



Keep Soaring

Newsletter of Lake Keepit Soaring Club

February - March 2008



Callair VH-MRP and Boris Ariotti

*The 'new' Callair soon after its arrival and Boris displaying a proprietorial air.
Note also the length of the grass. (Photo Ed.)*

This newsletter is distributed by email to current Lake Keepit Soaring Club members, including recent Short Term Members. If others would like to receive this bi-monthly newsletter advise the Editor. Equally, if you are not a member or do not wish to receive it, email the Editor to take your name off the list.



Keep Soaring

Newsletter of Lake Keepit Soaring Club

Lake Keepit Soaring Club Inc

Airfield and Clubhouse: Keepit Dam via Tamworth NSW

Mail address: 234 Keepit Dam Road, Lake Keepit 2340

Phone: 02 6769 7514 Fax: 02 6769 7640

Email: enquiries@keepitsoaring.com

Internet: www.keepitsoaring.com

Lake Keepit Flight Centre

Manager	Jenny Ganderton	02 6769 7514	manager@keepitsoaring.com
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President	Ron Cameron	02 6721 0081
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Vice President	Tim Carr	02 9801 7979
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Secretary	Ian Roache	02 9387 1882
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Treasurer	Dave Shorter	02 6656 1979	treasurer@keepitsoaring.com
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Committee Members:	John Clark	02 9997 2842
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	Vic Hatfield	02 6765 7050
--	--------------	--------------

	Roy Worthington	02 4731 5756
--	-----------------	--------------

Airworthiness Officer	Ron Cameron	02 6721 0081
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Chief Flying Instructor	Nick Singer	02 4365 5485
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Instructors' Roster	Peter Sheils	02 6762 1377
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Chief Pilot	Dennis Stacey	02 6760 8538
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Tugmaster	Ian Barracough	02 9948 7866
-----------	----------------	--------------

Tug Pilots Roster	Phil Anderton	02 6785 2764
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Membership Secretary	Phil Anderton	02 6785 2764	membership@keepitsoaring.com
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Webmaster	Chris Carr	webmaster@keepitsoaring.com
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Bookings Manager	Tim Carr	bookings@keepitsoaring.com
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Contents

Page

Cover photo	The Callair and Boris	1
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Club Officers		2
---------------	--	---

Editorial		3
-----------	--	---

Member Profile ... Tony Esler	Geoff Neely	4
----------------------------------	-------------	---

More on BLIPmaps	Garry Speight	6
------------------	---------------	---

New Club Car		7
--------------	--	---

Unfinished Business	Peter Robinson	8
---------------------	----------------	---

Coming Events		11
---------------	--	----

Instructors and Tug Pilots contact numbers		11
--	--	----

Instructors and Tug Pilots Roster		12
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Newsletter of Lake Keepit Soaring Club

Editorial

Callair MRP

Welcome to the ‘new’ Callair, Mike Romeo Papa which the Club has purchased. eTug is undergoing a period of research into some recent issues and the Club needs a tug to carry on as usual.

MRP has been stripped back to bare metal and completely restored. Even with a cursory glance it is easy to be impressed with the result. The Club hired the aircraft for a month to evaluate its suitability and notwithstanding finding that further finishing work was required, went ahead with the purchase. The additional items include a new mirror, a Tost tow release, cabin ventilation and some instrumentation and are being attended to.

So we have gone full circle and are back to a Pawnee equivalent. Standing back a bit and looking at glider launching with a detached view, we can see that Pawnees and their equivalent are still widely used around the gliding world; the Europeans have not found a replacement for the Robin as a tug and hold the Pawnee in high regard.

Launching with ultralights is possible if you are prepared to accept the limitations of low hourly launch rates and longer queues on the grid ... the jury is still out on how long the lightweight airframes will withstand the rigours of aero-towing. The two Tecnams in New Zealand have both been withdrawn from towing duties and the trial of towing with a Jabiru was discontinued. Note that it was lack of ruggedness issues that brought the Husky undone.

The best hope for the future of aerotowing gliders is still the eTug, an automotive engined Pawnee. It has shown it can deliver launches at half the cost we are used to paying; it uses a rugged proven airframe and as well as Autotug at Kingaroy which has been towing for 15 years now, there are more and more automotive engined aeroplanes flying. The Mercedes based diesel engine is being certified for an increasing number of aeroplanes. eTug has to solve its niggling issues and then get on with proving its value.

In the meantime, we have the Callair MRP.

BLIPmaps

Weather Briefings at 9.30am each morning have really taken a big step forward, particularly when Harry Medicott is not present with a Cusonde printout. As well as hearing of the parts of the BoM Area Forecast that interest us, we are now being treated to a reading of the RASP, as the visiting British pilots call it, or the BLIPmap. Garry Speight is increasingly proficient at interpreting the extensive information it provides and I believe there is increasing confidence that it provides a useful and reliable forecast.

The article in this issue on the subject was posted by Garry on the Club’s chat group and is repeated with permission.

Ian Barraclough
Editor
(ian.barraclough@bigpond.com)



Newsletter of Lake Keepit Soaring Club

Member Profile

by Geoff Neely

Tony Esler ... Chartered Accountant

**OLGETA MAN DISPELA TAUN BAIM BIKPELA SU
WANKAIN BILONG MASTA ...**

... or as they say in Papua-New Guinea "everybody in this town is buying boots (big shoes) the same kind as belong to the Boss".

Certain occupations tend to run in families, for example law, music, farming or small business. Perhaps Tony Esler, now in business as a chartered accountant, had an example in his mother. What do you do in a country such as Papua-New Guinea where no-one wears shoes? Well, she opened a shoe shop at Mount Hagen. Refrigerators to Eskimos? Gold bars in the poor house? Not a bit of it, the headmen discovered the convenience of shoes and soon everybody wanted them ... in big sizes to fit feet that had not known shoes.

Tony has been familiar with flying since childhood. He was born at Albury and two weeks later the family moved to Papua-New Guinea where his father took a government job at Buin on Bougainville. For those of us who have not been there but have an atlas, it is in the Solomon Islands a thousand kilometres to the east of Papua-New Guinea. They moved to Wewak and later to Mount Hagen, 5,500 feet up in the mountain backbone of Papua-New Guinea. This must be in the formerly German mandated part of the country because there are numerous towns called Hagen in Germany. There were about 3,000 Europeans in Mount Hagen at that time. It is at about six degrees south latitude and has a nearly constant temperature of 26C and an annual rainfall of 6,000 mm. The rain falls from clouds, don't you know and this makes for interesting flying.

There were five brothers and they all went to secondary boarding schools. Tony commuted excitedly a couple of times a year between Sydney and PNG in airline jets. There were frequent flights between centres in PNG, including a hairy last leg on the trip home from Australia, among the mountains between Port Moresby and Mount Hagen. In those days there were DC3s, DHC Otters (single radial engine, not the Tw'otter) and even today some Junkers. Tony remembers sitting on the pilot's knees on an internal flight.

After senior school Tony took a year off before University. A mate wanted him to learn to fly but this would have cost \$1200. His parents went to Europe and then settled on the Gold Coast (of Queensland). The old order changed and PNG was given self-government in 1972 and independence in 1974.





Keep Soaring

Newsletter of Lake Keepit Soaring Club

Tony did a Bachelor of Business in Accounting at Queensland University and went to work for an accounting firm. In about 1989 he went into business on his own in Brisbane and in about 1999 he moved to Brendale. This is not on my Encarta map but he says it is more or less near Strathpine in an industrial suburb that has need of accountants. He now has five people in his office.

Do you love your accountant? The year GST was introduced everybody did. Tony says he flew one hour that year. Things have improved and now he goes about in a Grumman Tiger.

On his first visit to Lake Keepit Soaring Club he reached the turnoff late in the day and nearly gave it a miss, but having previously rung Jim Stanley he made a last-minute decision to turn in to Lake Keepit and ask whether there was a gentleman called Jim Stanley. That was the start of his gliding but we still hear more about power flying than gliding and we have to goad Tony to get into a glider.

Tony learnt to fly power in a Beech Skipper at Archerfield. His instructor was a former Royal Flying Doctor Service pilot who seemed to know what he was about. Tony still feels that the natural configuration of an aeroplane is to have the wing under your feet although he did his first solo cross-country in a C172. Celebrating his successful arrival back home by drinking Coke (so he says) at the aero club, he forgot to cancel SAR. He did that again not long ago, as well as leaving the master switch on and needing a battery charger in the morning. An early trip with friends took him to the Birdsville races. He remembers the flight but not the races.

In 1994 their youngest child, who turned out to be the feisty Kate, was on the way and Tony thought he had better get established in a gliding club while he still could. He did his tow rating with John Wolfe, also an old PNG hand.

Tony's appetite for power flying led him to constant speed and tailwheel endorsements and an aerobatic rating. He is now studying for a Private Instrument Rating so that he can follow in his Grumman Tiger wherever the GPS leads.

I sometimes think the only thing more charming than having a daughter would be to have two daughters. Tony has three. They have all flown with him from infancy, in a car seat strapped into a C172. They enjoy their visits to Lake Keepit where they can run free. They are good friends with Matthew Minter and with Christian Linnett's daughters. Tony now has three teenage daughters and is seeing the darker side of the experience. The youngest, Kate, is thirteen and she still travels with him.

Although we do not often see him here, Tony tows regularly at Caboolture. He says the circuit is interesting, with aircraft ranging from paramotors to a Mustang.

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EMAIL: sales@citycoastmotorcycles.com.au
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Newsletter of Lake Keepit Soaring Club

More on BLIPmaps

Garry Speight

I am getting the hang of the soundings for Lake Keepit on the Blipmap Univiewer:

<http://blipmap.walsys.net/NEWSOUTHWALES/univiewer.html>

I'll pass on what I have found out. I don't guarantee that I have got it right.

The forecast soundings are plotted on "Skew-T Log-P diagrams". These diagrams are explained in Wikipedia.

Temperature (T) is plotted on straight yellow lines that slope up ("skew") to the right. The scale is marked by black ticks along the bottom of the chart, but the lines of equal temperature (isotherms) are not vertical.

Pressure (P) in hectopascals is shown on the left side, plotted on an inverted logarithmic scale, starting with 1013.2 hPa at the bottom. This allows the altitude in feet (assuming standard conditions) to be plotted on a linear scale on the right side of the diagram. Horizontal yellow lines are lines of equal pressure (isobars).

DALR (Dry Adiabatic Lapse Rate) lines, called Potential Temperature lines, are yellow lines sloping up to the left, with a slight curve. The scale is taken from the DBT scale where the lines meet at 1000 hPa.

MALR (Moist Adiabatic Lapse Rate) lines, called Equivalent Potential Temperature lines, are solid green lines that (mostly) curve steeply up to the left.

Humidity Mixing Ratio lines are dashed green lines curving up to the right. Values are marked on the lines. You are assumed to know (as everyone does) that mixing ratios are in grams per kilogram, so "8", for example, is only 0.008 parts of water vapour to 1 part of air. These are lines of constant absolute humidity.

Radiosonde observations include Temperature (Dry Bulb Temperature: DBT), Dew Point, and Pressure. The readings are presented on diagrams like these. These particular ones show not observations but forecasts. The dry bulb temperature line is in red, and the dew point in blue. Where the red line is parallel to the DALR, the air is mixed, usually by thermals. Where it is flatter than the DALR, the air is highly unstable (usually near hot ground). Where the line is steeper than the DALR, or slopes up to the right, the air is stable, and will not mix, unless cloud is present. In cloud, the red line is generally parallel to the MALR lines. The blue Dew Point line cannot be to the right of the red Temperature line. If they touch, cloud will form. In mixed air, such as the boundary layer containing thermals, the blue line will be parallel to the Humidity Mixing Ratio lines.

Other data are attached to these Skew-T Log-P diagrams:

Wind: A vertical black line on the right has wind arrows attached to it. The arrows have feathered tails. A long feather shows 10 knots, a short feather 5 knots, and a triangle fifty knots. The wind blows from the tail to the head of the arrow. The wind speed is also plotted, as a red line, using a scale marked at the top edge.



Newsletter of Lake Keepit Soaring Club

Cloud: At the left of the diagram are a black line for cloud amount and a blue line for cloud water content. Scales are marked at the top edge.

In an email exchange with Dave Shorter, Jim Staniforth mentioned that the information he pays attention to includes:

BL (average) Wind ... don't go flying if this does not please you
Thermal Velocity
Critical Updraft Height
B/S Ratio
Cu Potential
OD Potential
BL Up/Down Motion ... to look for convergence.

The web addresses that Jim gave us which were mentioned in the last issue of Keep Soaring were:
www.drjack.info/RASP/INFO/parameters.html and
www.drjack.info/BLIP/ETA/CANV/index.html

New Car

Garry Speight's daughter Alison has generously donated the Club the green Commodore. This photo was taken very soon after its arrival ... it has been washed many times since.

Thank you Alison.





Unfinished Business

Peter Robinson

Thirty-odd years ago I went for a 4-day gliding course over the Easter weekend at the Dorset Gliding Club (DGC), then based at the wartime airfield at Tarrant Rushton. During the course and on days spread over the next few months I accumulated 23 launches. My progress was erratic. One problem was the unreliability of the launch system. A V8 truck drove along the runway towards the launching glider, pulling the single-strand towing wire that ran around a pulley at the far end of the strip. This was fine until the wire broke or one of the splices wore out on the concrete runway: the wire then sprang into coils and took a long time to repair. Eventually I gave up. Hang gliding was just starting and I got hooked on that instead.

From time to time I have thought about having giving sailplanes another try. It seemed like unfinished business, so at the beginning of October I joined the DGC again, now based near the Bovington tank training area. The gliders are different and so, fortunately, is the launching system, now a conventional winch using multi-strand cable.

The winch is so powerful that for a long time I was daunted by it. Once the line is taut the glider does 0 to 60 in about 4 seconds. This first bit, partly with the wheel and skid still on the ground, seemed uncontrollably wild. The transition from the ground run to the climb is critical to avoid being in a nose-up attitude with too little speed to recover from a cable break: I scared one of my instructors by putting us in this position, as I was emphatically told. The following full climb at 45 degrees attitude seems very unnatural.

My hang gliding and paragliding experience both helps and hinders. On my hang glider I had my instruments on the left and tended to watch them during thermalling, so I was often looking down the wing. I realise now that I have carried this habit over into paragliding even though the paraglider instruments are central. In gliding, speed control is all about holding the attitude constant so apart from scanning the sky for other aircraft and occasionally checking your instruments, your view should be over the nose at the horizon ... *not down the bloody wing!* ... as I was reminded. The launch technique and control of the aircraft are so different that my foot-launch aircraft experience is only partly relevant – just being comfortable in the air, knowing about aerodynamics, being used to judging height, being familiar with the meteorology, and having done of plenty of cross countries.

There is even a limit to the usefulness of the cross country experience gained on hang gliders or paragliders. Because the glider is flying at nearly three times the speed of a paraglider, it really needs to be banked up, typically to 45 degrees, to work most thermals efficiently. This, coupled with the much more subtle ‘seat of the pants’ signals that you get in a glider compared with a paraglider, mean that working a thermal efficiently is a skill that needs to be largely re-learned.

My difficulties with winch launch, or the fact that a poor circuit or an obstructing aircraft on the strip could lead to the instructor saying “I have control” on final approach, meant that, six weeks and 26 short flights after I had started, I was not making much progress in launch and landing although in the circuit I was starting to get it together.

A business trip to Australia planned for late November gave me the idea that maybe I could combine it with some gliding tuition there. I was going to take my paraglider anyway. Searching the internet for suitable clubs I thought Lake Keepit Soaring Club (LKSC) looked best: a 7-day a week operation with enough gliders for trainees and a nice big airfield (www.keepitsoaring.com).



Newsletter of Lake Keepit Soaring Club

When I phoned, it was a happy surprise to find that the manager and weekday instructor was Jenny Ganderton, originally from the IoW and with whom I had occasionally flown hang gliders in the 1980s. Lake Keepit is a state park about 250 miles north of Sydney and LKSC leases the airfield there. Because many of the members live a long way away, LKSC offers accommodation in cabins set amongst the trees alongside the runway.

After business in Cairns was done I was left with nine days at Lake Keepit. Almost every day during this period was to end with showers or a thunderstorm, but it did not interfere with training too much. The other trainee for the week had cancelled so for much of the time I had the luxury of an instructor and aircraft all to myself.

The first day, Thursday, went OK with four flights in the Puchatek 2-seater. Friday was wet and I had only three flights over the weekend, with different instructors, because of the weather, members' check flights and the club's need to give a number of visitors their joy flights. However, come Monday Jenny had me training with a vengeance. The first nine flights that day included spins, stalls, simulated cable breaks, wave offs (where the tug waggles his wings to signal that he wants you gone), hook-up procedure (if the glider's rope release should jam) and recovery from being out of position on the tow. Preparing for the tenth flight I noticed Jenny just doing up the straps instead of getting into the back seat. When she brought some ballast over I knew it was time for my first solo.

Tow to 1600ft, release, join the circuit at about 800ft, downwind, diagonal, base leg, turn on to final, airbrakes out, and a good landing. Yippee! If the CASA (Australian CAA) did not have a strict rule against it I would have given my instructor a kiss! I quickly did another solo to make sure it was not a fluke.

One important difference between the DGC and LKSC is that the LKSC usually uses aerotow instead of winching for trainees. I seemed to get to grips with that much more quickly: as soon as the tug has climbed enough to let you get below the wake turbulence it is a fairly easy ride. And with luck, the tug can take you to some lift.

There is another significant difference: I do not recall ever needing to have the kangaroos cleared off the strip at the DGC.

More solo circuits followed, mixed in with more dual tuition, such as flying a circuit with the altimeter covered, selecting possible outlanding paddocks and tactics when joining other gliders in a thermal. The next highlight was a solo launch, still in the Puchatek, gaining more than 3000ft after dropping the rope, playing about near cloudbase and completing a one hour flight despite being a little concerned about the rain showers that were developing. The lesson that Jenny and instructors before her had been trying to beat into my head ... "don't keep looking at the ASI, trim the glider correctly and concentrate on the glider's attitude against the horizon" ... had finally sunk in and I was at last able to relax and enjoy the thermalling. Then there were more dual flights to adjust my landing technique to a more slippery GRP glider. Finally, on Friday I was ready for the Jantar Junior single-seater. With a fixed wheel and best glide of only about 35:1 the Junior is not a particularly high performance glider but, as I found, it is pleasant to fly.

I have been to these heights countless times on hang gliders and paragliders but this was a new fantasy come true ... relaxed, lying back in a single-seat sailplane, banked up in a thermal high above the Australian countryside, then pulling out and slipping easily across the sky to a distant cloud. In two flights I added nearly 3 hours to my solo time, only aborting the second flight



Newsletter of Lake Keepit Soaring Club

because I had forgotten to top up my Camelbak and was worried about dehydration in the cockpit heat.

There is one other aspect to my gliding experience that perhaps I should mention; getting a real knot in my stomach before getting into the cockpit. In the early days it was a significant problem, to a point where it was almost only my pride that kept me going. Why should I be so wound up when there was an instructor in the back who would anyway take control if things went wrong? Also, why should I be no more anxious when getting in for my first solo flight? It seems to be partly about not being in control of the timing: when you are on the flightline you have to go. You can not just say to the tug or winch driver "Hang on a few minutes ... I'll let you know when I feel comfortable". When that cable is attached the 'Take up slack' signal follows and that is it: you are going in the next few seconds, like it or not, unless of course there is a real reason not to. The only time I have recently felt anything similar was at a crowded paragliding launch in Brazil, where there was so much pressure from others waiting behind me that even a whiff of breeze had people urging me to go. It is also about lack of confidence and not wanting to make a hash of things on launch; a bit like stage fright I suppose. Once the aircraft was rolling I was too busy to feel anxious.

No one else that I have mentioned it to has volunteered that they once felt like that; maybe it is just me. Anyway I am pleased to say that, after nearly 60 launches in two months in various gliders, the problem has (almost) gone away.

Still unfinished business? Definitely. My immediate goal is to master the winch launch and be allowed to go solo off the winch. A longer term goal is a 100km flight. This distance should be no big deal in a sailplane but it appeals to my tidy mind to make a nice boxed set with my other 100km-plus flights, four on hang gliders and a couple on paragliders. This will not be for a while yet though. I need more experience and a total of at least 20 solo flights plus outlanding checks, before I will be allowed any cross countries.

In the meantime if there are any of you who would like a different perspective on flying I can really recommend joining a gliding club, such as the Dorset GC, (www.dorsetglidingclub.freeserve.co.uk) where I can perhaps get you a reduced price on a trial lesson. If, after you have the basics sorted out you find that the UK weather or limited club operating days are making you impatient, you could do what I did and take a trip to a 7-day-a-week operation in a benign climate to speed things along. A nice big airfield also helps to take the pressure off.

As a footnote, on the one day when the weather was unflyable I drove the 50km to Godfrey Weness' place at the renowned Mt.Borah, Manilla, hang gliding and paragliding venue. There was a bunch of pilots stretched out on old sofas in an open shed that passed as the club house, under blankets, parawaiting. It reminded me of nothing so much as a scene in a old-style TB sanatorium. I made my apologies and left.



Newsletter of Lake Keepit Soaring Club

Coming Events

2008		Event	Contact
February	2 - 9	Horsham Week	Ian Grant 0418 271 767
February	9 - 16	Paraglider Cross Country Open at Mt Borah near Manilla	Keep a better lookout!
February	23 to 1 March	NSW Hang Glider Titles at Mt Borah near Manilla	Keep an even better lookout!
March	21 - 29	Queensland Easter Competition at Chinchilla	www.glidingcaboolture.org.au/Easter08
March	20 - 25	Keepit Easter Regatta	Allan Buttenshaw

Contact Numbers for Instructors and Tug Pilots

Name	Home	Work	Mobile
Jay Anderson	02 9571 9592	02 9221 4938	0418 676 696
Philip Anderton	02 6785 2764		0427 493 107
Ian Barracough	02 9948 7866		0428 410 010
Andrew Brumby			0404 043 386
Allan Buttenshaw	02 4944 8518		0412 217 557
Tim Carr	02 9801 7979		0414 405 544
Bruce Clark	02 4955 5041		0414 545 278
Ron Cameron	02 6721 0081	0428 659 637	0428 659 637
Rob de Jarlais	02 4677 1926		
Tony Esler	07 3350 5858	07 3881 2615	0412 770 526
Bill Gleeson			0408 443 009
Vic Hatfield	02 6765 7050	02 6766 9655	
Steve Hedley	02 9834 4178	02 9670 6733	0412 378 758
John Hoye	02 6767 1033		0427 505 233
Wendy Medlicott	02 4365 3626		
Matthew Minter	02 6785 7399	02 6742 3998	0427 455 119
Geoff Neely		02 6769 7514	0419 563 233
Peter Sheils	02 6762 1377		
Michael Shirley		02 9439 2022	0427 108 040
Nick Singer	02 4365 5485	02 4384 2101	
Garry Speight	02 6785 1880		
Dennis Stacey		02 6760 7677	
Gerhard Stuck	02 9982 5248		0428 300 370
Charlie Szpitalak	02 6777 2154	02 6777 2040	
Dave Turner	02 9489 0841	02 9620 0893	0425 269 210
Dave Warburton			0427 802 502
Stuart Welsby		02 9686 3836	0425 266 380
Trevor West	02 6766 5618		

Car Pooling: There is a Yahoo chat and message group (not officially sanctioned by the Club) for Club members. To join, either visit the chat group web page at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lksc> or email pjanderton@optusnet.com.au with your email details and he will fix it.



Keep Soaring

Newsletter of Lake Keepit Soaring Club

Instructor & Tug Pilot Roster ... Feb - Mar 08

Date		Instructor	Tug Pilot
February			
Saturday	2	Vic Hatfield	Jay Anderson
Sunday	3	Peter Sheils	Charlie Szpitalak
Saturday	9	<i>Volunteer please</i>	Phil Anderton
Sunday	10	<i>Volunteer please</i>	Andrew Brumby
Saturday	16	Tim Carr	Rob de Jarlais
Sunday	17	Garry Speight	Rob de Jarlais
Saturday	23	Dave Turner	Garry Speight
Sunday	24	Nick Singer	Ron Cameron

Date		Instructor	Tug Pilot
March			
Saturday	1	Vic Hatfield	Geoff Neely
Sunday	2	Peter Sheils	Charlie Szpitalak
Saturday	8	<i>Volunteer please</i>	Andrew Brumby
Sunday	9	<i>Volunteer please</i>	Bill Gleeson-Barker
Saturday	15	Tim Carr	Andrew Brumby
Sunday	16	Garry Speight	<i>Volunteer please</i>
Good Friday	21	<i>Volunteer please</i>	<i>Volunteer please</i>
Saturday	22	Dave Turner	Garry Speight
Sunday	23	Nick Singer	Geoff Neely
Easter Monday	24	<i>Volunteer please</i>	<i>Volunteer please</i>
Saturday	29	Gerhard Stuck tbc	Jay Anderson
Sunday	30	Gerhard Stuck tbc	Ron Cameron

* If it is clear that there will be no instruction and no gliding on these days LET THE TUGGIE KNOW.

Instructors are rostered by Peter Sheils and **Tug Pilots** are rostered by Phil Anderton.

You are responsible for finding your own replacements if it turns out you can not make your rostered day. Keep the Club Manager and Peter or Phil up to date with any change you make. When arranging your replacement remember that Level 1 Instructors must ensure that the Tug Pilot is a Level 2 or 3 Instructor.