

# *Fly About*

NORTHAM AERO CLUB (INC.) NEWSLETTER Vol. 56 Issue No.1 FEB 2025



## In This Issue:

- A Message from the President
- Club Captain's Report
- Altimetry-Part #1
- Federation Award Recipient
- Aviation Humor
- Next Club Comp
- Classifieds
- Club Contact List

# Presidents Message

## Welcome to February Fly About

Well all, it is so fantastic to be back in the pilot's seat again with this cooler weather. Flying is much more enjoyable.

This week we celebrate a very big 90<sup>th</sup> Happy Birthday to our Life Member and renowned pilot and very good friend Captain Claude Meunier. Claude has been responsible for so many wonderful projects at the Northam Aero Club and his participation at Committee level has been outstanding. It is good to see he is enjoying his retirement but also keeping very busy with his duties at Earthrounders.com.

The monthly flying competitions have started again. Ray Challen has kindly offered to fly with any non-current pilots or students that would like to participate in the flying competitions. Just let Dave McFarlane know you are interested and we can contact Ray.

The Royal Aero Club will be holding their flying competition at Murrayfield on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2025. The West Australian Light Aircraft Championships will be held also on 14<sup>th</sup> March at Jandakot and 15<sup>th</sup> March at Murrayfield. For more information on the WALAC competition please call me as we will be taking part.

If you haven't flown in any of these competitions they are a lot of fun. You can contact Royal Aero Club Captain Hayden on 0437 522 093 for more details.

As always, a big thank you goes to Marg, Kay and Ashley for the wonderful food/cakes/scones that have been prepared and served at each flying competition.

We once had a very interesting competition at Murrayfield where the altimeter and air speed indicator were covered. We then had to take off, fly a circuit and land. This of course was with an Instructor who could see the instruments. The circuit was to simulate a pitot tube cover left on which can happen. So be sure to check to make sure you remove your cover before taking off. I hope to see at Murrayfield on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February.

**Errol**

# Club Captain's Report

## February Club Competition:

The Competition today was an anti clockwise Navex, Northam to Northam via Mt Bakewell. This was last flown in 2022 in the reverse direction with a way point suggested by Paul Blain. Thanks Paul.

Seven pilots took part, unfortunately one had to retire due to the flight plan and chart falling under the seat and couldn't be reached in the air.

One question resulted in some interesting discussion regarding what altitude you would fly over Mt Bakewell. Is it 1499 ft plus 500 ft AND plus the towers or not??

Results of the day;

→	First Place	Ashley Smith	C172 PGL	100 points
→	Second Place	Peter Hill	C172 BOF	98 points
→	Third Place	Paul Blain	C172 PGL	97.5 points
→	Fourth Place	Peter Hill (Snr)	C152 BFC	96 points

Thanks Marg, Ash and Kate and others for providing tea.

**Next Competition; Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March. Briefing from 9am**

**Dave McFarlane**  
**(Club Captain)**

# Altimetry-Part 1

If we want to fly upside down or practise stalls, we'll start from at least 3000 ft above ground. If we want to practise forced landings, we might decide to get up to a similar height to illustrate that from there, you have choices and you have to make decisions. What other factors might influence your choice of level, and what factors will you consider once you're there? Here are a few random ideas.

## Some definitions

- Altitude – vertical distance Above Mean Sea Level (AMSL);
- Elevation – vertical distance of a point on the ground from mean sea level;
- Height – vertical distance of a point measured from a specified datum.

So height can mean altitude or elevation, but most commonly it's used to mean "Above Ground Level (AGL)". If there's any doubt, that's what the terms "AMSL" and "AGL" are for.

Using these definitions, you can say, for example:

- Airfield elevation at Northam is 500 ft AMSL;
- Standard circuit height is 1000 ft AGL;
- Therefore, circuit altitude at Northam is 1500 ft AMSL.

## QNH

QNH is the pressure at mean sea level. The term "QNH" comes from the old days of radio telegraphy, where signals were sent in Morse code and brevity was essential. Most of the old 3-letter Q codes don't stand for anything (e.g. QCE meant "When can I expect a clearance") but I like the story – true or otherwise – that QNH may have come from "Question Nil Height" i.e. What is the pressure at nil height (Mean Sea Level (MSL))?

# Altimetry-Part 1

## QFE

Question – field elevation. This is what you set so the altimeter reads zero (0) on the ground, and will then read height above the airfield. This is what you'd use for a low-level aerobatic display.

## Standard pressure or QNE

Above 10,000 ft you set 1013 so your altimeter reads height above ISA sea level, and you fly at Flight Levels, not altitudes, so while your airline crew may tell you you're at 38,000 ft, they'll tell ATC they're at Flight Level 380.

## SOME OF THE RULES

### Minimum heights

1000 ft above populated areas, 500 ft AGL elsewhere. I think everyone knows those numbers. Perhaps the main variable if you're down low is your judgement of the ground elevation. Look at the spot height on your map that says "920" and see that it's just a bump a couple of hundred feet high. This tells you the surrounding ground is about 700 ft AMSL.

### Hemispherical levels

A recent rule change means you're now required to plan and fly at a hemispherical level – "Odds + 500 heading east and Evens + 500 heading west" – above 3000 ft, not just above 5000 ft as it used to be (CASR 91.275 and AIP ENR 1.7). You can request and be assigned a non-hemispherical level in CTA, and OCTA you are allowed to be non-hemispherical if it's not practical to fly at a specified level. For instance, you may be flying over the Hamersley Range, with hills up to 4000 ft, and cloud ceiling at 6500 ft. In that case I'd be as close to the cloud as VMC rules allow to give myself some options if something goes wrong, and if that's not a hemispherical level, so be it.

# Altimetry-Part 1

## SOME OF THE RULES CONT...

### **Altimeter checks**

If you have an accurate QNH available, you must do an altimeter check on the ground. An accurate QNH means one from a source such as the ATIS at Jandakot, or the AWIS (Aerodrome Weather Information Service). At places like Albany, Esperance or Geraldton. AIP ENR 1.7 says the altimeter has to read within 100 ft of aerodrome elevation to be considered serviceable.

### **Altimeter settings**

ENR 1.7 also says your altimeter setting must be the Area QNH (which in my experience can be notoriously inaccurate) or a current local QNH, which means either an accurate one from an ATIS or AWIS or similar, or a forecast QNH of an airfield within 100nm. So to obey this to the letter, flying around Northam we should read the Cunderdin or Perth TAF and use the QNH off that (remembering that a TAF has four QNH values – one for the start time of the TAF and one for every 3 hours after that). What we do, setting aerodrome elevation on the ground, is in most cases at least as accurate.

To avoid making too long an article of it, next month's article will be **Altimetry Part 2**.

And lastly, for those who haven't seen my posts on antisocial media, thanks again to Errol and Ray for conspiring with the RFACA to give me an award for being paid to indulge my hobby! (see next page)

**Kevin**

# Federation Award



## THE ROYAL FEDERATION OF AERO CLUBS OF AUSTRALIA

### FEDERATION AWARD

*Awarded to*

*Kevin Lathbury*

*for services to the Northam Aero Club of a nature over and beyond  
what would normally be expected of an Aero Club employee and that  
have benefited the Aero Club movement*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Paul', written over a set of horizontal lines.

.....  
President

*3 October 2024*  
.....

Date

# Aviation Humour

So there I was, minding my own business, when a mosquito hit my windscreen....

....Car Insurance man looks up at me disbelievingly....



Confucius say's:

There are more airplanes in the oceans, than submarines in the sky...



# Aviation Humour



**Turns out you  
CAN take off  
with the  
parking brake  
set....**



# MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL & APPAREL

## Northam Aero Club Membership & Apparel Order Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Not Renewing

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership:  Adult \$55.00

Junior \$10.00

**Club Bank Details: BSB 036-107 Acc Number: 69-2937**

Apparel:  Club Polo Shirt \$35.00 – Size \_\_\_\_\_ Name on Shirt: \_\_\_\_\_

100% breathable polyester jersey knit, snag resistant. Knit collar with contrast tipping.

Mens sizes S M L XL 2XL 3XL or 5 XL (185gsm standard 3 button)

Womens sizes 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 or 24 (Ladies 215 gsm with open V with 2 press studs)

Club Cap \$25.00 plus \$8.00 postage

Caps also available from the Bar

Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to receive an invoice please tick

"Fly About" magazine Yes

No

Many thanks,

Northam Aero Club Committee

Northam Aero Club Cap \$25.00

Northam Aero Club Polo Shirt \$35.00 personalised



# BAR

The Bar will be open every Saturday evening from 17:00 — 19:00

## **LEARN TO FLY**

Recreational Aviation Capital of the West



Ph Errol 0428 880 149 or Kevin 0434 000 217

[www.northamaeroclub.com](http://www.northamaeroclub.com)

## **NEXT CLUB COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2025 @ 13:00**

### **Wanted - Aviation Memorabilia**

- Books
- Artefacts
- Photographs
- Old Aircraft Parts
- Signs

If it's old and historic—I'm interested

**Adam Price—0428 611 797**

### **NAC Club Aircraft Bookings**



Enquiries— Matt Bignell

**0407 873 700**

# CLASSIFIEDS

## Northam Aero Club Merchandise

*Club Polo Shirts with name and club logo—\$35.00*

*Club Caps with logo—\$25.00*

*available at the bar or Postage—\$10.00 per order*

*Stubbie Holders—\$7.00*

*available at the bar or*

*Postage —\$8.00*



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# NAC Club Contact List



## **President**

Errol Croft

E: [dowref@bigpond.net.au](mailto:dowref@bigpond.net.au)

T: 0428 880 149

## **Aircraft Bookings Officer**

Matt Bignell

E: [big.matty@hotmail.com](mailto:big.matty@hotmail.com)

T: 0407 873 700

## **Secretary**

Susan Clements

E: [info@northamaeroclub.com](mailto:info@northamaeroclub.com)

T: 0488 441 274

## **Treasurer**

Paul Blain

E: [nactreasurer@bigpond.com](mailto:nactreasurer@bigpond.com)

T: 0427 909 412

## **Club Captain**

Dave McFarlane

E: [mcf888@bigpond.com](mailto:mcf888@bigpond.com)

T: 0428 743 031

## **Membership Officer**

Heather Deegan

E: [heatther1957@gmail.com](mailto:heatther1957@gmail.com)

T: 0428 738 808

## **Aircraft**

Dave Beech

E: [daveb3314@gmail.com](mailto:daveb3314@gmail.com)

T: 0438 016 903

## **House & Grounds**

Trevor Sangston

E: [trevorsangston@inet.net.au](mailto:trevorsangston@inet.net.au)

T: 0417 183 160

## **Flight Training**

Kevin Lathbury

E: [Kevinlouis62@gmail.com](mailto:Kevinlouis62@gmail.com)

T: 0434 000 217

## **Flight Training**

Ray Challen

E: [ray@challen.com.au](mailto:ray@challen.com.au)

T: 0408 321 262

## **Editor Fly About**

Paul Blain

E: [paul.blain@bigpond.com](mailto:paul.blain@bigpond.com)

T: 0427 909 412

# NAC Cessna 172 — VH-PGL

## Hire Fee Structure

- Private Hire - \$270 per hour
- Dual Training - \$440 per hour
- TIF's - \$220 per 1/2 hour
- Briefing - as required
- Instructor (in owner's aircraft) - \$170 per hour

## Pre-paid Discounted Block Rates Available

- 5 hours - less 5%
- 10 hours - less 10%

*Student pilots may use the discounted block rate for aircraft hire costs only. Instructor fees remain as fixed price.*

For all further enquiries please contact:

NAC Treasurer - [nactreasurer@bigpond.com](mailto:nactreasurer@bigpond.com) T: 0427 909 412

Aircraft Bookings: **Matt Bignell** - 0407 873 700

## NEXT CLUB COMPETITION

**9:00 am Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

Cheers,

**Dave McFarlane**

Club Captain **0428 743 031**

