ASC e-News

Electronic news from the Adelaide Soaring Club ***1st NOVEMBER, 2026.***

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Karl Faeth

ASC PRESIDENT – JOSH BROWN by Geoff Wood

In the last **ASC e-News** we promised to profile the club's new President, Josh Brown. He is a serving officer in the RAAF, based at Edinburgh where he is a check captain on the P8 Poseidon, one of the military variants of the Boeing 737 aircraft. On a wet afternoon at Gawler, we caught up with Josh and asked him about his flying life…



ASC e-News: *How did you first get involved in aviation, and what eventually brought you to the Adelaide Soaring Club?*

Josh: I grew up in a little coastal town just south of Newcastle, NSW. My father was a flying instructor and my first flight was with him at age 6, in a Piper Cherokee. I could hardly see over the cockpit dash but I still remember that flight. My second flight was in a glider at the Hunter Valley Gliding Club.

ASC e-News: *What then?*

Josh: Like a lot of aviators I flew models as a kid. Then I moved on to full sized aircraft (working three jobs to pay for lessons) and finally went solo in a Cessna 150. I got my commercial licence in 2001, then an instructor rating and worked as an instructor for a couple of years. After a pretty short selection process I finally joined the RAAF and went to Point Cook for officer training in 2004.

ASC e-News: *You must have had some interesting experiences in the RAAF*.

Josh: The RAAF has given me a wide range of opportunities. One quirky side-bar to my career occurred when I was part of a group joining a flying program at Pearce in WA, and there was a delay. Rather than have us just hanging around, the powers that be sent us to Cunderdin for a few week's gliding courtesy of the RAAF. We were young and let's just say "very confident in our own ability" and we had a great time. I chose to fly the Blanik and loved it.

In RAAF service I have instructed on the Pilatus PC9, the E-7A Wedgetail, flown the P3 Orion operationally, and been to many parts of the world. I have a QFI (Qualified Flying Instructor) rating in the RAAF, and currently I'm flying and instructing on the Boeing P-8A as the Senior Pilot Training Officer.

ASC e-News: *Can you recall a flight that stands out in your memory?*

Josh (thinking): Well, lots. But a pretty special one was flying out of Jacksonville Florida in the USA in a P8. We flew out over the Atlantic to near the Bahamas where we dropped a torpedo on a practice target drone, then flew back to the US via Cape Canaveral where we did a touch-and-go on the runway used for the space shuttle touchdowns. The official designator for the location is "Earth" and the callsign is "NASA tower" – that was pretty memorable!!

ASC e-News: *What do you do when you aren't at the airfield? Tell us a little about your life beyond the club.*

Josh: I live in Gawler with my wife Petra and our three children. We've been there since 2015 and Petra is the Heritage Collections Officer for the Gawler Council. Between work at Edinburgh, being a Dad to three sporting children and active in Adelaide Soaring Club, I have a pretty full life.

ASC e-News: *Indeed! Speaking of the ASC, when did you join, and what do you value most about it?*

Josh: My first ASC flight was with Tom Leech in the DG505 in 2008. Work took me away for a while, then I rejoined in 2015 and flew Jabirus with Karl as my main instructor. These days I mostly fly the tugs – flying Pawnees has been an ambition of mine since early days in the Hunter Valley, and I really enjoy the back-to-basics nature of them. Apart from that I just enjoy being outdoors and able to mix with all the enthusiastic people the club has. And of course, being on Committee and now President, I hope I can contribute.

ASC e-News: *Good to hear! Finally, what's something about you that members might be surprised to learn?*

Josh: Well, there was a short period when aviation might not have been in my future. When I left school after year 12 I was a dedicated surfer (it goes with the territory if you grow up near the sea in that part of the world) and I set my heart on being a surfboard shaper. But eventually life took me on a different path.

GLIDING 18/10/26 by Geoff Wood



Well, yesterday Sunday was an outstanding October day for gliding. The forecast looked promising dulled only by N-E winds stronger than desirable (at least that suppresses sea breezes!) Max Scutchings and Peter Temple succeeded in doing not just the best flights in Australia, but best in the world for the day – see https://www.weglide.org/ for 18 October. Both did over 600 km on the day, normally unheard of at this time of year.

About midday little cu's started to form and gradually got closer, so many of the usual suspects were off. Given the "lie of the sky" most took advantage of the fact that the Edinburgh restricted airspace was not active to go northwest past Mallala under the 4500 ft zone, lifting to 8500 further out. Many went past the area north of Balaklava where the pink lakes were - well, pink:

Jai Carson distinguished himself by doing better than some of us old guys which is as it should be – keep it up Jai!!

Meanwhile back at Gawler, President Josh Brown did 27 tows to get everybody airborne, we flew 7 air cadets and lots of people enjoyed local flying. Blissful day. Thanks to Josh and the instructors who made it possible, and let's hope for lots more days like that this summer.

KEEP THOSE WEEDS DOWN Contact Dianne Young



It's that time of the year when our plentiful rain makes the weeds grow. Whilst the growth looks good – it is of course **Not Required** near our hangars.

Tom Leech then finds it necessary to remind hangar owners of their responsibility to keep their hangar surrounds well mowed. ***Easy for some – much harder for others.***

Di Young is always happy to help with mowing – short or long term agreements. Just give her a call on **0429 674 731.**

AEROSCENE by Jeff Schuster

Thanks to the 18 in attendance making it another good night. A special thanks to Phil Ritchie in attendance for the first time.

This weekend is the Great Jabiru Muster at Lethbridge Airport Vic. Five or six planes are departing from YGAW Friday, and Saturday morning.
Unfortunately for me the hay farm commitments have grounded me.
Safe travels everyone. Look forward to hearing all about it next week.
Jeff.

INAUGURAL JABIRU MUSTER by Richard Young

Yes we did it, this made it the second time in a row that us lot left on time. Most of us kept to 3,500' all the way for the first leg to Horsham. The winds were better at lower altitude but were still around 20 kts mostly as a cross wind. 'Mostly' just meant that Horsham has a Kadina problem, bloody cross wind operations and Horsham has 100% more runways than Kadina.
Now this is where strategy plays a key part. Jamie Clothier and Peter Smith are impatient buggers and got going first. Mr Magoo 1 and 2 performed their 'Torvill and Dean' routine deciding who was landing on what and where. The rest of us just came straight in on the correct runway, easy peasy!

The leg from Horsham to Lethbridge is very pretty at this of year. We had caught up to the clouds by this stage, I'd originally planned on 5,500' but the weather Gods ignored my flight plan. Jamie and Alan Gray went up to 7,500' until around Skipton. I was passing through 6,000 ish around Stawell with higher bits in front of me before the 'bugger this' decision was made and dropped back down again.

Jamie was the point man again and made the excellent decision for RWY 34 at Lethbank….lithbish…no,no,no….Lethpark! I love radio! Anyway, the rest of us professionals formed a neat, orderly queue and landed beautifully. Now the cynical readers would imagine a group of old ladies fighting over the Brussel Sprouts on special at Woolies, but that would be just plain rude.

What we actually came for.

Lunch. Yes, we got there in time for lunch. But after that, a side mission was to inspect an aircraft for sale that is very interesting and maybe a little scary. It's an Arion Lightening, it's very similar in looks to a Bristell, Roko, maybe even a touch of Morgan Sierra like the one based here at Gawler. I don't believe that the sale will go ahead. Because a lot of us are such a group of shy wallflowers, the quiet aircraft inspection turned into a multiple hangar inspection. Man, there are some cool toys spread around there.
As you are aware there is a bit of competition here at Gawler amongst the Southern hangar owners and those 'Johnny come lately' Northerners. Well this lot make us out to be complete amateurs. Jamie's eyes were twinkling with ideas.

In total, I believe there were 48 Jabiru's that attended with a number of extra different aircraft. Peter Heuzenroeder, Alan Gray and myself all had to 'identify' as Jabiru's.

Arion Lightening for sale.





Beautiful **"CARROLL SHELBY"**





The closest our lot will get to Virgin First Class!

Organised activities

Unlike other fly-ins I've been to in the past, this event was pretty casual. There were a number of restored trucks and cars, quite a reasonable number of 'normal' people (we don't count) came for a look. Jabiru screened a video of their history right from the very beginning. I'd never heard the whole Camit, Jabiru, Ian Bent disaster before. It's a great Australian story of grit and determination when it seems like the whole world is against you. They're pretty honest about the risks and mistakes made. Anyone who has owned their own business can certainly understand when you've got everything at risk if you fail.



Melbourne coastal run

I did this route with Bradley Leksas about three years ago. I've been wanting to have another go at it ever since. The locals gave us some tips with the communications and gotcha's around Moorabin. It seems unreal that us RAAus pilots are allowed to do it, but it is monumentally cool. What was cooler, was that Melbourne Centre told off the Piper Cherokee coming straight at us for not following the procedures. Peter Smith J230, Brian Clow J230, Baljit Singh J160, Jamie Clothier SP500 and myself in my Sonex took about 90 mins of tacho time from Lethbridge back to Lethbridge. If you ever have a chance, you have to tick it off your list.

Westgate Bridge.





ALBERT PARK and MELBOURNE CBD. If you look closely you can see ANTARTICA in the distance.

Coming home.

It was the Camptown Races for the home run. Most went directly back via Horsham. Jamie and I headed back via the Great Ocean Rd. It was a pretty solid 15 - 20 knots on the nose for most of the way. My decision making is easy, not a hope in hell doing the trip with only a single fuel stop. So Warrnambool and Naracoorte fuel and tinkle stops for me. I was the last one back at Gawler around 4:30. My stats were 9.2 hours flight time and probably around 200 litres of fuel. Which if you think it over, I took the longest time to go to Lethbridge and back and burnt the most fuel. Wahoo, I won!

Summary

I've got to thank everyone for making the trip. I've still got a stupid grin on my face thinking about the weekend. Also to Peter Heuzenroeder for finally getting his plane sorted and achieving his goal of coming

along on a major trip. He was a little trepidatious, but he didn't stuff anything up and should feel a bit of pride at the achievement.

This is the South Australian contingent. The two young ones at the front are Noah and Hazel Michael. He's the grand old age of 16 and Hazel is 15. They flew from Snowtown in his SP500 which he'd rebuilt in my hangar over a few months last year.



SAFETY SCENE by Andrew Wright

SAFETY-Scene

An E-News Article About Safety and Safety Culture

What is Safety Culture?

SAFETY CULTURE: Are our accepted beliefs, behaviors and attitudes that determine what we consider normal and safe.

Why is Good Safety Culture Important?

A good safety culture sets the stage for how we do what we do. A good safety culture encompasses our expectation that we all have a shared belief that safety is the most important part of our activity, and that we believe that respecting the rules and sharing the things that we learn when things go wrong is the best way to avoid accidents and damage.

A good "Safety Culture" begins with you.

TO ALL ADELAIDE SOARING CLUB MEMBERS

Please be aware that there have been several recent sightings of **Brown Snakes** on the airfield, with the latest being near the oil drum area behind the trailer shelter area.

With warmer weather approaching, members are advised to use extra care when walking around the club facilities and at glider launch points.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SEE A SNAKE

If you see a snake, Government Wildlife Agencies advocate remaining calm, and then slowly and calmly move away from the area.

Andrew Wright ASC Safety Officer

NEW GOLF BUGGY by Geoff Wood

A new golf buggy is now operational and going through a TRIAL PERIOD. Tommy has fabricated a box/container to hold all the bits and pieces glider pilots need. Any changes needed will be incorporated.



SOUTH ROAD DIRT RUNNERS by Phil Pullem and Steve Lovegrove

Editor. In past editions I have always tried to make the point that even though our club consists of aviators, it is amazing to see the skills, expertise and truly courageous persistence and endurance shown by some members. As discussed around the dining room table or on the veranda, members just go about their daily activities without any fanfare and people generally have no idea what lies behind some of the faces we speak to regularly.

Steve Lovegrove is one of those people. Lovely man, nice to talk to and an aviator as well. The news below just came to light the other day and Phil brought it to me attention. Thank you Phil because this is an incredible story.

Some of our older members may well remember some of the outback roads some of us travelled on. In particular the road to Perth which I used, on the way to RAAF Pearce in 1960, and the Main South Road that connected Darwin and Alice Springs. They were dirt roads and very, very, challenging.

Steve Lovegrove was one of the regular truckies between Alice and Darwin and as he says the roads were treacherous particularly when rain hit the area and vehicles needed to travel through fords and muddy roads. As he says, all the truckies knew each other and also the owners of the Stations along the way.

Some of the Station Owners had Cessnas which they used to locate their sheep or cattle and they also kept an eye out for the truckies they were expecting to visit their homes and drop off much appreciated bread etc. As Steve remembers, one time he was stuck for 8 days and a station owner flew over in a Cessna to make sure he was ok and to drop off some food.



*The History Makers Award was accepted by **Murray Fox and Steve Lovegrove** for their work in preserving the stories and history of the 'South Road Dirt Runners'.*

National Road Transport Museum

Extracted from BigRigs Magazine 11th September 2026

THE SOUTH ROAD DIRT RUNNERS
HISTORY MAKERS AWARD 2026

Presented to MURRAY FOX & STEVE LOVEGROVE

The National Road Transport Museum's History Maker Award recognises individuals, groups, or moments that have changed the course of the trucking industry through courage, innovation, determination, or simply having the vision to do things differently.

This year's History Maker Award went to a group whose contribution deserves to be remembered for generations to come: the **South Road Dirt Runners**, represented by **Murray Fox and Steve Lovegrove**.

For hundreds of kilometres north of Port Augusta, corrugation stretched to the horizon. Creek crossings changed with the weather, and dust found its way into every crack of the truck. Every journey north and south tested not only the machinery but the men behind the wheel.

From the late 1950s through to the early 1980s, a remarkable generation of drivers carried almost everything north: Buntines, Polar Expressways, Cold Storage, and dozens of smaller family operations pulled machinery, fuel, livestock, food, and building materials along the route, including the supplies and equipment needed to rebuild Darwin after Cyclone Tracy.

There was little romance in driving the dirt South Road. It was hard, grubby work.
In summer, drivers battled relentless heat without air conditioning.

In winter they faced freezing mornings and reluctant engines. Dust wore away the brakes. Corrugations shook trucks apart, and huge heavy tyres were constantly failing.

Rain could transform the road overnight. Dry creek crossings became flooded. Trucks could sit bogged for days. The road also taught its drivers to become mechanics and engineers. Repairs were often made with whatever was available. They made it work.

One delay at the Finke River lasted over a week, with drivers sharing supplies and waiting for the road to dry enough to move.
But perhaps the greatest thing about the South Road was the people. Places like Kingoonya became a meeting point where drivers shared meals, drinks, and stories.

Friendships could form within hours. Jeff Gilbert once met an interstate driver at Kingoonya who, after a few beers, asked Jeff to become godfather to his daughter. The next morning, Jeff travelled to Coober Pedy for the christening — and, as the story goes, never saw the man again.

There were characters too. Spud Murphy became famous for putting up fake “Road Closed” signs, sending unsuspecting drivers into Pimba for an unexpected night of beers and company at Spud’s Road House.

And then there was Albert “Nobby” Clarke, the transport inspector, whose presence could send a convoy of drivers looking for alternative routes through station tracks. It became a good-natured game of cat and mouse.

By the 1980s, the bitumen was steadily replacing the dirt. Trucks were becoming more reliable, and communications had improved. The hardships began to disappear, but so too did some of the camaraderie.
Ansleigh Bilato, of the National Road Transport Museum in Alice Springs, said, “Looking back, the dirt road runners are incredibly modest.
To them, they were simply doing a job, but what they did was extraordinary.

They opened and maintained a vital link to the north, endured conditions few would willingly face today and built friendships and a sense of community that have lasted a lifetime.
While the dust has long settled beneath the bitumen, their stories remain an important part of Australian road transport history, and we’re incredibly honoured to have our new display honouring them up in the museum now.

In responding Steve Lovegrove added…

“What can I say? Those days were hard. CB radio wasn’t even about.
Fridges were a wish you would hope might happen in the future.

One time I was stuck in the middle of nowhere for eight days by myself.
You realised then how lonely the country was when you couldn’t even see outback station lights.

Someone eventually flew over, saw me and dropped some food packages.

That’s how we survived back then. You’d be digging for days to try to get out of the mud.

When the sun came out it was like a sauna. You couldn’t use the 13-gallon water drum, which was probably pretty empty by then, you had to save that for drinking.
So we’d scrape mud off our legs and find a place to sleep - hopefully not in the truck.
We’d sleep in big water pipes up there on the load, to save the dirt and mud getting in the bunk.

Would I trade those days?... No, never !”



Wet conditions would cause havoc for drivers
South Road Dirt Runners 1960s



Steve received TWO Awards. One was for being one of the Dirt Road Runners. The other was for ensuring the memories were recorded, preserved and the topic received its appropriate and important place in the museum.

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