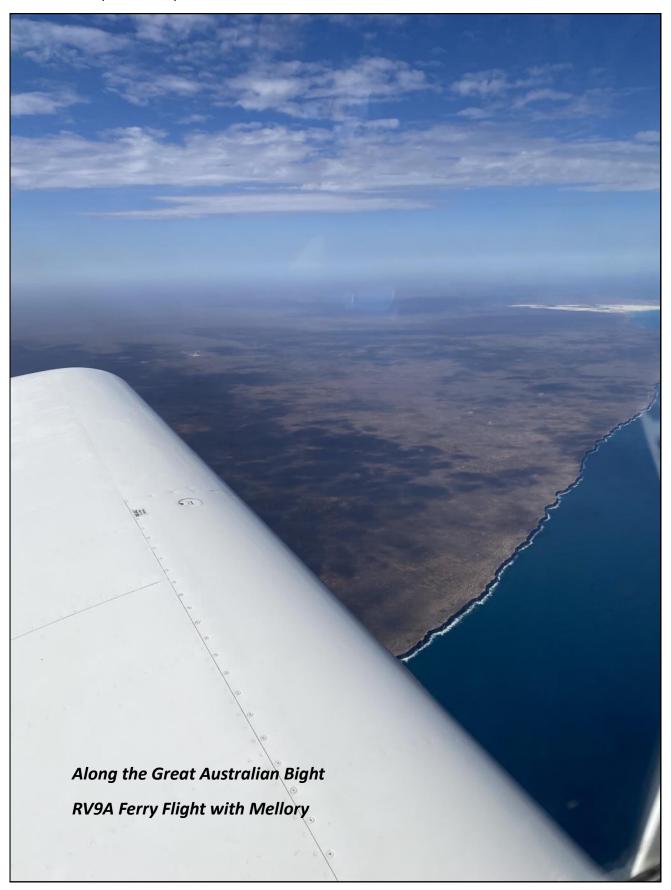


Newsletter No. 344

April 2024

The Atherton Aero Club is an organization of aviation enthusiasts who promote the sport of aircraft building and flying.

The organization is associated with *Recreation Aviation Australia Inc.* The Club meets at Atherton Airport every third Sunday of the month. Food and drinks are available and visitors are most welcome.



Atherton Aero Club - Committee Contacts

President Vice-President Secretary **Treasurer** Jack Cross **TBA** Dave Camp Mark Aitken PO Box 227 PO Box 227 PO Box 227 PO Box 227 ATHERTON Q 4883 ATHERTON Q 4883 ATHERTON Q 4883 ATHERTON Q 4883 xjac@bigpond.net.au dcamp.gvale@gmail.com mjaitken54@bigpond.com

Web Page http://www.athertonaeroclub.org/

Facebook https://www.facebook.com/AthertonAeroClub?ref=hl

Email athertonaeroclub@gmail.com

EDITOR'S NOTE - by Bill Gronbeck

Hi All and welcome to edition No 344. In this issue, the history of Donnington Airpark, an update on activities at the FNQ Air Museum and upcoming events. Keep those flying adventures going and remember to send us your photos and stories.



A thank you to Christian Smith, Mellory, the NQAC, FNQAM and other Clubs and Flying Groups who contributed content to this edition. Please contact me with your newsletter contributions on any of the following: (07) 4036 2868 or 0408 073 142 or email at -

williamgronbeck2@gmail.com

Watch the AAC, NQAC, Burdekin Flyers, FNQ Flyers, Donnington and Innisfail Facebook Pages for details of calendar changes and other short notice events. Check out the AAC Website for the YATN weather-cam and older AAC Newsletters.



The next **AAC Club Function** will be our regular monthly social get-together and BBQ Lunch on **Sunday the 19th of May 2024**. *This month will also include a short Club Members Meeting*.

From **10:30am** to around midday at the **AAC Atherton Aerodrome** facility.



AVIATION HISTORY IN THE FAR NORTH

This month—Donnington Airpark. A fact sheet, history and some early photos.

DONNINGTON AIRPARK (YDOP)

HISTORY, PURPOSE, USAGE & FUTURE

HISTORY

160-acre property purchased 1969 by Ray and Doris Smith, with the intent to develop a satellite airfield for the Townsville/Thuringowa region.

Opened to aviation activities 1970 - first official flight August 1970.

Home to Donnington Country Fly-In/Donnington Airshow 1979 to 1993 inclusive – these events show-cased a wide range of aviation from ultralights to Warbirds and military aviation of the day - visitors travelled from all over NQ and even further afield to attend. Events organised 1979-1985 by Ray and Doris Smith; events 1986-1993 organised by Christian Smith.

Winner NQ Tourism Awards 1991 for category "Significant Local Festival or Special Event" (for 1990's event).

Home to Burdekin Soaring Club for several years - featuring annual gliding courses for ATC cadets.

Used jointly by ultralight, gyrocopter and hang-gliding clubs at various times.

Used by Rural Fire Service for training exercises, coordinating aerial and on-ground resources.

Used intermittently by 35SQN (RAAF) for Caribou night-flying training when based at Townsville.

Used for training exercises (commandeering an airfield) by Army unit 10FSB (Ross Island).

Usage by Customs and Coastwatch to promote awareness of illegal flights (footage for promotional video shot at the property).

PURPOSE

Was originally re-zoned from "Rural" to "Special Purposes – Airport" under Thuringowa Town Plan – 2014 update of Townsville Town Plan saw involuntary change to "Rural – Land Use Code 56-0 - Racecourses, Showgrounds & Airfields".

Authorised Landing Area (ALA) listed in Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) Enroute Supplement (ERSA) – code YDOP. As an ALA and by virtue of the ERSA listing, it is a public resource for travelling aviators. Convenient stop-over facility for travelling pilots who are not comfortable with or not accustomed to Air Traffic Control (ATC).

Sport, recreational and general aviation hub for Townsville and surrounds.

CURRENT USAGE

Currently 10 privately-owned aircraft hangared on the property – mix of RA-Aus and GA-registered with one gyrocopter.

Monthly Social Fly-In Breakfast open to pilots and public alike - supporting RFDS.

Used intermittently by agricultural aircraft spraying vegetation retardant in the local area. Previously used by agricultural aircraft for crop spraying in the district.

Used as required by Cleveland Bay Aviation and Townsville Helicopters for flying training operations.

Used by travelling pilots not wanting to enter controlled airspace or pay higher charges at Townsville Airport – intermittent arrivals on business or visiting family and friends in Townsville.

DONNINGTON AIRPARK (Continued)

Used intermittently 2020- 2022 by 5 AVN REGT for training with both Chinook and Agusta AW139 helicopters.

Tandem skydiving operations with Sydney Skydivers (as bookings allow - successful first day 16/09/23)

FUTURE POTENTIAL/DEVELOPMENT

Potential for further hangarage options (build your own, term lease), or maintenance providers and flying training operations to be based at the airpark.

T- hangar vacancies occur at intermittent intervals. Open storage always available.

Short-term hard accommodation for visiting pilots (as finances permit). Under-wing camping available now with public toilet and hot shower. Fold-out double sofa-bed in Social Centre. Weekend getaway deals!

Social Centre improvements - currently has tea/coffee, fridge, microwave, crockery and cutlery, tables, chairs, couches. Improved lighting and electrical outlets, signage and landscaping to follow. PA system and floodlighting to be upgraded.

With the Drive-It facility being developed close by, there may be future options for out-of-town visitors to fly in and be shuttled to and from the motorsport venue.

The QPM nickel/cobalt refinery proposed for the nearby Lansdown Industrial Eco-Precinct also offers potential for corporate aircraft visits if it goes ahead.

COSTS

Landing fee \$10

Parking (casual, open) \$5 per day Parking (casual, T-hangar) \$10 per day

Camping \$10 per site/night
Weekend deal \$20 per aircraft

(landing and camping)

* Landing and camping fees are waived for our fly-in events, held on the 4th Sunday of each month. Most are held Sunday morning 0800 - 1200 but others are weekend overnighters. Pilots are welcome to overnight for any of the events. Fees are waived in return for having more aircraft on display - it's a two-way street!

We do have a "regular users" deal for unlimited landings, short-term parking and use of the Social Centre - \$100 per annum. If you only fly in once a month, you are still ahead just on landing fees!

CONTACTS

Christian Smith - 0418 636727 or operations@donningtonairpark.com.au

Erica Smith - 0407 731698

Facebook: Donnington Airpark Past & Present

Website (not fully developed yet) - www.donningtonairpark.com.au



DONNINGTON AIRPARK HISTORY

The early years and a few more recent photos:



Ray Smith on his Fergie



First Official Flight 1970



First Flight Group 1970



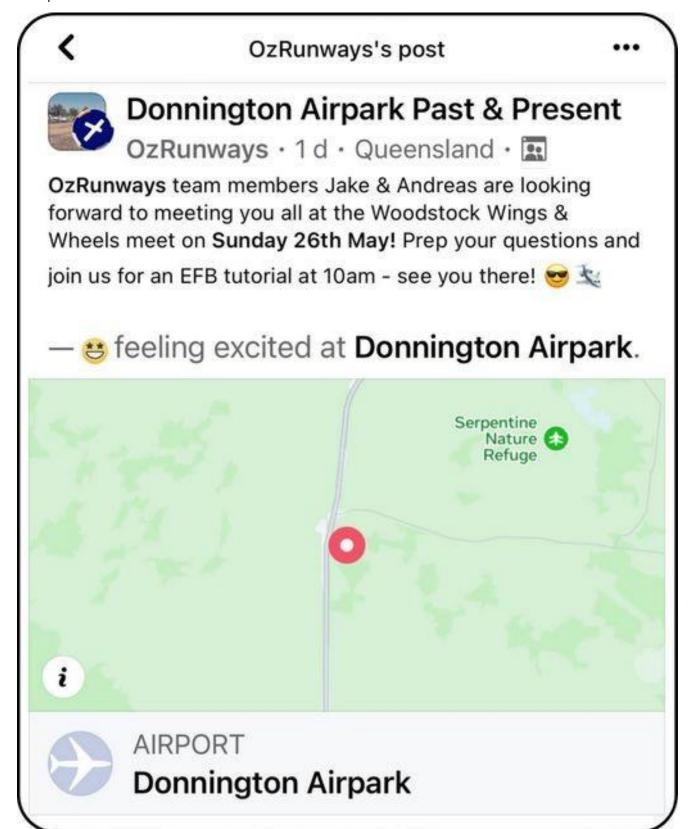
Hang Glider Ops



Donnington Airpark August 2023



Trojan and the Smith Family



Donnington Airpark is excited to be hosting an OzRunways EFB tutorial on Sunday 26th May at 10 am. All pilots welcome - there will also be food, coffee and an ice-cream van onsite plus market stalls and perhaps a car/bike club display. Make a morning of it or even camp over on Saturday night if you have distance to travel and don't want to be pushing it to get here. 930 metres of grass strip (11/29) in excellent condition, plenty of aircraft parking space, toilet and hot shower, undercover seating and tables. No landing fees for the event! Contact Christian Smith 0418 636 727 if more info required. We look forward to your company - please also feel free to share this event with your own networks.

RV9A FERRY FROM SERPENTINE, WA TO CASINO, NSW

I recently got the call up to help deliver a RV9A from Perth to it's new owner in Casino. We recently purchased our beloved Comanche 260 from Bob and he was now the proud new owner of an RV. I was excited of the opportunity to make a cross country trip in a sleek RV.

I caught a flight over to Perth from Adelaide after attending a friend's wedding. On arrival the weather was atrocious, and I had a look at FMC that afternoon but left it in the hangar. I stayed the night at a very interesting private airfield that was home to a Stinson Reliant, a Stampe (think French Tiger Moth...) and a Chipmunk.





The next morning the weather had much improved. After a short test flight and refuel I was on my way. First stop Kalgoorlie. En route the clouds cleared (not to be seen again until NSW...) and I arrived 2 hours later. Caught a glimpse of the large mine on the edge of the town refuelled quickly and set course for Forrest. I was welcomed on arrival by the caretakers with lovely hospitality. Another refuel and quick soft drink and then off to Wudinna, SA. Forrest to Wudinna track crosses the Great Australian Bite, what a wonderful view. Big recommendation to call in here...I regretted not ordering dessert from the pub, would have been good left overs for breakfast. Great service from the local pub and motel. This was the final stop of day 1.





RV9A FERRY FLIGHT - Continued









In the morning I refuelled and set off for the next stop, Broken Hill. This was the most scenic 2 hours of a 14 hour flight. The track passed Lake Gilles, the top of the Spencer Gulf, the Flinders Ranges and across the desert to Broken Hill. The terminal had a café where I enjoyed some morning smoko. Next stop was Walgett where I encountered fuel bowser trouble... which was eventually sorted thanks to the local Aero Club (Aero Clubs are the best). After Walgett I saw some clouds again. There was very strong thermal activity from here on, luckily was not too far to Warialda where I met Bob (and Judith the border collie) the new owners of this very tidy RV9A. We all piled in and set off on the final leg to Casino, VH-FMC's new home.

RV9A FERRY FLIGHT - Continued



The total flight time was 13.5 hours over 1985nm. The RV must be one of the most efficient cross country aeroplanes. An average ground speed of 147kts at 30lph! A great trip and a pleasure to deliver this fine aeroplane to it's new owners.

Mellory

Yak-52 Warbird Adventure Flights.

Bookings are now open for Yak-52
Warbird Adventure Flights at Donnington
Airpark over the weekend of 27-28 July.
Follow the link below to select a time-slot
and then follow the instructions to complete your purchase. Owner Pete Marriss
is offering a discounted price of \$350
(normally \$395) for a 20-minute flight as



part of our North Queensland Military Muster weekend. Don't miss out on this rare opportunity to experience flight in an historic radial-engined Russian trainer aircraft in North Queensland!

https://widebaywarbirds.com.au/events/north-queensland-military-muster-27-28-july-2024/

Christian D. Smith

Operations Manager, Donnington Airpark, 0418 636 727

Rotax 447 Engine For Sale

(Amended and additional information to original advertisement)

Rotax 447 UL 2 stroke, 2 cylinder engine, together with matched 57" reversible Brolga prop, all gauges and wiring harness as shown.

From decommissioned ultralight, all in good condition.

Pick up Mareeba. \$2450 ono.

Seller information: Volker Schwerdtfeger 0497 807 473











Extracts from the FNQAM April Update

It has been a busy start to the year, welcoming some new volunteers who have been assisting with various projects. These projects include commencing hangar fabrication, sorting the Stephen Fowler collection, 12 new display boards, grant applications, Cessna 152, diorama/3d printer acquisition, VR project, Dakota restoration research.

After finally receiving engineered plans, payment has been made for our next hangar with fabrication taking place off site and in the coming months should see some building progress. Unfortunately, a \$30,000 grant was unsuccessful and further grant applications/sponsorships are being made to secure additional funding/materials to complete the project.

October 2024 is lining up nicely for the Igloo and we await funding news for this project as well! Thanks to the Mt Emerald Windfarm who has come on board to support us with funding towards our Virtual reality aviation experience which is the first of its kind that we are aware of.

Thank you to those who have renewed or become new members! Congratulations to long time supporter Bill Gronbeck who has become our 100th member!

Just a reminder if you haven't already you can renew through the link below.

https://www.cognitoforms.com/FNQAviationMuseum/Membership

Bank Details: BSB: 633 000

ACC: 164 132 367

Hopefully I haven't forgotten anything! We look forward to seeing you one Thursday or Saturday morning.

Regards, Brendan Kent President



A sneak peak (unless you've visited us recently) - the first of a dozen display boards that will be unveiled in the coming week!

FNQAM April Update Continued

Kids play plane restoration

Our volunteers have been making great progress transforming the Aviation Australia Kids Play Plane into an educational and inspirational tool for kids.

Paint will be next along with a range of informative educational stickers on the various parts which help make an aircraft fly!

Some photos from our inspiration board.

This project requires an eye catching shade of paint to contrast at least 18 decals. We will have one of our student volunteers, Teresa help design the decals.

Paint: \$150

Decals & install: \$850 Impact on Kids: Priceless

If you would like to donate towards this project please help here:

https://www.fngam.com.au/donate







FNQAM April Update Continued

Volunteers Wanted in May

Any volunteers to help on the below dates will be much appreciated for another Year 2 student visit!

As part of our Humanities and Social Sciences Unit in Term 2, the Mareeba State School Year 2 cohort are organising an excursion of significant sites around Mareeba. Last year, our students thoroughly enjoyed the visit to the FNQ Aviation Museum and learning all about the rich aviation and war history of our region. We would greatly appreciate if we could include this site in our excursion again this year.

As we have five Year 2 classes, we are proposing the following dates and times:



Tuesday 14th May 2024 arrive 10.30amdepart 11.15am: 2K and 2B (approx. 50 students)
Thursday 16th May 2024 arrive 10.30amdepart 11.15am: 2P, 2C and 1/2B (approx. 60 students)

Exciting discovery in the attic!

We were thrilled to hear from Tableland Aircraft Maintenance about some vintage wing ribs from a Pawnee aircraft, once flown by aviation crop-spraying pioneer Harry Squires in the 1950s. One of TAM's hangars was the first hangar at Mareeba Airport as seen in the black and white picture. And how about that old-school generator load tester? Anyone ever used one of these contraptions? Huge thanks also for the sand blasting media, which will help our restoration projects. Your support is much appreciated!









FNQAM April Update Continued





It was great to have Mayor Angela Toppin out recently, who took these photos while out last Saturday. Joan and Ian always have plenty of interesting research projects that Angela can help out with.

Grab a piece of History!

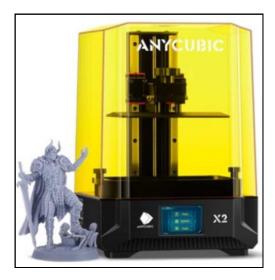
ARDU Rudder used on RAAF Dakota A65-73 during its service around 1965. Sound condition for its age. Can assist with preparing a support frame for safe transport. Dimensions: 2.7x 1.9x 0.3m Pickup Mareeba, Queensland

Rudder only. Aircraft not included. :-)

MEMBERS FEEL FREE TO MAKE AN OFFER OR SHARE TO HELP RAISE RESTORATION FUNDS!



FNQAM has acquired a 3D printer which will be used to create a Mareeba Airport Diorama. The printer will be used to make all the aircraft and infrastructure around the airport. What a great time in tech developments to be creating a diorama! Below is Tony's Beaufort model which has come up beautifully, which we aim to have on display later this year!





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FNQAM News Continued



WE ARE OPEN

Every Thursday and Saturday morning 9am - noon (Western end of Mareeba Airport)

Sponsors































































The FNQ Aviation Museum is a brand new facility due to open in the near future showcasing the incredible contribution that aviation has played in Far North Queensland's history.

The Museum will create employment, volunteering, educational and training opportunities that will benefit the community and boost tourism.

PRESERVE | IMSPIRE | EDUCATE | RESTORE



SERVICES & MATERIALS

In-kind support to assist with building construction and restoration.



DONATE

Make a tax deductible donation.



ARTEFACTS

Preserve aviation items that will be of educational or display interest.



VOLUNTEER

Variety of roles available - admin, grants, social media, design, curation, research and history



RESTORE

Help our restoration team every Thursday or Saturday.



MEMBERSHIP

Show your support by becoming a member.



SHARE

Spread the word on Facebook. Instagram and join our newsletter.



JRM Braes Rd, Mareeba Airport, QLD



admin@fngam.com.au



www.fnqam.com.au



0422 379 984







FACEBOOK

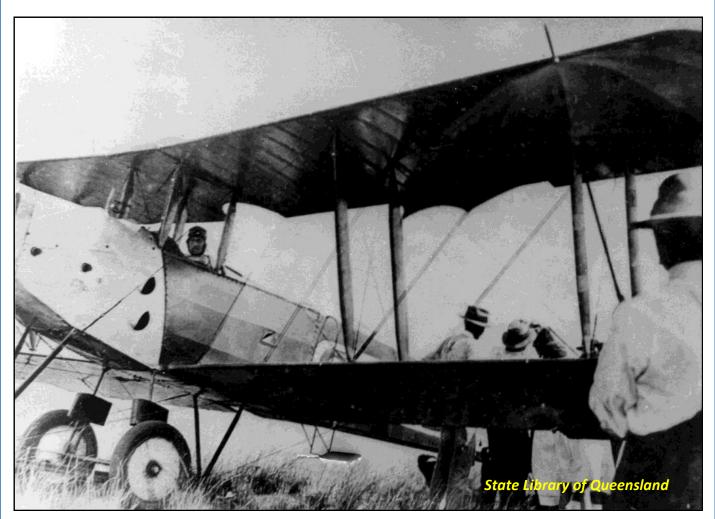


FNQ Aviation Museum

One of the first recorded planes to land on the Atherton Tablelands was an Avro 504 K aircraft registration G-AUDM.

It was owned by Lieutenant Alex Reid. In 1922 he was on a barnstorming tour of Queensland with Lieutenant Chivers. They were in the Cairns district February 1922. They left Innisfail 7/2/22 to fly to Mareeba landing at Atherton on the way. They landed at Kelley's farm near Mareeba and remained there giving joy flights until the 10/2/22 when they left to fly to Innisfail. They flew over Cairns but did not land. Bad weather forced them to land at Fishery Creek near Babinda. They plane was damaged on landing and was crated up and transported to Cairns arriving on 20/2/22 where it was shipped to Sydney for repairs.

Anyone know where Kelley's farm was located?









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Ron Atkinson 0419 201 622



















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AAC EVENTS CALENDAR

(Check Your Club Website or Facebook Page For Short Notice Changes)

Atherton Aero Club 2024 Events

May Sunday 19th—AAC Meeting & BBQ Lunch

Other 2024 Events

May Sat/Sun 11th & 12th- NQAC Gliding Weekend Charters Towers

May Sunday 26th—OzRunways EFB tutorial at Donnington Airpark

July Sat/Sun 27th & 28th—**Yak-52 Warbird Adventure Flights** at

Donnington Airpark



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We deliver throughout the Far North

Places of Interest and Activities in NQ





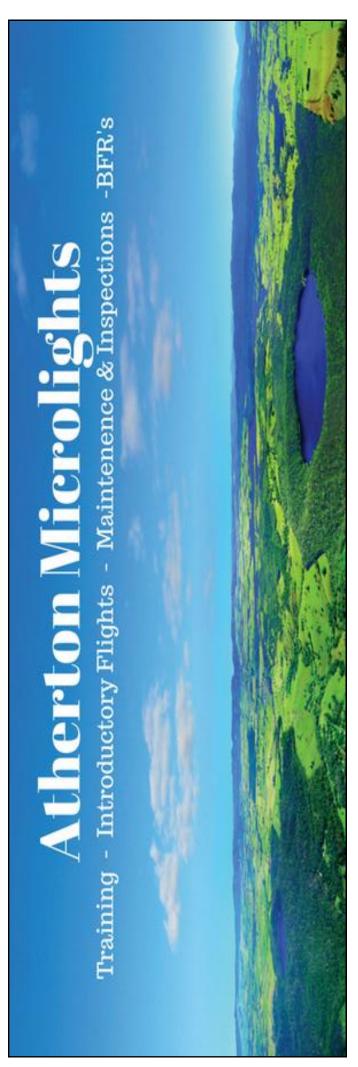


Northern Flyers











NOTICE



The **Atherton Aero Club** is now an ASIC Issuing Agent for **Aviation ID Australia**.

Those seeking the issue or renewal of an Aviation Security Identification Card (ASIC) should apply directly to **Aviation ID Australia** via the following link:

https://aviationidaustralia.net.au/application.html

Once the ASIC card has been approved the applicant will be advised and the required "face-to-face" identity check carried out locally by an Atherton Aero Club representative. On the satisfactory completion of the identity check the local agent will hand over the ASIC card to the applicant.

AIRCRAFT FOR SALE AND WANTED

If you have, or know of, an aircraft for sale please contact me directly by telephone or email with full details. The AAC offers free advertising in the club newsletter as a service to local flyers. Direct emailing of your advert to aviators on the club mailing list is available should your advert be received after the publication cut-off date. *Bill Gronbeck, EDITOR*.





INTERESTED IN BUILDING YOUR OWN AIRCRAFT?

The Sport Aircraft Association of Australia (SAAA) is an organization that has mentored and assisted many owner builders, for both VH and Ultralight registered aircraft.

Further information on the SAAA's National and FNQ Chapter 34 websites:

http://www.saaa.com/

http://www.saaafnq.com/

Local contact is:

Laurie Wincen (Secretary) laurieq19@gmail.com

Atherton Aero Club Fundraising - Club Member Stephen has arranged the Scheme ID for members who would like to donate their 10 cents Container Refund to the club. These regular small donations will greatly assist in covering our running costs.

Congratulations Atherton Aero Club Inc! You're all set.

You've joined our Containers for Change team doing our best to make a real difference in our communities and to our environment. We're super excited to have you on board.

Here's your Containers for Change scheme ID. Your scheme ID makes it even easier to return containers and receive refunds directly to your bank account.

Scheme ID

C10476716

Save your scheme ID to your mobile wallet

iPhone users



Android users



If you don't have WalletPasses installed, you will need to download it from the Play Store.

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ATHERTON AERO CLUB CORPORATE SPONSORS





Lilley Grose & Long - Solicitors

Atherton, Queensland.

Practicing in the following areas of law: Commercial, Criminal, Family Law, Property & Conveyancing, Wills & Estates

Contact details

Lilley Grose & Long 34 Main Street Atherton, QLD4883

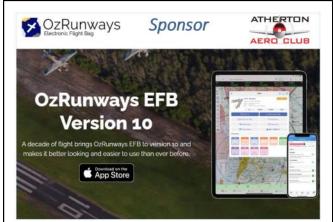














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Atherton Aero Club - Membership Application / Renewal

¬						ATHERTON					
	New Member										
Returning Member											
PERSONAL DETAILS											
Full name	IAILS				Date	Date of Birth					
Street address							State		ГР	ostcode	
Postal address							State			ostcode	
Email address							Occupation		<u> '</u>	0010000	
Telephone ah		bh						nobile			
MEMBERSHIP											
\$ 60.	\$ 60.00		Single Member				Single member with voting rights				
\$ 100.00			Family Member			Two members with voting rights					
\$ 50.00			Associate Member			Single member with NO voting rights					
no charge		Student Member			Single member with NO voting rights						
PAYMENT											
Forms to be sent to: The Treasurer or email to: xjac@bigpond.net.au Atherton Aero Club PO Box 227 ATHERTON QLD 4883											
Payments can be made by: EFT, Cheque, cash, or at the Bendigo Bank											
EFT Details: Atherton Aero Club BSB 633000 ACC 114331796 (Ref - Your Name)											
I hereby apply for membership to the Atherton Aero Club and agree to abide by the Constitution and any rules and regulations thereof. I further agree that my contact details may be made available to other members of the association as the Management Committee deems necessary.											
Signed		Dated									
Print name:						Print name:					
OFFICE LISE ONLY											
	Membership type			Re	ceipt No			Fee Paid		\$	