

# MERCURY BAY AERO CLUB INCORPORATED

## 2022 President's Report

Thank you for your attendance to the 74<sup>th</sup> Mercury Bay Aero Club Annual General Meeting.

### Financial

The year 2021/22 has produced the best result we have had since the Club was formed. Covid and its variants still had a major impact on activities in the past year, but it was noticeable that aviators from all over the country chose to explore our patch of 'God's Own' so that landing revenue was sustained. With the increased revenue from Ground Rents from new hangars coming online gave us a very satisfactory financial result.

As Philip Hart is unable to attend this AGM we have asked for questions ahead of time and they will be addressed shortly. A new Budget for the forthcoming year is included in the Accounts and continues to show stability for the next few years.

### Membership

We continue to grow our membership with a total of 126 financial Flying members and a further 5 financial Model Section as at the end of February. However, the financial numbers have now increased to 149 and 15 respectively since.

### Club Aircraft

During the year RV 12 MBA was sold. MBB has become our primary training aircraft with Martin Little appointed Maintenance Controller. Maintenance was carried out on MBB to rectify issues identified since it was brought online but utilisation is as expected. It would be great to see some younger people join the Club to learn to fly.

Wayne Morris has joined the Microlight instructing team with Alan Coubray and Peter McVinnie. Wayne is also available for GA instruction and BFRs.

MBB has now flown a total of 168.9 hours for the financial year.

### Airfield

A prolonged hot dry period from the middle of December 2021 through to the first week in February 2022 resulted in the formation of an emergency subcommittee to investigate irrigation alternatives and formulate a long-term plan to protect our major asset.

**Irrigation of runways:**

Average annual rainfall for the airfield is above 1,500mm, which, if spread out evenly, would be sufficient to maintain the airfield. However, there are moisture deficits in the hot summer months necessitating supplementary irrigation during these dry periods to maintain runway condition. It is evident a sizeable volume of water is needed. As an illustration, based on irrigation of 5mm per night (50 cubic M/ha), a runway of 1,000m x 30m will require 150,000 litres per night! This necessitates substantial storage capacity to meet the volume required for irrigation. Additionally, permits need to be sought. This could take months of ploughing through bureaucratic layers.

Considerable research has been conducted into various water sourcing and irrigations system options. Ground water samples indicate suitable water quality for runway irrigation. Potential water sources such as the TCDC wastewater plant, wells, boreholes, and ponds are being investigated. The irrigation project will continue with urgency.

**Runway maintenance:**

The subcommittee has recommended a long-term plan which has been formulated in conjunction with advice from several experts. Ultimately, the plan involves dividing the main 04/22 runway into three strips to enable resting of two strips while the other is in use. Soil tests and seed research have been conducted and our experts advised the best sowing time was immediately.

Consequently runway 04/22 strip has been divided in half lengthways and the northern side has been sprayed, tilled, graded, rolled, sown, and fertilized to hopefully provide a great runway by Christmas 2022. Then, next year, we will do the same to the side that is currently in use right now, and by Christmas 2023 we hope to have a great wide grass runway strip that we can move our runway back and forth across to spread the wear. We wish to acknowledge Leigh Hopper's contribution which he has done at no cost to the Club.

Very shortly, additional drainage pipes will be laid across the main runway at the intersection. Once completed we can start work on extending the western taxiway to the north toward the threshold of runway 22.

**Birds**

Birds are still a major problem. Waterways culled over 400 geese and over 120 ducks two months ago and further work needs done. We are continuing to work with the Authorities and are working well within the law with the necessary permits.

Of late we have had a proliferation of Seabirds, Magpies and Plovers with the earthworks providing a new feeding ground and scare tactics have had a limited effect.

**Hangars**

In the past couple of years 36 new hangars have been completed. A further 14 are under construction at present albeit with the frustrations in delays of material supplies causing problems.

Evan Wheeler has Project Managed the building programme is happy to elaborate on the hangar development.

## **Hangar Function & Cafe**

Covid and its various iterations have caused problems with the lack of staff limiting the opening days and functions able to be staged. We can only hope that the restrictions will be lifted so that business can return to normal, and the function bookings start again, albeit that it will be some time before the effects come through.

We wish them well for the future after enduring a difficult start.

## **Aviation and Club Events**

Several gaggles of aircraft have visited for lunch & coffee stops as well as individuals of all types making some interesting scenes on the airfield.

In the next financial year, it is planned to start more of the club competitions and gatherings of Members as changes in the Government rules are hopefully eased and fuel prices don't make our activities unaffordable.

## **Volunteers**

I would like to take the opportunity to thank those who have kept the Club alive over the past year in numerous and divergent roles, managing to do so despite the limitations of time due to family commitments, lockdowns, health issues, trips away and other constraints. We are all getting older and with very few younger people getting involved, makes the tasks for the future somewhat difficult to arrange.

I would like specifically to mention and recognise the input of Tony Turner for a number of years, and he decided during last year to step aside from the functions he was involved with.

## **Committee**

I would like to thank the Committee of the last year for their tireless efforts in rather trying circumstances and thank all for your attendance and support. I feel your Club is healthy and in good shape for the future.