

Australian

# skydiver

magazine

Australian Parachute Federation  
**50th Anniversary**  
Special Edition

Biggest Issue Ever!  
**124 Pages**



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12



**ISSUE 50**

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**ASM AUSTRALIAN SKYDIVER MAGAZINE**

FLAGSHIP PUBLICATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN PARACHUTE FEDERATION





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Belgium Steve Geens, Dave McEvoy, Robbie McMillan, Angela Hiesler & Wade Edwards holding on tight to the banner, wishing the APF a happy 50th anniversary.

Photograph taken by Wayne McLachlan in the split second that the banner flew before disintegrating!

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Being quite the sentimentalist, it tickled my fancy to coincide the 10th anniversary of ASM with issue number 50, but to be able to celebrate the 50th anniversary of sport parachuting in Australia at the same time really pushed my buttons! It is quite a thrill to crack the 100 page dream and be able to bring you this very special edition as the one.

There is an old saying about the new jumpers, that "they think skydiving started when they started" and so, this special edition is dedicated to ALL jumpers, old and new - to show respect to the old and hopefully give insight to the new. If it wasn't for the old we wouldn't have the new and it is because of both that we have a great future to look forward to.

This issue is to pay homage to the fabulous organization we call the APF. On jump run a few weeks ago, when the load was attempting a 50-way cover shot, I made a profound statement that got completely missed by everyone, so to repeat it seems important, "we wouldn't be here if it weren't for the APF." Obviously we were there to do a jump for the APF magazine, but deeper than that ie. if it wasn't for the success of the APF and it's reasons for being and the people who drive it, we would not be sitting in a wonderful million dollar aircraft, enjoying 14,000ft, in our own clear airspace, about to jump out with peace of mind donned with the latest of equipment on our back and latest technologies on our head and wrist etc, about to open and fly a fantastic parachute and land it gracefully on a lush grassy landing area at a purpose-built drop zone, all in a safe and controlled environment.

Thankyou APF!

At the end of the day, a 500 page magazine would not have been big enough to cover all the interesting and worthy aspects of our history. While there is obviously a lot missing, there is also a great amount covered

exceptionally well. A million thank you's to the contributors for their fabulous submissions and my heartfelt thanks to the APF and those contributors who continually support ASM.

**Susie Mc, Editor**

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The Editor retains the right to withdraw any advertisement, article, photo or other at her discretion and does not accept liability for delay in publication or for errors, although every care is taken to avoid mistakes.

The information in this magazine was, to the best of our ability, correct at the time of going to press. Production and mailing takes a total of 5 weeks, so some information may be out of date or superseded.

Photos submitted will be returned if supplied with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

The parameters of the Australian Parachute Federation lie in sport

parachuting operations from aircraft and while the APF is aware that parachuting descents are being made from other than aircraft, APF rules do not cover these descents and the APF are not in a position to control them. Note: The ASM may include BASE jumping, providing the APF does not appear to condone the activity.

Pursuant to my contract with the APF in relation to the publication of Australian Skydiver Magazine, I am required to make a general statement about the nature of any pecuniary interest that I have in a particular brand or parachuting equipment, service or event being promoted in ASM. I am a Director of Toogoolawah Drop Zone Pty Ltd and I am a part-time employee of Ramblers Parachute Centre which organises various events and is a dealer for various equipment, some of which companies advertise in the ASM from time to time.



My first jump - inside Mum's tummy, 1973



My first real jump - first Father/Daughter Tandem in Australia, 1990



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 5th November, 2010





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# history of the apf



By Claude Gillard

## ASM: How did the APF come about?

In the very early days of recreational parachuting there had been two fatal accidents and a low opening incident involving Lord Casey's son.

The Department of Civil Aviation requested assistance from the RAAF to investigate these accidents and Bob Milligan was loaned to the Department to carry out these investigations.

Bob Milligan was a Warrant Officer in the Air Force and had been Chief Instructor of Sydney Parachute Club and was then Chief Instructor of New South Wales School of Parachuting at Camden.

It was obvious that the Department was having problems dealing with every parachuting matter without having an overall national body to talk to.

Bob conveyed this to his parachuting club contacts up and down the east coast and as a result; the first meeting of the APF was held on Sunday 23rd of October, 1960 at the Camden Inn Hotel, Camden.

Those present were; Robert Milligan NSW, Brian Murphy NSW, Keith Bulleid Vic, Alan McDonald NSW, John Philp NSW, and Reginald Carsburg Qld. Reg Carsburg was elected President and Bob Milligan Secretary.

The following year Reg Carsburg remained president and Tom Nicol was elected Secretary.

About this time, Bill Molloy and I wrote to the APF asking when Australia was going to affiliate with the Federation Aeronautique

International (FAI) and when would we introduce a licensing system. As we received no answer we took it for granted that nothing was happening and we started a campaign to achieve these reforms and for good measure threw in the outline for a State Council System to bring the Federation closer to the grass roots jumpers.

Unknown to us, Bob Milligan had enquired of his contacts in Britain how Australia would go about affiliating with the FAI. Someone in the British Parachuting Association (probably Bob's contact) told Bob that we must join through the BPA and discussion about this went on for a long period.

Back in Melbourne, we had contacted FAI and had been put in touch with the Royal Federation of Aero Clubs of Australia and we thought that the Federation was just being slack and I went to the third AGM of the Federation thinking I would have to sell our ideas to the Meeting.

Immediately the Meeting was opened for General Business, Bill Johnson moved that the Federation accept the suggestions we had put forward and that I be elected Secretary to bring a new constitution to an Extraordinary Meeting of the Federation. It was immediately seconded and carried unanimously.

At the Extraordinary Meeting the Constitution was accepted, Charl Stewart was elected President and I was re-elected Secretary. That was the beginning of my heavy involvement with the APF.

1960s





# A LICENCES

- A 001 M. (JACK) STEVENS
- A 002 ROBERT MILLIGAN
- A 003 GRAEME GRIGG
- A 004 KEITH BULLIED
- A 005 WARREN HUTCHINGS
- A 006 ANDREW CASE
- A 007 LOUIS JOHNSTON
- A 008 BOB THOMAS
- A 009 TOM DARLINGTON
- A 010 CLAUDE GILLARD
- A 011 HANS MAGNUSSON
- A 012 STEVE FILAK
- A 015 NIELS ASCHE
- A 016 BILL MOLLOY
- A 017 DON MCKERN
- A 018 JOHN O'ROURKE
- A 019 NOEL COMELY
- A 020 TED HARRISON
- A 021 PETER MCDONALD
- A 022 CATHY WILLIAMSON
- A 023 ALISON BAXTER
- A 024 RICK MEEKIN
- A 025 GEOFF DRINKWATER
- A 026 JIM MCLEAN
- A 027 COLIN PARSONS
- A 028 LEN HUNTER
- A 029 TREVOR BURNS
- A 030 GEOFF HUNTER
- A 031 JOHN KIRK
- A 032 BARRIE MCDONALD
- A 033 FRED STEVENS
- A 034 KATHY HENDERSON
- A 035 TED CROWTHER
- A 036 BRIAN BROWN
- A 037 LISBETH WRIGHT
- A 038 PETER LYNCH
- A 039 LYLE SCHULTZ
- A 040 MARY DUNCAN
- A 041 FRED MARSH
- A 042 MAX DOBELL
- A 043 MICHAEL STEWART
- A 044 TOM ENNIS
- A 045 JOHN ROBERTSON
- A 046 MICHAEL SOPH
- A 047 BOB PALMER
- A 048 IAN CARVER
- A 049 MALCOLM BOYD
- A 050 ROBERT ROSE
- A 051 JAMES MOIR
- A 052 COLIN KING
- A 053 DENNIS KEENAN
- A 054 CHARLES LAXTON
- A 055 PETER BELT
- A 056 LAURRIE TROTTER
- A 057 GEORGE REEMAN
- A 058 GLEN RAMSAY
- A 059 JOHN SCHULTZ
- A 060 JOB DUIUENVOORDEN
- A 061 RON PEARSON
- A 062 DAVID CALVERT
- A 063 GEORGE JACKSON
- A 064 BOB LANG
- A 065 KEN BATH
- A 066 FRANCIS BUFFONI
- A 067 GLEN READ
- A 068 GREGORY BLACK
- A 069 NORM MCDILL
- A 070 PAUL BUESNEL
- A 071 DONALD SAUNDERS
- A 072 CHRISTIAN DAVID
- A 073 PETER BLACK
- A 074 PHILIP WILSON
- A 075 JOHN SMITH (DAWSON)
- A 076 HELEN SEAL
- A 077 BARRY EVERS
- A 078 DAVID SHARP
- A 079 BILL GULLY
- A 080 BOB CAWSE
- A 081 IAN ALEXANDER
- A 082 MARSHALL POWER
- A 083 JOHN PATMAN
- A 084 DAVE MILLARD
- A 085 JOHN TURNER
- A 086 JOHN PUGH
- A 087 GARRY LOBB
- A 088 BILL KENNY
- A 089 ALESE JENSON
- A 090 PHIL EDWARDS
- A 091 TREVOR BAKER
- A 092 GERRY BECKETT
- A 093 JOE FINTA
- A 094 BARRY ARAVANDINO
- A 095 JEAN BOU
- A 096 BRIAN CLARK
- A 097 GORDON MUTCH
- A 098 JOHN MCMEEKIN
- A 099 WILLIAM WALKER
- A 100 JAMES MICHAEL

## ASM: What motivated you to stay so involved?

Parachuting was so new and out of the ordinary back then and every new thing you did gave you a feeling of achievement and I was lucky enough to have a flare for it. Every jump was a new adventure and I loved the sport so much I lived for the next time I could jump out of an aeroplane.

Back then you had to be prepared to spend long hours on the drop zone to make a jump. When I began, the Victorian Parachute School had only one or two parachutes and the Instructors would be at the drop zone to make a manifest list at first light on the one day of the week that they jumped.

The Victorian Parachute School was controlled by the partners Graeme Grigg and Keith Bullied and as it needed to be; it was regimented.

Those of us who were qualified paratroopers did not take long to reach the stage where we could organise to make unsupervised jumps but this involved us in heavy paper work to get permission for each and every jump from the Department of Civil Aviation.

The quick progression through the ranks kept me interested. I was a foundation member of 2 Commando Skydivers and was an instructor by then and when Southern Cross Skydivers was formed I became a Chief Instructor. One could hardly look for more motivation.

## ASM: How did you qualify as an instructor?

The Department of Civil Aviation made an edict that to instruct it was necessary to have 50 jumps and obtain its approval.

You will often hear a quote, "They only needed 50 jumps to be an instructor" and that just is not true. It was not easy to get the approval of DCA and very hard to get approval to act as Chief Instructor. Also, 50 jumps back then could not be compared with 50 jumps now. It was difficult to get more than one jump each jump day and my 32 civilian jumps in my first year was probably a record. The only person I can think of who may have done more was Bill Johnson in Sydney.

On that subject, very few recreational jumpers before 1962 had 100 jumps and there were a number of jumpers who gave up at 100 because they felt that was as many as anybody was entitled to.

## ASM: Was the lack of jumps a brake on advancement?

If you consider the small size of the sport, it went ahead in leaps and bounds from 1962 to 1964. In 1962, the first Australians competed in a World Championships; Kathy Henderson, Don West and Bill Molloy jumped in the 6th WPC at Orange Massachusetts. In 1964 Australia had a full team in the 7th WPC at Leutkirch, Germany, plus both South Australia and Western Australia joined the Federation over that time.

1960s



Bob Morrison



Dave Millard



Hans Magnusson



## ASM: Did implementing Parachuting Certificates (Licences) make a difference?

Yes it did. In the beginning, it served to make it clear who had experience and who did not. In an industry that was heavily involved in safety and had little written guidance, experience was an important factor.

The FAI licensing requirements were very basic; if an Australian had the required number of jumps he or she would certainly fulfil the other requirements.

Fortunately the FAI rules allowed member nations to impose more stringent requirements. We rewrote the APF requirements to set skill goals for the applicants. In practice it was very successful, neophyte jumpers were proud of every licence that they earned. So much so that many of them wore their highest licence number on the sleeve of their jumpsuit. (They had a lot more time between jumps).

The APF Licensing System came to have the highest requirements in the world and Australian jumpers were very easily accepted on foreign drop zones.

We had little experience of foreign licensing requirements and so we accepted the FAI

system in its entirety from A to F. Canada, USA and the United Kingdom only issued licences A to D.

When the APF was negotiating with DCA about the size of display landing areas, the Department was happy to accept the internationally accepted FAI/APF Parachutist Certificate as part of the requirements to jump into the different display areas.

In the 1990's when the nations that issued only A to D Certificates put forward at the FAI International Parachute Commission that the range of the FAI Certificates be brought in line with their systems they were successful even though I pointed out to them that in Australia it would take an act of Parliament to change the Australian Government Operational Regulations and E and F licences were required for some operations. However I was able to have them allow member nations to continue to issue the E, F & G licenses should they want to.

Australia has never issued G Licenses. It was discontinued by the Board because a number of F License holders indicated that there was no interest in obtaining the G as the F allowed them access to the tightest display drop zones anyway.

## F LICENCES

F 001	ANDY KEECH
F 002	PETER DAWSON
F 003	ALLEN JAY
F 004	CLAUDE GILLARD
F 005	BILL JOHNSON
F 006	COLIN KING
F 007	BRIAN BROWN
F 008	STEVE FILAK
F 009	LEN HUNTER
F 010	JIM COX
F 011	LAWRENCE TROTTER
F 012	ALLEN JAY
F 013	BILL KENNY
F 014	DAVID LOCK
F 015	DAVID MILLARD
F 016	DENNIS CLARKE
F 017	JOHN MAHAFFY
F 018	JOB DUIVENVOORDEN
F 019	BOB STAFFORD
F 020	JOHN FRASER
F 021	ART LITTLEMORE
F 022	BOB RANNEY
F 023	SERGE WITTE
F 024	PETER FRICKE
F 025	BOB MORRISON
F 026	JENNY STAFORD
F 027	GEOFF THOMAS
F 028	PAT CAHILL
F 029	PHIL WHATMORE
F 030	JOCK MOIR
F 031	FAYE COX
F 032	CATHY BURROW
F 033	GENE BERMINGHAM
F 034	LOUIS JOHNSTON
F 035	DANNY WRIGHT
F 036	JOHN MIDDLETON
F 037	DEREK DOUL
F 038	DAVE MCEVOY
F 039	BOB BARRY
F 040	GEOFF BINGHAM
F 041	RON LAW
F 042	BRUCE BRAMHILL
F 043	JURGEN WRIEDT
F 044	TONY CURL
F 045	KERRY TUCKER
F 046	DICK COYNE
F 047	BRUCE TOWERS
F 048	DOUG IRVIN
F 049	ROD WHYTE
F 050	COL HOLT
F 051	MARK WALTERS
F 052	PETER NOBBS
F 053	JIM CZERWINSKI
F 054	NIGEL LONGHORN
F 055	JOHN STANDRING
F 056	ROY MARKER
F 057	TONY DALE
F 058	MIKE DEAKIN
F 059	GRAEME WINDSOR
F 060	SEAN LLEWELYN
F 061	JOHN MCEVOY
F 062	KATHY SILVESTRI
F 063	BILL ROBINSON
F 064	JIM HESSON (USA)
F 065	GEOFF COWIE
F 066	NOEL LOURIE
F 067	ROY TAYLOR
F 068	COLIN TREZISE
F 069	RAY WILLIAMS
F 070	JOHN DASH
F 071	JOHN FRISWELL
F 072	ROSS LOUGHTON
F 073	GRAHAME HILL
F 074	GEOFF CARR
F 075	IAN HANDLEY
F 076	BRIAN KILPATRICK
F 077	JOHN BLAIN
F 078	IAN SWINBOURNE
F 079	HILTON TRENT
F 080	DAVID TAPP
F 081	HARVEY HUTCHINSON
F 082	NOEL RATH
F 083	ROD WILSON
F 084	TONY DUCKWORTH
F 085	TONY LEE
F 086	DAVE OPITZ
F 087	LAURRIE SAMS
F 088	PETER EADIE
F 089	RAYMOND MAKIN
F 090	RAY FOSTER
F 091	BOB CANTRIL
F 092	MAGGIE GRAHAM
F 093	MARSHALL POWER
F 094	TONY EDWARDS
F 095	MARY SKI
F 096	ROSS DAVIDSON
F 097	RORY HATCHETT
F 098	STUART MCPHERSON
F 099	ANNIE SWINBOURNE
F 100	GREG GRAHAM





## ASM: What do you think were your personal achievements?

Mostly my involvement in the development of the APF. There were many times that I had to overcome heavy opposition to put new developments in place. It was difficult to get agreement to make the change allowing students to advance by ability. The original training was very military and largely geared to the lowest common denominator; you were taught as a group and progressed when every member of the group had learned the skill.

Convincing the Executive that we should have a building fund and put a percentage of our income into it was touch and go. Many of the Executive Members could not see far enough ahead to see the need for owning real estate.

When we had enough money to put a deposit on a building and advised State Councils that it was possible to implement the plan; one of them had a meeting and answered "If we have \$30,000 we should jump it out".

And convincing the Department of Civil Aviation Officers that the APF was not a bunch of cowboys took a couple of years. Then it was a long haul to where the Department handed control of the sport to the Federation.

## ASM: What had you worked at prior to parachuting?

I ran away from college, went picking grapes and found it hard work. It was wartime and I took a job with the Netherlands Indies Government Information Service as a projectionist and became a Camera Boy. When the war ended I did not want to go and work in Indonesia so I went to sea, around the Australian coast and overseas, then I got married. I worked for a while as a Waterside Worker and a number of other things until I joined the Victorian Railways. There I worked as a porter, an Assistant Station Master, a Shunter and a Guard. If I had stayed with the railways I would have been retired as a fat cat long ago.

Once I became involved in parachuting everything else took second place. I had never taken a day off sick day in ten years at the Railways. I had an unbelievable amount of sick pay entitlement.

I was secretary of the Federation and started taking time off on my sick leave to handle the ever-growing work load. The Railways didn't like it and the Roster Clerk made a deal with me. "I'll book you on "Stand By" every night provided that anytime that you are off sick and I run out of "Stand By" Guards and there is a train that will not be manned; I phone you and you will come regardless of what else you are doing" I agreed to that and by using it judiciously I was able to donate my services to the Federation for more than a year. If I was at work; I sat doing Federation work in the stand-by room.

My wife Jean ran a Milk Bar/Sandwich Bar in Richmond and having imported a couple of rigs for myself, I started to import and sell parachuting equipment, became a parachute rigger and Southern Cross Parachutes was born.

I built an office in my back yard and used it as the first purpose built APF Office. It became a way of life for me. Even later, when I was not so involved, I would buy equipment for the Federation if it could not afford it. It was what I wanted to do, developing the organization I always believed it could be.

## ASM: What were the most pressing problems faced by the Federation?

The biggest problem was that we were restricted by regulations, there were Department of Civil Aviation Officers who saw parachuting as an unnecessary use of air space and of course the Department had to protect itself from being blamed for anything bad that happened. These two factors coupled with people who didn't understand what we were doing left parachutists with the impression that the Department was obstructionist.

In the first two years of my involvement it was not unusual for every parachute club and school in Australia to receive a

# 1970s





telegram from the Department of Civil Aviation with a message decreeing that all civilian parachuting must cease forthwith. One of these barred all jumps where the parachutist stood on a step or a wheel to exit the aircraft and only aircraft in which the jumper could exit in military fashion were to be used.

I phoned and asked to come and discuss the matter. I was ushered into a room with a very long table and seated at one end of it. The table was filled with official looking gentlemen and they all had serious expressions on their faces. After the preliminaries I asked "Could you explain the reason for this decision?" A lot of paper was produced and one of the officers indicated that these are the reports from three fatal parachuting accidents and all three of them contain the words "the jumper left the wheel and went unstable". I spent some time explaining the technicalities involved and explained that paratroopers did not assume the stable freefall position and that it would be more difficult to obtain the freefall position than for a person exiting from the step or the wheel because he only had to extend his arms and legs to be in the stable position whereas stepping out of the door requires him to turn his body into the direction of flight while assuming the stable position. They removed the edict and we only lost one weekend. None of the fatals had been caused by instability.

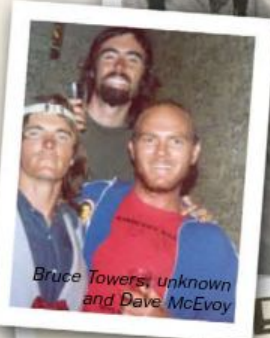
That must be seen in the light of the thinking at the time. The Departmental Officers were mostly ex Air Force and it was difficult for them to come to terms with the fact that parachuting was being conducted without military supervision.

Gaining the respect of the Department and having them hand over control of the sport was one of the most important steps in the Federations development.

# history of the apf



Ralph Ford, George Creecy, Graham Jeffery & unknown



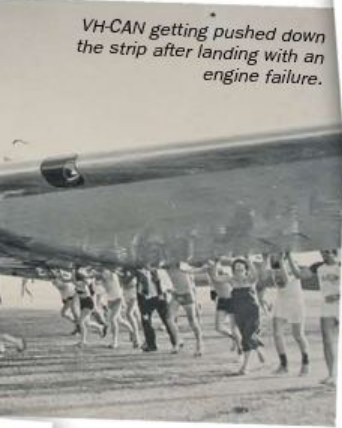
Bruce Towers, unknown and Dave McEvoy



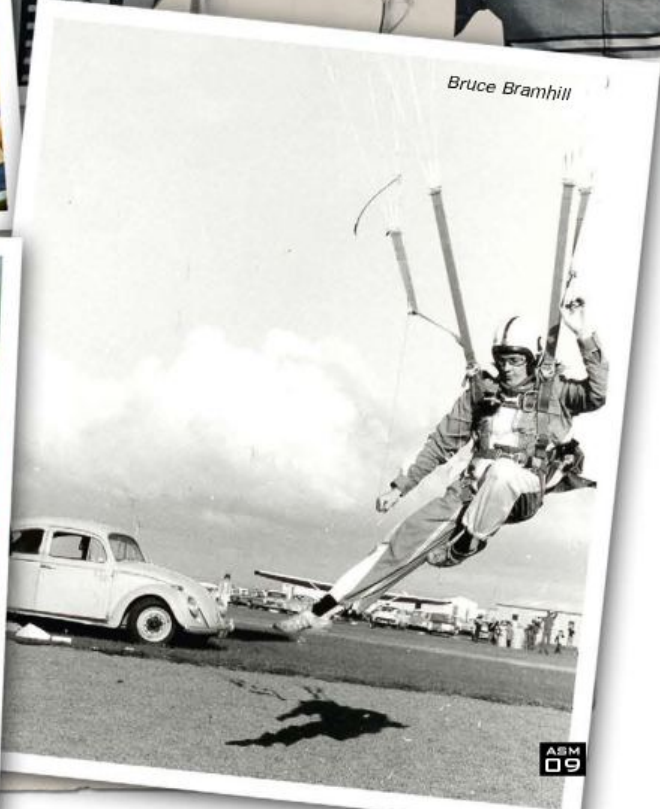
Richard Stuart, Rod Barber, Alan Tricky & Tony Jackman



Top - Harvey Hutchinson, Faye Cox, Doug Irvin  
Bottom - Col King, Jim Cox, Claude Gillard, Ron Law



VH-CAN getting pushed down the strip after landing with an engine failure.



Bruce Bramhill



Ian Hunter performing Australia's first nudie run



Harvey Hutchinson with son Martin



## ASM: Why did the Federation move to Canberra?

The most obvious advantage of having an office in Canberra was the proximity to government departments and politicians. Because you were close, you could discuss problems with the relevant Department as they arose and in many cases head off unwanted action before it occurred. You could also maintain a personal relationship with those people in government whose decisions can most affect you and usually stay well informed of their intentions before they actually make the decisions. It is sometimes not appreciated by sporting organisations that government officials who are not aware of the organisation's needs, will normally talk to an informed source before acting, provided there is a source within easy reach.

Personal contact with politicians was the most successful way to bring about political change. No doubt another way to make that contact was through the local members for each electorate. However, you must be aware that this course relies upon many people in your organisation getting off their backsides and making the effort to approach local members. Even when they do, you cannot be sure that they will make a favourable impression on the local member. Sadly, the few times that you will get members to make this effort are when it is too late and damage has already been done to your organisation. The only other way to be in contact with all of the politicians is to have someone on site at the seat of government, somebody who actively cultivates personal relationships with politicians.

An instance of where the local member approach can backfire was the Department's decision to approve an application for an aviation training organisation to take over an airfield that was already occupied by an established sport parachuting club. The Club went to the local member who happened to be a member of the opposition and he brought the subject up in parliament and embarrassed the Minister. The Department dug its toes in and went to great lengths to defend the Minister.

There were also internal reasons why the Federation needed to be based in the ACT. State rivalries can decimate an organisation. In the years prior to the shift to Canberra, I spent untold wasted hours having to deal with objections to progress because they might happen in a particular State and members in other States allowed their partisan feelings to overcome their desire for progress. Being based in the capital city overcame most of those rivalries and placed a national character on the actions of the organisation.

The Federation has recently moved the office from Canberra to Brisbane. I have every confidence in the Board so I am sure they have good reason for doing so.

## ASM: What were the previous APF Offices like?

In 1962 the APF Office was the back room of my house in Doveton. I carried the whole filing system in a large leather brief case. The Federation fee structure took a small sum of money from each member club and that went on office supplies. I supplied the office furniture and equipment.

It can be seen in the photo that the office shelves were made from packing cases but the typewriter was state of the art.

As the Federation grew in size I had a purpose-built bungalow erected in my back yard. At first I manned the bungalow three days and four nights a week and as the load grew I was augmented by other volunteers three or four nights a week.

Amongst the most active volunteers were: Tony Hillman, Bob Courtenay and Andrew Kerr.

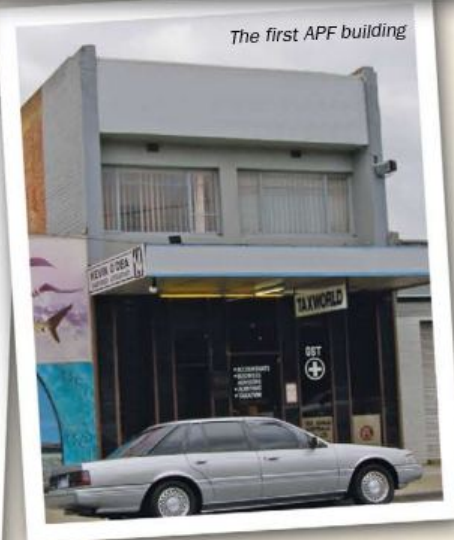
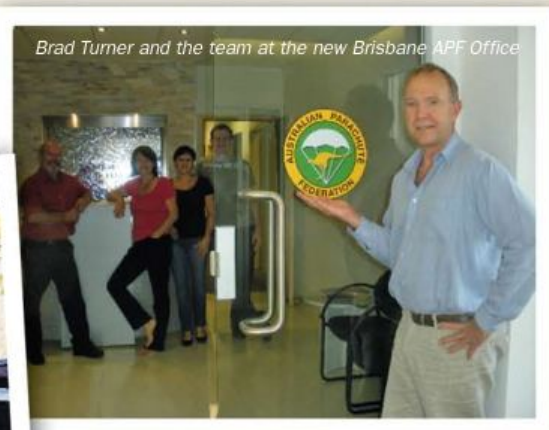
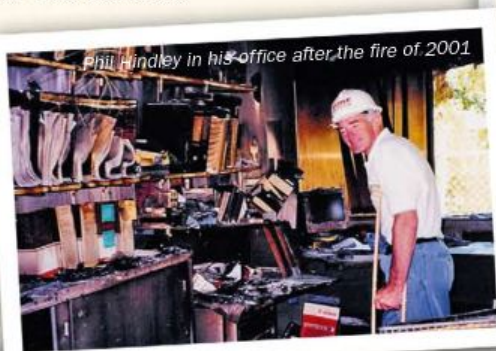
The Federation introduced an individual membership fee and along the way Anne Jessop was employed three days a week and eventually five days a week to help out.

The Federation eventually outgrew my bungalow and a larger office was rented from the Royal Victorian Aero Club on Moorabbin airport. Ruth Martin-Levorsen replaced Anne Jessop and by the time that the Federation outgrew that office it was able to enter a contract to buy its own office building in Mentone.

Later there was land available from the Federal Government in Canberra at a greatly reduced price and the Mentone building was sold to enable the purchase of the land in Canberra and the building of the Canberra APF Office.

By now the Federation had grown into a sizeable sporting body and was seen by the government as a role model. While in Canberra, the Federation grew to be staffed by seven people.

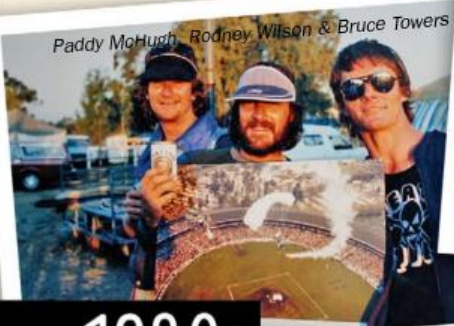
The Federation has recently moved to Brisbane to continue its growth.



Above: The new APF building.  
Right: Official Opening, Peter Lloyd OBE,  
Claude Gillard OAM,  
Perry Crosswhite Aust. Sports  
Commission.



Paddy McHugh, Rodney Wilson & Bruce Towers



TM Brad Turner



# history of the apf



## 1980s

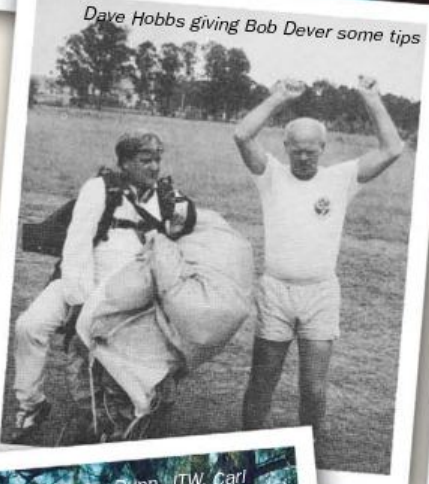
Pete Anderson, Marcus Priem, Miff, Andy Hardy & unknown



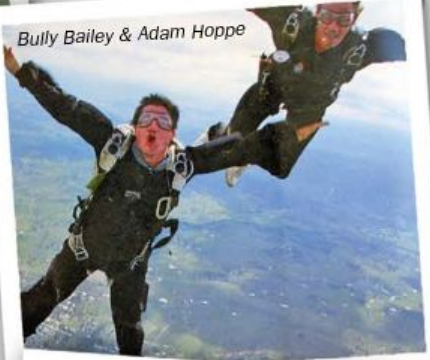
Geoff Bingham  
Landing at the Aratula Pub



Dave Hobbs giving Bob Dever some tips



Bully Bailey & Adam Hoppe



Monkey, Brandon Van Nie Kirk, Doug Stewart & Mark Brody



Dicky Drieu, Michael (Kimble) Hughes, Bluebaker & Ray Palmer

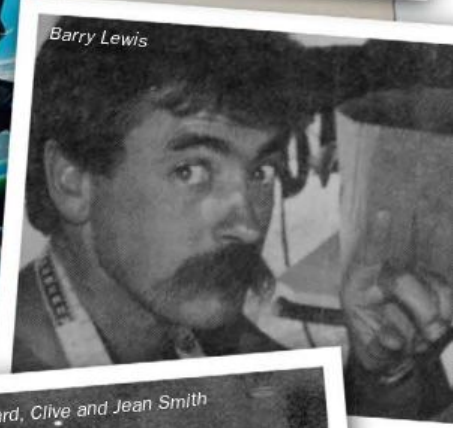
L-R Back: Shane Dunn, JTW, Carl Michaels, Miff. Front: Shane Strudny



Lower Light DZ



Barry Lewis



TM John Friswell



Claude Gillard, Cjive and Jean Smith





## Long Serving APF Staff



Graham Windsor



John Chapman



Phil Hindley

## ASM: What about the structure of the Federation?

I copied the original structure from the Memorandum and Articles of the Royal Federation of Aero Clubs of Australia, which was a Company Limited by Guarantee.

I included a Collegiate Voting System (The AGM was made up of two persons elected by each State Council). The alternative was that the AGM be made up of delegates from all of the member clubs and schools. There two reasons for the choice; the cost of travel was high back then and the possibility that control of the Federation may have centralised in the State with the largest number of clubs and schools. (There were instances of where this had happened in other sport aviation bodies)

I also had a mind set that we needed a structure that gave those at the top a feeling that their position had some importance. The Constitution had a company feel to it; the representatives were called Directors. But the lack of resources was no doubt the perceived reason.

My reports to the Board in the seventies commented on the need to introduce individual membership. It was quite some time later that this happened.

Along the way Collegiate Voting became unpopular with corporate affairs office and it would not approve constitutions that contained it. We have

gone through a few different structure changes since then but have been able to keep the Board members coming from the Council Areas.

There was good reason for changing the structure along the way and there maybe those who want to change it now. My comment on that is that during the whole time that I was involved with the Federation, there was never a time that if a member, club or individual, put a submission in writing explaining why it should be acted upon, that it would not have been given due consideration by the Board.

Most of the complaints that I experienced as president were based on personal differences between members or a belief that the Federations funds should have had different priorities in how they were spent. Many of these claims were based on self-interest or lack of knowledge as to the costs of the different expenditures.

## ASM: What do you think of the Federation of today?

I think it is an excellent organisation. I know all of the Officers and many of the Board Members and I respect them all. I look back on my time with the Federation with great affection for all of the people who took part in its development. If ever there was a band of brothers we are it.

I know that from the salutation I am received with when we meet and the deepness of the bond I have with those I spend a lot of time with.



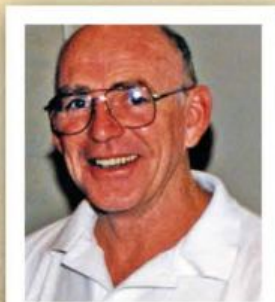
Warren Hutchins



Claude Gillard



Tony Edwards



David Smith

## APF Presidents

Reginald Carsburg 1960/62

Charles Stewart 1962/64

Andrew Case 1964/65

Warren Hutchins 1965/66

Claude Gillard 1966/2000

Tony Edwards 2000/2008

David Smith 2008/2010





# history of the apf



1990s





00s

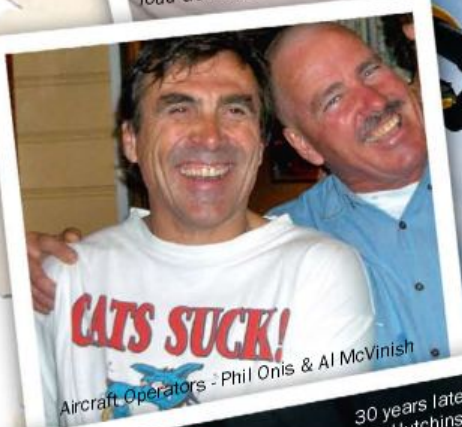
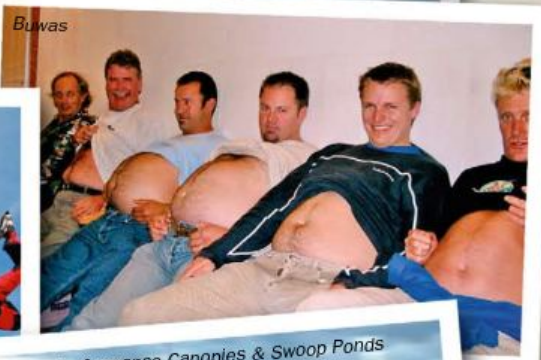


NQ Tandem DZ Operators - Todd Gerrard and Col King

Earth Leakage



Buwas



Aircraft Operators - Phil Onis & Al McVinish

Hybrids

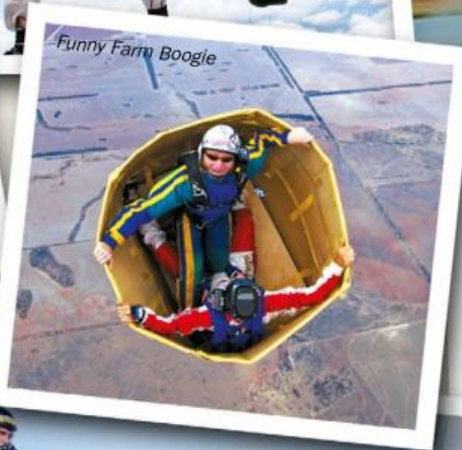


High Performance Canopies & Swoop Ponds



30 years later - Martin & Harvey Hutchinson

Funny Farm Boogie



Atmonauti's



Airtite 4-way team Tunnel Training



Wingsuit Rodeos



Foozeball



Friends & Fun Times





# Claude Gillard



## 5-way baton pass

Claude and his mates set a "World's Best Performance" 5-way Baton Pass at Pakenham on the 30th of January, 1964. The only previous 5-way Baton Pass was performed by the US Army Golden Knights, from 35,000 ft with the last pass at 90 seconds from exit.

*L-R: Beryl Blakemore – Len Hunter – Andy Keech – Colin King – Claude Gillard – Bill Molly*



Commandos Founding Member Claude Gillard in freefall over Melbourne on a grey evening in February. The weather held out just long enough for this jump, which marked the start of the one year countdown to the Commando Skydivers golden anniversary. It was jump number 5,000 for TM David Boulter, with Shane Sparkes on camera.

The Countdown Party was designed to kick off the big year of celebrations and fundraising efforts for the club's 50th birthday. 80 members, past and present, gathered to look at photos, cheer for Claude and tell old war stories on a fantastic informal night.

The main celebrations for Commando's 50th anniversary will be a big Friday night formal dinner on February 4th 2011, with a birthday boogie weekend at the DZ.

If you want to jump and have some fun  
Head your car south along Highway One  
Turn off at Labertouche  
There's a nice drop zone in the Gippsland  
bush

The target area's nice and neat  
It's easy on the eye and soft on the feet.  
And if you're lucky you could get to meet  
The King of the Air.

I don't need no flash P.C.  
Crossbow systems are not for me  
I'm doing fine on my old C9  
And I'm King of the Air.

Don't need an ultra low  
Just green fields down below  
A ten metre sawdust pit  
And a little white disc I'm gonna hit  
I got a 10 sec series flat  
Dead centres are just old hat  
In a ten man star I'll be there every time  
'Cause I'm King of the Air.

I don't need no French jumpboots  
Bubble goggles or twin-zip suits  
As long as I've got my two parachutes  
I'll be King of the Air.

\*\*\*\*\*

RAMBLING ON - ISSUE 26. 31.7.79







*Ready for the big step ?  
Your "Guardian Angel"  
is watching over you...*



Photo & artwork Willy Boeykens

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# ASM

By Steve Swann

## the birth of a magazine

*Editor of ASM in the 1970s, Steve looks at how the magazine evolved and the parachuting pioneers who helped fill its pages back in the day.*

1966

AUSTRALIAN SKYDIVER

1969

1970

1972

1973

Producing Australia's skydiving publications has always been a labour of love for those doing the editing and publishing. But in the 1960s, when our sport was born, the emphasis was very much on the "labour". It was before email, before the web – personal computers weren't on the technological horizon as Australia's first skydivers taught themselves to fall stable and land in the same paddock as the target. Desktop publishing? Not even a distant dream and digital photography was just a wild fantasy. Electric typewriters were still to make it into the mainstream when Australia's first skydiving publication was launched.

Back in the 1960s and 70s, the skydiving community was very small and widespread. But it had the same hunger for news and information about the sport – new gear, new techniques, competition results, gossip and photos – as every generation since.

That early challenge was met by jumpers themselves, with no financial support from the APF or anyone else for that matter – and we used stone-age tools, in comparison to today's technology.

It's great to see ASM flourishing now – a far cry from the all black-and-white magazine I produced with Bernie Keenan's help in the 1970s, typesetting it on an electric golfball typewriter in my lunch hours, shooting half tone film negatives on the sly in my employer's printing camera room and pasting the whole thing up after hours back in the office, the old-fashioned way with waxed galley proofs.

And then handwriting (with the help of my wife Jill) 400 addresses – the sum total of our subscriber base in those days – before stuffing envelopes and humping the whole lot off to the local post office.

### A Child of the 60s

Australian Skydiver magazine has been meeting the needs of jumpers for 45 years. It was born in Queensland, grew up in South Australia and has flourished in maturity back in Queensland.

The magazine's first appearances were under the masthead of the "Northern Star Digest", published by the Northern Star School of Parachuting, based at Archerfield airport near Brisbane. It first came out around the beginning of 1965. The earliest and only copy I have is dated May-June 1965 and was numbered as Edition 3, edited by Brian Mitchell. This was no slick, four-colour, coffee table affair. It was a basic as it gets – 28 pages of A4, printed on one side of the sheet only by Gestetner machine, an archaic, low-cost office printing press (a forerunner of the photocopier) that worked by forcing ink through a stencil onto paper.

Stencils were cut on an ordinary old-fashioned typewriter and then fixed to the machine's drum, which was rotated by hand. Talk about a labour of love!

In that issue, South Australian contributor Trevor Burns (D67 and soon-to-be editor and publisher of the fledgling magazine) wrote a piece arguing the case against opening at 3,000 ft, as opposed to the 2,200 ft laid down in the APF's Op Regs – a popular argument among many of those who resisted the idea of the young APF setting the rules. An early example of Trevor's commitment to the APF.

Within 12 months the "Northern Star Digest" had morphed into "Australian Skydiver", edited and produced by Murray Cosson (E15). It was still a rudimentary production (no photos, no colour) and even the date of the edition was hand-written onto the plain black and white pre-printed cover which enclosed the hand-stapled document. Murray's editorial column in July 1966 noted that the edition had actually been put together by Trevor Burns, who was taking over from then on. The magazine now moved to SA, where it stayed for the next 10 years.



Constrained for resources as ASM was in those days, one of its ambitious aims was to "print news of activities in all States, New Zealand, Malaysia and South East Asia." It was a big task for a one-man band but it was tackled with a volunteer enthusiasm and generosity not much seen these days.

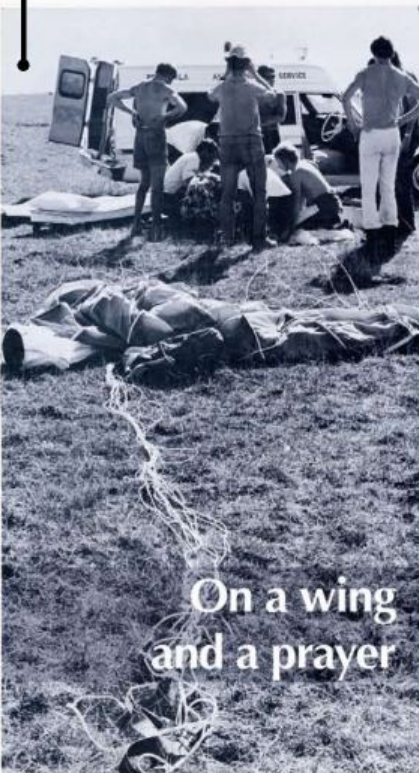
Drop zone listings were offered at an advertising rate of \$3 a year. The only DZ listed in that first edition was Spencer

Gulf Skydivers at Whyalla in SA, which boasted a seaweed pit and 30-second delays at \$3 a slot – obviously Trevor, who lived at nearby Port Pirie, was trying to kick-start the column by listing his own local organisations.

A full page advertisement offered a Paracommander main (the high performance round canopy we all lusted after) at \$220, a 24 foot diameter will reserve at \$40 and a 16 mm gun camera at \$50. With the nation only having switched to decimal currency in February of that same year, the prices were also, helpfully, listed in pounds.

## On a wing and prayer

*OK, so strictly speaking it's not a wing – actually a Para Plane which featured in this story from 1971. But those were the days when anything other than "round" was exotic and something about which to be very cautious. The story detailed Ray Williams' experience trying to cutaway from a mal with the even then antiquated 2-shot capewell system. One riser failed to release and at about 800 ft he was forced to dump his round reserve, fitted with a pilot chute which wasn't necessarily common in those days, and which didn't make the job easier. Ray survived (obviously) with several broken bones but the incident delivered, via ASM's pages, many timely lessons for jumpers.*



On a wing and a prayer

Photos by Warren Hinchings.

A couple of months ago Ray Williams proved the value of a good pit when he landed under about one-third of his Para Plane. Here is the story of that jump. There should be a lesson or two here for everyone.

After despatching two students Ray got out at 2,500 to discover a floating ripcord. After some fumbling he found it and had the main inflated at 1,800'. But the wing was severely restricted to about half its normal size. Ray immediately checked for the position of the pilot chutes as experience had shown him these had a tendency to wrap round rigging lines.

As he was checking the wing started to rotate, slowly at first but then accelerating rapidly.

He released the brake toggles (the Para Plane is fitted with a system which retards the forward surge of the wing during deployment by holding the toggles in 95 p.c. brake during opening) and the wing spun even faster.

Once more Ray checked for the pilot chutes. He thinks they must have been in the rigging on top of the canopy as they were not around steering or rigging lines. It was cutaway time.

He popped the covers on the two-shot capewells of his borrowed harness and squeezed the lugs together. The right side released but the left hung up. Two hands on it but still no luck.

A look at ground and altimeter showed Ray he was down to 800'. He had no choice. He would have to try to throw the reserve clear.

For the first time ever, Ray was jumping a reserve fitted with a pilot chute. His own was being re-packed.

He tried to throw the reserve to the left, into the spin. But his rate of descent was so great that the pilot chute carried it

By May 1967 the magazine, while still printed on an old Gestetner, had now stepped up, being printed on both sides of the sheet and it boasted heavier, separately printed covers which carried photos and ads, as well as two pages of black and white photos pre-printed on a better quality stock and hand stapled in.

Sydney correspondent (and Parachutes Australia founder) John Mahaffy reported on a great Easter weekend of jumping by Sydney Skydivers Club members near Taree, NSW.

He listed 146 descents for the weekend and some great relative work, including a perfect double 4-man star with backloop and re-link and 4-man raw egg passes. "Mostly the jumps were from 8 to 10 grand and worked out at \$2 to \$2.45 – no complaints about that," John noted. To put that jump cost in perspective, an annual subscription to ASM (6 copies) cost \$2.50 and the average weekly wage was \$55.

In 1969 Trev Burns was canvassing the idea of having the magazine printed offset, asking readers to express their opinions. Surprisingly many wrote back saying they "couldn't give a damn". While the prospect of lots more photos being printed was attractive, some worried it would put up the price of the magazine too much.

ASM's listing of DZs on the inside back page now ran to 11 clubs or centres around the country. Not everyone listed their operation though – perhaps spending \$1 or \$2 went against the grain.

## Genuine Jumping Veterans

In the September issue of 1969 correspondent Don Mardle of the Saigon Sport Parachute Club submitted a piece on sport jumping in the middle of a war zone.



up into the malfunctioned Para Plane. The reserve did not inflate at all. Despite several attempts to clear it, the canopy remained hopelessly tangled with the main. At about 300' Ray realised his only hope would be to pull off a perfect pit. Fortunately the violence of the spin decreased as he neared the ground – possibly because of the tangled reserve inhibiting the airflow.

At this stage the only thing holding air was the Para Plane's one-third of free canopy.

Remarkably Ray was able to relax on landing and confined his injuries to a fractured pelvis, crushed vertebrae, a dented rib and a broken right elbow.

The most probable cause of the Para Plane mal was the failure to have the twin pilot chutes connected. Instead of the 2-side reefing system being drawn like a purse string to one point the separated pilot chutes were able to stand out any distance apart from each other.

In this case one could easily cross back over and through the reefing on the other side thus restricting deployment of that side of the canopy.

**Editor's note:** One would have imagined Ray's accident at Pokemah would have driven home, to local jumpers at least, the folly of jumping two-shot capewells with high performance canopies. I guess some people will never learn. We had a Pokemah jumper in Adelaide for the SA Champs with a brand new, locally made style system (and a very nice set of gear, too) which had two-shots. The jumper in question had not even bothered to file off the lugs of the catches and, on investigation, one release was difficult to open. Are you one of those "temporary" jumpers on a high performance canopy with two-shots? Talk about stupidity.





## Editorial meeting

(From left) Bernie Keenan, Trevor Burns and Steve Swann with SA parachuting pioneers Col Parsons and Phil Edwards at the 1971 Gulf Meet at the SASPC's Lower Light drop zone.



"To most Australians in South Vietnam, jumping is a sport which must be put on the shelf for a year or so while they serve out their tour here," he observed, referring to the large contingent of conscripted National Servicemen in the country. "The Saigon club has been in existence for some time now but, due to a number of reasons (for example, Tet 1968), the club has closed down jumpwise a couple of times," he wrote.

Tet of course, was the massive, surprise nationwide Tet Vietnamese New Year holiday offensive launched by the North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong against the allied forces – not a bad excuse for curtailing club jumping!

Don ended his article with contact details and the wry invitation: "Why not look the club up and enjoy your stay in Vietnam?"

In mid 1970, ASM finally went to offset printing, opening up the possibility of photos on every page. It was still a black-and-white only affair on the inside pages but the covers varied in colour from issue to issue, appearing in duotones from shocking pink or basic blue to dashing green. The move also allowed impressive centrespread photo layouts for the first time.

An editorial at this time explored the rise of the "commercial centre" in Australian parachuting. By then there were at least as many commercial centres as clubs operating in Australia and ASM observed that "by virtue of the fact that centres are run as businesses, the great majority of students make their first leap at a commercial centre. Like it or not, the commercial parachute centre is here to stay and, in the not too distant future, a parachute club will be a very rare bird on the Australian jump scene."

But the dilemma then was that few, if any, commercial operators were enrolling their first jump students in the APF. This was long before it became an agreed requirement.

"It's difficult to give \$10 away (the APF annual fee in those days) when it could just as easily go into your own business," the editorial said. "The result is that few commercial centres are affiliated with the APF." It went on to recommend a basic student fee and then an additional fee for an "A" licence, which together would add up to \$10.

It was an editorial position strongly promoting the value of the APF in an era when there were still vocal doubters and antagonists to the national organisation.

How much more forcefully might that editorial have been received back then, had any of us foreseen the phenomenon now known as "tandems"?

## The Coming of Ram Airs

Technology was beginning to make its presence felt in 1970, as more jumpers realised they didn't have to go on thumping into the ground under round canopies. A feature spread that year, headlined simply "Ram-air Parachutes", gave a detailed background of how the new-fangled Parafoils and Para-Planes worked, explaining that "these new designs are of the gliding type with desirable characteristics far exceeding any other known parachute."

The author advised those who were sceptical that "seeing is believing. The leading edge of the ram-air parachutes is open or physically missing."

At the same time ASM's "Riding off in all Directions" column, a round-up of news briefs from Australia and overseas, reported that the US national team was using another cutting edge tool. "US team uses videotape," the headline announced. "While in training, the 1970 United States team probably made history by using a video tape to monitor style jumps. For the first time jumpers were able to see their own recent mistakes on the 21-inch screen."

## New Blood

Producing ASM regularly and single handedly is a big task and for anyone holding down a fulltime job at the same time, there were bound to be hiccups.

In the August 1971 edition Trevor Burns' editorial recorded that after a few months out of production ASM was back in business: "The best news is the staff has increased from one to three," he reported. "Steve Swann, an experienced jumper and journalist has taken over the production and printing side of things and Bernie Keenan, who fills in time between jump days wielding a TV news camera, is pictorial editor and all-round handyman."

Within a couple of issues Trev decided to move on, taking a new job interstate and handed the magazine over to me.

ASM in those days wasn't entirely free of politics or opinion pieces. That's what comes of letting a couple of journos into the running of your magazine. A piece in "Riding off in all Directions" observed: "Prince Charles has made his first parachute jump", as all good newspapers have dutifully reported. With their usual stunning disregard of fact they declared: "Prince Charles skydives 1,200 feet".

They went on to say that "as His Highness stepped into his Royal Harness he expressed the wish that he be 'treated just like one of the men.' After this he was fished out of the sea by a fleet of assault craft sufficiently large to have been able to invade and hold the entire southern half of Great Britain for a fortnight; delivered to a waiting Royal Helicopter; flown to a waiting Royal Rolls Royce and then driven back to home sweet home. Oh well! The rest of the men didn't want to go anyway."

No prizes for guessing the then ASM editorial team's later position on the Australian Republic debate!



## Keep it to yourself

SA jumper Terry Angus and the old outside dunny at the Lower Light pub feature in an ASM advertisement in 1974, encouraging jumpers to subscribe to the magazine. The ad's message – "You don't pay for their jumping. Why pay for their reading?" – sought to discourage the few paying subscribers which ASM had from handing the mag onto their mates to read, without actually supporting the publication themselves. This was before the APF helped underwrite the magazine's production – you only received it in the mail if you paid for it.

## Over a Beer

Gossip and DZ news from around the country was directed into ASM's "Over a Beer" column, a feature of every issue.

In October 1971, Trev Burns commented on the generosity of the farmer who allowed the SA Sport Parachute Club to use his paddocks: "How's this for a friendly landlord? Early in August (1971) I lost my watch while jumping at Lower Light. After spending a couple of hours searching for it in knee-high grass, I gave it up. A couple of weeks ago George Quigley, owner of the SASPC's DZ, got to hear of my loss. After erecting a 50 yards square fence around the area where the watch disappeared, he herded in 500 sheep. After a couple of days they ate the ground bare and up turned the watch. It's guys like George who help make up for all the 'bad' farmers around the country."

Is it any wonder that the Lower Light drop zone, now owned by the SASPC and located on National Highway 1, 40 minutes north of Adelaide, today carries a respectful sign, identifying it to passing traffic as the "George Quigley Airfield"?

World news items made another appearance in "Riding off in all Directions" in December 1972 under the headline 'Another Lonely Leap': "Author of 'The Long Lonely Leap', US Airforce captain Joe Kittinger, who free fell from a balloon at 102,800 ft and later wrote the fascinating account of his experience, has been shot down over North Vietnam. He was last seen descending under canopy," the story noted.

Kittinger was shot down just before the end of his third tour of duty, having flown a total of 483 missions. He spent 11 months as a prisoner of war in the infamous "Hanoi Hilton" prison. This man is a legend and was an inspiration to most of us who took up jumping in the 60s and early 70s.

## A Record Star?

The same 1972 edition of ASM recorded a 16-man star built over Pakenham, suggesting it was almost certainly the first 16-man built outside of the US.

With five jumpers in Labertouche's 185 and 11 in the Pilatus Porter, the jump run was at 13,500 ft. The 16-man was together at 43 seconds but 3 seconds later a grip broke and it spread into a "U", ASM reported. "It was being flown back nicely when another grip broke and, as if by signal, everyone turned and tracked off. Whether it can be recognised as a record or not, it remains that for 3 seconds it was a perfectly round, stable 16-man. It was almost worth not being on it, just to see it!"

# KEEP IT TO YOURSELF

Help your magazine flourish through a stranger circulation. Keep your copy of Australian Skydiver to yourself. You don't pay for their jumping. Why pay for their reading?



The "APF Newsletter" column in that edition also reproduced an honour roll of those who had remained financial members throughout the 10 years since the Federation had been opened to individual members in 1962. Some very familiar and significant names here: Niels Asche E19, Trevor Burns E61, Brian Clark E22, Tam Dickinson D11, Phil Edwards E74, Steve Filak E8, Claude Gillard F4, John Gillett C167, Doug Irvin E106, Allen Jay F12, Louis Johnston F34, Andy Keech F1, Bill Kenny F13, John Mahaffy F17, Dave Millard F15, Jock Moir F30, Ron Pearsall E40, Pat Snell D107.

In 1972 "Over a Beer" commented, somewhat disapprovingly, on the trend to discard the pneumatic soled French Paraboots in favour of sneakers, still themselves something of an American oddity in those days when the Australian public had, not that long before, referred to anything so sporty as 'sandshoes'. "Terry Trewin, one of the local jumpers here in Adelaide, broke his ankle late in January jumping Addidas shoes. Who will be next?" the column asked.

Maybe it had more to do with wind conditions on the day or the canopy Terry was jumping or whether his PLF was good enough – but really it was symptomatic of skydiving's final move from the almost military mindset from which it had sprung. And it was the liberated 70s afterall.

## Those Who Made it Happen

Photography has always been one of ASM's most compelling attractions. But in an era when freefall photographers were few and far between and camera gear was big, clunky and very, very expensive, sourcing photos was a huge challenge. In the 1960s and 70s pretty well everyone shot black and white – but those who could do it at all (let alone well) were real artists.



Colour or black and white: it didn't matter – there was no instant, digital feedback in those days. Just a few hours back in the darkroom, labouring over dishes of chemicals.

As editor of ASM through much of the 70s, the highlight of my month was to open the mail to find a treasured package of black and white prints from Andy Keech, in the US. He supplied numerous covers and photo spreads in those days, inspiring local jumping photographers to emulate him.

Other prolific photo contributors from ASM's early days included: Mike Richards, Ted Harrison, Chip Maury (USA), Geoff Thomas, Joe Finta, Dave Tapp, Tony Holtham and Blue Thompson. (Apologies to all those I've missed).

ASM's writers were the other essential, unpaid ingredient in the editorial mix. Without an enthusiastic and knowledgeable team of editorial contributors any magazine will quickly run out of steam. Those who freely and frequently wrote for ASM in its infancy included: Claude Gillard, John Middleton, Jim Czerwinski, Clive Smith, Dave McEvoy, John McEvoy, Chris Fowler, Gene Bermingham, Tug Molony, Mike Deakin, John Mahaffy and Louis Johnston.

## Advertising Supporters

Apart from subscriptions, publishers have only one other source of income with which to pay the bills – advertisers.

Despite the attractive rates charged in 1971 (a full page cost \$20 and a half was \$12), ASM wasn't beating them back with a stick. But to be fair, we were offering advertising to a very limited number of manufacturers and retailers, who themselves were trying to make a living from a tiny population of jumpers by today's standards.

ASM's stalwart band of advertising supporters in the early years included Parachutes Australia, Southern Cross Parachutes and Ramblers Parachute Centre. Steve Snyder Enterprises was among the rare international advertisers, promoting its groundbreaking Altimaster 11 and the Sentinel automatic reserve opening system, together with ParaGear, which booked the occasional page.

If we carried 3 or 4 pages of advertising we'd done a good job. Jumpers who wanted to list their gear for sale got a free run in the classifieds.

However, ASM briefly thought it might have cracked the advertising revenue big time back in 1973 when Winfield cigarettes booked a full page (the outside back cover) promoting their fags. At the time, prominent Victorian jumper and cameraman Tony Holtham had just completed shooting a TV commercial, featuring comedian Paul Hogan as a laconic skydiving smoker who makes a cool jump under a roundie onto the front lawn of a stately rural residence, lands by the pool and utters the promotional phrase "... anyhow, have a Winfield", before lighting up.

It gave us all a warm feeling (ignoring the prospect of lung cancer) and Winfield donated \$3,000 (big money in those days) to the Australian Team Fund.

SEND FOR YOUR COPY OF OUR  
**NEW '67 MULTI-COLOR CATALOG**  
A HANDY REFERENCE BOOK FOR ALL MAKES OF  
SPORT PARACHUTING EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES  
OVER FOUR HUNDRED PHOTOGRAPHS • ONE HUNDRED THIRTY PAGES  
SIMPLY MAIL IN \$1.00 (POSTAGE PAID) WITH YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS  
IF YOU DO NOT HAVE AFB MAILING, WE WILL MAIL YOU A COPY

**Para Gear Equipment Company**  
818 N. Broadway Dept. D Chicago 40, Illinois, U.S.A.

"AERO CLASSIC" INSTRUMENT PANEL  
FEATURE - OF THE MONTH FROM PARA-GEAR  
AERO INDICATOR ALTIMETER. 100 ft. Altitude dial with 0-10,000 ft. scale (open in front) 1/2" diameter weight 1 lb. 10.00  
AERO INDICATOR PANEL. 100 ft. Altitude dial with 0-10,000 ft. scale (open in front) 1/2" diameter weight 1 lb. 10.00  
AERO INDICATOR PANEL. 100 ft. Altitude dial with 0-10,000 ft. scale (open in front) 1/2" diameter weight 1 lb. 10.00

1 1/2 SHOT CAPEWELLS  
\$10.00 per set

PARACHUTING GOGGLES  
\$3.50

EXCLUSIVE PARA-COMMANDER COLOR COMBINATION  
BLACK, GOLD and RED. AVAILABLE ONLY FROM PARA-GEAR. Design as follows: Fast five panels are Red. Side and stabilizer panels are BLACK instead of the new standard white panels. In place of the red panels we have GOLD along with a GOLD rope. Also 25 other color combinations - WRITE FOR INFORMATION  
PARA-COMMANDER Mark I CANOPY. GOLD, BLACK and RED. \$120.00  
STRONG SHORTY SLEEVE. Black and Gold. (Includes opening SHOCKS). \$ 25.00  
SECURITY SLEEVE. Black, Red, Blue or Yellow. (Dependable openings). \$ 22.00  
Mark I SMALL TOP PILOT CHUTE. Complete size with silver shock sleeve and you will no longer ditch when the OPENING SHOCKS of the P.C. \$ 5.75

...anyhow\*

Just about every jumper in the country would have seen the skydiving Winfield television commercial by now. It's short and to the point and easy probably don't realize the effort and skill which went into its production. Cameraman TONY HOLTHAM explains.

TRIMPAK

NEW SERIES  
AERODYNAMIC SHAPE  
FASTER EXITS  
FASTER STARS  
EASIER HANDLING IN DOCK  
TRIMPAK'S BENT PEG  
FLARELIGHT RECORD  
EASE  
MULTI-COLORS AT NO EXTRA COST (RED, BLACK, BLUE, SADE GREEN, ORANGE)  
NEW SERIES BAG FOR MINIMUM RISK TAILS  
ALL ROUND CANOPY  
LIGHT WEIGHT, 7.5 LB.  
(INCLUDES RECORD)  
INCREASED FLYING CONTROL

OLD STYLE BULBY GUYS  
TAKE IN DOCK  
"BANDS" PINS  
"HAND" RAILS  
"SLOW" TAILS  
"SLOW" STARS  
"HEAVYWEIGHT" 18 LB.  
REDUCE FLYING CONTROL

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Sydney, N.S.W., 2000  
Phone: (02) 5121 29 6441

PARACHUTES AUSTRALIA

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS  
THEY HELP TO SUPPORT YOUR MAGAZINE

FOR SALE

ParaCommander Red, white and blue,  
one owner, red has never been opened, supplied with both riser long and short sleeves, log book and instruction manual. Packed and ready to jump and could be jumping this next weekend.  
This chute is being offered by IACC and it is expected that it will be sold at a public sale. If you are interested, please contact the IACC office.  
There will be no export duty or customs formalities as the chute is already in Australia.  
Price \$20 \$220.00

Reserve 24 ft. English bell canopy in PHAWON CONSTRUCTION. The most desirable reserve.  
Price £20 \$40.00

Gun Camera 16 mm. electric.  
Ideal for taking F.V. commercials. Complete with lightweight rechargeable battery pack (fits easily under reserve harness) and battery charger. Can be helmet mounted or hand held. Helms and magazine, 100 ft. film through in-line mounting bracket for pistol grip.  
Price £25 \$50

Available from L.A. JOHNSON, c/o Australian Skydiver Magazine.

FOR SALE DH RAPIDE  
LUXURY JUMP SHIP

Carries seven jumpers in warmth & comfort Economical to 12,000 FEET

New G. of A.  
Powered by two 210 H.P. GYPSY SIXES - Performance similar to Cessna 180  
Silver and White with blue trim  
Spare Magnetos & Propellers (nil hrs.)

\$1650

FOR QUICK SALE

Write - AIRFLITE, BOX 2, ARCHERFIELD, BRIS.  
aircraft may be inspected at Aero Kare, Adel...



# ASM

the birth of a magazine

## Jumping, booze and drugs: was it really a problem?

The 1974 Nationals generated what was ASM's biggest ever news story – but unfortunately we weren't reporting on dazzling competition performances or new sporting records. The festering issue of alcohol and marijuana mixing with skydiving shot to the surface with the tragic deaths of two jumpers who, having adjourned with most others to the pub after the competition was called during the afternoon, decided to do a night jump at 1.45 am the following morning.

With the clandestine assistance of a few who lined the runway at Rylestone, NSW, with some car headlights and the help of an experienced jumper who also owned and piloted the Piper Navajo, they decided a 3-man from 5,000 ft might be a good idea.

They got out as planned but the third man wisely decided to dump immediately. The other two linked up. They went all the way in without ever breaking off. The fatalities occurred in late December 1974, already a shocker of a year with 9 deaths and were at first reported in the daily media as "just another" couple of skydiving fatalities. But the proverbial hit the fan in mid February 1975 when Parliamentarian Ian McPhee, apparently tipped off by disgruntled constituents who were also jumpers, raised the toxic subject of jumping, booze and drugs in Federal Parliament. It was a public relations disaster for the sport. Both the APF and the Department of Transport's inspector of parachuting were pilloried for supposedly not being able to control the allegedly rampant problem. (DoT was the forerunner of CASA).

The front page headlines in major daily newspapers and five pages in Hansard (the official parliamentary record) were an absolute low point for the sport.

ASM went in boots and all in its April 1975 edition, reproducing all the Hansard transcripts and lengthy reports from APF president Claude Gillard and director of safety, Grahame Hill. It wasn't pretty – our layout and headlines were "in your face". But this was something the sport had to confront head on. And quickly.

One element of that report was the reprinting of Grahame Hill's January 20, 1975 letter to APF safety officers, written in the immediate wake of the incident:

*"If we look at the past year's statistics in their worst form (as the press and DoT would), this is what we could come up with: If we say we have 700 active parachutists jumping each year (experienced only). We had 9 deaths in 1974. That makes it one jumper in 70 will 'go in' if we have another year like 1974,"* Grahame warned.

It was a sobering assessment and a useful base from which to measure the sport's progress ever since, both in self-discipline and attitudes to safety – not to mention technology and improved gear.

Apart from the obvious and painful truth that booze and drugs really were an issue (albeit not that widespread) this tragic episode crystallised the entire debate, both within the skydiving community and in broader aviation and bureaucratic circles, about whether parachutists could be trusted to regulate themselves and whether the APF was the body to do it – whether, in fact, the APF was worth supporting at all.

As my editorial introduction to our series of articles noted: *"It goes further than just the exercise of what some believe to be repressive laws which prohibit the use of certain drugs.*

*It comes down finally to a question of safety and our fitness to control and discipline ourselves. If parachutists cannot demonstrate self-discipline, then there are agencies which will do it for us – and not as nicely."*

ASM was firmly in the APF camp on this occasion, as it always was.



## Is it really a problem?



# CUTAWAY

## USING THE KIWI SYSTEM

Photographs and details: Dave Topp

### Birth of the RSL

Long before the invention of the 3-ring circus and ram air parachutes, innovative jumpers and riggers were tackling the question of how to get reserves out more quickly and reliably, particularly for students. This feature spread from ASM in the 1970s explored the latest New Zealand variations of the proven Steven's cutaway system, the original RSL.



## Handing It On

By 1976 pressure of everyday work and the need to devote more voluntary time to student training in our own club (the SASPC), meant Bernie and I, who had recently gained our senior instructor ratings, reluctantly decided to pass the magazine on.

Claude Gillard, who's company Southern Cross Parachutes had been underwriting the publication's costs since Trev Burns had moved on, bravely cranked out an edition or two before the magazine finally moved back to Queensland under the stewardship of Dave McEvoy in late 1976 and it hasn't looked back since!

## TREVOR BURNS



STEVE SWANN

## Cutaway

The opening page of a 3-page photo spread in 1973. Mike Richards mounted a motor-drive camera on his chest to capture the full sequence. This shot captures the moment of cutaway. The ring-pull section of the old capewell mechanism has disengaged but the male fitting has not yet pulled free, leaving the risers hanging by a thread. A fellow Canberra jumper caught the main as it collapsed and brought it down between his legs – possibly Australia's earliest recorded case of CRW?

# CUTAWAY

Photo series by MIKE RICHARDS

Photo 1 - The moment of cutaway. The ring pull section has disengaged but the male fitting has not yet pulled free. Notice the main ripcord is back in its pocket.

Photo 2 (over page) - About 1/2 of a second later, the main has started to collapse. John Lahiff on the right, watches the action.

Photo 3 - Right hand comes across for reserve ripcord.

Photo 4 - Looking up for the opening canopy.

Photo 5 - Looking down to check the camera is running.

Photo 6 - Mike reaches for the risers as the canopy opens.

Photo 7 - The fully open reserve. John Lahiff caught the main as it collapsed and brought it down between his legs.



appears to lack the directional stability, and damping of the PC. The Paracommander is more predictable in its behaviour.

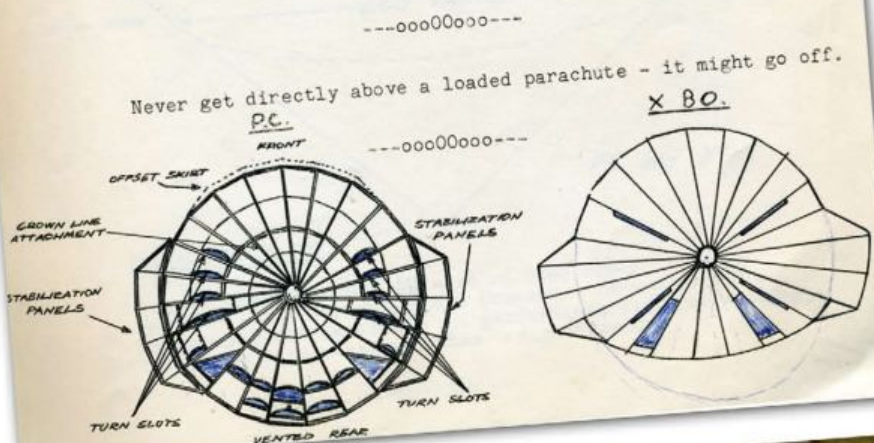
The piggy back harness is extremely comfortable, and the packs are not too bulky, but you do feel a bit naked without a reserve in front. The instrument arrangement I had could have been better, and a proper set of instruments (preferably a wrist panel) is essential. I was using a harness mounted altimeter, and the placing of the reserve ripcord makes this difficult to arrange properly. I ended up doing some quick mental arithmetic and using the wrist stopwatch plus visual judgment. I found the redistribution of weight no problem, but got the impression that the packs are inclined to create more drag than a conventional rig, when exposed to the airstream. ie. during barrel rolls and loops.

During the final approach, it's good not to have a reserve obscuring the view; although both Crossbow and PC have a very flat approach angle, which almost solves this problem anyway.

If you get dragged, it's smart to let the right capewell go, as the left one static lines the reserve.

Both the Paracommander and the Crossbow, are "second generation" parachutes, designed from the start for sport parachutists. As a result, they are far better for this purpose than anything else available at the moment.

Which is the best buy? Well, that depends on what you want it for, and what colour you want!





# ALTITRACK ROCKS

The world's most versatile and accurate digital visual altimeter & freefall computer.

Photo  
**Norman Kent**  
2009 JUMP FOR THE CAUSE



L&B has also gone beyond the average by incorporating all of the popular features of its long-time favorite PROTRACK™ audible and added several new and useful features to the ALTITRACK™. Imagine a visual altimeter that records your jump information from exit to landing, has the ability to download jump information to a computer, has an ergonomic fit, is both shock and water resistant, upgradeable firmware... and most of all... is extremely easy to use... among its long list of features. ALTITRACK™ ROCKS!

- FEATURES:**
- Visual altimeter
  - Digital accuracy
  - Datalogging for review
  - Back-lit face
  - Ergonomic design
  - Accessories available
  - Jumtrack 3 Compatible
  - Long lasting battery
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  - Standard or Metric

DESIGN:  
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# RAMBLING ON *and* ON

With Dave McEvoy & Susie McLachlan



Issue 1, Nov 1978 - Issue 123, Feb 2000

**SUSIE:** So Dad, what's the story behind Issue 1? Was it done in anger?

**MACCA:** No, not anger. Frustration, before Rambling On started there was the ASM, then after Trevor Burns and Steve Swann stopped running it, the APF Board ran it for a couple of issues, there was APF support in there. I was guest editor for one issue, that's what got me started on the idea because when it fell over, ie. no more magazine (looking horrified), it wasn't being produced and I just said at the Board Meeting that "we've got to have it" and as it says there (pointing to Issue 1), they said "go do it yourself" and that's what happened.

**SUSIE:** A bit like with you and me towards the end of Rambling On hey, you wanted to close up shop and I begged you not to, trying to appeal to your sentimentality but you said to me "if you want it so much, you go do it!" I still remember that feeling of youth rebellion and with such intensity declaring, "well I will." Today I understand it more as "passion".

**MACCA:** When I first started jumping and right up until that point in time, everybody, we all loved getting our magazine in the mail, it was just something we really looked forward to and read from cover to cover every time and we needed one and there was nothing being done. So, there was room for a magazine, but at Ramblers there was room for a newsletter. Rambling On was our first newsletter. Joe Armstrong came up with the name. In that first year, it was all about drop zone stuff and as the year went on we started getting more and more stuff from the Northern Territory – the Katherine Skydivers and the DPC were always supportive. We started sending it out, we were sending it out weekly for starters, then fortnightly.

ISSUE 1. 14th November 1978

NAME: RAMBLING ON.

REASON FOR CREATION:

At the recent meeting of the A.P.F. at Parachutes Australia in Sydney, a motion was put forward "that the A.P.F. start a National Magazine". The motion was put forward because I felt that there was something really lacking in Australian Parachuting communication.

The A.P.F. felt that, due to past bad experiences, it did not want the responsibility of, nor did it have the personell to produce a National Magazine. The Board's reply was "Do it yourself".

This is Issue #1.

DAVE McEVOY,  
EDITOR.





# RAMBLING ON and ON

**SUSIE:** When did you make the transition from Newsletter to Magazine?

**MACCA:** Issue 29 was our first attempt at a Magazine, not quite a year later. The rest were just Newsletters. Issue 32 was our first front cover, 12 months later. It coincided

with the opening of Toogoolawah drop zone, so the cover was with the Premier Joh Bjelke-Peterson, at the Airshow. The second year of the magazine had about 8 issues, it was a magazine format, we started getting ads, the content was great and the quality was still matt paper. We didn't upgrade too much, but we started getting black and white photos in there and then we started using coloured paper to give it some sort of colour, lots of

contributors were coming along, it was still a newsletter but with an upgrade.

**SUSIE:** Did you have subscribers straight away?

**MACCA:** I remember our first subscriber. We went down to the Gloucester Nationals, Rambling On had been going for a while, but then I started to try to sell it nationally. Tony Duckworth was the first person to flick me 2 bucks and say, "I'll be in it". It started going interstate fairly soon to subscribers.

**SUSIE:** And advertisers?

**MACCA:** The first advert appeared in Issue 31.



**SUSIE:** Did you share the job of producing the magazine?

**MACCA:** Rick Collins was the backbone behind it for years before he left to work for the APF. He did all the hard work,

his heart was in it. Louise, the Ramblers lady at the time would type it up for us, and the labels, we'd crank out a couple of hundred of each page, have big piles of each page, walk around and pick 'em up in order, staple them together. I'd put on a carton of beer, usually at Rick's place, we'd walk around, walk around, walk around collating, stuffing envelopes, sorting into post codes, away we'd go and take 'em to the post office. It was one hell of a show!

**SUSIE:** Yes, I know only too well (pointing to self) ie. child slave labour.

**MACCA:** (Laughing) Yeah, the Halligan kids were great value!

**SUSIE:** What were the printing equipment advances?

**MACCA:** After a while, Nobbsie got a collating machine from the University; great old machine, it worked well. Took about 28 pages, 7 a side, load it all in there, press a button, push a thing, pull a lever, up it would pop and (many hand actions and sound effects) and out it would come. Instead of walking around the table we collated them one by one. Then we got a new Gestetner machine and that was a really high class thing for us, automated. Rick used to turn the old gestetner by hand, then we got the new one, second hand, and we were all excited about that. Higher technology too so instead of cutting and pasting. We could do it differently, better, made life a lot easier. Rick would stand there and do an all-nighter when it was on, especially when the circulation increased.

**SUSIE:** Was it still newsletter type of content or did you get into any politics?

**MACCA:** Throughout the whole magazine, there was never anything too political in it. We tried to keep it like a "family" magazine. In the 80s though, McEvoy, Nobbs and Holmes appeared on the front cover about 5 of the times, so that's when Dick Hall made up that song "On the Cover of Rambling On"... (singing) "with McEvoy and Holmes, Peter Nobbs are on their own and we can't get our picture on the cover of Rambling On."

Well one cover at that time was the first Tri-Plane in Australia. Nobbsie came back with the Canopy Rel and he did a link up with me, then he took Holmes. Then I went and did a link up with Holmes and Nobbsie came on the bottom of that; and that was our first Tri-plane.

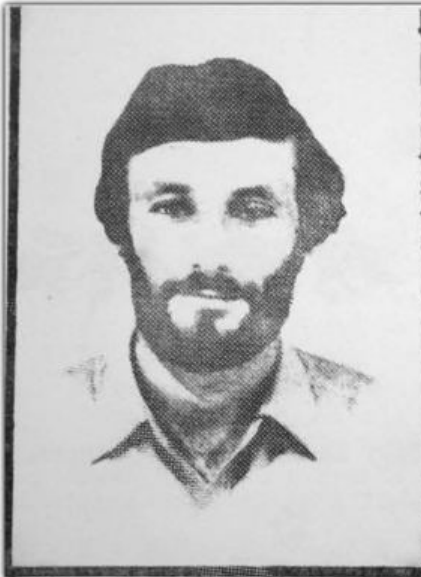


Rick Collins



McEvoy, Holmes & Nobbs first Triplane





7  
Peter Nobbs, F 52, 1800 jumps.  
Age 32, single.

Started jumping in 1971.

He is a World Champion  
Demonstration jumper and has  
represented Australia three  
times in Style and Accuracy  
events.

He brought Canopy Relative  
Work to Australia and is  
considered to be a true man  
of the air.



# The Cover of Rambling on

by Dick Hall, Mary Ski &  
Doctor Hook

(to the tune of: Cover of Rolling Stone)

Well we've got sign written clouds  
And we're thrilling all the crowds  
And we're loved wherever we go  
And if the weather's hot and sunny  
Or up the shit, we earn our money  
Cause we always put on a good show.

But McEvoy and Holmes and Peter Nobbs  
are all alone  
When the cameras start clicking and it's  
wrong  
Cause they're always in the picture  
And we can't get to feature  
On the cover of RAMBLING ON.

CHORUS:

RAMBLING ON - Gonna see my picture on the  
cover  
RAMBLING ON - Gonna buy 5 copies for my  
mother  
RAMBLING ON - Gonna see my smiling face  
On the cover of RAMBLING ON.

Well we've tried every caper  
And we've made the local paper  
And we even made the news on T.V.  
And we take spunky Lady Pilots  
In a bit to hit the limelight  
And Marker wipes out trucks and canopies.

And people say he's always blind  
But Tony's never far behind  
With the ladies we try to lay it on  
But we're doing something wrong  
Cause we just can't get it on  
With a cover shot in RAMBLING ON

CHORUS.

In 1981 we had our first colour cover. The South Australians sponsored most of that and Bermo too by advertising in the front and back. Col Parsons appeared on the back cover.

**SUSIE:** Why did SA donate it?

**MACCA:** It may have had something to do with Steve Swann back then, I can't quite remember. It was just a one-off thing but it gave us hope for the future. We ended up doing a black and white quality cover somewhere along the line and we started adding splashes of colour, but nothing like the real thing. The mag was a labour of love and it just kept gaining momentum. There

was nothing super quality about it, but people still loved getting it in the mail, nothing changed in that department. It was about this time that Rick started getting really good on the gestetner, started experimenting with glossy covers as another step forward but nothing over the top. It was about this time that Canopy Rel really started happening too. We jumped into the Commonwealth Games, three TriPlanes, another one of the front covers. It was a big deal! Our second colour cover, Issue 62 November 1984 was 5 years later. After this we started going splashes of full colour every now and then.

**SUSIE:** Did the APF give any financial help?

**MACCA:** The mag became more and more an Australian magazine, because what happened, we were reporting on nationwide things like the National Championships and I'd go down and take photos of all the teams. It got APF backing in so much that the APF didn't pay anything towards it but they advertised for us on their yearly membership renewal.





# RAMBLING ON *and* ON

I put that to them as a business proposition, I think it was \$35 subscription for the year and so the APF would keep \$5 of it, like a commission. That worked quite well, because every June the subscriptions would come in from all around the country and that's when it became the Australian magazine.

Whenever I could afford it I would go colour, something special like the World Meet edition. I was on the front cover again! Early Openers at the Gatton World Meet, we got a bronze medal at that one, so it was worthy. No wonder people got the shits, but they were great photos, you can't deny that. It was ground-breaking stuff what we were doing back then, the kites and the double-diamonds...

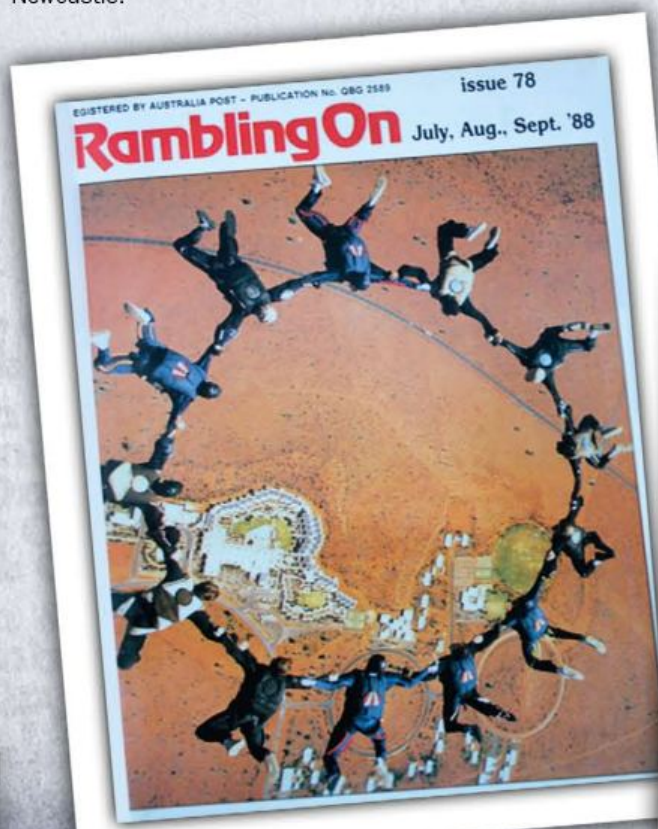


**SUSIE:** Advertisers?

**MACCA:** We started getting full colour adverts, which paid for the front cover in colour, that's how that worked. Because it was printed 4 pages to a sheet, we'd charge two advertisers the cost so we could run the two colour covers.

**SUSIE:** Hooray to all advertisers past and present I say. So who were the first colour advertisers, PA and Paragear?

**MACCA:** No Windshear Jumpsuits, I think they were out of Newcastle.



**SUSIE:** And those thongs! Rage Ons, everybody had a pair!



**MACCA:** Yeah and so the mag progressed a little, progressed a little, progressed a little. I kept the politics out of it, any nasty letters about so-and-so going crook at so-and-so never made it, anonymous letters never made it and I tried to keep it pure skydiving and related to skydiving and it worked out fairly well, I didn't upset too many people.

**SUSIE:** Hah, what about Parapenalia?!

**MACCA:** Yeah I did get myself into a bit of strife with Parapen! I used to quite enjoy getting funny bits and whacking them in there. I used to carry a notebook with me all the time, especially at parties and boogies and whatnot. Someone would always say something that was profound and funny and I'd write it down because it was always too hard to recall. A couple of times I went a bit too far apparently and it really backfired on me, I won't say what.

**SUSIE:** I'm not surprised. I'm too scared to run it the way you did, though it does make for great reading. I wish people would send more jokes and quotes and poems in.

**MACCA:** People were sending in poems all the time, we ended up with the Rambling On Songbook, which was beaut.

**SUSIE:** So what was the next big milestone?

**MACCA:** For some reason we went full colour throughout.

## EDITORIAL

Issue 78 - Another milestone in Australian Parachuting History, as, for the first time, Rambling On hits the streets in full living colour. The good news is that from now on, at least once a year, Rambling On will continue to be produced in full colour. Thank you to the Australia Parachute Federation for their financial support and thanks also to all the advertisers who could see value for money.

This is also the biggest ever issue and thanks to all the contributors. The magazine has been sent to all APF "A" license holders and above. I hope you enjoy the reading. Please subscribe !!

\* \* \* \* \*



PARA PEN PARA PEN PARA PEN PARA PEN

PETER NOBBS doing buddy jumps at the NT RW Seminar. VIVIENNE BOWES (Tamworth) while on 7 second delays was taken up to 8½ grand for a taste of real sky-diving, as was WOMBAT LASSLETT and CHARLIE ROOT, (both N.T.)

MARTY MILLER (ex NT), GREG CROW (N.T.) and ROBIN BROWN (Twah) all did their 100th jump at Katherine.

BLAINO and SNITCH (Ramblers) were seen driving up a one way street up the wrong way after a recent pub night!!

MAX KING (N.T.) had his first test of large RW with an all N.T. 9 man.

"We will bring back 2 lbs next year" T.C. May edition of Australian Photographer has a feature by ANDY KEECH.

Along the same lines, DEE BISHOP (Gold Coast) also featured in the latest CLEO magazine.

"It's dearer than marbles, but cheaper than golf" FRIS to a wuffo on the price of jumps.

BRAD MILLFORD (Twah) is back in hospital for bone grafts.

JOHN GREIG (Ramblers) is back walking caneless.

"I am a lumberjack and I'm OK." ALAN TRICKEY.

"I sell cars. I've got to look respectable" GEOFF COWIE (N.T.)

Q. "What did you do before you started jumping, Christine?"  
A. "I went to school."

"There I was, unconscious, and all I could hear were my own screams." CLAUDE GILLARD  
252's have been blowing their rear end lately and it is advised to watch for stretching material.

Question to leading manager of a large aircraft operating company: "How do you make a small fortune in the aviation business?"

Answer: "It's easy. You start with a large fortune!"

Fuel prices had a small increase again, up 0.06c per litre.

Records set in the N.T. recently:  
4 man Sequential, 6 formations by Da Vinci's Disciples  
Night Star - 6 man  
All female load - 5 person formation

Another Tropical Flyer (Cairns) has been issued.

"Old jumpers never die. They just take some time off now and then". JOHN BLAIN.

"You can't get perfect at this sport. I know - I have tried." GEOFF HOLMES.

GREG CROW is off to work in the Antarctic and is taking his gear. Aircraft - choppers: D.Z. - South Pole!

"That's why I was good at style. I have got a heavy head." GILLARD.

"If they (the T.V.) had video up there to watch whatever we do, they would have cartoons to show the kids on Saturday afternoons." HOLMES

"I'm not worried," said Raelen, (N.T.) sitting on the barbeque plate. "It will warm up my bum before I go to bed!"

ROY MARKER was a foregone conclusion at the Labertouch \$1000, with a T.V. crew after him as the obvious winner before the competition started!

KIM BARTON has headed to the Territory and is working in a pub in Katherine.

Also now working in the Territory: PADDY MCHUGH, GEOFF BINGHAM, STUEY McNEE, and ANDY SKI.

"Watch the feet, fella! They are worth \$500 each." ROD WILSON.

More WILSON quotes:

"Yeah, I grabbed a hold of BRAMHILL and didn't let him go. He had an altimeter!" on a recent cloud jump at Corowa.

"I should have worn my flippers and I would have got that disc." on his last jump at the Labertouche \$1000.

REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST - PUBLICATION NO. 080 2589

Rambling On

issue 85

Apr., May, June '90



1990

REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST - PUBLICATION NO. 080 2589

Rambling On

issue 92

Jan-Feb-Mar-Apr-May '92



1992

REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST - PUBLICATION NO. 080 2589

Rambling On

issue 102

Oct, Nov, Dec '94



1994

REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST - PUBLICATION NO. 080 2589

Rambling On

Issue 104

April, May, June '95



1995

29

# For Sale..

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Exciting days. I started taking the magazine to printing houses, I'd just give them a rough and they'd do all the work on their machines to make it more of a magazine. That was fantastic, we started going fairly colourful. It was getting better and better all the time and became THE mag, the subscriptions hit a bit of peak just before you started up, about 1994.

**MACCA:** Issue 100 was a big one. It was a big deal.

**SUSIE:** You're not wrong! I'm only half way there with ASM right now and I can vouch for every issue being a very big deal!

**MACCA:** Yeah, but the first 30 odd were not really magazines.

REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST - PUBLICATION NO. 080 2589

Rambling On

issue 100

April, May, June '94



29



# Rambling On

ISSUE 109  
JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER '96



1996

# Rambling On

ISSUE 110

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER,  
DECEMBER '96



1996



1998



1999

ASM  
30

20th Anniversary Edition

**SUSIE:** They're all part of it. It's history. That's what important I think. If you didn't do Rambling On issues and I didn't do ASM issues, we wouldn't have the history accounted, you know what I mean? Like the APF building burning down and losing all those records!

**MACCA:** It's always been a small community but over a large country, if we didn't have a magazine we'd probably never know what's going on out there. It was the only method of communication there for a while.

**SUSIE:** Did you have regular contributors and photographers?

**MACCA:** The skydiving photography evolution was fantastic. Mike McGowan deserves a special mention, he really was so supportive all those years and through his photos he encouraged other jumpers to send their photos in.

**SUSIE:** Next milestone?

**MACCA:** It was about mid 90s when you started coming along and getting interested and it was about the same time that the APF was producing their bimonthly newsheet, Skyline. The advertisers started dropping off because Skyline was pushing for advertising. Rambling On started dying a natural death because it wasn't getting the advertisers to help pay for the colour and subscriptions alone couldn't hold it. It was like fighting an uphill battle and I started, not losing interest, but it was hard to maintain the enthusiasm. The APF wasn't against the magazine or anything like that, it was just a natural progression. Skyline would have turned into a magazine maybe, if they had the staff, but Skyline was enough for the advertisers to get their message out to Australia. So that was the demise of the advertisers for Rambling On, until you came along. When did you start?

**SUSIE:** During Uni. I was helping from about Issue 100, only really with the database and taking it to the printers for you, licking envelopes, that sort of thing.

**MACCA:** You changed it to RO and gave it your signature as such.

**SUSIE:** Yeah, Issue 116. The intention of RO as opposed to Rambling On was to make it less Ramblerish. Don't think I was fooling anyone! My contract with the APF states that I'm not to be South Queensland biased. Poor Toogoolawah jumpers, they are so discriminated against! They don't realize how many of their photos and stories don't make it in ASM.

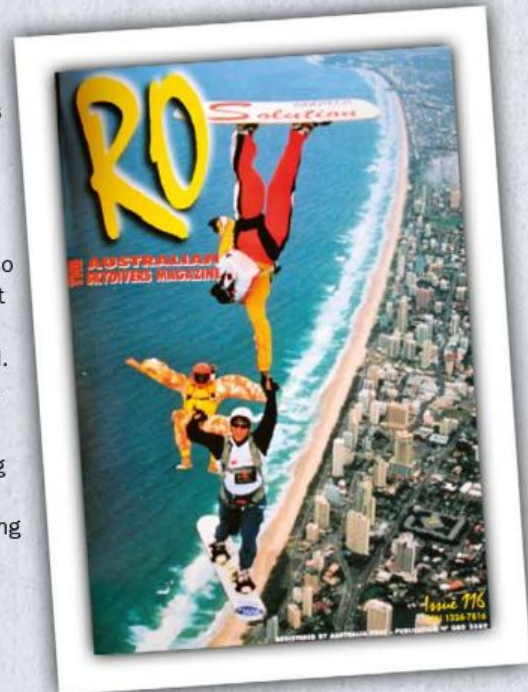
**SUSIE:** So 21 years of Rambling On is a big chunk of your life.

**MACCA:** Yeah, it was great going through the mags again. Some definite milestones there - starting it, getting the first year done, surviving, getting subscribers, the new gestetner and collator machines, then Rick left, getting it printed outside, colour pages, 100th issue - it had a pretty good

run in the sun. The rest is history. You took over Rambling On, increased the contributions and the advertisers came back, you had a few ideas, took them to the APF, voila, jobs done, Aussie jumpers still have their mag!

**SUSIE:** You make it sound easy! It was pretty full on standing up in front of 20 people at the APF Board Meeting, pitching my idea. I tried to picture them all naked, didn't make any difference.

**MACCA:** I watch you and see that the mag is still the same love job. History repeating itself!





# New Gear Store opened up at Just Jump Skydive, Hunter Valley

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*'STAY IN THE PLANE!'*

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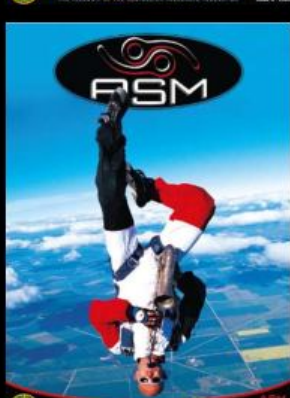
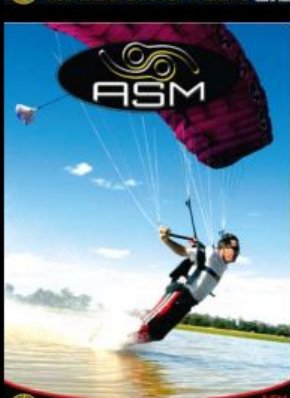
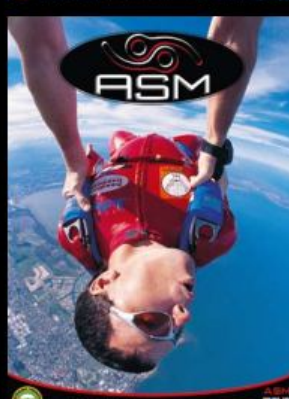
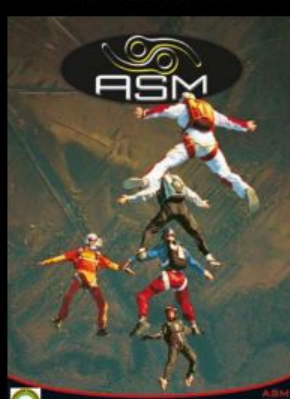
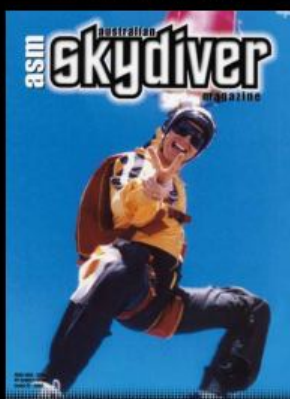
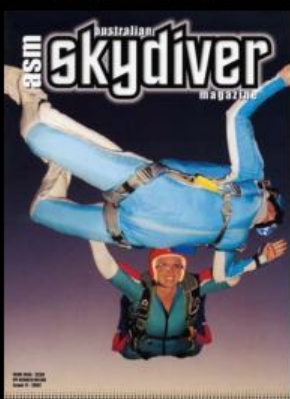
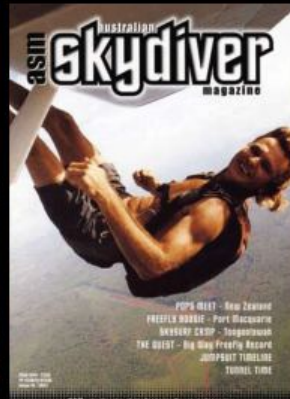
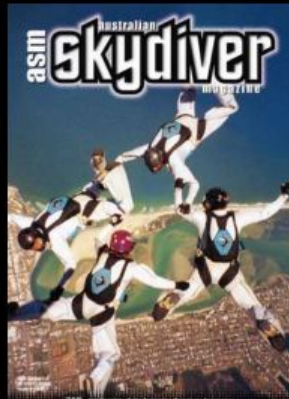
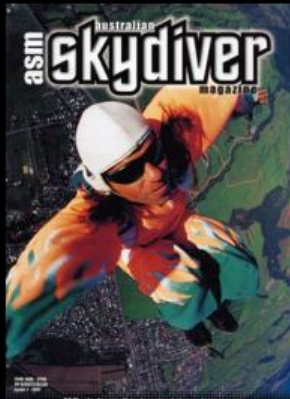
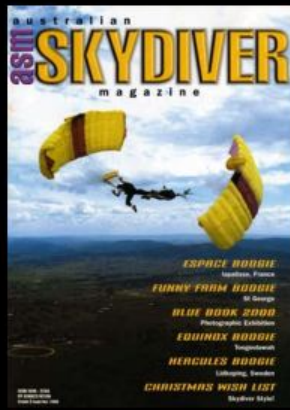
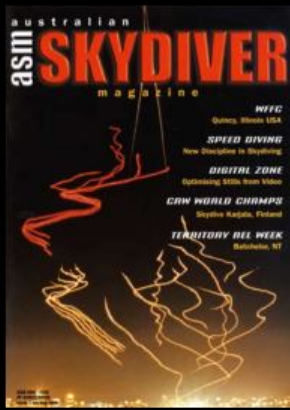
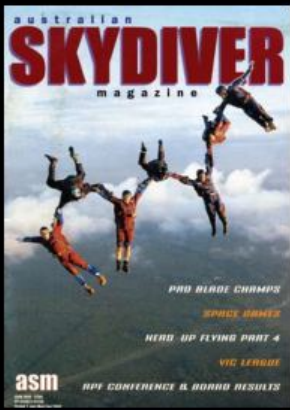
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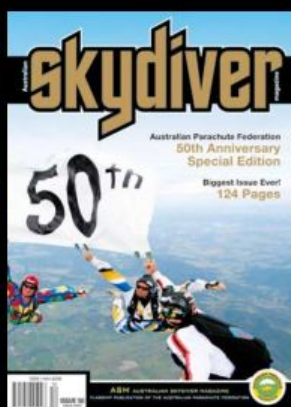
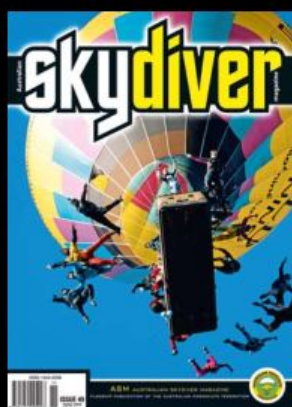
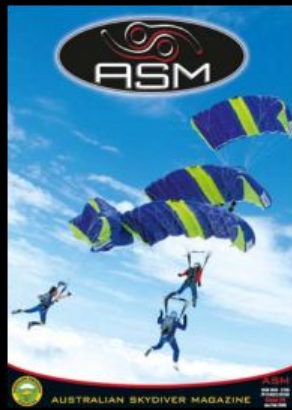
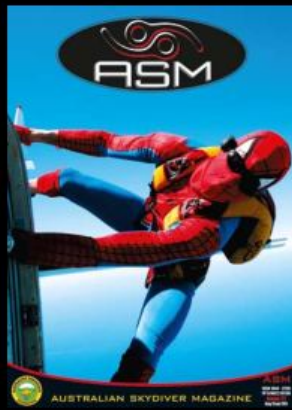
**Over 100 new rigs sold around Europe and USA  
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interest to check out how we can make your gear  
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# DIRECTORS DIRECTION

## EQUIPMENT ADVANCES IN 50 YEARS

By Dave Smith, APF President

Our 50th anniversary is a time to reflect on our humble beginnings but also to look forward to the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. As this ASM is about the first 50 years and me being a member for 42 of those 50, I thought I would reflect on something dear to me.

While some have a passion for instructing and others for competition, I have always had an interest in parachute equipment design and manufacture.

Advancements throughout history are generally a combination of things. We are naturally inquisitive, we seek and acquire knowledge and we apply this to develop better equipment and techniques that allow us to achieve a particular purpose. Putting a man on the moon being a well-known example of this approach.

Parachutes used in the 1960s were military surplus from UK and USA. The C9 canopy, the B4 harness and container, the T7 reserve, MA1 pilot chute are the USA military designations that are familiar to those who began jumping in the late 1960s. Except for the T10, which came along in the 1970s, these were aircrew emergency parachutes not intended for everyday use. So the C9 main canopy was modified to cut holes in the rear to provide 4-6mph forward speed and it was stowed in a sleeve to moderate the otherwise fast opening that is normal for an emergency parachute intended simply to save your life.

Parachutes of this era were designed by mechanical engineers used to working with metals - so there were cones, end tabs, stiffener plates, eyelets and pack opening bands plus lots and lots of harness hardware including the ubiquitous Capewell canopy release. These

metal parts were combined with fabrics, tapes and webbing resulting in many points of wear and a constant need for repair. Such parachutes were never intended for frequent intentional activations. Being a back-mounted emergency parachute with a second parachute added to the

chest (as an after thought) fatalities followed when both parachutes became entangled.

Early commercially produced sports harnesses/containers were only marginally better since designers were mimicking the manufacturing techniques used in military equipment. I now cringe when I see what we produced back in those days. Fortunately designers moved to using plastic for stiffeners, soft closing loops replaced metal cones, pilot chute springs doubled in length so pack opening bands were eliminated and the quantity of hardware was reduced from seven sizing points of adjustment to, eventually, just three.

Early ram air parachutes were massively overbuilt and overly complicated. They were big, used a huge quantity of reinforcing tape, had complicated ropes and rings reefing systems and rigging lines as thick as your finger - all considered essential to reduce the "barn door" like opening shock. Thank goodness someone finally invented the slider.

Moving from fore-and-aft to piggybacks was a huge advancement - and when combined with the 3-ring release, the SOS or TAS and the RSL, we saw far fewer equipment related fatalities. Cutting away became a routine event rather than the scary two-handed Capewell cutaway, get stable, locate and pull the reserve, by which time everyone on the DZ was watching anxiously. And then the modern AAD came along.

Early AADs included the military F1B, the Russian KAP3 and FXC, which were mechanical, bulky and very uncool. AAD use implied you could not be trusted to pull your own ripcord. Definitely not for the prospective sky god! But the Cypres AAD changed all that. It was compact, stowed within the reserve, electronic rather than mechanical, used fuzzy logic to activate only when absolutely necessary and being a novel piece of equipment it was almost cool to own one. APF mandated its use on students and novices and then later low experience jumpers so that now, most jumpers have one. What truly made it mainstream was when Tom Pirus - some say the world's best skydiver - died wearing a Cypres that was intentionally turned off.

Developments in ram air design have seen ZP fabric replace F111, exotic lines replace bulky Dacron, elliptical replace planform wings, low profile frontal area instead of thick high-lift aerofoils. Cross-bracing and internal rigging have further improved the aerofoil efficiency so that much higher wing loadings are now standard.

Whereas designers may have dictated parachute design in the past - recent changes with head down, sit and canopy piloting events, prompted designers to tweak their products to incorporate additional safety features, deal with abnormal freefall body attitudes and extract better performance from canopies. This is why the major manufacturers support teams and have representatives travel the world looking for ideas to give their products the edge over competitors. No longer are jumpers forced to buy what is available - as was the case in the 1960s.





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Also, stringent certification requirements now apply and testing well beyond the speed and payload limits is required for the emergency parachute, ie. the harness/container and the reserve. It is very rare these days for a fatality to involve an equipment failure and, having been involved in parachute design most of my life, I take some satisfaction that this is the case.

At this point I must confess I have trouble imagining where the next advances will come from. I do believe someone will eliminate the need for a slider. There must be a way of embedding something within the canopy to control the opening that requires no special attention by the jumper. I think canopy size has further room for improvement. I look at aircraft with a 12lbs/sqft wing loading and I think canopies can certainly improve on the 2-3lbs/sqft we now have.

Harness & containers are now pretty standard and we should only expect minor incremental improvements. We saw press studs replaced by Velcro then tuck tabs and now rare-earth magnets. Stainless steel hardware has replaced carbon steel. I am at a loss to think of any problem that is looking for a solution in harness/container design.

I think materials technology offers great promise for the future with new exotic textiles, ways of laying up fibres other than weaving to spread loads and thus avoid the need for tapes and seams. Maybe ultrasonic welding and adhesives will replace sewing but that means repairs require special tools so maybe not...

It is easy to look back, see the improvements and justify why they were logical and necessary to advance the sport. It is more difficult to look to what will improve equipment going forward. Without copping out, I tend to think the demands of competitors and special-interest groups will drive equipment development going forward. That is, you people that are competitors, instructors and recreational skydivers must tell manufacturers exactly what you want the equipment to do (or not do) and have them turn your vision into a reality. The future of equipment development is therefore in your hands!



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# DIRECTORS DIRECTION

## FIFTY YEARS ON – THE EVOLUTION OF JUDGING

By Lindy Williams,  
APF Director Judging

**And in the Beginning...there were two parachutists and the two parachutists wanted to know who was the better parachutist. So they developed a performance criteria and called it the Sporting Code and the two parachutists set out to compete against each other to determine who was the better parachutist according to the performance criteria. They needed a third person to observe and assess their performance and the Judge became an integral part of competition... and so it was.**

**Who can remember fiches?** (and have I spelt it correctly?) For those who might be scratching their head, these were a skewer type piece of equipment used by accuracy judges a long time ago. The judges would fix their eye on the first point of contact between the competitor and the ground. The judge would then lunge toward that point and mark the point with their fiche. The measurement was taken from the dead centre of the landing pit to the centre point of all judges' fiches. You can imagine the flurry of arms, legs and canopies as judges dived forward to record the competitor's performance.

**Fifty years on...** judges observe the performance of accuracy competitors who attempt to make their first point of contact with an electronic pad, which measures out to 16 cm from the centre and another electronic pad registers a back strike, or first point of contact not on the 16 cm pad.

**Remember the telemeter.** Did every drop zone have one? The telemeter was a powerful lens or binocular, which was mounted on a tripod. Judges observed the competitor's exit from the aircraft and performance in freefall through a telemeter. Judges were often assigned scribes to record the judge's assessment of the performance. The valued volunteer has been around forever.

The telemeter was improved. A video camera with a powerful lens replaced the binocular on the tripod and we moved into the era of "ground to air" video. Judges watched the silhouetted images of teams going through



Electronic method for judging



Manual method of judging

their paces and experienced for the first time the opportunity to take a second look at the performance, not to mention the luxury of slow motion viewing.

Then "air to air" video arrived on our door step in the early 90s, bestowing responsibilities upon the cameraperson like making sure they "got the exit", camera angle, distance. How many rejumps were made at the Nationals that year? And how far have our videographers come since then?

**Fifty years on...** Our highly skilled camera people fall with the competitors in freefall and record the performance using beautifully engineered camera helmets. While in the judging room the judges sit poised in front of OmniSkore, the electronic scoring equipment which records and collates the judges' scores, then relays the collated information to a public viewing area.

**Remember RW and CRW?** Doesn't seem that long ago for some of us.

**Fifty Years on...** our sport parachutists spread themselves across many disciplines. Style and Accuracy is still enjoyed by many. Relative Work is now known as Formation Skydiving, Canopy Relative Work is now known as Canopy Formation and does anyone remember the background to this change? Freestyle and Freely have joined the list. Skysurf came and sadly went. Canopy Pilots negotiate their course with amazing expertise Vertical Formation Skydiving is the latest at competitions and the Atmonauts and Wingsuit floggers are keenly developing their newer disciplines.



Lindy judging in 1990



Craig Bennett setting up Canopy Piloting judging equipment





**Last but not least**, let us recognize the qualities of the people who have made up our judging work force across five decades. These people have endured long hours of exposure to the elements, long hours of concentration, staying alert in front of monitor screens plus days of networking behind the scenes, preparing, training and evaluating. Each and every judge in their own way has made a valuable contribution to our sport and can stand tall with pride for their volunteered contribution.

The performances of some sports are now assessed totally by modern technology.

**Fifty years on**, we can still enjoy the excellence of the "human element" of our sport, competitors and judges united.



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY APF

*By Mike Carre, APF Director Instructors*

Apart from barnstormers and stuntmen, parachuting had no formal existence in Australia until 1926 when the RAAF commenced military parachute training. The Australian Army's parachute section was formed at Laverton, Victoria in 1942 but civilian parachuting remained in a type of barnstorming limbo until ANO 29.1 (Air Navigation Order) was introduced by the Department of Civil Aviation in 1959. The first regular civilian jumping also commenced that year.

You had to be keen to make the financial commitment in those early days (£30 1st Jump Course) at £5 per jump out of a £13 per week basic wage – in today's terms that equates to something like \$600 1st Jump Course and \$300 per jump!

The early civilian training regimen and parachuting techniques were adopted from the Australian Army and very strict in their application: particularly skills related to parachute landing falls (PLFs) followed by your first jump from 1,500ft, pull your own ripcord. Several excitingly low openings saw the introduction of the static line for more reliable deployment and also the sleeve to make the opening less brutal (similar line of thinking is used on modern equipment where the slider is used to negate opening shock).



*Sliderised Paraplane - old rings and ropes vintage.*

Equipment and training syllabus remained essentially the same whilst the sport developed multiple disciplines and skill sets. Time for a change! The early 80s saw some Australian drop zones make the move from fore and aft gear to P.A SOS Piggybacks with Paracommanders (PCs) and then Ram Air mains.

New teaching techniques such as Accelerated Freefall (AFF) and Tandem came on the scene in 1984/85 and were readily embraced by the APF and instructional community.

Instruction has continued to develop throughout the 90s and 2nd millennium.

To deal with the different aspects and ever evolving demands of our sport, we encourage the use of various aids and back ups such Automatic Activation Devices (AADs), RSLs, audible altimeters etc. to enhance safety. You can now meet people who are prepared for AFF Stages after hours of tunnel time.

The time ahead promises to give the first 50 years a run for its money.



*Mike's first freefall jump at Wilton, 1974. Dave Smith is the Instructor.*



# DIRECTORS DIRECTION

## 50 YEARS OF RIGGING 1960 - 2010

*By Jo Chitty, APF Director Rigging*

Since the first skydivers leapt out of aircraft for fun instead of emergency or military use of parachutes, they have had to learn to service and pack their own parachutes. At first this knowledge was supplied by the serving and ex-military personnel, and quickly learnt by the jumpers themselves. The first parachutes used were designed as pilot bail-out parachutes and adapted to suit sport jumping by adding 'D' rings to attach a reserve chute. To reduce the hard openings, sleeves were made by the jumpers themselves on home sewing machines to designs gleaned from information of other sport jumpers in USA and UK. Canopies were modified by cutting out panels for stability and drive, double blank for students and 7TU for experienced jumpers.

The rigger's kit was simple in that it contained a wooden packing paddle, two line stow hooks, 50lb break-tie cord, scissors/knife, temporary closing pins, rubber-bands and red thread to seal the reserve and pen to sign the log card. Canopy repairs were made with sticky ripstop tape or home sewing machine on mains and at times on reserves.

When I started my involvement with Commando Skydivers in February 1964 the club was using the British X-Type 28ft static line 'chute for students. This was a reliable system and had been used by the British and Australian military without a reserve right through World War 2. The staged deployment was controlled by sequential break-ties and webbing line stow loops that made the deployments fast and reliable.

Freefall rigs were USA surplus military B-4 assemblies, pilot back type bail-out, 4 pin, spring loaded pilot-chute, sleeve deployed and modified with a 7TU drive mod. To individualise these rigs Claude Gillard would dye them black or red over the olive drab standard that they came in. The canopies in these rigs were 28ft diameter C-9s and occasionally these orange and white canopies were also dyed. Pioneer Parachutes came out with a 32ft Lo-Po canopy to offer improved performance and lower rate of descent.

Packers were endorsed to pack particular types such as X-Type, B-4 sleeve deployed, 24 ft chest reserve type T-7 etc. and when the Para-Commander and Crossbow were introduced the ratings were annotated to indicate that the rigger had completed training in "internally rigged parachutes" as the apex was pulled down and the control lines ran inside the canopy to the vent slots. This then caused some jumpers to modify their C-9 canopies with Derry slots to obtain a poor-man's version of the PC. With the higher performance of PCs also came an increase in violent malfunction modes that necessitated a cut-away to obtain a safer reserve opening. To this end Capewell canopy releases were filed down to improve their ease and reliability and eventually the covers were removed and replaced by Velcro straps.

Some Czechoslovakian rigs, Ptch-6 etc. were imported and were fitted with locking lever and lug type canopy releases but the emergence of the "three-ring circus", as it was nicknamed, was the release of choice. Several manufacturers tried different wraps or pulley and lever styles of canopy release but actual use showed them to be less reliable than the Bill Booth designed 3-Ring Release.

Reserve development meant that the lower bulk 26ft Navy Conical canopy with meshed double blank mod was soon replaced by the Security 26ft Lo-Po, variations of which are still in production for pilot rigs.

With the advent of the Wonderhog system fitted with 3-ring releases and soft closing loops to replace cones, packers added draw cords to their kits. The use of belly bands pulled rigs in close and was used to fit throw away pilot-chute pockets as you could look at the handle to deploy the main. This resulted in a new malfunction due to twisted belly bands causing pilot-chute in tow situations. After several iterations of location, leg, lumbar pocket and bunny tail, the BOC (Bottom of Container) is the preferred location as you don't need to see it if you can feel it, without going unstable.

Some local copies of the successful Wonderhog were made, and referred to as "WonderDucks", but having the real thing was a link to being amongst the world's top echelon of skydivers.

TSO standards were not being applied as equipment from behind the "Iron Curtain" countries also found favour amongst our jumpers when attending world meets. This more relaxed approach spawned various design and developments such as the 'Womera' with hand deploy pilot-chute on the reserve.

The list of main canopies would fill several pages but small light weight round canopies such as the Piglet were a fad due to the desire to have smaller containers. The Irvin Delta wing was also a short-lived canopy as the deployment wrap was unreliable. It was replaced in 1976 by Jim Handbury's design of a lighter weight Paradactyl canopy. All of these canopies were battling against the Ram-Air canopies in performance with the introduction of the Paraplane in 1970 followed by the Stratostar and the first square reserve in 1978, the Stratoflyer. Riggers and packers were faced with an explosion of new designs and production techniques that continued on from construction methods for round parachutes which were at first bulky and poorly engineered until the loads were analysed and the bulk designed away with the introduction of new high strength fibres such as Kevlar, Spectra, Technora and Vectran. Weaving mills upgraded their machines to new models with finer tolerances that allowed fabrics such as F-111 to set new standards in achievable performance.

Designers of parachutes are coming with Aeronautical Engineering degrees and wind tunnel testing programs to develop new and improved systems and designing specifically for the sport market and then developing their advances for the military.



The rigger today should have a small suitcase sized kit to carry their tools and requisite components for in the field work. The requirement to strength test fabric needs clamp sets, calibrated scales, chemical test kits for acid testing, spare closing loops to suit AADs, main closing loops, rubber bands, tube stows, closing tools, packing paddle, Velcro protection strips, draw cords, screw-drivers, spanners, alan keys, spare AAD batteries etc.

The most important tool though is the computer as it allows riggers to remain up to date with packing manuals and Service Bulletins.

It is a CASA requirement that Airworthiness Directives be viewed regularly by owners of aviation products including parachutes and considers every four weeks a reasonable interval to access the Airworthiness website. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that their equipment is current.

Sport Parachuting is now a multidiscipline sport that has varied requirements of safety aspects that do not always overlap so it requires riggers to check requirements of components for different facets such as wingsuit jumpers needing longer bridles and appropriate canopies, compatible components in rigs, freely friendly rigs etc.

Developments in equipment such as the "Skyhook" and the use of advanced AADs introduced by Airtec's CYPRES has improved safety dramatically and the next 50 years should see changes in materials, designs and concepts that riggers will need to remain abreast of or possibly design themselves to address new areas of skydiving.

Photo: Warren Hutchings



Jo after landing off his first jump, aged 17 years, in 1964.

## WE'VE COME A LONG WAY

**By Grahame Hill, APF Director Aircraft Operations**

Well 50 years of the APF coming up. What an amazing milestone and for those who have been around parachuting/skydiving for the past 4 decades, and all, the changes in the 50 years is nothing short of amazing.

Who would have believed, that in such a short space of time it has become almost normal for a person 9 or 90 years old to make a jump from 14000ft. Not so long ago anyone making a jump was a daredevil. Not so long ago sex was safe and skydiving was dangerous, how things have changed.

A lot of changes are happening in the aircraft /pilot arena now we have a new set of operating rules from CASA. The APF negotiated the new rules to ensure the APF maintained control of our standards and financial future. The alternative was we fit in to the standard CASA rules where one size fits all but at great cost for no safety benefit in our view.

The new rules mean the APF has to issue Jump Pilot Authorization to all pilots flying training operations in Australia. The pilots will all be members of the APF in future. CASA felt we must have a control mechanism to ensure flying standards of jump pilots. The new rules will come into effect at the end of June 2010. The maintenance requirement for the jump aircraft is also more stringent. It is a tight timeframe to achieve this requirement.

The Jump Pilot Manual is in a reformat/rewrite and will be out in the next few weeks. The aim of the new Manual is to make it more appropriate to the current parachute flying ops in the country. There is a lot of input from jump pilots and operators in the country too.

The number of airspace/air traffic infringements has dropped dramatically in the past year. There has been a lot of follow up on report and the pilots and operators have responded and we can certainly thank all concerned for the efforts to improve airmanship and therefore our image in the industry.

At the recent SafeSkies International Conference in Canberra in October, parachuting/skydiving received some interesting recognition. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Transport Minister told a clean parachuting story and received a lot of cheers as did the Patron of the conference, Peter Lloyd. The conference, which is attended by the management of airlines, defence, Airservices Australia and CASA were informed by a former President of the FAI, that the APF was considered one of the best run sport aviation organizations in the world. This statement was received with a round of applause from the conference delegates.

Sitting there with the Brad Turner I thought "given this recognition at such a high level conference - what a long way we (APF) have come".



# DIRECTORS DIRECTION

## HAPPY 50TH APF

By Paul Osborne,  
APF Director Safety

Nobody will ever convince me that they were more scared on their first jumps than I was. I remember thumping in on an old cheapo on my third jump at Southbridge near Christchurch in 1974. I don't know if it was the impact or the terror of the jump that knocked the wind out of me. I lay there over a small rise checking my vital signs and trying to think of a way to escape the DZ without anyone seeing me. I didn't have a car so I was kind of stuck but I'd definitely made my mind up that I wasn't going to put myself through that again no matter what.

After about 5 minutes I got my breath back and the pain of the landing had dulled enough for me to get up and limp back to the packing area which was a bunch of cars in a paddock big enough to land a plane in.

As I approached one of the jumpers looked up and said "We've saved a slot on the next load for you, do you want it?" Whilst my mind is screaming "NOOOO!!!" my stupid mouth said "yeah".

It wasn't too long before I worked out that if I wasn't stiff, sore, tired, hungover and broke on a Monday morning I hadn't had a good weekend. But wasn't it great to be alive and I'd discovered a whole bunch of great people.

Well I've been around jumping for 36 of the APF's 50 years and certainly seen a lot of change. Taking it up can't be as scary as it used to be though. Look at the gear - you've really got to put your mind to it to set yourself up for an ambulance ride or worse. Skydivers are an amazingly resourceful lot and can dream up mindboggling ways to push the limits through loopholes in the rules that nobody's thought anyone would be stupid enough to try.

Well bless their little souls. They are on the constant prowl for an edge that pushes the envelope a little further. Without them we would not have developed the sport to where it is today. I have to remember that not too long before I started, the theory

was that freefall was not survivable and therefore all jumps were static lined. It must have been a blast when the first guy who tried it found himself still alive on landing!

Some things haven't changed though - jumpers still take it up for all the same

reasons and they still suffer from the same merciless force of gravity and wack in if it's not their best day.

While we still have our accidents at roughly the same average each year, we are doing a lot more jumps so I guess the sport has become a lot safer

When I started jumping there wasn't too many old blokes (over 30) as it was generally considered too risky once you got married and had kids.

Skydiving was definitely a counterculture and the DZ not really a place you'd take your kids, especially after the bar opened but like surfing, over the years

its professionalism has evolved our passion into a respected sport and industry. The jumpers had kids and they grew up on the DZ and now are representative of a large percentage of our sport jumpers and our future.

The rules were made by CASA and forced upon us whether we agreed with them or not and often hamstrung our development. Over the years CASA has acknowledged us as the experts in our field and now respects our views and we enjoy the best relations we have ever had. We now write our own rules and all members get a say in how we do things. Consequently since we wrote them we tend to stay within them most of the time.

Jumpers are a funny lot. We love the danger and seem to constantly strive to more challenging goals regardless of the risks. Despite this thirst for pucker factor, jumpers and operators seem proud of how far we have come and are not willing to take any steps backward. There have been some major changes to the way we operate that have been encouraged by our regulator over the past couple of years and it's great to see that operators and jumpers alike are happy to embrace these changes for the better.

When I look at the achievements of our skydivers here and overseas, both in business and sport and in the records that have been set, it's hard to imagine that not so long ago a bunch of guys sat around in a pub arguing whether freefall was survivable or not.

Well done skydivers, I congratulate all, past and present, that make up our Federation. Happy 50th APF.





## CONGRATULATIONS APF

By Brad Tuner, CEO

As we move into our 50th birthday year for the Australian Parachute Federation, I pause and marvel at what an incredible 50 years it has been for not only our Federation, but the sport as a whole. From early days of trial and error with lessons learnt the hard way, to the widely enjoyed, worldwide pastime it is today, we have come a very long way! The journey has not been without its hurdles and a great number of truly dedicated and innovative individuals too numerous to name, have played a part in our development, lobbied for our rights and left their mark for skydivers the world over to enjoy. Most of us usually take for granted the right to Skydive and not too often do we stop and consider just exactly what takes place behind the scenes and by whom, to keep us all in the air. Celebrating 50 years of advancements and achievements, this Federation has been that 'might behind the flight' for all of those years. We must also pay homage to the contributions of countless volunteers, upon whom this sport has relied for so long. Therein lies our strength – the dedication and commitment of so many simply for the greater good of skydiving and all it entails! The Annual APF Conference scheduled for May will be an opportunity for us to commemorate that History with this Conference set to be a very special event that all Skydivers should consider attending.

2010 also marks a year of great change for the APF starting with the relocation of the National Office (N.O) from Canberra, where it has been for many years, to new headquarters in Brisbane. With a shift in our focus from mere regulatory body to that of a more proactive, innovative organization, Brisbane offers greater opportunity for the APF to focus on further development of the sport whilst maintaining an exemplary 'member service' ethos.

Our 'working' relationship with our regulators has also come a long way over the past 50 years with CASA/ APF now enjoying a very productive, mutually respectful working union which has proven to be a refreshing change from past years of CASA Inspectors hiding in the treetops!! Whilst these advancements have not come easily, CASA now recognizes us as the Industry professionals and has confidence in the APF's ability to effectively self-govern.

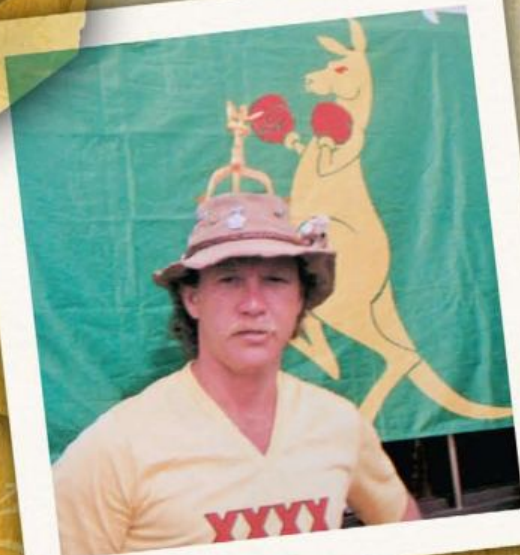


With the commercial component of our sport pushing us more and more into the public arena every day and with the worldwide catch phrase 'Safety Management Systems' ringing in our ears, we will need to remain vigilant that we stay abreast of developments and change as they occur.

As we prepare to celebrate our 50th year at the biggest Conference Event in APF History, we must also pause and take stock of where we are at right now. Yes we have achieved a great deal and come a long way, however 2009 proved to be a very litigious year for the APF and the cost to the membership and the Federation was enormous. As an organization we have to ask ourselves why, what made 2009 so different from any other year? Are we becoming too complacent? Is the quest for the commercial dollar dictating what we do? I urge all to pause, err on the side of caution and do not allow your pocket to play any part in the decision making process. It is to be assured that if we keep up this trend the costs to all members will be greatly increased and our ability to provide insurance will surely be affected.

Three new N.O staff have joined our Team here in Brisbane and are quickly learning the intricacies of the APF (no mean feat!) and are all fitting in well. These are exciting times for this Federation and fresh people will bring even more energy, ideas and motivation to this Office and ultimately this Federation and the next 12 months will see many new projects launched.

As we move into the next 50 years I can only imagine where our sport will take us, the possibilities are endless! Happy 50th Birthday APF!





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# HISTORY OF COMPETITIONS &

Compiled by Fiona McEachern, APF Director Competition

DISCLAIMER: Note these timelines don't include Notable Events. Anything that's incorrect or omitted is my fault and I apologise. A big Thank you to all the people who helped put this together.

AUSTRALIA

## 1959 Tamworth, NSW "The Australasian Parachute Championships"

Sport parachuting was born in Australia. From the date the first civilian was trained in a formal course approved by DCA it was Non Military Recreational Parachuting. As only three of the known 19 competitors were not ex-military gives you an idea of the makeup the civilian parachuting fraternity at that time. Accuracy from 2,100 ft was won by Keith BULLIED  
Accuracy with Stable Delay from 2,600 ft won by Warren HUTCHINGS  
Accuracy with Stable Delay from 3,100 ft won by Allan MCDONLD  
Accuracy from 3,100 ft won by Warren HUTCHINGS  
Overall Individual was John CHARNOCK (New Zealand)  
Overall Team was New Zealand



## 1960 Pakenham, Vic 1st Australian Parachute Championships

Overall: Alan McDonald  
Event 1: Accuracy with immediate opening from 3,000ft Alan MCDONALD  
Event 2: Accuracy with 10 seconds stable delay from 3,250ft Alan MCDONALD  
Event 3: Team Accuracy with immediate opening from 3,000ft Alan MCDONALD & Tom NICHOL



Left to Right are: Louis Johnston, Tom Nicol, Bob Thomas, Keith Bullied, Graeme Grigg, Warren Hutchings, Bob Milligan and Joe Finta



**1966 Oz Team** Colin King, John Mahaffy, David Millard, Laurie Trotter, David Lock and Jim Cox

## 1967 Taree

Dave LOCK scores the first ever dead centre by an Australian in an Australian competition. He was jumping a ParaCommander (PC) onto a 1 Dorn disk.

1951

## 1951 Bled, Yugoslavia

First World Parachute Championships in Style and Accuracy for both male and female

1959

1960

1962

## 1962 Orange, USA

Introduction of individual medals and team events IN S&A, Australia's first World Championships participation

1964

## 1964 Hungary

Col KING wins Silver Medal in Accuracy at World Champs

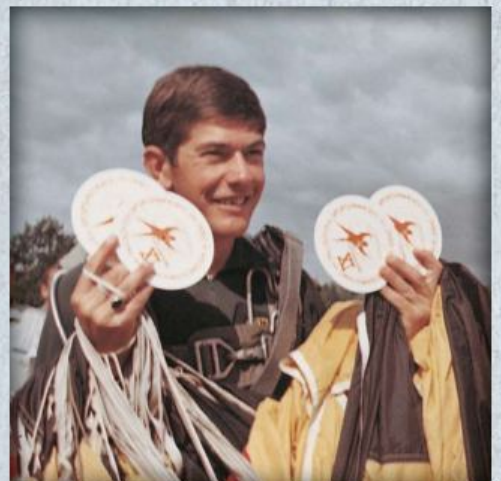
1966

1967

INTERNATIONAL



Bill Molloy, Don West and Kath Henderson





# RECORDS



## 1973 Labertouche First Australian Relative Work Nationals

The 10-Man Speed Event was won by the "Gully Cats", Russell COCKING, Geoff BINGHAM, Bob BARRY, Kerry HILLS, Andy SKI, Eddie SMITH, Dingus MCKIE, Stewie McNEE, David HOBBS and Ian SWINBOURNE. The 4-Man fixed sequential event (4-man Star - Back Loop - 4-Man Star) was won by "4DS Unintentional" Captained by Alan SOUKUP (Victoria)



This photo is of "Sydney Siders" who was the team that went on to become the "Gully Cats".

## 1980 Corowa, NSW First Australian 8-way Canopy Stack (From the top)

Kimble, Ray CLIFFY, Tony DUCKWORTH, Tom HONAN, Paul OSBORNE, Paddy McHUGH, Bruce TOWERS and Ian LADYMAN.



## 1974 Fall's Creek

First Australian Para-Ski Championships  
Wayne LARKIN won the Giant Slalom and the Accuracy Event was weathered out.

## 1981 Corowa, NSW First Australian CF Nats

held at Corowa: 6 teams competed, won by Kiwi team "Four Sale" with 77 points over 6 rounds. Second place went to "Crooz" and was therefore the Australian Team Geoff LITTLE (Cisco), Paul FLIPO, Brian SCOFFELL and Ross MAGEE.

1973

1974

1975

1979

1980

1981

1982

## 1975 Warendorf, German

First World Champs in 8 & 4-way Formation Skydiving

10-Man Speed Star team: "Joint Effort", Capt. Ian SWINBOURNE, Bob BARRY, John BATE, Bruce BRAMHILL, Tony CLURL, Peter EADE, Greg GRAHAM, Ken HILLS, John PARKER, Robin ROSE, Andy SKI and Peter STEVENSON.

4-Way: "Green Machine" Capt. Jeffrey CARR; Gene BERMINGHAM, Colin COLOUGH, John COOD and Danny WRIGHT



## 1979 France

Australian 4-way FS team "Rapid Transit" win a bronze medal at the World Meet.



## 1982 Lapalisse, France

World Cup Silver Medal 4-way CF Rotations team "CROOZ". Paul FLIPO, Geoff LITTLE, Chris FOWLER, John GREIG.

## 1981 Zephyr Hills, USA

Australian 8-way FS team "Prometheus" wins bronze medal at World Meet. Dave Flood, Chris Bramhill, Doug Knowles, Ray Morgan, Guy Mainwaring, Dicky Dreu, Dave Hancock, Peter Eadie, Ray Palmer.





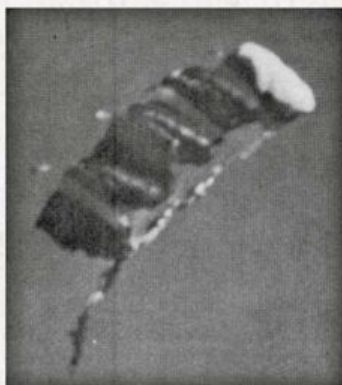
# HISTORY OF COMPETITIONS & RECORDS

## AUSTRALIA

## INTERNATIONAL

### 1988 Wangaratta, VIC

"Fourth Force" score 111 over 10 rounds in 4-way Open FS. First time that a team has averaged over 10. John STEWART, Ray PALMER, Tim STEVENS, Dave GRAHAM, camera Jon MCWILLIAM



### 1984 Townsville, QLD

First Australian All Women's 4-way Canopy Stack  
Giselle PATTERSON, Linda CORBQUILD, Faye COX and Jane CONNELL, all on X228 canopies.

### 1986 Toogoolawah, QLD

Jonny GOSS sets Australian Female Style record of 7.70 secs.



### 1987 Toogoolawah, QLD

IAN SLIGHT, Andrej PERCIC, Eros BATTELLO, Brent CAMERON, Brian SCOFFELL, Paul FLIPO, Ross MAGEE, Michael GULTEN set a World Record of 45.13 seconds in 8-way Speed Canopy Formation.

### 1983

#### 1984 Cairns, Australia

World Record 21-way canopy stack.  
Ross MAGEE, Gary McWAHON, George SIMMONS, Mike GULTON, Spiro AGNEW, Rod WHYTE, Paul FLIPO, Nick HAGERTY, Mirko BERIC, Dave McEVOY, Peter NOBBS, Brian SCOFFELL, Chris LEE, Stan NEWSOME, John GURN, Geoff LITTLE, Wayne FOWLER, Rod ERNST, Greg ERNST, Chris FOWLER and Keith FEATHERSTONE.  
Photo by Bluebaker



### 1984

#### 1984 Toogoolawah, QLD

World Cup 4-way CF Rotations team "ROOZ" win a Silver medal.  
Geoff LITTLE, Ross MAGEE, Paul FLIPO and Brian SCOFFLE.



### 1986

#### 1986 Gatton, Australia

4-way Sequential team "Orxial" won a bronze medal after a jump-off for Silver. Brent CAMERON, Andrej PERCIC, Mark SCOTT and Ian SLIGHT.



#### 1986 Gatton, Australia

First World Championships in Canopy Formation. Australian 8-way Speed Stack (no formations) team "Early Openers" won Bronze medal.  
Team members top to bottom: Dave McEVOY, David BAILEY, Peter NOBBS, Stewie McNEE, Adam HOPPE, Jon KENT, Chris LEE, Geoff HOLMES and Brad TURNER.

### 1987

#### 1987 Sarajevo, Yugoslavia

First World Championships in Paraski.

#### 1988 Vichy, France

Second World Championships in Canopy Formation. Australian 8-way Speed Formations team "Early Openers" won Silver medal.  
Paul COHEN, Andrew PRESTON, Andrew WHITTEN, Greg ROBERTS, David BAILEY, Greg HAYES, Paul FLIPO, Brad TURNER and Eros BATTELLO.  
McNEE (V)



### 1988

### 1990

#### 1990 Thailand

Third World Championships in CF. Australian 8-way Speed Formations team won Gold medal.  
Paul COHEN, Andrew PRESTON, Andrew WHITTEN, Greg ROBERTS, David BAILEY, Greg HAYES, Paul FLIPO, Brad TURNER and Eros BATTELLO.





**1993 Corowa, NSW Freestyle starts at the Nationals.**

Male event was won by Carly THOMAS and Mick KELAHER and female by Roz THOMPSON and Dee BOWRING. 8 teams entered in total (both inter and open and both sexes).



**1997 Corowa, Australia**

Formation Skydiving, longest sequence 16-Way. 9 formations. Tim STEVENS, Julie WARD, Lloyd COFIELD, Dee BOWRING, Orla BANNAN, Gavin DEL'ORO, Robert THOMSON, Dana HORT, Stephen HICKSON, Alan MOSS, Steven BOBKEL, Gregory MACKINTOSH, David REDFERN, Richard PYM, Scott LEE, Benjamin MCWILLIAM, Terry WAFER (v)



**1994 Corowa, NSW**

23 intermediate 4-way teams register for Nationals – the most ever at an Australian Nationals.

**1993**

**1994**

**1995**

**1996**

**1997**

**1994 Kooralbyn, Australia**

CF World Champs. 4-way CF Rotations team "Paradox" set a new Australian Record of 15 points in 90 seconds working time. Archie JAMIESON, Callum MOSS, Dene RICHARDSON, Wayne McLACHLAN & Jason COOKE (v)



**1995 Anpfling, Germany**

Australia cleaned up in Freestyle at the World Cup with Aussie cameraman Richard STUART winning Gold for USA team, Roz THOMPSON and Craig FELD winning Bronze in Open Female category and Janine WHITTEN and Jacques WATSON winning Silver in Intermediate Female



**1997 Efes, Turkey**

First World Championships of Artistic Events Freestyle and Skyart as part of World Air Games

**1996 Lido, Indonesia**

8-way CF speed team "Xterni8" set a new Speed record 42.61 seconds. Greg HAYES, Andrew WHITTEN, Paul COHEN, Tony SMITH, Ben NORDKAMP, Jon MCWILLIAM, Tom BEGIC, Steve JONES and Brett HIGGINS





# HISTORY OF COMPETITIONS & RECORDS



## 1999 Corowa, NSW Australlian 81-way FS record

Terry ANDERSON, George ATTARD, David BAKKERS, Andrew BARKER, Alan BENNETT, John BENNETT, Stephanie BENSLEY, Geoff BINGHAM, Birgit BRAKHAHN, Mark BRODY, John BLOW, Pierre CHALLOT, Rosemary CLANCY, John CUSACK, Jean-Marc DAYDE, Michelle DODDS, Mai FITZSIMMONS, Ian FLACK, Paul FLIPO, Lisa FLORIAN, John GAUCI, Simon GOLDING, Greg HAMILTON, Bill HARRIS, Janine HAYES, Cindi HEMMILA, Terry HEWETT, Angela HIESLER, Stephen HILL, Ken HILLS, Archie JAMIESON, Greg JONES, Tim JOYCE, Jeff LAHEY, Adrian LLOYD, Marty LLOYD, David

LONCASTY, Lee LONCASTY, Wade MANN, Frank MARCZAN, Angie McDONALD-SMITH, Fiona McEACHERN, Dave McEVROY, Mal McKEE, Ben McWILLIAM, Luke McWILLIAM, Craig MORRIS, Andy MULHOLLAND, Terry MURPHY, Gary NARVO, Darryl NORRIS, Michael O'CONNOR, Jack O'DONNELL, Luke OLIVER, Phil ONIS, Phil PEARCE, Col PORTER, Mark RAINEY, Terry RIDDLE, Ralph RIDGE, Cheryl ROBERTSON, Dave RUCKERT, Rod SAHELI, Craig SANDERSON, Shaunn SEGON, Greg SHEEDY, Brendon SISSON, Steven SMEDLEY, Andrew SNOW, Mildred SPINOZA, Mel STEVENS, Graham SUFFIELD, Mark SZULMAYER, Adrian TARRANT, Rob TASIC, Derek THOMAS, Ollie TORKEL, Elise VALE, Michael VAUGHAN, Rodney WILSON, John WINKLER  
Photos: Steve DINES, Kenton McLEOD & Jim SMITH.

## 2005 Toogoolawah, QLD Australian Women set a 47-way FS record at Skysisters.

Leigh Ainsworth, Torill Anderson, Sally Baker, Jodie Ball, Amelia Barrett, Prue Bears, Suzanne Bourke, Sonja Bruss, Cheri Bullen, Dianne Campbell, Caitlin Collin, Chris Collins, Elaine Cox, Annka Cronert, Cassandra Dale, Katie Fluin, Marlies Friese, Kim Hardwick, Yakeri Hashimoto, Janine Hayes, Kim Hedley, Angela Hiesler, Cindi Hemmila, Peta Holmes, Ely Kirkman, Heather Little, Lisa McDonald, Debby Marshall, Fiona McEachern, Susie McEvoy, Karen McEvoy, Julie Nichol, Lisa Perdichizzi, Maybritt Prah, Claire Ringland, Cheryl Robertson, Elise Rogers, Naomi Ross, Deborah Sanderson, Tracey Sgroi, Krishna Strickland, Donna Turner, Amy von Navak, Lynette Warn, Kim Williferson, Kate Wills, Carley Young. Camera: Archie Jamieson, Jeff Lahey & Wayne McLachlan.



## 1999 Cessnock, NSW

Tibar GLESK sets new Style record for men of 7.31 secs



## 2005 Toogoolawah, QLD

6-way Headdown Female Freely Record. Shona LLOYD, Deb McEVROY, Rebecca SCOTT, Erica TADOKORO, Isobel WHEELER, Arny CHMELECKI and Ian GOEBEL (v).

AUSTRALIA

## 1998 Lower Light, SA

"El Borrachio" set an Australian Record of 5 points in 4-way sequential CF. Andrew WHITTEN, Paul COHEN, David SALSURBY, Tony SMITH

## 1998

### 1998 Empuriabrava, Spain

This was the First World Cup of 16-way FS. It was won by Australian team "It'll Happen" who set a new World Record of 16 formations. The team had spent a great deal of time and effort to perfect a 16-way linked exit. Tim STEVENS, Orla BANNAN, Dee BOWRING, Gavin DELLICRO, Kim HARDWICK, Stephen HICKSON, Scott LEE, Gregory MACKINTOSH, Alan MOSS, Grant NICHOL, Julie NICHOL, Gavin MCPHERSON, Richard PYM, David REDFERN, John STEWART, Kevin TAYLOR, Terry WAFFER (Camera). The IPC decided to keep 16-way as a World Cup

### 1998 Evora, Portugal

IPC introduces a women's standings for female teams in the 4-way event at a World Cup. Silver won by Australia. This becomes a stand alone event as 4-way female. Southern Aurora: Karen SITKOWSKI, Joanna BONIFACE, Nicky LEWKE, Fiona McEACHERN, Monica GREEN (v)



## 1999

### 1999 Corowa, NSW

World Championships for Artistic and FS, hosted by Sydney Skydivers. Australia fielded teams in every event and won Gold in Male Freestyle with Ash CRICK and Jon KING and Silver in Female Freestyle with Gemma STEVENS and Paul TRUJMAN



### 1999 Corowa, NSW

8-way FS team "XLR8" broke their own Australian record with 20 points and the highest ever 8-way team total score of 147. Paul McMULLEN, Don CROSS, Don PADDEEN, Jeremy HUNT, Jason COOKE, Michael STRICKLAND, Dana HORT, Rob THOMPSON and Simon CHABERKA



## 2001

### 2001 Grenada, Spain

First World Championship in Freely Event and Female FS

## 2003

### 2003 Gap, France

Freestyle Silver medal won by Ash CRICK and Jon KING.



## 2004

### 2004 Rijeka, Croatia

"Crimson Mist" 4-way CF Rotators set a new Australian Record of 17 points (in 120 seconds working time). Ralph HAMILTON-PREGRIVE, Tom BEGIC, Cameron COOPER, Matt BERENS and Mitch McMARTIN (v). Photo: Mitch McMartin



## 20

INTERNATIONAL



### 2007 Picton

"Stray Cats" set a new Inter 8 way record of 15 points at the Nationals. Team members were Dave LONCASTY, Nicole HANNAN, Naomi SCOTT, Glenn HOYES, Glen WILSON, Tracey BASMAN, Andrew GELLATLY, Darren PEARSON, Scott NEANDER (vid)



### 2009 Nagamble, VIC

36-way CF Diamond National Record. Paul Archibald, Trent Argus, Paul Baker, Kevin Balen, Hamish Barker, Peter Barnett (NZ), Dean Barrowcliffe (UK), Tom Begic, Craig Bennett, Matthew Berens, Jody Blunden, Daniel Brauman, Scott Brown, Graeme Bull (NZ), Dale Buttenworth, David Carr, Cameron Cooper, Gary Cullen (NZ), Ben Daiglish, Danny Daniels, Glen Farrell, Christopher Gay (USA), Steven Geens (BE), Brett Higgins, Archibald Jamieson, Alex Kaiserman, Julia McConnel, Mitch McMartin, Robert McMillan, Brian Pangburn (USA), Ralph Hamilton-Pregrave, Andrew Preston, Shane Price, Jaak Saega, Philip Tharmin, Michael Vaughan. Camera: Steve Fitchett, Wayne McLachlan, Pam Pangburn (USA)

### 2009 Picton, NSW

A new 25-way Head Down Australian record was set by Sonnica van Zijl, Brad Pokroy, Brian Dore, Isobel Dore, Scott Hiscoe, Peter Wilson, Cath Corryns, Tim Golsby-Smith, Steve Curtis, James Hensman, Mark Gazley, Erica Tadokoro, Adam Long; Brad Gayson, Chris Cosgrove, James Evered, Dylan Tempest, Kim Hopwood, Stewart Kerrp, Remi Guillemette, Brett Sheridan, Roger Mulckey, Lucas Georgiou, Shea Convery, Ryan Mair with Sara Curtis on camera.



### 2009 Picton, NSW

"Rotor Out" 4-way Open FS record 27 points. Steph BENSLEY, Gary NEMIROVSKY, Jens GONNERMANN, Darren PEARSON, Darren GRIGGS (v) alternate Michael VAUGHAN



### 2008 Latrobe Valley, VIC

Janine Hayes, sets a new female accuracy record of 40cm total over 10 rounds at the National Championships.

### 2009 Picton, NSW

First Nationals in VFS. Gold medal winners Adam LONG, Stewart KEMP and James Hensman



### 2010 Picton, NSW

"Intangible Forces" sets new Australian Inter 4-way Intermediate record of 17 points. Bec BRICKNELL, Heath MILLARD, Travis WOOD, Deb HOBBES, Matt LUKE camera. Photo Davide MOY



### 2007 Toogoolawah, Qld

National Female Canopy Formation Record, 5 stack at Skysisters. Jules MCCONNEL, Jill GRANTHAM, Jenny GORDON, Shanle DARLING, Kim HEDLEY and Brett Higgins (v).



### 2008 Picton, NSW

"Snatch Force" 4-way FS Female record 21 points Caitlin COLLIN, Steph BENSLEY, Carley YOUNG, Tanya CALE, Nigel JOHNSTON (v)

### 2009 Latrobe Valley, VIC

David BOULTER and Tibor GLESK both set a new Open record in Accuracy at the Australian Nationals of 25cm over 10 rounds.



### 2010 Picton, NSW

"The Addicted" set a new VFS Inter record of 12 points. Team members were Kim HOPWOOD, Tim GOLSBY SMITH, James HENSMAN, Lucas GEORGIO, and Mark GAZLEY (v)



05

2006

### 2006 Thailand

400-way FS record set from Hercules aircraft. There were 10 Australians in the record: Geoffrey ABRAHAMS, Simon DI SCIASCIO, Ian FLACK, David LONCASTY, Jon MCWILLIAM, Gary NEMIROVSKY, Grant NICHOL, Julie NICHOL, Luke OLIVER and Michael VAUGHAN

### 2006 Vienna, Austria

First CP WPC. After several World Cups the first WPC was held in the middle of Vienna with an above ground purpose built pond. Michael VAUGHAN wins Silver in Zone Accuracy



2007

### 2007 Florida, USA

New 100-way CF World Record, including 7 Australians: Tom BEGIC, Brett HIGGINS, Jules MCCONNEL, Ben NORDKAMP, Andrew PRESTON, Michael VAUGHAN and Andrew (Wendal) WHITTEN



### 2008 Pretoria, South Africa

Draw LPINSKI sets the Australian CP Distance record of 143.91m



2008

### 2009 Talpel

"Cokoanono" broke their own 2-way CF record with 18 formations in 60 seconds and win the bronze medal. Jules MCCONNEL, Michael VAUGHAN, Craig BENNETT



2009

### 2009 Jo'burg South Africa

Mike HOWELL sets the Australian CP Speed record of 2.73 seconds over a 70 m course at the World Cup



### 2009 Perris, USA

Women's World Record FS Large Formation 181-way. Leanne CRITCHLEY, Heather LITTLE, Cheryl ROBERTSON, Julie NICHOL, Michelle KOSMER, Ellen COENRA, Shirley COWCHER, Nicole HANNAN, Maxine TATE and Yukari HASHIMOTO.



### 2009 Chicago, USA

Freely World Record for the largest head-down formation of 108 parachutists including 3 from Australia: James EVERED, Kim HOPWOOD and Adam LONG



### 2009 Texas, USA

4-way FS competition, a World Record set of 45 points in time by "SpaceLand Force XP"





# PARACHUTES AUSTRALIA

EST. 1968

*Parachutes Australia has now been in existence for 42 years.*

1968 Parachutes Australia was established by John Mahaffy and Lou Johnston. The first products were jumpsuits and gear bags.

1970 Constructed and commenced operation of Wilton Parachute Centre. Designed PA fore and aft system. Dave Smith joined PA.

1976 Slimpack, Trimpig and 26' Taffeta Conical tested and certified to American TSO C23b standard. PA becomes 1st manufacturer outside USA to be granted TSO authorisation. PA supplied TRIMPIGS to Australian Team "Joint Effort" for World Championships. Joint Effort placed 2nd in World.

1978 Parachutes Australia staff at premises 407 Kent Street Sydney.

1979 Developed, tested and certified PIGMEE container with patented SOS system.

1980 Moved to larger premises at 68-72 Wentworth Ave, Sydney. Commenced production of ram air main and reserve parachutes, including Hobbit, X228 and X300.



*From the left: Dave Smith, Denis Ismay, Raymon De Mesa, Nheuang De Mesa, Lee O'Regan, Ian Crewe and John Mahaffy.*

1986 Talon system added to PA's inventory by way of a licensing agreement with Rigging Innovations, USA. Australian 8 way CRW team and 4 way sequential CRW team take 3rd place at World Championships using PAX228 CRW canopies.

1987 Designed and tested the "Bullet" recovery parachute system for Ultralight aircraft.

1988 Australian 8 Way CRW team wins Silver medal at World Championships (France) using PAX228 CRW canopies. PA launched the AIRFORCE range of parachutes—designed, tested and certified in Australia.

1989 PA was bought out by the International Conglomerate, BHSala. PA now commenced trading under the name PA Safety Systems.

1990 Australian 8 way CRW team wins GOLD medal at World Championships (Thailand) using PAX228 CRW canopies.



*Fore and Aft System*

*Trimpig Container*



*Pigmee Container*



*Australian 8 way CRW team*





1993 PA Safety Systems sells the business and brand of products of Parachutes Australia to now current owners Mike Carre and Greg Sitkowski. PA moved to new premises at Smithfield NSW.

1996 PA launches the Talon 2 harness and container system.



Talon 2



Talon 3



1998 Computer Aided Design technology installed at PA - one of the first worldwide to do so.

1999 The Talon 3 harness and container system launched by PA.

2000 PA purchases land at Ingleburn NSW and commences construction of its new purpose built manufacturing facility.

2001 Parachutes Australia move from Smithfield NSW to its new premises at Ingleburn NSW.

2002 PA launch the Talon FS harness and container system.



Parachutes Australia at Ingleburn



Photographer - Craig Bennett

Parachutes Australia continues to manufacture quality equipment for the sports skydiving, military and gliding communities. Our great service, low lead times and quality products will continue to see Parachutes Australia as a leading manufacturer in the Australian skydiving industry for years to come.

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Photo by Mathies Lundblad  
Graphics by Gravity Angel





# AN R-RATED ADVENTURE FOR SKYDIVING

# ALVIN PURPLE

If Ray Williams ever tries to tell you that he played the part of a sex symbol in Australia's first R-rated movie, well... you can believe him!

During 1973, Ray was one of four Pakenham jumpers who starred in a skydiving sequence for the movie *Alvin Purple*. Produced and directed by Tim Burstall, the film was a risqué venture into the newly created R-rating territory. The hero of the film was Alvin, played by Graeme Blundell. Dubbed the original Australian naughty boy, Alvin kept finding himself in all sorts of misadventures because of his overwhelming attractiveness to eager women.

In one of the brainstorming sessions for the film, no doubt through the haze of cigarette smoke, the movie makers came up with the skydiving scene, which was virtually the (ahem) climax of the film. It went like this:

Alvin was being chased by angry husbands when he drove his Valiant Charger into the Pakenham DZ. As two husbands pulled in behind him he slipped into the Commando Skydivers' shed.

Out the other end marched three jumpers ready for a leap; Tony Holtham, Dave Millard and Bill Kenny. Then there was a fourth, the movie's hero, Alvin Purple cleverly disguised in full parachute gear and walking nervously with the group.

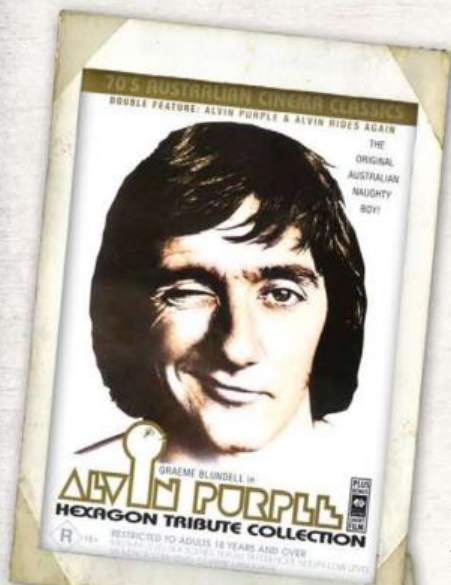
Their plane was chased down the runway by Alvin's pursuers as it took off. Kenny gave spotting directions to the pilot. When it was time to jump Millard and Kenny calmly leapt out but Alvin trembled in fear. "I'm not really a skydiver," he confessed to jumpmaster Holtham, "I'm Alvin Purple."

"And I'm the King of Siam" was Holtham's retort, as he grabbed the reluctant sex symbol and hurled him out the plane. After tumbling and fumbling in free fall and eventually pulling his ripcord Alvin landed in the Yarra River. Cue the music to mark the movie hero's latest escape!

Ray Williams was the lucky stunt double who played Alvin's part in freefall and under canopy. "Would you believe I was the slightest framed guy?" he said a few decades later when he was somewhat larger in girth. Ray said Bill Kenny didn't want to be Alvin's double, because he wanted his own face on the movie. He said Billy changed his mind at one point when he learned there was to be a jump into the Yarra. In the end, Ray managed to keep the plum role but the authorities didn't let the river jump go ahead anyway. Ray ended up doing that part of the movie under a parasail.

Tony Holtham remembered standing under a tree with Tim Burstall as the boat tried to drag Ray up over the river. Instead, he went under the water and it seemed like a very long time before the driver stopped to let him surface for air. "Ray has defied death many times parachuting but I think that nearly got him," said Tony.

For more on these adventures, and Ray's 34 malfunctions, read 'a history of *Commando Skydivers*' due for release in 2010.







# Jean

Like so many skydivers over the decades, Jean Burns made her first jump as the result of a bet. But this girl was not like others. The seventeen year-old had already made history as Australia's youngest licensed female pilot.

Then, in 1937, she had another entry in the record books as Australia's first 'lady parachutist' to leap from a plane.

As a little girl, Jean had liked climbing trees and lamp posts to get to high places. Even while others were swimming, Jean's highlight was diving. The higher the better. She'd joined the Junior Royal Victorian Aero Club at fourteen and started flying lessons just before her 17th birthday. "The boys tried to get rid of me," she laughed, "but I stuck around!"

One day, while watching a parachute descent at Essendon, the plucky, pint-sized teen, who used a pile of cushions in the cockpit, made a bet with another pilot. He had declared that she wouldn't be able to jump from a plane. "Motormouth me said there'd be nothing to it," she recalled. "He bet me some flying hours on his account that I would not be game if he could arrange it." Well, arrange it he did. "And that's how I got sucked in!" explained Jean more than 70 years later. In the end, she did get those free flying hours.

Parachuting was very much in its infancy in the thirties. Since Australia's first freefall descent from a plane in 1926, the idea had caught on with RAAF pilots, trained how to use these so called life belts of the air. There was also a handful of barnstorming daredevils thrilling big crowds with parachuting displays. One of those parachuting performers was Felix Mueller, a pastor's son who'd been raised on a farm in western Victoria and shared a passion for flight with his business-minded mate, Reg Ansett. Mueller was happy to help Jean deliver on her bet.

Jean's first jump was at Essendon in November 1937, from a DH4, 'The Spirit of Melbourne'. At 3,200 feet, she snagged her rig as she started clambering out of the cockpit. Mueller had to jab at her equipment with all his force to get it loose. "Finally, I went overboard, like a bundle of washing!" she said. Jean told a reporter at the time that she screwed up her eyes and was filled with panic, her hand gripping tightly on her ripcord. "I pulled," she said, "and nothing happened." She could feel her heart pounding like a sledgehammer. Suddenly, she felt the drag of the parachute across her thighs. "I opened my eyes and looked up above me, and there, billowing like the wing of an angel, was my parachute. It was lit up by the sun and seemed to me to be one of the most beautiful and satisfying sights I'd ever seen."

*"Once the chute is opened the descent is pure joy. All round you the country is laid out in vivid colours. It looks so beautiful from up in the sky, it makes you cry out for joy. For a few minutes you sit suspended like some kind of immortal being above the world. There is a wonderful silence, broken only by the sound of the air passing through the chute."*

## EXPERT PILOTS ARE DANCERS, TOO.



MISS NANCY EDWARDS and MISS JEAN BURNS at the Anniversary Air Pageant Ball.

At least, that was the poetic account published in the papers back then. Nowadays, Jean remembers very little about the first jump. She recalls Mueller in one ear reminding her not to lose the ripcord because he would have to send away to America for an expensive replacement. In the other ear, the pilot was telling her not to pull the ripcord too soon, or they would all be crashing down together.

It was reported that 2,000 people witnessed the descent. The brave Miss Burns landed in a nearby paddock and was dragged by the wind until a gallant Tiger Moth pilot ran over and smothered her chute.



# Australia's first female skydiver

# Burns

By Greg Weir and Kelly Graham

Jean was an auditor's assistant in an accountant's firm. She stood all of five feet and half an inch (154cm) tall. Nobody had taken much notice of her as the kid who'd been hanging around hangars. But now, she was in the spotlight, feted as quite the media darling for her achievement. The papers dutifully reported Jean's return to work, surrounded by beaming colleagues. A few days later, she made the news again when she took a stumble down some stairs at the theatre. "Now that was exaggerated," she stresses. "It was just a little whack on the head and I got much worse than that on some of my landings!"

Jean enjoyed her second jump so much more than the first, amazed by the brilliant colours around her and delighted when some birds flew past. "It was very, very pleasant," she recalled, "and quite delightful." She absorbed the slight hissing noise as air passed through the vent in her American Russell parachute. And, once again, she had an untidy landing.

Soon after her first jumps, Jean received a letter from aviation officials, telling her she was not allowed to make parachute descents, but they would not prosecute. She doesn't know why, but they suddenly had a change of heart. Jean still has the paperwork listing the requirements for her to continue jumping and she remembers having to fold her chute in front of the right person to prove her ability.

In those days, she said they had to make do with the hangar floor for packing on. "I suppose things are much better than that today?" she asked, before learning that some things never change.

The persistent teenager continued jumping, but it wasn't for the fun of it. "I did get to like it, but I liked the money better!" she explained, "I was saving to buy my own plane." She travelled with Felix Mueller to air shows around Australia, thrilling the crowds with entertaining displays and interesting landings. On one jump, there was a single runway surrounded by grass in every direction. "Guess what I landed on?" she lamented. "I was dragged along the runway, taking bark off my knuckles, and I had to dress up for a ball that night, too." On another jump, Jean landed in a lagoon. "I came out covered in water lilies and smelling to high heaven. It was very embarrassing."

On her fifth descent, Jean delayed for a full 500 feet before pulling the ripcord, reportedly worrying some of the spectators.

## PORTRAIT OF A PARACHUTIST



NOTE—Jean Burns was the youngest person in Australia to gain a pilot's license. She is also the only woman parachutist in the Commonwealth. Her title of the youngest parachutist in the world has not yet been disputed. She is a member of the Royal Victorian Aero club and the Victorian Gliding club and has flown all over Australia, from the tropical north to the desert interior.

Portrait of Miss Jean Burns, who is described as "Victoria's first woman parachutist," now on view at Miss Aileen Dent's exhibition at the Athenaeum Hall. Reproductions of this picture will be sold in aid of the Women's Air Training Corps.

## Girl as Parachutist

MISS JEAN BURNS, of Rathdown street, East Brunswick, who made her first parachute jump at Essendon in November, has now received the approval of the Civil Aviation Board as a parachutist, provided the parachute is folded by a person who holds a licence for that purpose. She is Australia's first woman parachutist.

## Parachuting Forbidden

No person shall drop from an aeroplane by parachute.

That seems clear, under Civil Aviation Board regulations. Dropping by other means is not forbidden, possibly because the dropper is in no condition to be prosecuted.

But Miss Jean Burns, 17, of Rathdown Street, East Brunswick, who has made two parachute descents, will not be prosecuted. An official of the Board said today that she would be advised that she had been at fault.

The old regulations, made before Commonwealth aviation legislation was found to be invalid, stipulated that nobody under the age of 21 should descend by parachute. Proof of ability to fold a parachute and carry out a dummy drop was also necessary.

Because parachuting was becoming more general, the official added, the Board would soon consider drafting new regulations, and doubtless, if Miss Burns could prove her competence in other respects also, she would be granted permission to continue her descents.



## Australia's first female skydiver

# Jean Burns



There was a particularly lucrative display in Townsville that earned the pair 125 pounds. The rig was said to have cost 80 pounds. It was a small but successful business, which allowed Jean to keep flying Ansett's Porterfield plane by day and study at business school by night.

Apart from the landings, there were some other painful memories. After coming down in the edge of a reservoir in Victoria, Jean was helped out by another teenage parachutist, Colin Cathels, who was the star of an aerial circus. He died a week later, in a skydiving mishap in front of a stunned crowd.

Over a year or so, Jean made about a dozen jumps. "We called the last three or four of them 'fun jumps'," she said, "but they were all aimed at getting me to hit the spot better!"

Then the war came along. "It ruined everything for us," said Jean. Pilots couldn't fly because of fuel limitations and many airmen were away at war. Jean got married, had children and the time flew by with school runs and lunches. There was no more flying and no more skydiving.

Some years ago, one of her sons persuaded Jean to consider flying again. But she found the trial flight quite boring, flying flat and level with so many rules. "I went go-carting instead!"

Nowadays she's a spritely 90 year-old, whose great grandsons are beginning to think she's pretty cool. A street in Essendon Airport was recently named Burns St in Jean's honour and she's looking forward to meeting the skydivers of today at the APF Conference. She wonders if the rheumatism in her ankles is connected to those heavy landings and she marvels at our modern equipment.

Modest about her role in history, Jean is amazed at how skydiving evolved to baton passing, let alone to people flying together in freefall formations. "I could never have done that!" she declared. "You'd have thrown me out years ago!"

"When I look at the newsreels about modern parachuting, I was just a wee drop in the ocean. Nothing like what you lot are doing today. If you'd all seen some of my landings, you'd have shuddered!"



Jean Burns with Nancy Bird, 2009



## Australia's Woman Parachutiste

MISS JEAN BURNS

One of the headline attractions of the Air Display will be Miss Jean Burns, only woman parachutiste in Australia. Petite Miss Burns is very young, only 18 years of age. She has made half a dozen leaps to date, ranging in heights from 1500 to 3200 feet. Miss Burns has been anxious to take up parachute jumping for some time, but has been deterred until recently, on account of her age.

She is managed and instructed by Mr. Felix Mueller, a licenced parachutist himself, who also supervises the folding of her parachute.

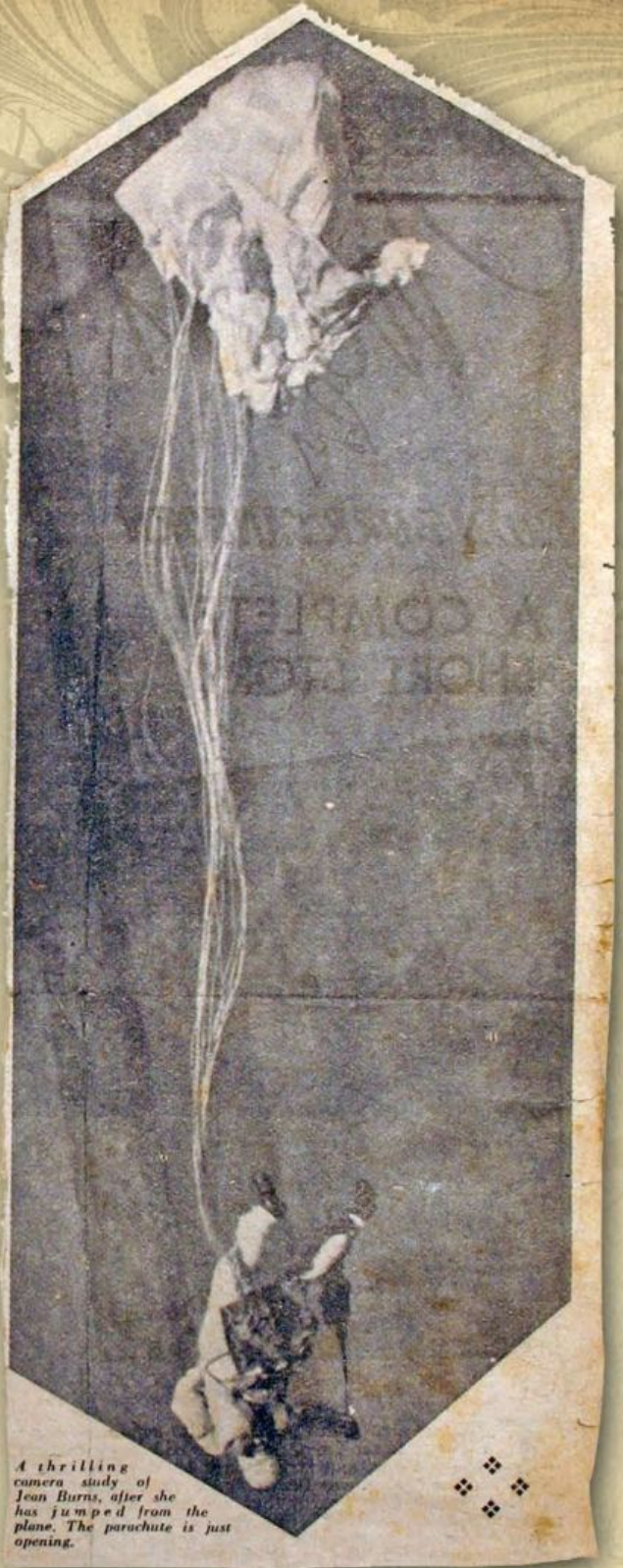
Miss Burns is also a licenced pilot, and has the added distinction of being the youngest girl in Australia to attain her "A" licence. She will sit for her commercial license next September. She is engaging in parachute descents to finance the cost of an aeroplane of her own, and when she gets it, hopes to make a leisurely flight to England to visit relatives. After that she plans to get her instructress' ticket and secure a position as an instructress.



### PARACHUTIST IN DANGER



A remarkable picture taken as Miss Jean Burns, the 17-year-old Victorian parachutist, hurtled from a plane at the Newcastle Aero Club's pageant. Miss Burns narrowly escaped serious injury when the wind carried her into an adjoining engineering works instead of the centre of the aerodrome. She skilfully manoeuvred herself to clear buildings and high-tension wires and landed unhurt.



A thrilling camera study of Jean Burns, after she has jumped from the plane. The parachute is just opening.

## finding jean...

The story of tracking down Jean Burns is as much about persistence as the woman herself.

A chance meeting at a BBQ in Gympie in 2006 led aviation researcher Greg Weir on an amazing search. He got chatting with a retired Qantas pilot, who turned out to be the son of the pilot who took Jean Burns up for her first jump. Greg wasn't sure if this incredible woman would still be alive. He searched through birth, marriage and land title records for months, finally finding the unassuming great grandmother, living an anonymous life in the suburbs of Sydney.

Jean started as a 'project' for Greg, but quickly became a friend. He engineered a meeting between her and another pioneer aviator Nancy Bird Walton, who'd both known of each other since the thirties but never met. Greg also arranged for a street to be named after Jean. He wanted others to hear and acknowledge this remarkable woman's story.

Awesome work, Greg! Thank you.



Jean Burns with Greg Weir



# girls on

A quarter of a century after Jean Burns led the way, women parachutists were still few and far between. In the late fifties and early sixties, as the first clubs started to form, most of the jumpers were young men with military backgrounds. For the handful of women who joined them, doing battle with the heavy equipment was sometimes not their only challenge.

In March 1962, Kath Henderson became Australia's first woman involved in a baton pass. The pair had come within inches of success on two earlier tries. *"On the final attempt,"* Claude Gillard reported, *"Ted Harrison was down to her level in about 10 seconds. He made two run-ins but overshot on each one, then he made a quick turn and dropped onto the baton and rolled off with a triumphant grin."*



Kath Henderson

Another Cathy was perhaps better known, thanks to her 1963 book, *Falling Free*. Cathy Burrow (nee Williamson) described her passion for the sport, her early frustrations with failed baton pass attempts, and her big adventure with the Australian team at the 1964 World Championships.

Cathy went on to fly commercially for two decades. *"The sport of skydiving was more egalitarian than the competitive working world at the time,"* recalled Cathy, *"but not without the odd negative experience here and there."*

Legendary skydiver Andy Keech says modern women would have little idea what confronted the pioneers of women's issues just 50 years ago, and Cathy was on the front line. *"Her stands were in the face of the hypocritical Australian tradition of 'Fair go, mate',"* said Andy, *"which apparently only applied to males."*

One club even had a ban on women in the mid sixties. Commando Skydivers had been born from military roots and the Chief Instructor persuaded the club not to train women or allow them as full members. Warren Hutchings insisted that he was not 'anti-women', but he was concerned that they seemed to show no fear and did things that frightened him.

The fairer sex certainly copped a blast from pioneer skydiver Laurie Trotter in a 1967 magazine article. He wondered why it was not possible to produce world class female parachutists. Trotter wrote that the standard of female parachuting in Australia was appalling:

*"From a technical point, females have very little knowledge of the workings of the human body in freefall, and know less about their canopy which is evidenced by their accuracy. I consider this to be one of their big failures."*

*Girls, instead of prancing around the DZ looking for a cameraman to perform in front of, how about performing in front of a set of Telemeters and a stopwatch. Then maybe one day you will be able to make me eat my words."*

(Laurie Trotter, Australian Skydiver Magazine, Sept 1967.)



Cathy Burrow



# Top!

Just some of the many women who've helped shape our sport. **By Kelly Brennan**

Despite this serve, Faye Glassford was one woman putting in credible accuracy performances at this time and she went on to become one of just five APF Masters of Sports Parachuting. Faye started in Tully in 1965, with some special assistance from her idol Jim Cox, who later became her husband. "He said 'you have to be strong like a guy to do this sport.' So I was!" said Faye.

After buying her first set of gear, Faye was stirred up by some Sydney jumpers who told her she'd wasted her money and she'd never keep jumping. She decided to finish her 'A' licence to prove them wrong, even though she really was 'scared shitless'.

"I became a jump addict and always enjoyed challenges and trying to do anything that was available in the sport," said Faye. "DZ facilities were non-existent, so often it meant the 'bathroom' was hiding behind a bush or using a bush dunny. No water. No shade," she said, "so not many women stayed around."



Faye Cox

Faye placed 6th out of 79 in Women's Accuracy at the 1974 World Championships in Hungary. But her proudest achievement was her daughter, Carolyn. "I actually was not into kids, but I'm so glad she arrived," said Faye. Nowadays, Faye is delighted to see so many active women jumpers and she says the general male attitude towards women is great.



Vere Oakey

Vere Oakey was a reluctant trailblazer in 1981 as the first female Chief Instructor at Victoria's Commando Skydivers. Vere said she never thought much about any differences between the sexes. At the Nationals one year, a woman thanked her on behalf of all women. "I'd never thought of it like that before", said Vere. "I was really quite amazed. I just thought I was one of the boys."



Katherine Rel Week 1980. The women formed a team called "knickers" and entered the Northern Territory Championships. L-R Robyn Warne, Unknown, Raelene Pappin, Sundy Duncan, Jenny Dalby, Kim Barton and Unknown

A little lady with a big name in skydiving is Fiona McEachern. She's an FAI representative, Director of Competitions, coach and competitor. Fiona and her irresponsible alter ego, Narelle, pop up at boogies around the nation.

Her first jump was in October 1984, when Fiona was one of Picton's earliest AFF students. She had no trouble finding people to jump with in those early days, as she was considered a novelty. It wasn't because she was a female though.

"Everyone wanted to jump with me to see what the AFF students turned out like!" she explained.

Back then, Fiona says it wasn't as easy for a girl to get into teams unless you made them yourselves, so that's what she did. Nowadays, she doesn't have any problems, but thinks less experienced jumpers may.



Fiona McEachern



# girls on top!



Buffy

The nineties produced a skysurfing trend and Kylie 'Buffy' Tanti was up there riding high on her board. She was Australian champion in her first competition, but doesn't have the medal to prove it due to partying too hard afterwards.

Buffy has plenty of 'girl

stories' from her skydiving adventures. Like the time a local Llama farmer was very nice when she landed on his property, even though he'd once pulled a gun on one of the blokes. Or the time when she and Rebecca Scott landed off DZ on a lingerie jump. "Thank God I was wearing Yves Saint Laurent!" said Buffy.

In her case, there was some tension with the blokes when she started doing tandems. Rather than play their games, she walked away. "If you aren't enjoying yourself, why do it?" she asked.

Buffy praised a huge list of men and women who've shaped her skydiving success. "Roz Tomkins especially helped me out with my first jumps," she said. "I was blown away that a world medallist freestyler was so keen to help me out!"

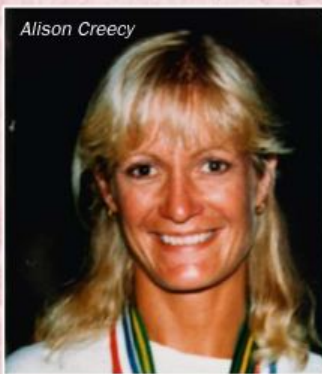


Roz Tomkins

Our sport lost Roz in a road accident just days before Buffy won that medal. Roz was one of several women taken from us too soon. Pauline Richards and Alison Creecy were others who proved that super humans of skydiving are just as vulnerable as everyone else when things go wrong in this sport.



Pauline Richards



Alison Creecy



Jules McConnel



Angela Heisler



Issy

Kim Hardwick is known for her hard work to set skydivers on the safest possible course. She's the APF's Technical Officer and one of the four female Chief Instructors in Australia. Andy Keech first met her when he dropped by his old club Elderslie

10 or 15 years ago and Kim was the CI.

"The positive impression was immediate and solid and has remained that way," said Andy.

Angela Heisler and Issy Dore are two of less than a dozen Aussie women Tandem Masters currently gracing our skies. Issy believes it's still a male dominated sport, but getting better all the time. Issy says women generally end up stronger, fitter and better able to face fears on a daily basis if skydiving is a large part of their lives. "Pushing yourself out of your comfort zone is one of the best possible things you can do," said Issy, "and it has major flow on benefits to every aspect of your life."

Jules McConnel is another winner in our sport, receiving the Tim Bates Award in 2009. Jules feels that skydiving treats men and women more equally than many other sports. She should know. Jules is a star performer in CRW, a discipline within skydiving that's always been male dominated.

Jules jokes that there is one key advantage for the girls, as a single woman at the DZ has a good ratio to work with! But, for all her medals and international adventures, Jules has another achievement that she's more proud of. "I met a fun jumper who I'd once taken on their first tandem," she said. "That felt really good to inspire someone to join our sport. I hope more of them are out there!"



Kim Hardwick  
1993 Arizona  
World Meet,  
member of the  
Oz 8-way.



Karen McEvoy



Susie McLachlan & Cecilia Morton



Susie McLachlan says many female skydivers have long claimed that there are no differences. *"That's largely true,"* says Susie, *"but ask freestyler Naomi Adam or Skysurfer Cecilia Morton if they agree with combining the males and females in their disciplines and see what reaction you get!"*

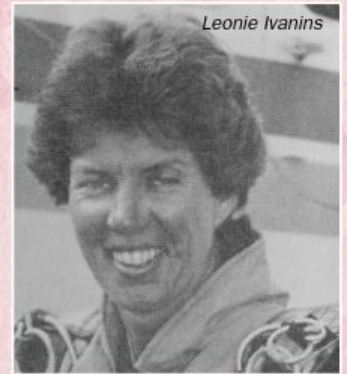
Naomi Adam



Susie is grateful that bra-burning feminists did their part for women many years ago and that the history they created has allowed better access for the current generation. As a second-generation skydiver Susie says she always felt "special" and "perhaps a little over-protected." Susie thanks her trail blazing aunty Karen McEvoy for teaching her how to *"toughen up, with a smile"*. Karen credits another strong female leader of her era, Leonie Ivanins for much of the same inspiration.

Susie felt that women could still learn so much more from each other and that's how Skysisters was born. Seizing on the ideas from Project XX back in the nineties in Melbourne, Susie put together two big meets at Toogoolawah in 2005 and 2007. More than 110 women attended each of them. *"It was not 'secret women's business' as some tainted it,"* said Susie. *"We shouted to the world when we set national and world records! And gaining that invaluable positive media exposure for our sport was always one of the top priorities."*

Leonie Ivanins





# girls on top!

In April 2005, at the first Skysisters, 47 skydivers built Australia's largest women's freefall formation. Some of those high fliers were up there with the best from around the globe four years later. At the 2009 Jump For The Cause, 181 women set a new world record. Ten Aussie sporting licence holders were among them.

It's not just flatly where women are right on the pace. Karen Sheekey is ripping it up in Canopy Piloting while Heather Swan and Elaine Cox are leading the flock in wingsuiting. It's impossible to name all the names in this article, because so many women are doing so well. No matter what the discipline, we've come a long way since Jean Burns first jump in 1937 or that first female baton pass in 1962.

As we celebrate the APF's Golden Anniversary, it's probably fitting to give the last word on the topic to Kim Hardwick. For her, it's not about whether you're male or female. She declares, "Being anything in this sport has been great!"



Denise White's instructors told her to give up trying to skydive and take up lawn bowls. She went on to make over 1,000 jumps and represent Australia at a World Champs in Freestyle!



Elaine Cox



Heather Swan



January 1999 - All girl AFF Team



Dee Watkins



Kaz Sheekey



Jonny Goss



Janine Hayes - Australian Pacific Champs 1980s



Australian Women's Style and Accuracy Team - Di Rutledge, Kathy Silvestri, Kim Barton and Faye Cox at the 1982 World Meet



Theresa Malin and mum Ruth - Mothers Day



Kelly Brennan

*Editor's Note: You don't get away with it that easily Kelly! Our author Kelly Brennan (nee Graham) is also one of Australia's leading ladies. Aside from her extensive jumping activity spanning nearly two decades, Kelly has been serving on the APF Board and Management Committee for a number of years and does much of the behind-the-scenes tasks that noone else would care to dare, as a volunteer. Further, Kelly has gone above and beyond with contributing to this issue and I thank her immensely for sharing her fabulous literary skills. We're all looking forward to her new book on the history of Commandos due out soon.*



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# *A brief History* **OF SPORT PARACHUTES IN AUSTRALIA**

*By Robbie McMillan*

Leonardo sketched this design in 1485. He suggested what size would be needed to allow a person to fall safely from a great height. "If a man had a tent made of linen, of which all the apertures have been stopped up, and it be twelve braccia [21 feet] across and twelve feet in depth, he will be able to throw himself down from any great height without sustaining any injury." No one knows whether he ever tested a full scale model.

History dictated that Adrian Nichols from the UK successfully flew a life size model of Leonardo's design after it was lofted to the skies suspended underneath a balloon. Nichols commented that 'there was no oscillation, no rotation or gyration or anything'. He cutaway the parachute and landed beneath a conventional modern parachute. Nichols noted that the parachute landed without suffering any damage to itself or the measurement devices attached to it.

Unfortunately, Leonardo cannot claim to have influenced the modern-day parachute as his design remained undiscovered until the nineteenth century. Modern parachutes are based on parasols whereas Leonardo's is based upon the tent.

So from the parachutes humble origin as an escape mechanism from burning balloons to cross braced canopies as small as 37 sq. feet, the evolutionary process has been an adventurous journey for parachutists across Australia and throughout the world. It is often difficult to imagine the improvements in technology for the next 5 years, let alone 10 to 50 years ahead in time. Before looking to the future it is important to look back at our history, then dream of our future.





# 3 PARACHUTES THAT MADE THE SPORT

*~ a Queensland perspective.*

By Douglas Irvin

## B.C. BEFORE CHEAPOS

Sport jumping in Queensland got underway in 1958 with the founding of the Queensland Parachute Club. One of the big problems faced by these intrepid pioneers was obtaining parachutes. Some members gave Bank guarantees for the purchase of new parachutes from Sydney. These were freefall and X-Type static line rigs. The latter was the WW2 British paratroop rig. In today's money they probably cost well over \$10,000 each. These round canopies were not steerable and one landed facing any direction at the wind speed. The rate of descent was the same as jumping off something 1,400mm high. Jumpers had to be proficient at the military style Parachute Landing Fall. (I did about 20 hours on PLFs in basic training.) New low porosity (lo-po) parachutes were available from the U.S. So by 1960 the sport was limited to a few surplus military style rigs or expensive new gear.

## C. E. CHEAPO ERA

That all changed with the ready availability of surplus military gear. The 28ft (8.5m) C-9 main in a B4 harness and pack was used in jet aircraft. A lot were produced for the Korean War and after 7 years they were sold unused as "out of date". They were probably less than a tenth the price of a new rig hence the name "Cheapo". Soon everyone had one. The Cheapo became the backbone of the sport and was an important boost. It was the first of the major canopies to change the sport. With modifications to the canopy, the forward speed was about 8kph and it had the ability to turn. Small obstacles could be avoided and one faced into wind for landing - a huge improvement. The Brisbane designed "4 gore" modification was superseded by the American developed "TU." The saying was, "A good landing was one you walked away from."

## PC. E. PARA-COMMANDER ERA

In 1964 the Crossbow and Para-Commander (PC) were released in the U.S. These canopies were 24ft (7.3m) with a pulled down apex and stabilizers. The rate of descent was the same as jumping off a 1 metre height. The forward speed was about 15-20kph with full braking to a stall and a glide ratio of 1:1. Consistent stand-up landings were possible. The PC soon won out over the Crossbow and although expensive, was the choice of most experienced jumpers. Wind was not as big a problem and tighter demos could be done. Good spotting was still important. The PC had many clones - Mk2, Competition PC, Olympic, PTCH, UT-15 and Dominator to name a few. The PC was the next big step for the sport. It was a canopy designed for sport jumping. Fewer out landings, better accuracy and landings that could be enjoyed rather than endured.

In the quest for better performance entirely different parachutes were tried. One of the first was the Barish Sailwing in the U.S. in 1965 but nothing came of it.

In the late '60s the Eagle was developed from the triangular Rogallo shape that NASA had worked on as a possible space recovery 'chute. The Eagle had a brutal opening shock, turned like a supertanker and had virtually no brakes. Only a few were imported into Australia. A later version, the Delta II had some success. The first ram air was the Parafoil developed from kites. Then followed the ParaPlane and Cloud. These all had good speed and braking. The ParaPlane had long lines and a "rings and ropes" reefing system. The weight of this canopy would make a Tandem Master blanch. The Cloud was an excellent canopy for accuracy. Getting reliable, comfortable openings was still a challenge. Pioneer in the U.S. marketed the Volplane with a hydraulic reefing device. The bigger Cloud lost the "rings and ropes" and had gone to a slider. Also at this time new manufactured harness and packs were still heavy and bulky. Jerry Bird in the States led the push to get gear more streamlined, safer and lighter. Up until then weight did not get serious consideration. (My PC in a Crossbow piggyback with reserve weighed 23kg. That was considered normal.) In 1975 the StratoStar was released. It was small and used a slider.



1



2



3



## S. S. E. STRATO STAR ERA

The StratoStar with a slider had good openings, was fast with full braking, very quick to pack and lighter than a PC. It was the third canopy to change the sport. It very quickly became very popular among fun jumpers. It was superseded by better canopies. Ram air canopies changed accuracy jumps to upwind approaches. The disc was reduced from 10cm to 5cm and is now 3cm. Gone are the days of the downwind approach hoping not to miss the pit. Also demos could be done into tighter DZs. Jumpers now had the advantage of a much wider wind cone that gave them much more latitude with their spotting.

The Cheapo Era lasted about 5 years and the PC about 10. Today's jumpers look on the Stratostar as a dinosaur but in 35 years there has only been a gradual improvement to the ram air design. Canopies are also made for accuracy, swooping, canopy formation and tandem..

In the Cheapo and PC stages it was hard to visualize that the canopies could dramatically improve.

The ram air stage has been quite long and there has not been a radically better development to get back to Earth. We can always hope.

4



5



9



6



7



8



10



1. British design; the X-Type harness was made from flax webbing, the container from canvas and the original WW2 canopies from silk. 2. The jumpers in the B-4 Harness/Container are Alison Baxter and Rick Meerklin. The jumper on the C-9 landing on target is Steve Filak 3. Fourgore 4. The US Military surplus equipment was mostly B-4 Olive Drab Harness/Container, T-7a Reserve Pack with a C-9 28ft Orange and White Main Canopy and a 24ft all white Reserve Canopy. All made of Nylon and Steel. 5. The Cloud remained popular for a long time, especially with the older jumpers. The jumper on the Cloud is Steve Filak. 6. The Paraplane had a higher angle of attack than the Cloud and so was only useful for good for accuracy in higher wind conditions. Something that it shared with some modern canopies. The jumper on the Paraplane is Steve Filak. 7. The Stratostar was popular because its five cell construction was lighter than other ram airs at the time. The jumper on the Stratostar is Fess Parker 8. The Eagle was the first of the Rogallo type canopies but by far the most popular of this type was the Delta II. The jumper in the photo is Fess Parker. 9. Strato Star. In the early days we usually called ram air parachutes "squares" and this pic really shows up how it had a very poor aspect ratio. Hence it was superseded. 10. The Barish Sailwing was a novelty canopy and very few of them were made. Laurie Trotter is the only Australian that I know jumped it (in America)





## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Douglas Irvin started jumping in 1962 in Brisbane with the Queensland Parachute Club and went from B.C. to StratoStar. He holds early licence numbers A163, F48, Star Crest 99 and Gatehouse 69. Douglas competed at a number of National Championships over the years and mostly jumped at Tully, Townsville and Mareeba. Pictured here in the early days and lately with his daughter Allison Irvin.



## I once had a beautiful cheapo

*to the tune of: My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean*

I once had a beautiful cheapo,  
A candy strip lovely to see  
And then I decided to progress  
So I purchased a brand new P.C.

Loop it, Loop it,  
That's what they all said to me  
So I looped it, I looped it  
And that's how I busted my knee!

CHORUS:

I spend most of the summer in plaster  
Swearing and cursing my fate  
Studying to command my Commander  
Before it was too bloody late.

Hook it, Hook it,  
They said it would do me no harm  
So I hooked it, I hooked it,  
And tat's how I broke my arms!

CHORUS: I spent most of the summer...  
Stall it, Stall it,  
That's what they yelled from  
the deck, the deck,  
So I stalled it, I stalled it,  
And that's how I busted my neck.

I spent most of winger in traction  
And sold that vicious P.C.  
Now I'm back on my Candy stripe cheapo  
Making standups and also D.C.'s.

Cheapos, Cheapos, instead of those  
\$\*## P.C.'s.

(Reprinted by permission of the composers Ed Smith and Dave Hobbs. Copyright 1968 E. Smith and D. Hobbs. Australian Skydiver March 1968)

## DYED CANOPIES

*By Claude Gillard*

In the early sixties sport parachuting in the western world received a shot in the arm from the United States surplus market. Southern Cross Parachutes marketed a complete rig Harness/Containers/28ft main canopy and 24ft reserve canopy for 45 pounds (\$90). Deployment sleeves were not being used yet and the canopies were unmodified. For 10 pounds you could order your main canopy dyed to your favourite colour. The only all white canopy available at the time was the Navy C-8 and if you dyed the red and white alternating gore C-9 the red gores would finish up as whatever colour resulted from mixing red with the colour of the dye being used. Here are some examples of the results. Fortunately colour slides were able to record what they looked like if you could afford it.





# THE 3 MAJOR MILESTONES SINCE

By Robbie McMillan

## THE FIII RAM AIR DAYS

During the eighties and nineties the ram air square canopy developed into a more reliable wing. The malfunction rate was decreasing considerably as refinements in the manufacturing process and the consistency of materials continued to improve. Canopies commonly seen on DZs were X300s for student use and for the more advanced jumpers the X228 which was simply a scaled down version. Furys, Mavericks and Meteors (all around the 220 sq feet range) were common as well. Thick Dacron lines were commonly found on these canopies making them ideal for CRW jumps. It was a common occurrence for jumpers to bust out a few points in freefall and then get a CRW stack together after deploying at 2,500 – 3,000 ft.

The first square reserve, a five cell Paraflite Safety Flyer, came onto the market in early 80s. X228 reserves, which were beefed up versions on the X228 mains, were slowly replacing round reserves such as Lopos and Aerolites as production techniques continues to improve. Meteors, Hobbits and Crickets were commonly found in the 80s reserve tray. Air Force reserves, the first ram air reserve to be TSO'd in Australia was designed by Greg Sitkowski, Dave and Paul Smith of Parachutes Australia. They used revolutionary elongated smaller, though more frequent cross ports and cross over reinforcing tapes in the ribs of the canopy. These characteristics of a canopy are still used in modern canopies of today.

Performance Designs (PD) arrived into the Australian marketplace in the early 1980s releasing their nine-cell PD range of canopies. Parachutes now had the new micro line strung to their wings, greatly reducing drag and scaring most CRW dogs away from getting together under canopy as the lines now could cut into you like a hot knife through butter. Consequently Australian skydivers were now jumping smaller canopies, with 170 – 210 sq ft canopies regularly seen on DZs across the country.

The research and development of main canopies continued through the 80s and especially towards the 90s. In fact, the release of the PD Excalibur marked the introduction of cross-brace technology to the canopy market. Developed and patented by Performance

Designs, the design elements cross-bracing instituted, elevated ram air performance to another dimension. While the Excalibur opened rather firmly, though most canopies of the time still did, it out performed any other canopy for forward speed and performance.

## THE INVENTION OF ZP

The next major step in the evolution of canopies was the introduction of Zero porosity material. Effectively ZP was still made from Ripstock nylon, though it was coated with silicone to decrease porosity and therefore enhance performance. One of the earliest ZP elliptical canopies flown in Australia was the Blue Track, manufactured by Parachutes de France. These canopies were known for their wild openings, though once inflated they allowed jumpers to scoot across the ground or a pond like they had helium bottles strapped to their shoes. ZP certainly kept jumpers on their toes as they wrestled the new slippery fabric as they attempted to pack it into the deployment bag. It is during this phase of the evolution of sport parachutes that Proper Ram-air Orientation (PRO) packing came into vogue. Although initially PRO packing was known as Trash Packing as the canopies always look really messy as they slipt and slid all over the place as the jumpers coersed them into the bag.

Jumpers of the era, began to adopt the 'Hook Turn' technique to gain speed and lift. Jumpers would fly on a downwind leg almost directly over their finals flight path and when they got to what they thought was the appropriate height, maybe around the 100 to 150 ft mark, do a massive toggle input on one side to pendular swing their bodies away from underneath the wing to a horizontal dive which they would hopefully either naturally recover from or forcefully recover from.



X228





## THE 3 MAJOR MILESTONES SINCE

If you got the timing right then you would get an awesome swoop from your efforts. Get it wrong and of course the consequences were dire. Debate raged between the toggle hookers and the front riser camp who believed that their method of gaining speed was by far safer and more efficient means of gaining speed and lift.

Once the limitations in materials were overcome, PD continued a trend of consistently releasing new canopy designs possessing the ability to out perform those previously available to the skydiving market. They introduced the Sabre in the early nineties and initially you needed at least 500 jumps before the DZSO might let you jump the new high performance wings.

Combining the design elements from its predecessors with new innovation, the Stiletto was released in 1993, to a skydiving public desperate for the elevated performance that the new elliptical, 9-cell offered. This dynamic, high performance canopy was an answer to the increasing demands by more experienced canopy pilots. Cutting edge for its time, the Stiletto combined responsiveness with an extremely high rate of turn and a flat glide. Merging great openings with an incredible flare, Stiletto loyalists can still be found at most drop zones today. The Stiletto was pretty much the first canopy that actually snivelled and opened softer than any other. In fact, some jumpers were a little adverse to them because they were not used to a 500ft slow, soft opening. Camera flyers were probably the greatest advocate for the snivel, saving their necks from the sometimes brutal cracking openings. PD researched the possibility of making a ZP Excalibur though couldn't get them to open consistently and the project was put on the back burner.

In Australia, canopies were getting smaller and smaller. Gary Cunningham and Greg Sitkowski from Sydney Skydivers were the first to my knowledge to jump a sub 100 sq ft canopy. They initially trialed an Icarus Beta 105 (fundamentally a square ZP canopy) and then took the equation one step further and jumped a 95. Most jumpers thought he was crazy for doing so, as they were very twitchy, stalled quickly and needed your utmost attention as a parachute pilot to make it to the ground safely. The evolution of faster more efficient canopies was well under way.

Steve Dines landing a Stiletto in his own style



## THE EVOLUTION OF CROSS BRACING

NZ Aerosports saw the need in the market to step up the performance envelope of parachutes. Paul 'Jyro' Martyn in 1995 developed the 'Mach 1' the first ZP cross braced canopy. It took many prototypes to refine the design and eventually he built the Icarus FX in 1996 and refined it to incorporate a closed in nose, which is still universally seen today. At the PIA Symposium in 1999 PD came out with a new canopy called the "Velocity", a seven celled crossed braced canopy utilising some of the changes in design that NZ Aerosports developed. As soon as PD put the first model on display at their booth, Jyro walked to his car in the parking lot and brought back the flyers for their nine cell, 27 chamber VX Extreme and nothing has ever been the same. The Velocity and the VX came out the same day in 1999. This has probably been the most significant development in modern parachutes.



Just as the early parachutes were derived from the need to save personnel from debilitated large and small aircraft built purely for the sake of War. Today's parachute technologies are also derived from the needs not only of the military but of civilian rescue as well. Such parachute systems that autonomously guided include advanced capabilities such as flocking (formation flying), active collision avoidance and adaptive control (self learning functions for varying cargo weights). With this technology, multiple systems (50+) can be deployed in the same airspace, guiding payloads to one or multiple targets without possibility of mid air collisions. Can you imagine having an autopilot on your parachute? It would take a lot of the fun and skill out of flying though.

Will Composite Fabrics replace the Ripstop nylon that has remained unchanged as the basic building block of parachutes for over half a century? Composite fabrics are created by sandwiching an engineered pattern of high-strength fibers between layers of ultra-thin polymer foil and then fusing them under extreme heat and pressure. This technology has enabled the design and manufacture of Motorised Paragliding Wings, which are larger than a 747's wingspan, yet remarkably able to fit into a large back pack and be carried by one soldier.



Mylar is a composite material and is commonly used to produce the sails of hang gliding wings. It is also common material used in the nose of paragliding wings to stiffen the opening of the cells to make the inflation process easier. On both of these wings multiple layers of Mylar are fused together to create a thicker more robust surface, to ensure that the surface it creates holds its shape and structure. Now imagine two laminates fused together with a weave of Spectre sealed inside the layers. It is lighter, thinner and stronger than normal ZP fabric. This potentially means that newer designs will be able to be built, as canopies will be able to hold their shape better. Potentially, such designs will outperform the current models of canopies, only time will tell what those results may entail.

New Zealand Aerosports, the Designers and Manufacturers of Icarus and Daedulus canopies has currently enlisted the services of a Physicist who specializes in Fluid Dynamics to mathematically study the flow of air around new models of canopies. By using computer aided design software to create virtual parachutes, it is now possible to study the flight characteristics, lift potential and drag coefficients in two degree increments of angle of attack. What this means is that new designs can be theoretically tested before one is ever built, minimizing the need for multiple, costly and time consuming prototypes. Once a viable canopy is designed, a final prototype can be reached sooner rather than later. The future designs of parachutes will undoubtedly be driven by the demands of sport and competitive canopy pilots. Preparation, education and experience will remain the key to the success of our sport if we are to continue to evolve.

So what will jumping be like in another 50 years time? Will skydivers need parachutes at all? Will they be just a primitive means to arrest your fall or will a Wing Suit finally be landed successfully without the aid of a parachute? Jeb Corbliss, a very talented Californian BASE jumper certainly has the potential, ability, skill and the self-belief that this will become a reality in the not-so-distant future. He has already flown next to and docked on Luigi Cani, who was the pilot of the Daedulus J VX 37 sq foot canopy. The wing suit has a glide ratio of 3:1, which means that he can fly the same glide slope of a parachute.

Where will the evolution take us? What records will be set? The answers to the question will materialise in a lively, vibrant and adventurous future. Bring it On. Get Some, Go Again.

Every APF member, regardless of age or experience has a dream of what their future may entail.

Mia Angus, APF member for a year believes that "in 50 years, being a slave to gravity will be a thing of the past! Instead of leaping out of your jump ship and ending your skydive after about a minute, you will be able to jump out with your wing suit with your special impulse magnetoplasma rocket and tear up the skies until your plasma runs out! No one will walk to work, you will wing suit to work, runways will be more common than footpaths and roads and as a result, our environment will be healthier because everyone will have boycotted cars."

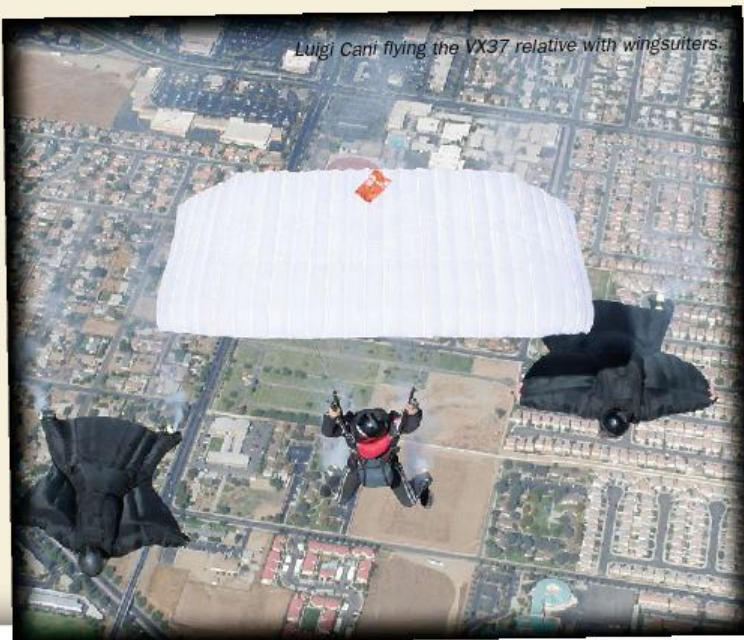
Susie McEvoy is dreaming of a "packing vending machine and 14,000ft bubble of climate controlled airspace. Maybe a huge football field sized tunnel that you can run tracking and atmo races in."

Fiona McEachern (Director of Competitions, 26 years in sport, 7,370 jumps) suggests that "we are the lucky ones. The first balloon flew in 1783. Soon people jumped from them and parachuting began. In probably less than 100 years time fossil fuels will be too expensive to use on such a past time and again no one will be able to jump. We are living our lives in the time of parachuting which will be a very small time in the history of man."

*Top POP, Ian 'Robbo' Robertson, penned this poetic glimpse into the future.*

## A Skydiving Future

Babies born in freefall  
 A virtual skydiving world  
 No need for rigs or aircraft  
 For which there is no fuel  
 Technology can't help us now  
 Too many people seeking space  
 We can only dream of jumping  
 With a mask upon our face  
 We'll never feel once again  
 That thrill of exiting  
 So we fill our heads with drugs  
 And start hallucinating  
 Through the sky, wind in face  
 On a multi-coloured wing  
 But it's not the same as it once was  
 No sensory overloading  
 The drugs wear off the mask is gone  
 Back to reality  
 Of empty sky and crowded streets  
 Skydiving? Just a memory.





# Icarus CANOPIES







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# the 'ROO' Club

By Ken Wright Photographs Courtesy of John Hewson

Prior to World War One, the use of parachutes was seen as something foolhardy and undertaken only by showmen and women to thrill crowds of voyeuristic spectators. The war of 1914-18 was instrumental in changing the role of the parachute from a curiosity to an essential life saving device.

With the use of massed artillery and the ability of flying machines to fly high enough to observe and report back more comprehensively on the layout of an unfolding battle, aerial observation became an essential part of modern warfare. Observation of the enemy position and the ability to accurately direct artillery from a stable platform was achieved by the use of tethered observation balloons carrying a wicker basket occupied by observers. The very stability and static nature of the balloons made them a tempting target for enemy aircraft and the method of winching down a balloon by its ground crew was not always fast enough to ensure a safe descent and save its occupants. In most cases, the observation balloon was defended by anti-aircraft guns but to secure the safety of the observers, parachutes were introduced. They were stowed in containers attached to the outside balloon rigging and all the observer/s had to do in theory was jump out. As they were already attached to the parachute by a static line their falling weight would snatch the parachute from its container and the parachute would hopefully open. Not an easy task when thousands of pounds of helium in a big bag might be collapsing in flames directly above the observers head.

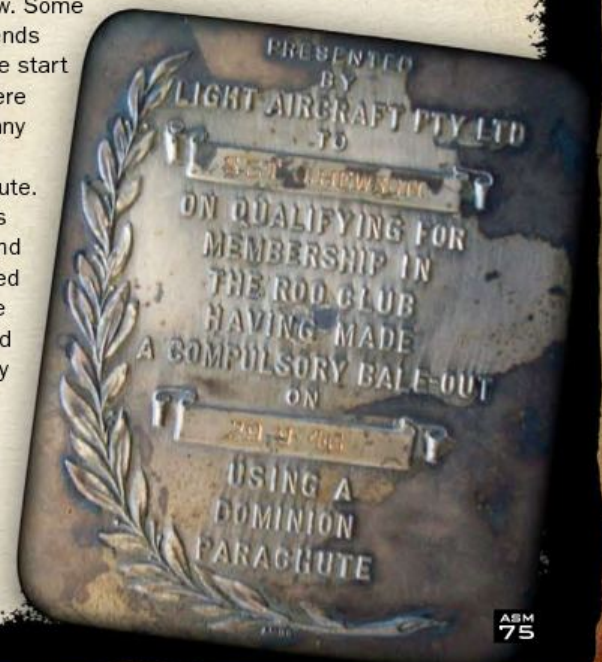
Unfortunately, the parachute was not considered appropriate for aviators and crews of fixed wing aircraft by either side. Between 1915 and 1917 the idea of issuing parachutes to pilots was debated at various times by the British Royal Flying Corps and rejected. The main reason was that such a device would undermine a pilot's aggressive fighting spirit. It was argued that it would soften their moral fibre to get in close and engage the enemy. Because of this rigid, obsolete view of warfare, men continued to die unnecessarily. It is true aviators on both sides took pride in their ability to nurse a damaged aircraft back to base or at least land safely. Not that one had a choice, but as the loss of valuable pilots mounted, the use of a parachute gained recognition at least by the Germans. From late 1917 or early 1918 German Air Force began to make this device available to their pilots. It is interesting to note that the initial reaction by the German and Austro-Hungarian pilots when issued with a parachute was to treat it with a degree of contempt. The first successful parachute jump by a German pilot during an encounter dates from 27 June 1918, when

Leutnant Steinbrecher was shot down by a British aircraft and parachuted to safety.

One graphic description of a parachute escape from a crippled aircraft was written by the fighter Ace, Oberleutnant Ernst Udet, Staffelfuehrer [Flight Leader] in the Richthofen - Geschwader. On 28 June 1918, Udet attacked a French aircraft but was shot up. He couldn't control his plane and decided to bale out. At a height of about 400 metres he stepped onto his seat to jump but the air pressure was so strong that he was thrown against the aircraft's rudder. He felt a violent blow to his spine and discovered that the parachute had hooked itself over the tip of the rudder. With the last of his remaining strength, he broke off the edge and fell tumbling down until the parachute opened at the low height of 60 metres. He landed with a hefty bump but was otherwise unhurt. The parachute saved his life but more unfortunate Allied pilots fell to his machine guns as Udet would go on and survive the war with a tally of 61 kills.

After the war in 1919, an American, Leroy Irvin, designed a parachute with a silk canopy 32 feet in diameter with 24 silk rigging lines, each 16 feet long. The canopy had a small vent at the top to allow a certain amount of air to pass through it to control oscillation. The chute was packed into a canvas container secured by heavy elastic bands and two metal pins attached to a handle. This became known as the 'Rip Cord'. When this cord was pulled, the pack opened a small pilot chute followed by the main chute allowing the rate of descent to be approximately 20 feet per second as opposed to 175 feet per second without a parachute.

After a few modifications, trials proved so successful, the American Air Corps adopted the design and made the wearing of the parachute standard equipment for all aircrew. Some of Irvin's friends suggested he start a club as there would be many in the future using the chute. The idea was discussed and it was decided that because silk was used in the canopy and rigging lines, and because the silk worm





# the 'ROO' Club



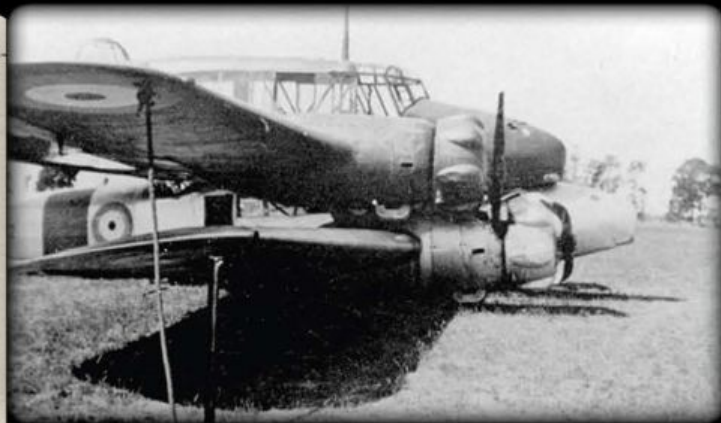
or caterpillar lets itself down to the ground by a silken thread, it was to be called the Caterpillar Club with the slogan, 'Life depends on a Silken Thread. It's interesting to note that Leslie Irvin, despite making more than 300 parachute jumps, never became eligible for membership of the club he inaugurated.

From a membership of two in 1922, the club has become the second most exclusive aviation club in the world with a past and present membership in the tens of thousands world wide. It's a club without joining fees, committee meetings, offices, or staff, and is open to all nationalities irrespective of race, religion, gender or political affiliation. There is only one condition for membership. The applicant must have saved their life in a genuine emergency descent using an Irvin type parachute. Once accepted, the member would receive a certificate and a small gold caterpillar pin with the members name and rank engraved on the back. The WW1 fighter ace Ernst Udet became a member in 1934. During WW2, due to economic shortages, the gold was substituted with gilt gold. None of the WW2 Luftwaffe aircrew applied to join the club even though they are eligible as they were using the Irvin chute made at the factory bought by the Nazi Government in 1936. Some applied for membership after the war and were accepted.

WW2 Allied aircrew had available two types of parachute. The seat chute which was worn at all times and doubled as a cushion and the chest type which was stowed in a convenient place and in an emergency, was clipped onto a harness worn by the aircrew. At the height of the war,

production of parachutes at the Irvin Air Chute Co in Letchworth, England reached a peak of nearly 1,550 parachutes a week. The biggest percentage of membership applications were from service personnel during the war with a large percentage from POWs.

During the war, more companies produced parachutes and began to keep a roster of lives



saved by their parachute. Two examples are the Pioneer Parachute Co in Skokie [USA] who donated plaques to those who packed parachutes that saved lives and the Switlik Parachute Co of Trenton [USA] issued both gold and silver pins.

The least known Parachute Club and arguably more exclusive than the Caterpillar Club began in Australia. From 1925 the RAAF purchased their first parachutes from the UK and continued these purchases until 1937 when arrangements were made by Light Aircraft Pty Ltd in Sydney, Australia, for the purchase of the parachute manufacturing rights from both the Irvin Air Chute Company of Great Britain and the GQ Parachute Company, England. Both these companies were suppliers to the Royal Air Force. When the manufacture of 'Dominion' parachutes in Australia was commenced, the policy of the company was to endeavour to have as far as possible, everything made in Australia. The parent companies in England kept Light Aircraft informed all through the Second World War of the latest developments anywhere in the world. Samples, drawings, material etc were constantly arriving in Australia and this information was supplied to the government. Light Aircraft responded in kind.

A small royalty was paid to the parent company but it was suggested the money be used to buy Australian War Bonds instead. This gesture was an indication of the excellent relationship between the two companies.

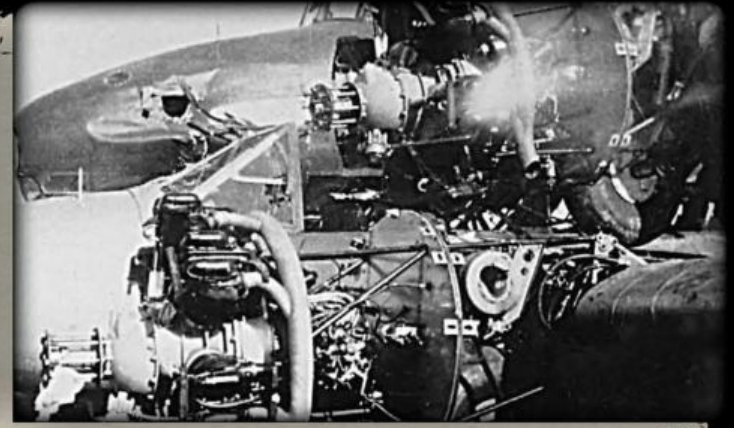
On 13 September, 1940, Luftwaffe bombers attempted to bomb Buckingham Palace. The private chapel built for Queen Victoria was hit and destroyed and RAF pilot, Flight Lieutenant James 'Ginger' Lacey D.F.M. shot down one of the German bombers, possibly a HE 111. The Light Aircraft Company had a 'Dominion' parachute and a silk scarf autographed by all the staff sent to England and presented to him as token of their appreciation of his downing of the enemy aircraft. FLT Lacey had already made nine parachute escapes during combat and had accounted for 23 enemy aircraft. The famous legless airman Squadron Leader

Douglas Bader was also presented with a silk scarf autographed by the staff in appreciation for his service to his country.

Mr.G.N.Mills, an Air Force reservist and pilot from WW1 was the managing director of Light Aircrafts parachute division assisted by his secretary, Miss Storey, a Flight Lieutenant. Mr Mills instigated the Roo Club at the time the factory and office was located in Sydney on the seventh floor of Grace Brothers on Broadway near the University







of Sydney. As there were no trained workers in this field in Australia, the staff had been recruited from areas such as dressmaking, coat, vest, trouser, bag making, georgette and silk workers. Lorna Walker who worked for the company stated one of the benefits of working with the 65 feet of silk it took to make a parachute was the availability of off cuts which the factory workers were able to turn into useful items of clothing especially under wear.

Australians whose lives were saved using a 'Dominion' parachute from Light Aircraft Company Pty Ltd were eligible to join the Roo Club. Qualifying members were presented with a plaque and a gold tie-pin in the shape of a kangaroo. The first three Roo club members were Leading Aircraftsmen, Ian Sinclair, John Hewson and Hugh Fraser.

Two Avro Ansons were on a training flight from No 2 Service Flying Training School at Wagga in New South Wales, Australia. On 29 September 1940 at 10:45 am, the two aircraft had a mid air collision at about 3,000 feet with both aircraft locked together facing the same direction. The two aircraft continued flying but slowly began to lose altitude. In the upper Anson, Leading Aircraftsman Leonard Fuller remained at the controls while his navigator, LAC Sinclair bailed out. From the lower Anson, the pilot, LAC Hewson had, as soon as the initial contact had taken place, increased his engines to full power and locked the controls enabling Fuller to continue flying and not spiral out of control. When the collision occurred, he was not wearing his parachute and had to be handed his parachute by Fraser, his navigator, put it on sitting on the cockpit floor then climbed out through the broken cockpit Perspex, crawl onto the starboard wing and slide off at about 900 feet. Fraser parachuted to safety. Fuller managed to fly the both aircraft about 8 miles before bellylanding both damaged aircraft safely in a field 5 miles south-west of Brocklesby. When Hewson opened his parachute, it got tangled and he was turned upside down as it hadn't been clipped on correctly. The parachute fully opened at approximately 100 feet but Hewson slammed into the ground injuring his spine. He made a full recovery after a few months in hospital. He was the only one injured.

Pilot James [Paddy] Nolan who became the last member of the club was formally presented with his club badge and presentation plaque in 1945 before all the employees of Dominion Parachute. Nolan's Boomerang aircraft was hit by Japanese small arms fire causing his engine to seize. He turned his aircraft upside down and bailed out over the Solomon Sea at about 400 mph under 1000 feet with the chute opening under 100 feet from the water.

The deceleration was so great that it pulled his flying boots and socks off and he hit the water so hard it split the soles of his feet but the canopy hitting the water successfully arrested his descent any further than the length of the shroud lines. Nolan managed to inflate his rubber dingy and was later rescued.

In a forward to an illustrated booklet showing the production of 'Dominion' parachutes by Light Aircraft Pty Ltd, Sydney, Air Vice Marshal R. Williams C.B, DSO, OBE, Royal Australian Air Force wrote; **'It would be a bold man who attempted to assess the value of a life saved, but at least it is sufficiently great to allow it to be said that if a 'Dominion' parachute produced by Light Aircraft Company saves the life of one young man of this country, all those who have been responsible for establishing the industry and producing the finished parachute will be well repaid. I would like to congratulate the prime mover in establishing the industry and all those associated with the work of producing an article to which any airman in dire need can trust.'**

What possibly makes it a more exclusive club as opposed to the thousands in the Caterpillar club is the fact that there were only one hundred and twenty two and a half members. The 'half' member bailed out at 150 feet with a parachute which was half 'Dominion' and half 'Irvin.' Sadly, more detailed information about the Australian Roo Club is virtually non-existent. When the parachute side of Light Aircraft Pty Ltd closed down its operations in the 1970's, all the membership details and records were lost to history in the office cleanout. A tragic finale to a part of Australian aviation history.

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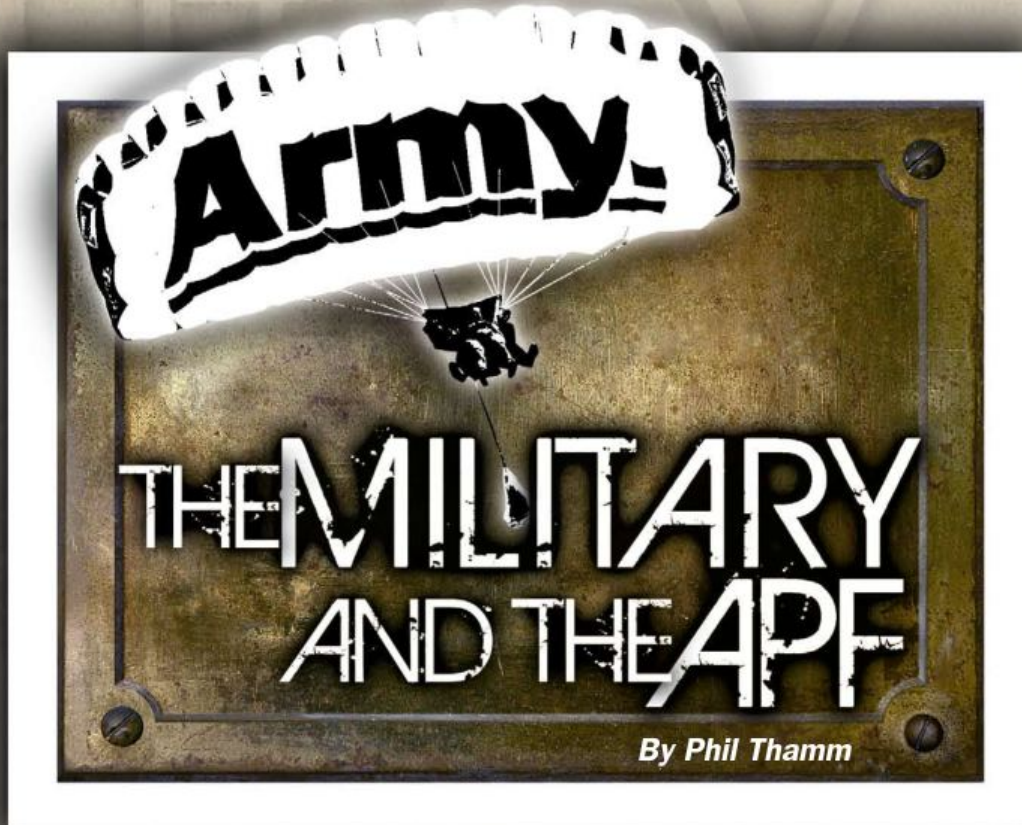
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The history of military and civilian skydiving has been closely connected since the earliest days of the 1900s and both can trace their origins to the first recorded parachute descent (made successfully!) from a hot air balloon in France by André Garnerin in 1797.



*Parachute pull-off from Supermarine Southampton in 1930s.  
Courtesy RAAF Museum, Pt Cook.*

In Australia, parachute descents from hot air balloons were hugely popular spectator sports in the early 1870s. In 1888, the first freefall jump was made from a balloon by J. T. Williams at Ashfield, a suburb of Sydney. The first descent by a woman, Valerie van Tassell, was made at Newcastle in 1890. The first base jump in Australia was made off a bridge in Sydney by Vincent Taylor in 1914. Taylor went on to serve in WWI and continued his parachuting activities after the war.

In 1919, CAPT G. Wilson, MC, AFC, DCM, a member of the Aust Flying Corps, made the first public parachute descent from an aircraft, a Sopwith Gnu at 1,500 ft at Melbourne. In 1926, FLTLT E.

C. Whackett made the first recorded free fall jump from a DH9A at 2,000ft at the Richmond Aerodrome, NSW. FLTLT Whackett pioneered parachute training in the Air Force where parachuting was primarily seen as a life saving device.

During WWII, the role of parachuting expanded with the raising of the 1st Australian Parachute Battalion which had the capability of inserting mass troops into combat. Instruction to the troops was provided by men such as SQNLDR Jack Milne, a professional parachutist prior to the war.

After the war, civilian parachuting thrived with techniques developed by the military and an abundance of military surplus canopies. Numerous personnel from the 1st Aust Para Bn had gained a love for parachuting during their war service and continued to jump after the war as display parachutists. Jack Milne was one such man who became the first CI of the Queensland Parachute Club when it formed in 1958.

The first meeting of the APF was held on 23 Oct 1960. However, the APF did not take its current form until it was reconstituted to form state councils at a meeting in 1962. Many of the foundation delegates were from clubs with serving or ex-military members. At the same meeting, the fledgling APF moved to become affiliated with the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale and, as a result, internationally recognised licences could be awarded.



*Refining Freefall techniques at PTS 1960s*





The following is a list of some training organisations, clubs, associations and teams that were either wholly military or had a strong military presence.

**1958 - NSW School of Parachuting (Camden)** The founder was John Crook, an ex-RAF PJI.

**1958 - McKenzie Flying School's Parachute Wing** The opening jumps were made by Pilot Officer Jack "Zeke" McDonald who carried out three five second delays from an Auster aircraft flying at 2000 feet.

**1959 - Victorian Parachute School** The VPS was a civilian parachute training facility formed in 1959 by two Army qualified jumpers, Keith Bulleid and Graeme Grigg. Initially they jumped at Casey Airfield, Berwick, then moved to Broadford and, finally, to the wartime airstrip at Pakenham.

**1960 - Newcastle Skydivers Club** This was a combined Air Force/Army club and two early members, LAC John Philp and CPL Alan McDonald, won the 1960 Australian Parachuting Championships at Pakenham in Victoria.

**1961 - 2 Commando Company Skydivers** (Renamed Commando Skydivers) In 1960, CPL Warren Hutchings sought expressions of interest to form a parachuting club and in Feb 1961, the club was formed with membership only open to serving members of 2 Cdo Company. Today, Commando Skydivers is a civilian club and is Victoria's longest running skydiving club.

**1961 - Commando Sky Divers Club (Sydney)** (Renamed Sydney Ripcord Club) The first President was WO2 Ray Harvey and the Secretary was CPL Bill Johnson, a member of 1 Cdo Coy. Bill served the sport well for many years and wrote the book *Ripcord Australia*.

**1961 - SAS Skydivers (Perth)** Danny Wright, a SAS trooper, helped form the Western Australia Parachute Club (WAPC) with most key committee positions held by members, or ex-members, of SAS. Subsequently, SGT Clem Kealy and SGT Geoff Scott formed a club solely for SAS members. Paddy Fleming, ex 2 Para Regt, formed **Rockingham Skydivers** and many SAS personnel jump at this club. In 1972, Danny Wright and SGT Ray 'Chick' Dimmack assisted in forming a skydiving club for the US Navy personnel based at Exmouth and **North West Sky Divers** came into being.

**1962 - 3RAR Parachute Club** (Currently named Skydive Nowra) This club was formed in Brisbane and in its first year, had 230 members. In 1983, under Matt Chambers, the club was named the **3 RAR Sports Parachute Club**. Today, it is one of the few true clubs in the APF.

**1963 - Woomera Parachuting and Skydiving Club (SA)** CPL J F Hilzinger sought approval to form the club and BDR T Goddard became its CI.

**1966 - Riverina Skydivers (Wagga Wagga)** This club was formed at RAAF Base Wagga under the direction of SGT Cox.

**1969 - Royal Military College (RMC) Skydiving Club (Canberra)** There are numerous adventure training activities within Army and skydiving is just

one. This club was formed to foster skydiving for Cadets who were training to become officers in the Army.

**1973 - SAS Sports Parachute Club (SASSPC)** The main instigator of this club was WO2 Marshall "Aussie" Power. It was primarily formed so that the members could jump officially on the Wednesday sport's afternoons and on weekends.



**The Green Machine  
Australian Army Parachute Team 1980-81.**

*Back Row: CAPT Ron Llewellyn, CAPT Matt Chambers,  
SGT Laurie Sams, PTE Gary McMahon.*

*Front Row: SGT Steve Neilson, WO2 Nigel Longhorn,  
PTE Phil Thamm, LT Gary Claridge*

**1974 - The Green Machine** The team was formed by four Army members and was a competition and demonstration team. In 1975, the Green Machine represented Australia at the World Parachute Championships in Germany. The team consisted of CAPT Geoff Carr, SGT Danny Wright, SGT Gene Bermingham, SGT Col Colelough and SGT John Dodd. Over the years, it had many team members and continued into the early 1980s.

**1983 - Australian Army Sports Parachute Association (AASPA)** CAPT's John 'JB' Brien and Gary Barnes formed AASPA in 1983. The first Army championships were held in tandem with the APF Nationals in 1984 at Corowa. AASPA held its first national competition at Toogoolawah in 1985 and in the following year, the Golden Knights (US Army Parachute Team) attended the championships. AASPA, since that time, has been a driving force in promoting skydiving in Defence. It has conducted countless championships, seminars and skydiving courses and has supported numerous Aussie CRW record attempts.

**1980s (mid) - Australian Air-Sports Centre** CAPT Ron Llewellyn started the centre at Tyagarah airfield, just north of Byron Bay.

**1990 - Australian Defence Force Parachute Association (ADFPA)** Out of

AASPA, the ADFPA was formed. LTCOL Matt Chambers led its formation and became its first president. ADFPA has conducted the annual Defence Parachute Championships since 1990 and numerous civilian personnel from the APF have attended in various capacities from invited competitors to judges and cameramen. The championships have attracted international Defence teams from countries such as New Zealand, Sth Africa, Thailand, Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, China, Sth Korea, Indonesia, France and Great Britain.

**1993 - RAAF Sports Parachute Association** With skydiving in RAAF gaining wider interest, RAAFSPA was formed with WOFF Peter Hawkins being the main driver.

**1995 (Circa) - ADFA Skydive Club** The Australian Defence Force Academy had membership from the Navy, Army and Air Force and promoted skydiving within the academy.

Many military members have been recognised by the APF and the following list records some of them.





- 1982 - Gary McMahon in winning two Gold Medals at the 1st World Cup of CRW. Australia's first Gold Medals at World Level.
- 1985 - APF Service Award Lionel Gene Bermingham for services to the sport.
- 1991 - APF Achievement Award Greg Hays a member of 'EARLY OPENERS' who won gold in the 8 way Speed Formation event at the 3rd WPC of Canopy Relative Work in Thailand 1990.
- 1998 - Bravery award Laurie Sams Awarded Star of Courage in Queen's Birthday honours list 2001.
- 1998 - APF Achievement Award 4-way Women's FS Team Jo Boniface, a member of Southern Aurora, whose team set a new Australian record of 16 points at the World Cup in Portugal.
- 1998 - APF Achievement Award 8-way FS team Don Cross, a member of XLR8, whose team set a new Australian record of 19 points at the World Cup in Portugal.
- 2000 Australian Sports Medal:
  - Doug Knowles - Bronze WPC 1981.
  - Laurie Sams - Bronze WPC 1982.
  - Greg Hays - Gold WPC 1990.
- Don Cross - Australian champion Formation Skydiving team member of long standing.
- Rob Douthat - Australian champion Canopy Formation team member of long standing.
- 2001 - APF Achievement Award Gary McMahon Silver - 2nd World Cup 1982, 8 way speed.
- 2001 - APF Achievement Award Ralf Jaeger Bronze - 1st WPC in 8 speed.
- 2001 - APF Achievement Award Jo Boniface Bronze - 1st WPC in 8 speed.
- 2009 - APF Achievement Award: Danny Daniels, Al Gray, Phil Thamm - National Record Canopy Formation of 26 Skydivers at Nagambie, Victoria.
- 2009 - Achievement Award: Daniel Brauman, Danny Daniels, Phil Thamm - National Record Canopy Formation of 36 Skydivers at Nagambie, Victoria.

Not formally recognised are the countless military skydivers who have contributed to, or served, the APF, State Councils or Clubs. In every state and territory in Australia they have served as CIs, Safety Officers, Club Presidents, Club Committee Members, Riggers, Packers, Instructors and Judges in competition. There have also been numerous military personnel who have

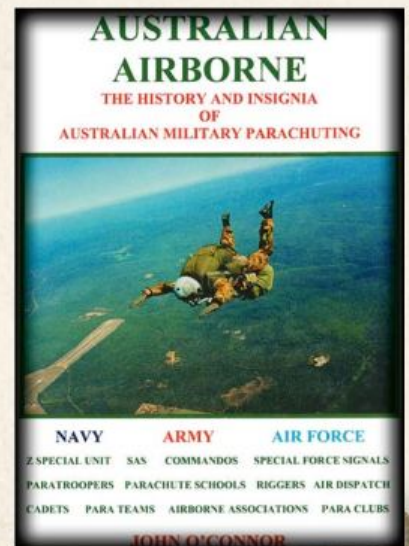


**CRW Rotations practice over Jervis Bay for the 1999 Aslania Champs in China.** From top: WO2 Ralf Jaeger, SGT Graeme Wilson, WO2 Phil Thamm & PTE Chris Nicol

represented the APF at world competitions over many years. Parachute training within the Army is of the highest standard and many APF instructors have been invited to attend military free fall courses at the Parachute Training School (PTS). Training techniques learned at PTS have consequently improved training within the APF. In saying that, military instructors have also learned from their APF counterparts. In 1990, WO2 Ray Webster, CI of the Newcastle Sports Parachute Club, demonstrated AFF instruction to PTS. From that time, AFF in the Army has mirrored that of the APF. Over the years, Army has run skydiving cameramen courses and has relied on expert instruction from APF members such as Shane Sparkes. This article paints just a small picture of how parachuting and skydiving have developed in tandem between the APF and the Australian Defence Force. The close ties that have developed over the years will, undoubtedly, continue into the future. Much source information for this article was taken from the book, *Australian Airborne* by John O'Connor. If you have an interest in military parachuting, the book is available by emailing the author at [joc44@bigpond.net.au](mailto:joc44@bigpond.net.au)



**2002 Australian Army Parachute Championships, with a Caribou recently retired from the RAAF after more than 40 years in service.**





# The Origins of

We are two kilometers above rolling green hills, a sunny blue sky beams.

From a couple of feet below we look up. There are 5 people huddled together, freefalling, each grasping a handle, freefalling, with intense looks on their faces. They are linked together and with the nod of the one in control, the others brace themselves for a quick, wild ride as the contained 5 x 1 metre banner is released. Click.

At least 1,000 more words would be needed to fully describe what's happening, so take a quick look at the cover of the magazine you are holding, you will no longer need to imagine.

For over 50 years we have been photographing our beloved Sport Parachuting and presenting to all some of the most beautiful and extraordinary images possible.

Ask yourself and your fellow skydiving friends what inspired you to take up parachuting. A frequent answer is that some form of picture was the major influence for this undertaking.

Claude Gillard, our past long time APF President of over 40 years was first inspired by a picture of military parachutists. *"On the front page of the Melbourne Herald there was a picture of two blokes landing their roundies at Laverton. My mate and I thought it was fantastic. We said we have got to have a go at that. The next day we went and signed up with the military and soon started jumping."*



Photographer Mark Hay who did 1,100, mostly camera jumps throughout the 1980s was inspired to take up parachuting after seeing a shot of Liz Kellaher jumping over Wilton in a late 70s magazine.

Rob Simunic, multiple Australian Skysurf Champion and World Championship Competitor saw an early 1990s Coca Cola Skysurfing commercial on TV, *"I just wanted to be able to do what I saw those guys doing"*, and so he did!

In the beginning photography was simply used as a method of documentation, extending into research.



The first known pictures of parachuting were shot from the ground.

A picture of ascending smoke balloon jumper V. P. Taylor taken at Clontarf, Sydney in 1908 is believed Australia's oldest. Aerial parachuting displays were often made from smoke balloons where the parachutist was suspended under a balloon filled with the smoke and heat of a fire. Once the

tethered balloon was filled and heated to a maximum it was released and would hoist the parachute and 'smoke jumper' to a height of around 1,500 feet AGL. At that height the jumper would release the parachute from the balloon by pulling a cutting device called a "ripping cord", severing the connection from the apex of the canopy to the bottom of the balloon. The balloon would slowly drift down and the jumper would land with varying accuracy, style and safety depending on the conditions of the day and the parachute.



One of Australia's first freefall descents, a military jump by Flight Lieutenant E. C. Wackett on 27 May, 1926 was photographed from another aircraft close by, as was a mass drop of troops into live combat at Nadzab in New Guinea in 1943. Three pictures on display at the Army Parachute Training School at Nowra illustrates the dropping of smoke screens, followed by dropping of troops and their final layout. Photographed from a nearby reconnaissance aircraft, the sequence shows a dozen of the 96 C47 aircraft dropping 1,700 Australian and US paratroopers.



# Freefall Photography

Like most places elsewhere on earth, Australian Sport Parachuting had its beginnings after the Second World War and conflicts of the 1950s that delivered military surplus parachuting equipment and most importantly the increasing availability of aircraft to the man in the street.

Not long after getting shots and film from the doors, wings and struts of aircraft, jumpers were taking cameras out with them and shooting the first of air-to-air pictures.

Pioneering freefall photographer and Australian Master of Sport Parachuting, Andy Keech recalls, "Anzac day 1961, during the first successful RW in Australia between Laurie Trotter and myself, was when I first felt the impulse to capture the images I saw in freefall. They were so rare that fellow Australians who had seen these sights could be counted on one hand. I began jumping cameras in 1962 after the NSPC was established and fellow members Col King, Allen Jay and Don McKern had advanced to work relative to me in the air, reliably. My freefall photography at this early time did not strike me as a "first" in so much as an "only" and probably would not be taken on by others. It garnered less attention than first kiss passes that were all the rage at the time."

*"The simplest and generally effective way to take pictures was to hand hold the camera and manipulate it as we do on the ground. This, of course, kept the arms and hands from maneuvering in freefall".*

Soon the cameras were to make their way on to helmets where one of the three revolutions of freefall photography was born. The helmet mounted camera allowed 'hands free' photography. Mounted on their heads and pointed where they were looking, a jumper could fly around freely and point their cameras to the action accurately.

*"I had seen photos of Americans with electric-powered cameras that were helmet-mounted and realized that hand holding was a dead-end way of taking photos", says Andy Keech.*

Parachuting pictures of the 1960s and 70s were done in a totally film world.

Initially, stills cameras were fired with mechanical cable releases and wound on by hand allowing one shot at a time to be taken. As new camera designs and types appeared so too were they employed by the ever-developing parachuting photographic fraternity.

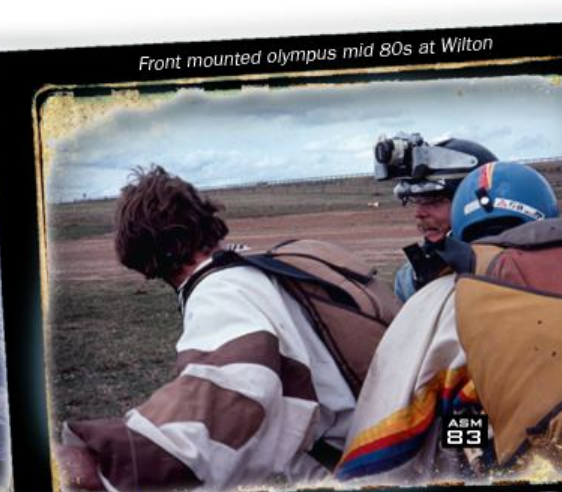
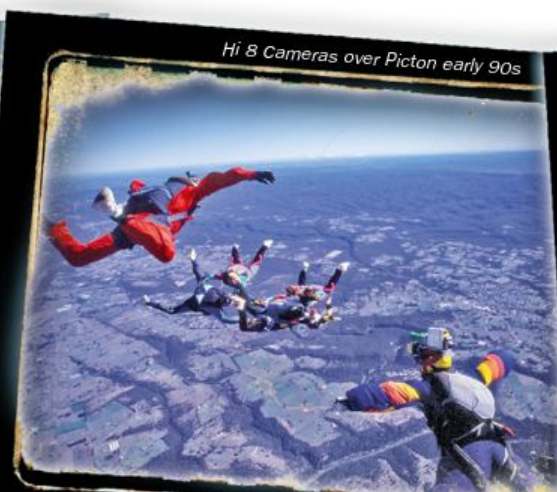
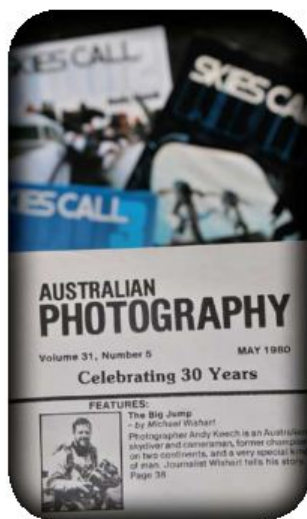
Motorized cameras appeared in the early 1960s. The "Robot" wind-up, non reflex camera was one of the first motorized cameras. The motor eliminated the need to manually 'crank' the camera in the air but like a wind up watch, the spring driven motor had a limited frame capacity. Nikon and Pentax were the first Electric motor driven cameras to appear freefalling over drop zones, other camera manufacturers followed. Being single lens reflex types, the cameras could be used with a full range of lenses and once off the helmet, could be utilized in many different ways. One could photograph a wedding on Saturday and 4-way star on the Sunday! Although the cameras were very reliable, they were heavy, expensive and required good technical skill to operate.

The mid 1970's saw the introduction of a lightweight camera system by Olympus. Being nearly half the size and weight of their predecessors and with some automation, they were the ultimate 'action camera'. They had instant appeal and were extensively used throughout the late 70s and into the 90s.

These were the favorite of renowned and often published photographer of the 80s, Mark Hay. Often fitted with his 16mm fisheye lens, which brought a style of being close to the action,

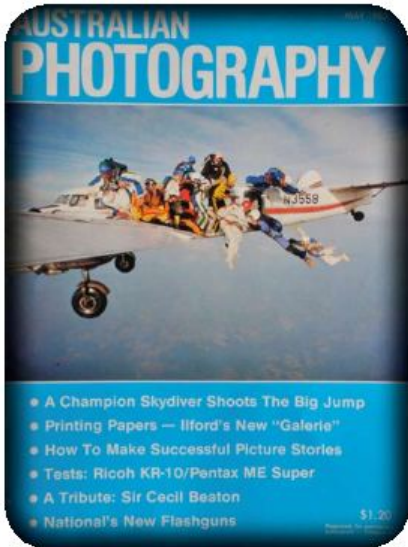
Mark recalls, "I worked hard at it and began to get some nice shots. Being a socially inward sort of guy the camera became my passport to being invited onto the good loads, with the cool guys. I got to skydive with champions".

Movie cameras were mostly wind up type cameras that ran for 30 to 50 seconds, depending on the type. As with the stills cameras of the day, electric motors were added and thus size and weight reduced. 8mm and 16mm cameras were soon in popular use. 35mm motion picture cameras were beginning to capture never before seen, close up aerial action and presented on the big screen cinemas in the form of feature films and commercials.





# The Origins of Freefall Photography



Skydiving has always featured prominently in the popular media: feature films, advertisers, TV sports, current affairs and lifestyle shows have picked up on Skydiving's thrilling appeal. Skydiving has been extensively published in the print media featuring regularly in magazines, newspapers and books.

*Skies Call*, the first book of skydiving photography by Andy Keech, is considered the benchmark. First published in 1974 and being the only book dedicated to skydiving at the time it received world acclaim and appeal reaching as far as the Russian Cosmonauts, who being trained parachutists, received copies as motivational gifts. Andy went on to publish *Skies Call 2* and *3*, a compilation

of his own and others photographs that began to explore the skydiving disciplines including Canopy Relative Work (CRW) and BASE jumping.

For the most part, Australian parachuting has had it's own illustrated magazine: *Australian Skydiver* was first regular illustrated in the 70s. With a short run of only two editions, Dave "Bluebaker" Hancock published the beautiful *Blue Skies Downunder* magazine in 1987, similar to the full colour European magazines of the time. Today we have an emerging photographic yearbook *Aeronaut*.

The most successful and longest running magazine being *Rambling On*, first published by Dave McEvoy in 1978. It was initially foolscap newsletter style with some black and white pictures; growing through the times to a larger colour magazine. Publishing was taken over by daughter Susie in 1997. The APF's newsletter *Skyline* became illustrated around the mid 90s and ultimately merged with *Rambling On* to become the *Australian Skydiver Magazine*, what we are reading now and have done so for the past ten years.

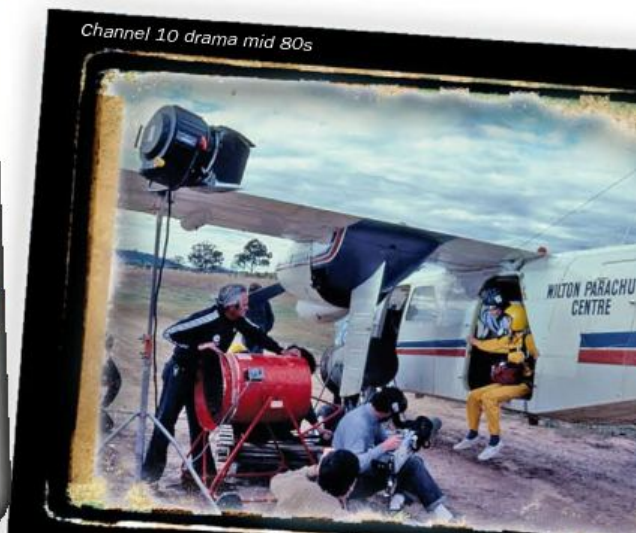
Australians have often led the way in producing and presenting vision of Sport Parachuting. 1960s and 70s newsreel and cinema shorts showcased the new 'space age sport' with extraordinary shots of freefall formations of their day which we today too often take for granted.

The early 70s saw a popular cigarette brand commercial showcase parachuting to the general public at the largest scale of the time, with the product's front man Paul Hogan.

According to Hogan's aerial stunt double Ken Hills, "No expense was spared. Shooting took a couple of weeks and was done by Tony Holtham. Ray Cottingham was also brought in from the US". Without today's technology, two versions of the commercial were shot; one in 35mm Panavision for cinema and a 16mm for television release. "The idea was that a carton of smokes be delivered by 'Hoges', jumping into a mate's BBQ in the country. I was flat broke at the time, the job got me the to the World Meet (10way Speed Stars)". Ironically, part way through the campaign, cigarette advertising was banned on TV, but the cinemas were still allowed to screen it.

The 1975 feature film 'Alvin Purple' flew onto cinema screens with the lovable, 'ladies man' Alvin being angrily pursued after some philandering escapade. Avoiding capture by taking refuge and disguise by dressing up as a skydiver at an airfield, he was mistakenly grabbed by an instructor; "Come on you're with us"... Aerial shenanigans and a comically awkwardly crash-landing ensued!

Skydiver and film producer Jas Shennan released two independent films of skydiving, *Jump* and the fabulous early 80s *Walk on Air*. Shot mostly around Elderslie, Athol Sneddon hosted and narrated his way through the sport and its people at all levels. Many a drop zone fired up the DZ television after jumping finished to see it broadcast on Sunday evening TV.





Bruce Towers is of the most actively involved skydivers. Renowned for his flying, fantastic DC3s and film work, Bruce would film many jumps at 'boogies' onto 16mm film.



Bruce Towers with sidemount 35mm arriflex on bell motorcycle hat early 80s

The films were projected in the evenings of the following meet, weeks later, where many a fraudulent "I didn't take the formation out, he did" would be exposed! This was the pre-cursor to one of today's valuable tools for entertainment and inspiration in skydiving, the day tape.

The biggest revolution in freefall photography and perhaps the greatest progression of our sport was with the arrival of the "Video Age" of the early 1980's.



The most effective use of pictures as a means of training needs instant access to the information. This was partly achieved and first used by teams such as the 8 way RW team 'Prometheus' using

'Polavision', an instant 8mm film system that used a self processing film cartridge. However with a high material cost and the capacity for three jumps on each cartridge, it was impractical to be truly 'instant replay'.

Video equipment was hugely expensive, large, heavy and complicated. It was in the domain of broadcasters and the film industry. The arrival of affordable, portable, domestic video systems quickly saw them falling through the air.



Mick Kellahe Dickinson helmet shooting 16mm late 80s



Mick Kellahe Picton early 90s VHS Camcorder

The first generation of video cameras were 'Tube' cameras; being that the device used to 'pick-up' the image from behind the lens was a glass tube full of electronics, something like a miniaturized TV picture tube. The VHS and Beta tape recorders were usually chest mounted and hard wired to the camera.

They were large and heavy. The pictures were good but nothing of the clarity of today. Both the cameras and the separate recorders suffered some reliability problems from the harsh environment they were put in, however; they were FABULOUS! At last the pictures shot in the air could be replayed as soon as the recorder could be plugged into a TV on the ground.

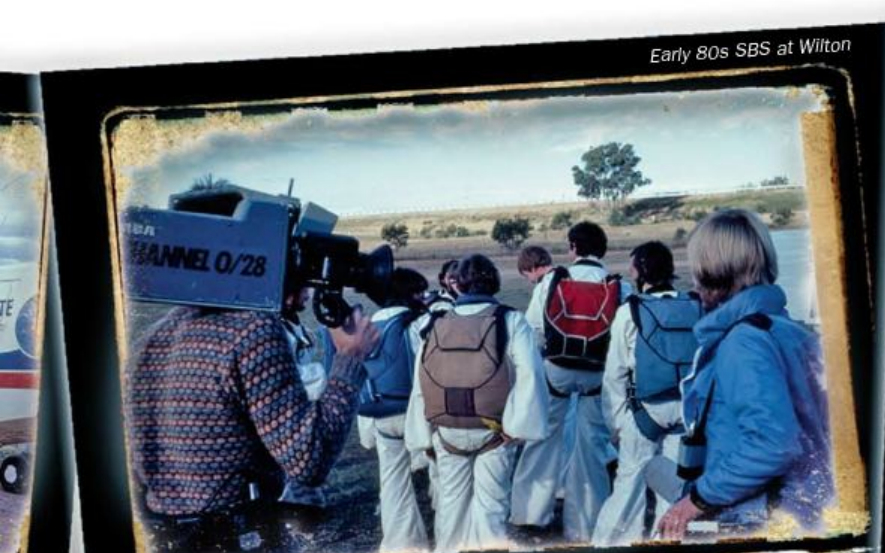
The second generation of video camera systems used were the same as the first, but smaller. Sharp and JVC compact VHS camera and recorder systems used a small 30 minute VHS cassette and were in increasing use nationwide.



Paddy McHugh

Cameras moved from using tubes to CCD's. Sony soon introduced the Video 8 system around 1985 where the camera and recorder were combined. The camcorder was born! Around the size and weight of two cans of drink, everything needed to record the jump was now easily carried on a helmet.

The use of video coincided with the introduction of Accelerated Freefall to Australia by Paul Osborne and Jim Knox at Corowa; the first jump student could exit the aircraft, freefall for 40 seconds, land and de-brief using video shot feet away by their freefall camera person. Those shots were taken home to family and friends and shown to a far-reaching audience along with the elated commentary from the on screen performer.



Early 80s SBS at Wilton



Graeme Hill runs video debrief



# The Origins of Freefall Photography



Early 80s ground to air video and telemeters, Corowa

Competition jumps were first judged using "Telemeters", big and powerful binoculars, where the ground based judge's gazed skyward, stopwatch in hand, with 'pencilers' taking notes by their side. The freefall events of Style and Relative Work (RW) were scored from one live sighting.

The arrival of the video age saw the telemeters replaced with the 'Ground to Air Video System', a video camera with a very long telephoto lens, mounted on

a smooth and stable "Fluid Head" and heavy tripod. These were complicated and expensive, but fabulous assemblies of photographic equipment. There were few skilled operators either available or willing to stand outside and film from sunrise to sunset as jump run after jump run exited.

This worked very well but not without its problems and drawbacks.

The judges were now out of the hot sun and could replay the jump, even at slower speeds, however, as the skill and speed of the jumpers increased so did the problems. Having to clearly 'show' their first point was a difficulty with the formation presenting to the relative air then quickly flattening out and falling straight to the ground. For the judges to see the grips, the angles of the camera looking up had to be precise with little margin. Teams often disputed scores and found themselves slowing down some aspects of their jumps to 'show' the judges. Black or dark jumpsuits were needed against a bright sky. Of course there could be no cloud between the camera and the aircraft and only the competitor or team could exit each jump run. Teams were spotted from the ground, which often resulted in long walks. As 70s and 80s competitor and photographer Dave "Bluebaker" Hancock put it: *"I can combine my two favourite pastimes. Skydiving and bush walking"*.

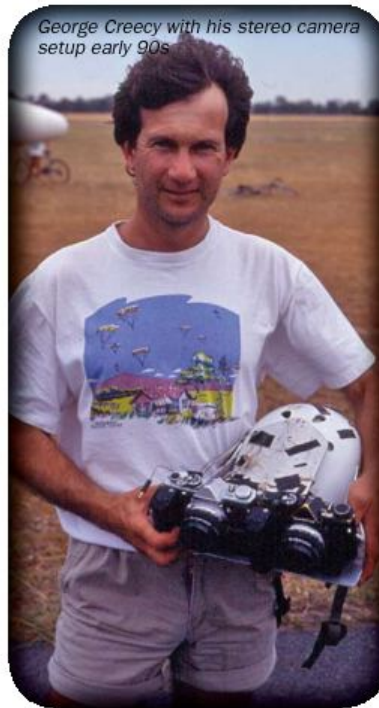
The cameras were as far as three miles away from the competitors, the device that had already enjoyed a long and 'close' relationship with freefalling jumpers.

1987 saw a differing competition format where the National Championships were run at Toogoolawah around the Christmas / New Year period and the Australian Parachute Team to attend the World Parachuting Championships were chosen from the winners of the 'Selection Meet' which was run at Yarrowonga DZ in Victoria, in Winter!

For the first time all teams at the competition arrived with their own Camera Person who had filmed all recent team training. With many days lost to weather, it was un-successfully proposed to use air to air video as the primary method of judging; the biggest reason being that it was not within the rules to do so. It was also suggested that a cameraman could 'look away' should their team be having a bad jump. The potential for 'sabotage' based re-jumps provided a good deal of mistrust.

To avoid falling near cloud which could obstruct the ground to air video's view, the 8-way team 'Dreamtime' were given the exit command that resulted with three of the team members, including their camera man Stewie McNeer, landing in a very cold Lake Mulwalah. After about thirty minutes Farrel McKay was found clinging to a dead tree, suffering from exposure!

Ultimately the meet was finished successfully and was somewhat the beginning of implementing air-to-air video as a primary means of judging RW, now known as Formation Skydiving (FS).



George Creecy with his stereo camera setup early 90s

After using air to air video extensively in local and state meets, it became the principle means of judging all FS at the 1990/91 National Championships at Corowa, the first such meet in the world to do so. The USPA sent two judges to observe our nationals. With the exception of Classic Style all freefall and Canopy Formation (CF) events rely on Air to Air Video and ground based video is used as an aid to judge Canopy Piloting and Classic Accuracy events.

Now the camera was an integral part of the teams, being in the position to increase scores with the information they supplied or cost the team points if they got it wrong.



Mark Hay late 80s



Night Jumper



Ken Penfold with 1970's 'shoot from behind' mount. Removable for landing to protect manhood!



Early 80's Protec with side mount 'tub'



Around the time the term 'Camera Man' was now being replaced with the more socially correct terminology 'Camera Person' it has since become 'Camera Flyer'. Once a rarity was now a more frequent sight: Girls throwing themselves out of aircraft with cameras mounted too. Today there are many. Although a world traveling Kiwi, Wendy Smith has regularly graced our shores for over 10 years and has made a significant photographic contribution.

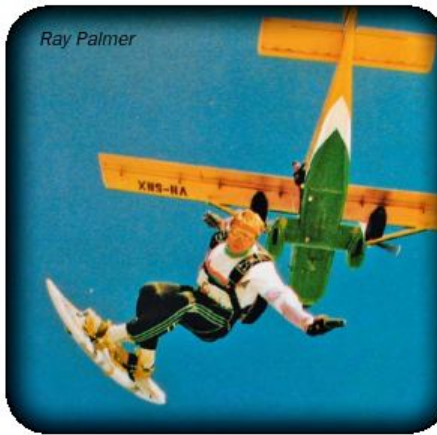
Apart from a few operational regulations (see section 5.9.A, 1,2 and 3; check with your CI and DZSO) Freefall Photography has the freedom of needing no rating! It is one of the few activities that require no formal training, however good advice and mentoring is always a great assistance to photographic skills and most importantly, safety. The Australian Army Parachute Training School has run a yearly Freefall Camera Course since 1996.

With pictures now being extensively used, some form of rating, standardization and unity was sought. At the instigation of the National Examiner, Phil Hindley, an organization, Ralph Presgrave and like-minded camera persons formed The Freefall Camera Persons Association around 1995 who presented and proposed camera work guidelines, competition ratings and freefall camera courses. It had limited success having a small, individualistic membership and little overall support.

However an objective of the group was put to use for the 1996/97 Nationals when seeing the potential of pictures to draw sponsors, sole media rights to the event were granted to an individual, including ownership of all images created at the competition. For reasons of principle and with few exceptions, camera flyers refused to hand over their work for any purpose other than judging.

Along with positive daily presentations of that event, astounding images of a near double fatality resulting from a canopy collision were also broadcast. Shot by a local spectator and combined with the media manager's ambulance recovery shots, these images displayed a stark reality. Similarly, a quick succession of student fatalities a decade earlier, and the terrible media generated, taught the sport lessons in media and crisis management. The APF now has a comprehensive Media Manual.

With the early 90s seeing the popularity of the newer artistic disciplines grow, so too did the cameras ability to present parachuting to a wider audience beyond their the peers. Feature films, television and commercials using skydiving as a vehicle to tell a story were regularly in production.



The world's largest advertiser, Coca Cola devised what was to become their world wide advertising campaign 'Skysurfer'. Details of the brief included: "No special effects, it has to be real". After months of R & D with a large team led by Sydney

Skydivers' Graeme Hill, Phil Onis and Steve Walahn, it was shot near Broken Hill by the author and a second 35mm system operated by Mick Kellaheer. Ray Palmer's skill and performance 'skysurfing' a full size 190cm surfboard, straight out of a Nomad, was sensational and is un-matched. It has been said that more people on Earth have seen Ray Palmer skydive than any one else.

Not from an aircraft but still free falling, in 1993 Nic Feteris and Glenn Singleman presented us with BASE Climb; a truly fantastic adventure film. Arguably, the shots falling by the rock face are the best pieces of real action film, ever.

The opening scenes of the 1995 Power Ranges film saw a freestyle, skysurfing, formation, swoop landing, teenage thrill fest! Being a fantastic 'five minute skydive' it was part of the biggest budget film made in Australia in its time.

The 90's saw the introduction of regular Australian skydiving videos. Almost all Nationals and many boogies began to release tapes of the events. Mick Kellaheer's independent video 'Gravitate' displayed a unique perspective from experimentation to tandems.

Direct air to ground transmission of parachuting displays became an often utilized source for broadcasters and stadium screens.

In 1994 with a 30-way Olympic Rings formation display and flag jump over Sydney Harbor, after years of canvassing the International Olympic Committee (IOC), The International Parachuting Committee (IPC) launched their presentation for inclusion of Parachuting in the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

The Competition was to be arena based Classic Accuracy and a modified 4-way FS event where the Camera Flyer, equipped with an air to ground transmitter for live broadcast, would exit the aircraft filming their team taking out and holding a 4-way star for some seconds with the 15 seconds working time would begin at the first grip break. Of the seven sports presented to the IOC, Parachuting was listed fourth with three chosen.





# The Origins of Freefall Photography

The 1990s were a time where the power and value of pictures were fully realized, being a major contributor to the unprecedented growth in parachuting activities in Australia and worldwide.

The experimentation with freestyle and sky surfing from the late 80s into the early 90's saw the artistic events of freestyle and skysurfing take off: Evolving from localized meets to World Cup and ultimately World Championship competition events. Likewise did the freeflying of the mid 90s. Not only had the camera become vital in delivering the vision of the performance to the judges, but the camera work also contributed to the score, on its technical and artistic merits.

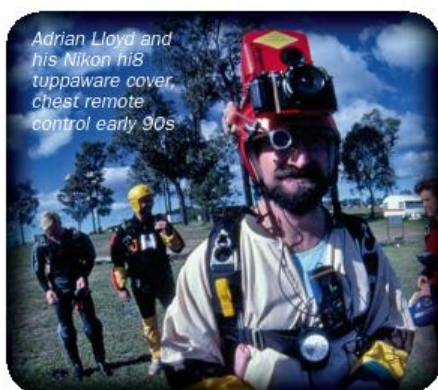


Roz and Craig

Photo: Shane Sparkes

The 90s saw many Australian cameramen achieve excellence at world level with performer and camera combinations of the likes of Roz Tomkins and her cameramen Gary Cunningham and Craig Field. Terry Wafer won a gold medal filming 16-way FS at the 1998 World Cup; Paul Truman and Gemma Stevens getting a silver by the narrowest of margins and a gold medal to Australian / NZ combo of Ash Crick and John King at the 1999 WPC at Corowa; Grant Hetherington and Richard Stuart winning WPC and World Cup medals in their mixed nationality teams.

As photographic equipment has evolved, we have seen the design and development of dedicated freefall camera helmets, mounts, sights and jumpsuits.



Adrian Lloyd and his Nikon hi8 tupperware cover, chest remote control early 90s

The once common Tupperware and gaffer tape camera cover has been replaced by custom carbon fiber boxes and camera gloves. A mirror or teammates to see the camera's red record light with the 'Cam Eye'. The piece of wire in front of the eye with the

readily available and accurate ring sight. There is now a wide range of helmets, mounts and peripheral equipment available off the shelf, as any parachuting gear catalogue or magazine will show.

The 60's and 70's camera helmet of choice was often a 'Bell' motorcycle helmet with camera mounts bolted on. Many cameras were so heavy and to one side that a counter weight would be required to balance the load.

Andy Keech says, "All mounts had to be custom-made, by bending sheet metal, riveting, and planning how to attach the camera to the helmet. All mounts were experimental and hand-made for each different camera design. Camera sights also had

to be mounted in a range of imaginative and unexplored ways, and occasionally these sights injured the photographer. On one such occasion, my sight collided with my nose, resulting in the need for stitches".



Bluebaker with side mount beaulieu 16mm mif 80s

Bruce Towers varied arsenal of cameras included side mounted Arriflex 35mm motion picture cameras and perhaps the most extraordinary of mounts: a twin side mount, 16mm Beaulieu and SP Betacam broadcast camera combination used for filming the freefall scenes in the 1985 WPC, ABC TV documentary 'Sky Cowboys'. This was the first time the world of 'hard core' training and competition was fully presented in detail to the viewing public.

The mid 80s saw the introduction of the 'Dickinson' helmet. This was a custom moulded plastic helmet based on the 'Protec' shell with a top video and front, rotating horizontal / vertical stills mount. Until then the video / stills camera combo was not in common use. Incorporating a simple quick release and a recovery parachute, it was innovative. It also used a new heavy duty Velcro type product called 'Dual Lock', at first considered so good by some it replaced the more conventional nuts and bolts to attach cameras, until numerous instances where cameras 'fell off' on opening! A release system is now mandatory in some parachuting activities and a recovery parachute could be regarded a good idea considering the numerous reports of jettisoned camera helmets!

Off the shelf helmets designed and manufactured locally have been available since the 90s: Shane Dunn's Competition Helmets being a popular choice in the earlier years; today Jason Cooke's range being worn on virtually every drop zone here and many overseas.

The camera has not only been in the hands and on the heads of skydivers. Phil Thamm has taken some extraordinary shots from his foot mounts as has the 'between the legs' mounts used by Ken Penfold in the 70s, shooting close ups of pack tray openings and over the shoulder POVs.

Cameras have been wing mounted, belly mounted, looking forwards and backwards, even on gloves. Mark Edwards innovated the Tandem Hand Camera (THC) which has recently seen a great change in the way commercial drop zones operate. An Australian development, its first uses were experimental in the early days of tandem skydiving where licensed skydivers acting as 'dummy' students, hand held the camera and shot their own jump. Brent Cameron put it to practical use in the late 90s, THC being born from the staffing problems of small island operations.

The video pictures of passengers having the 'joy ride of their life' with grabs and commentary of the full jump is an obvious economic 'blast' for the business side of the sport; fitting more tandem pairs in all sizes of aircraft and needing less staff, THC has almost completely taken over tandem skydive photography with the exception of DZs who want to offer greater visual representation than an arms length view of skydiving.



Jumpsuits used by camera flyers have always been a personal choice considering their suitability for the purpose. Initially all jumpers used the same jumpsuits, but to increase relative maneuverability requires more lift, so the camera can use characteristics of the suit to help get above and fly around the subjects easily and technique to get level and lower. Camera suits were initially baggier even to the point of using large 'Balloon Suits' that incorporated mesh covered vents that inflated the suit. A common practice in the early video days was to have a jumpsuit too big so the recorder could be carried inside. Swoop cords, boosters and wings have been added, the latter causing some angst when they were first introduced, where bad design combined with camera flyers inadvertently reaching through a gap created between the bottom of the wing and it's attachment point on deployment resulted in many 'pilot chute in tow' malfunctions.



1984, Oversized jumpsuit to carry video recorder.

Sit fly suits were popular around the mid 90s. Ironically in the early developmental days of Freefly, old baggy jumpsuits, an often preferred and 'clownish' looking outfit for the camera flyer became a sought after item. The rags of the 1980s came back into fashion for a time until again the science of the discipline was further applied.

With the introduction of this equipment, one factor remained constant. An increasing number of photographers, pictures and exposure of sport parachuting to both its own and the general public. Today not a week goes by with some form of parachuting being presented in the major media outlets: We see altitude records being broken, wing suiters and BASE jumpers defying gravity and the grandparents taking to the air!

The digital age is perhaps the third revolution of photographing our sport and within its domain lies much of the foreseeable future.

In 1985 a Telecom Technician and Meredith skydiving video guy, Mark 'Moff' O'Fynn, while waiting for the aircraft and holding his 'magnum of champagne' sized video camera mounted on a Bell motorcycle helmet and hard wired to his chest mounted 'dozen stubbies of beer' sized recorder he made a bold statement, "Eventually, all video stuff will be solid state. No tape. No moving parts and it will be really small!"

Digital imaging technology has been around for decades. The first pictures of the surface of Mars were beamed back to Earth in 1976 as was the process receiving pictures from the moon landings. It has seen little more than ten years mainstream use within skydiving with digital video cameras introduced in the late 1990s and digital stills cameras appearing around 2000: as did frequent use of computers such as Apple Macs for video editing and discs began replacing tape and prints.

Mitch McMartin who has been photographing for 12 of his 14 years in the sport first saw digital stills cameras in 2002. "I was in the States and these guys were shooting CRW big ways with them. It wasn't until 2004 that I got my own. I began

shooting with old Hi8 cameras and film. Digital has helped me experiment and learn".

The speed and quality of creating pictures digitally has largely replaced the use of film. It has given us the ability to run fax and web meets; to share experiences and information world wide, instantly and at a practical cost.

With such great advances in equipment, similar to the number of cameras on freely loads since the late 90s, Graham Hill of Victoria recently said, "I have been jumping for 26 years and taking pictures for six months. Now I know how you guys feel about taking pictures. I have a little 'go pro' that is fantastic. Just to be able to replay their own POV, eventually everyone will always jump these".

A historical retrospective cannot be complete without reference to where we are today and our heading toward the future. It may not be so much what technologies become available and how we apply them, but who will be shooting the pictures

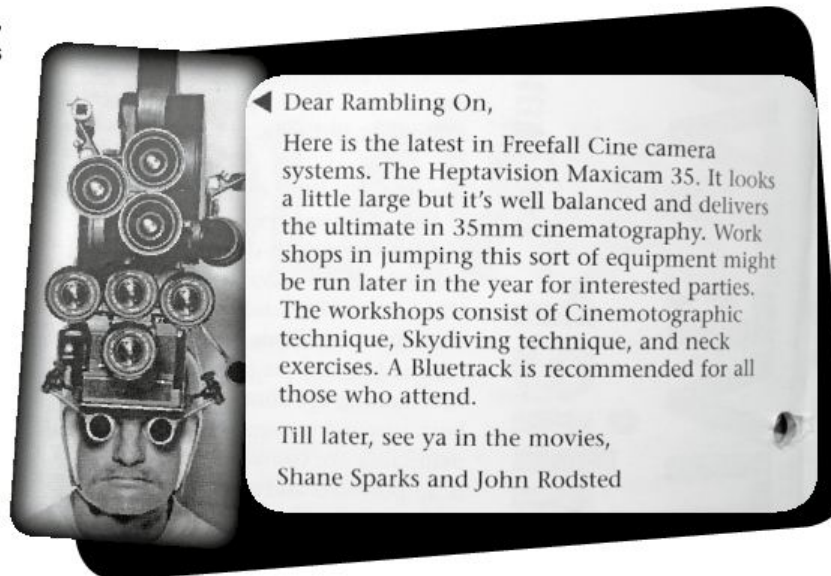
and what the motivation will be. What will inspire today's school kids to take up skydiving and who will teach the ones who want to photograph 'their' time?

By staying safe and together, we will probably get to see those answers, in pictures.

Being largely shot in open, outdoor spaces and lit by one sun Freefall Photography is one of the simplest forms of photography. The complexities of producing such images considering mind, body, equipment, environment and technique are utterly phenomenal.

As Jaak 'Sharke' Saega says of how he gets his shots, "I throw a camera out of a plane and as it falls to the ground at over 200 kmh, people in front of it are shot. Strange thing is, the camera is attached to ME!".

Thank you to the names: Australian Army, Douthat, Gillard, Hay, Hickson, Hill, Hills, Janine Hayes, Keech, Mc Martin, Parachute Training School, Presgrave, Simunic, Bron Sparkes and Towers, for the books, magazines, pictures, interviews and information they provided for this article.



Dear Rambling On,

Here is the latest in Freefall Cine camera systems. The Heptavision Maxicam 35. It looks a little large but it's well balanced and delivers the ultimate in 35mm cinematography. Workshops in jumping this sort of equipment might be run later in the year for interested parties. The workshops consist of Cinematographic technique, Skydiving technique, and neck exercises. A Bluetrack is recommended for all those who attend.

Till later, see ya in the movies,  
Shane Sparks and John Rodsted



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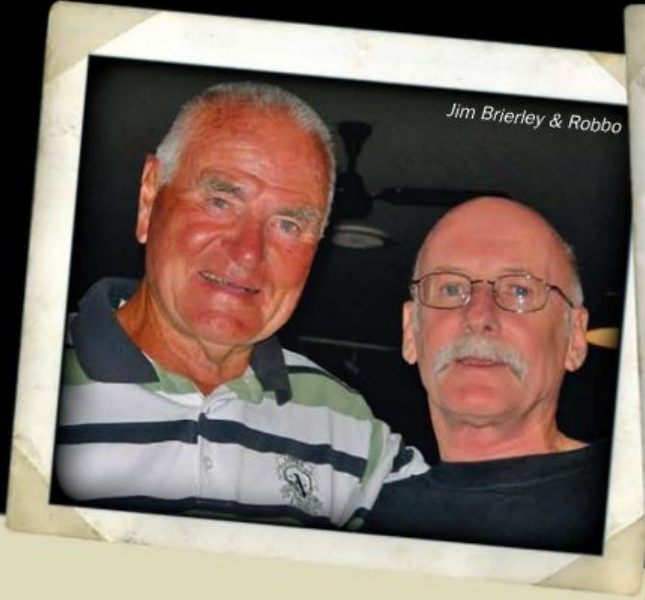


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# POPS AUSTRALIA AND THE APF



By Ian Robertson Top POP Australia

**A HISTORY OF THE AUSTRALIAN PARACHUTE FEDERATION WOULD NOT BE COMPLETE WITHOUT THE INCLUSION OF A FEW WORDS ON THE PARACHUTISTS OVER PHORTY SOCIETY AND ITS LINK WITH THE AUSTRALIAN PARACHUTE FEDERATION RIGHT FROM THE START. POPS AUSTRALIA WILL BE CELEBRATING ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2011.**

The APF was 11 years young when the Australian chapter of the International POPS Organisation officially began. According to documents given to me by Australia's first Top POP, the late Bernie Shaw, then APF President Claude Gillard asked Bernie to get a POPS organisation going in Australia. Bernie subsequently attended a Victorian Parachute Council Meeting on 20th January 1981 "as the person who has been nominated by Claude Gillard OAM to get POPS Australia going".



Bernie set about organising membership and events. At the time of the 1st Australian POPS Meet held 2nd & 3rd May 1981 at Labertouche in Victoria, POPS Australia had 7 members, all of whom attended the meet:

- # 1 Roy Taylor [Victoria]
- # 2 Claude Gillard [Victoria]
- # 3 Bernie Shaw [Victoria]
- # 4 Max King [Northern Territory]
- # 5 Jean Turner [South Australia]
- # 6 Bill Kenny [Victoria]
- # 7 Steve Filak [Victoria]

Bernie collated these statistics for those first 7 members:

- Youngest - 41
- Oldest - 55
- Average age - 49
- Total years - 339
- Most jumps - 3,000
- Least jumps - 259
- Total jumps - 9,521
- Furthest travelled - Max King from Katherine NT





The competition events at Labertouche were Accuracy and Hit'n'Rock, the worldwide POPS classic competition event. Roy Taylor won the accuracy ahead of Bill Kenny second and Bernie Shaw third. Bernie turned the tables and won the Hit'n'Rock in front of Roy second and Max King third.

That very first Aussie POPS Meet was the start of a skydiving journey that continues to this day and included the 1st World POPS Meet at the Ettamogah Pub in NSW in 1990 and the 9th World POPS Meet & Championships at Toogoolawah in Queensland in 2008. Bernie was the inspiration and the main man behind the Ettamogah Pub meet and was our Guest of Honour at the 2008 event at Toogoolawah, to publically acknowledge his contribution to the sport in general and for jumpers over 40 [but not over the hill] in particular. His idea for World POPS Meets was the reason POPS became a truly international fraternity with world meets

since 1990 having been held in the USA [Florida 1993 & Arizona 2006], Europe [Spain 1995 & Switzerland 2004], Jordan 1997, Canada 1999, New Zealand 2002 and Australia in 2008. This year in June the meet will be held in Italy and in 2012, Holland is the likely venue.

In the past, they were called World POPS Meets. I added the words "and Championships" in 2008 to recognise the skills and expectations of "newer" & younger POPS members, the diversity of disciplines available and the introduction of national team competition events at world POPS meets. POPS is the fastest growing sector in a sport that is not expanding at the same rate [outside of tandems that is]. The average age of skydivers these days, anecdotally at least, would have to be nearing 40.

From those early beginnings in 1981 POPS Australia began to attract members and grow; we recently issued Membership # 735, over 300 signing up in the last four or so years.





# THE FUTURE FOR POPS IN AUSTRALIA

At the World POPS Meet in NZ in 2002, I discussed the prospect of having more POPS meets in Australia and a regular Trans Tasman Australia v NZ meet. We [Aussies & Kiwis] felt we were at a bit of a disadvantage compared to POPS members overseas, particularly the USA & Europe, where populations and skydiving communities are much bigger, distances are smaller and POPS meets and competitions are regular happenings. In Australia and NZ, things were the opposite. Here, POPS had become, until 2002, pretty much a Victorian thing; most of the participating POPS members and all the events were held in Victoria, or at Corowa in NSW [which may as well be in Victoria].

We held the first POPS meet outside Victoria since Bernie Shaw was organising events, at Elderslie in October 2002. Since then we have had more POPS meets [18] at more DZs [9] in more states [4] with more jumpers joining, jumping and competing, as well as:

- Website introduced 2004
- Use of email including when applicable APF broadcast to inform members
- Advertising and expanded articles in ASM & some overseas publications
- World POPS Forum website introduced 2006
- 47-way largest Australia POPS FS record 2006
- 1st Australia v NZ Trans Tasman Challenge 2007
- 1st NSW v Victoria POPS Meet 2009
- 8-way speed stars & sport accuracy introduced at POPS meets in Australia
- 2-way CRW and 2 & 3-way Wingsuit Competitions introduced at 9th World POPS Championships 2008
- Coaching, camera and judging introduced for all POPS competition events and record attempts
- Area Council funding assisted coaching & load organising introduced at POPS meets in Australia
- POPS Australia support for National Accuracy Championships with medals for POPS category
- POPS Australia sponsorship and support for jumpers at Batchelor, Tully & Coffs Harbour Boogies
- POPS Australia sponsorship at APF Conference from 2009
- 1st World Top POP from Australia 2006 - 2008
- APF support for POPS Australia to host 9th World POPS Meet and Championships in Australia 2008
- APF & Area Councils financial support for Australian POPS & Official Volunteers at 2008 event

We encourage and support new and younger jumpers in our sport, as we should and celebrate the achievements of the sport's elders, such as that unique skydiver, Jim Brierley, POP, SOS, JOS and JOE, going on 86 and still a regular at DZs in Victoria. Jim, like many others who continue to jump well into their 60s and beyond, is an inspiration to those younger people, and an outstanding example of how one can continue to achieve great things regardless of age.

Most sports have a veteran or master category, based on age; so having an organisation – in this case the Paracutists Over Phorty Society - with an age prerequisite for competition events is consistent with what happens universally. Whether or not we agree what the benchmark age should be – is 60 the new 40 for example – the fact is that 40 is the international benchmark within our sport for determining qualification for POPS competition and records. [I realise 50 is the age qualification for Masters Category in the APF Sporting Code, although that is within the overall competition environment].

So is there a future for POPS in this country? I'd like to think so, that there is a place within the umbrella of the APF for mature age skydivers to continue in the sport, to have the opportunity for competition, learning, coaching and just hanging out with jumping mates. The successes of the last 4 years culminating in the 9th World POPS Meet and Championships at Toogoolawah in 2008 demonstrate there is an appetite for the types of opportunities and events POPS Australia has made available and the new level of performance and satisfaction that has emerged. It just takes imagination, inspiration, enthusiasm and hard work to make it all happen.



Female POPS Record at Skysisters 2007



The international POPS logo represents Father Time fearlessly hurtling through space in gear and seated in a rocking chair, the latter item being used in the unique, final event at POPS meets - the Hit'n'Rock. It involves landing on or near a target disc, removing your rig without moving toward the target, stomping or touching the target, running 40 feet [12 metres] and sitting in a rocking chair, or chair of some sort. People practice for this event overseas and competition gets pretty fierce, even though it's meant to be a fun event. The world record is 3.77 secs, set at Empuriabrava Spain in 1995.



# PERFORMANCE DESIGNS

1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996

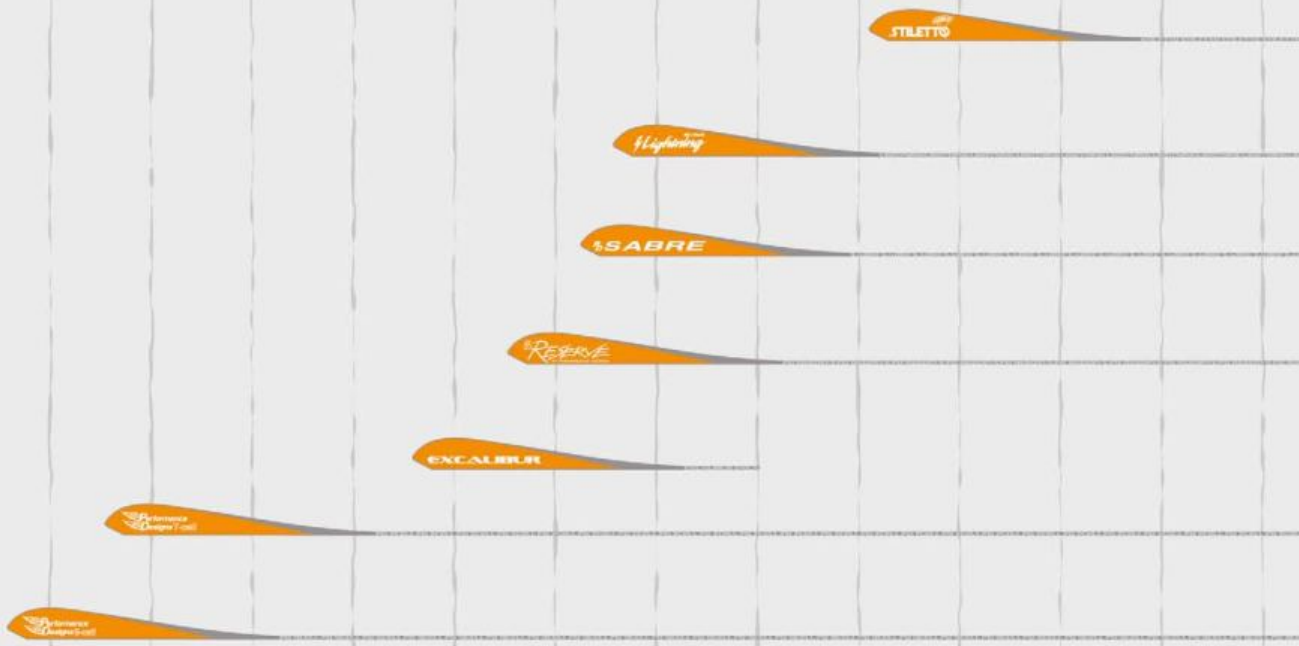
**1982**  
Bill Coe begins building canopies.

**1984**  
John LeBlanc starts working for Performance Designs.

**1989 ZERO POROSITY FABRIC**  
PD Devises A process to produce A Zero Porosity Fabric which revolutionizes the parachute industry.

**1986 MICROLINE**  
PD researches and develops a new "Low-Drag" suspension line Utilizing Spectra fibers. This new technology is introduced as "Microline" and reduces suspension line drag by 70%. This new line technology has now become an industry standard.

**1988 CROSS BRACED PATENT**  
PD develops and patents the "Cross Braced Airfoil" US Patent Number: 4930727 This invention was then commercialized in a square canopy named the Excalibur. This new concept reduced the total number of suspension lines required while improving aerodynamic performance of the canopy beyond that which was currently available.



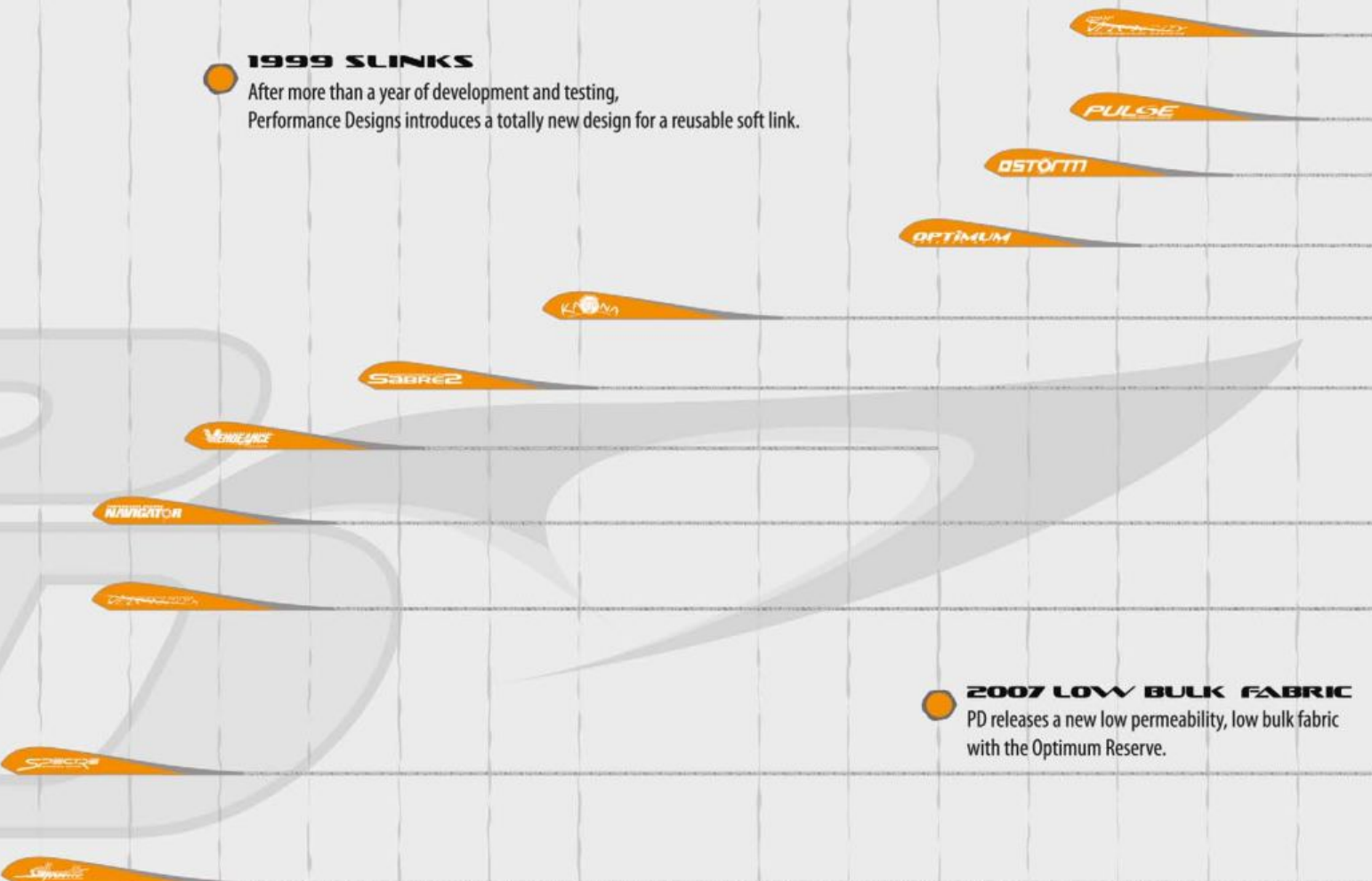


# THROUGH THE YEARS

1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010

## 1999 SLINKS

After more than a year of development and testing, Performance Designs introduces a totally new design for a reusable soft link.



## 2007 LOW BULK FABRIC

PD releases a new low permeability, low bulk fabric with the Optimum Reserve.

**Congratulations to the APF and ASM for 50 years of supporting Australian skydiving. PD is proud to have been a part of it with you for the last 28.**

Performance Designs has safely helped jumpers during this time get the most enjoyment out of our sport by building some of the best engineered and trusted main and reserve canopies on the market.

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Wally on TM Miff's back



TM Miff with Marcus Priem docking



Shadow Environment Minister Greg Hunt, doing a Tandem at Tooradin with TM Dave Boulter

# HARNESSING THE ENTHUSIASM

By Kelly Brennan

## TANDEMS HAVE NOW BEEN PART OF THE NATIONAL JUMPING SCENE FOR 25 YEARS

Australia's first tandem jump was done at Pakenham on 16th April 1985 from 6,000 feet. Greg Chambers was the Tandem-master, Dave Parsons was his passenger, and that first legal leap was conducted under the observation of the Department of Aviation.

Both men had done their tandem ratings in America, and they'd brought back a Vector Tandem rig. John Chapman, who was working at the APF Office in Melbourne at the time, bought a third share in the \$6,000 rig. The trio's first jumps with the new rig back at Commando Skydivers were made with a 50 lb teddy bear as the passenger. John, or Chappo as he was better known, then set about working with the APF to get tandem jumping approved.

Sydney jumper, Grahame Hill, joined the effort as the proud new owner of Australia's second tandem rig. "Since D.O.A. sport aviation was in Melbourne at the time, we did the first tandem jumps at Pakenham as a demonstration," said John Chapman. Once the authorities were satisfied, Greg Chambers began to train the first Tandem Masters.

"Hilly and I completed our tandem certification over a series of 5 jumps," said Chappo. Dave and Greg were given the numbers TM#1 and TM#2, Hilly got TM#3 and Chappo was given TM#4. "Initially," said Chappo, "CASA only allowed 'C' licence minimum on the front for a trial period and it wasn't until after the 1985 APF Conference in Mount Isa that ab initio students were allowed."

Three months after that approval-winning jump, Chappo took Allan Bennett up as his passenger on Australia's first night tandem.

Early tandem students included Melbourne television newsreader Jennifer Keyte and 80 year-old Florence Houghton who became Australia's oldest skydiver at the time. Chappo remembered Flo as an extrovert who got good national and even international media coverage.

Chappo said only a few hundred tandems were done in Australia for each of the first few years, but a lot of development was going on. "Initially, we only offered a 6,000 ft hop and pop to tandem passengers at Pakenham because we had no drogue." He said Strong tandems had a drogue right from the start but Bill Booth – the parachuting innovator behind the 3-ring system and Vector rigs - initially resisted the idea. "There were also a few stories about blown up mains and other concerns happening around the world," said John, "and, of course, there were no AADs then."

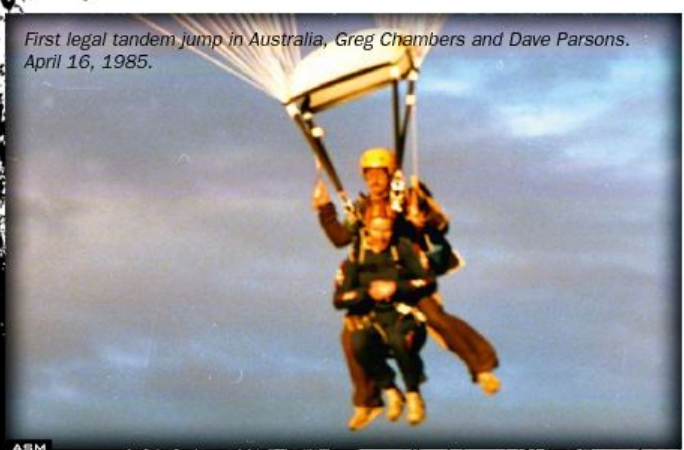
Chappo later had plenty of experience with incident reports, tandem issues and AADs, when he worked as the APF's Technical Officer for just over a decade.

Tandem skydiving would take off over the next 25 years, dominating our sport. By 2009, there were more than 95,000 tandem jumps a year in Australia.

The first Tandem Master, Greg Chambers, said he never expected it to become so huge. "I thought it was the way that training was going to go, and I realised it could be commercially viable but I never thought it would be this big," he said.

Greg said the popularity of tandem jumping was a little disappointing because it changed the relationship between the public and the sport. It also took away some of the club spirit that attracted people like him in the first place. "At the same time," stressed Greg, "Tandem has allowed a whole lot of people to enjoy an experience they might not have been able to try without it."

*An excerpt from 'a history of Commando Skydivers' due for release in 2010.*



First legal tandem jump in Australia, Greg Chambers and Dave Parsons. April 16, 1985.





John Chapman with Melbourne newsreader Jennifer Keyte



TM Archie Jamieson with passenger DJ



Crowd pleasers Dene Richardson with Tarsha

## THE TANDEM THAT WASNT - SYDNEY, 1928

By Kelly Brennan

(From 'The Argus' and 'Sydney Morning Herald' newspapers in Feb/March 1928.)

An entrepreneurial display jumper came very close to creating Australia's first tandem jump nearly ninety years ago.

Miss Phoebe Martyn was the lucky winner of a public competition to make a descent from 2000 feet, strapped to Lieutenant Haakon Quiller. The famous Norwegian had been making quite a name for himself with spectacular parachute feats around Australia.

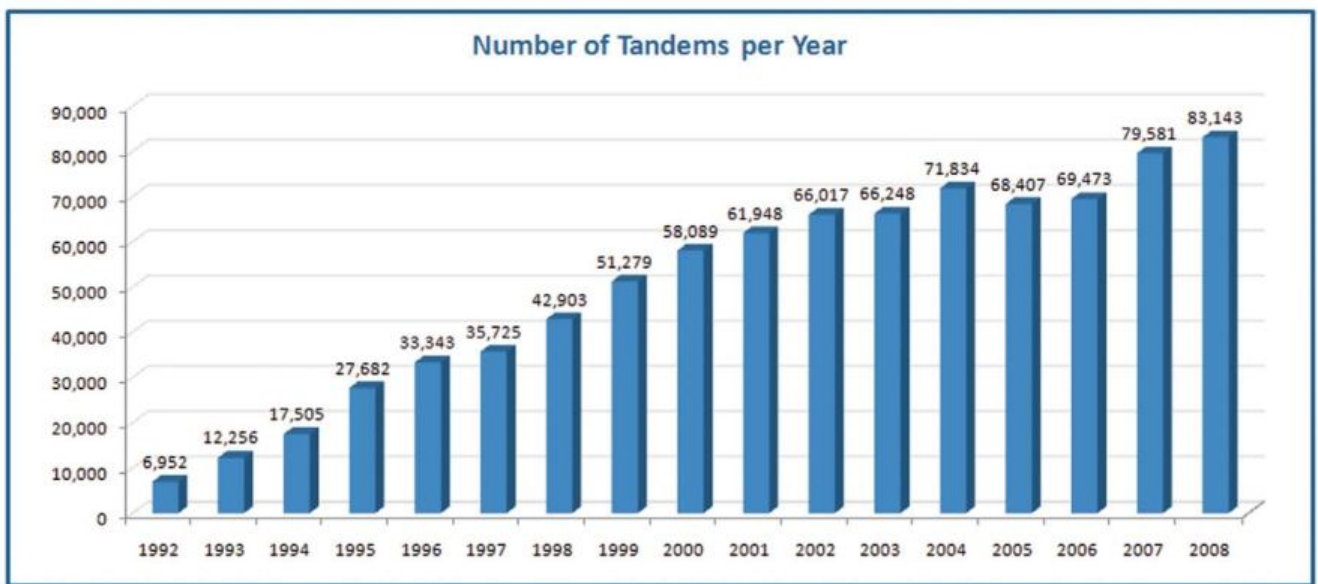
However, the plan came unstuck in the testing phase. Haakon wanted to assess the landing speed for two people under the same canopy, so leaden weights totalling 250 pounds were attached to a chute and tossed out of a plane at Mascot. The whole lot fell quickly and straight down, collecting a power wire and landing with a terrific crash just outside a cottage with three terrified people inside.

This didn't go down well with authorities, who refused to allow the jump. On the first of March, 1928, thousands of spectators gathered at the Coo-ee City Carnival, still holding out hope they'd see a dangerous double descent. Everything was in readiness, but a telegram from the Department of Civil Aviation in Melbourne confirmed the ban.



Photo: Shelly Mullen

TM Ben Nordkamp delivering a keg to his 40th



Source: APF Annual Reports.



# Spirit

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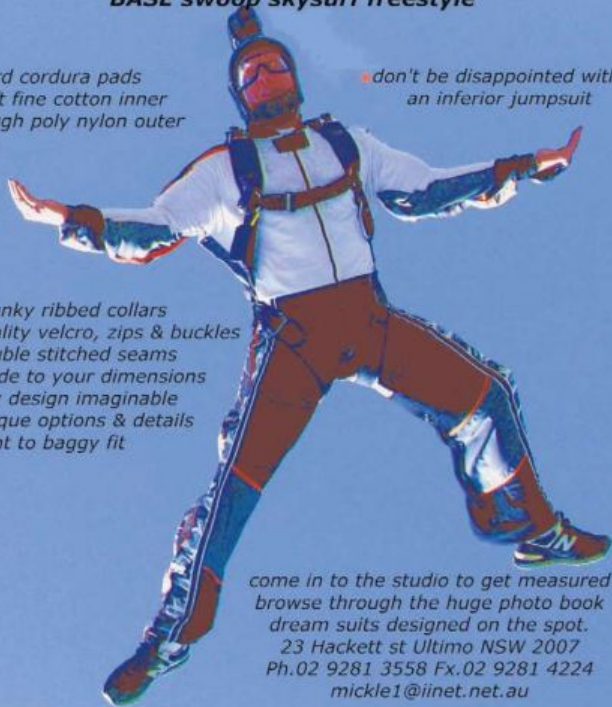
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Photo: Vertical Atmonauti Stack over Toogoolawah By: Bart Cunningham

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BUT IN THE LONG RUN IT CAN ONLY GAIN YOU RESPECT.**

# SAFETY MATTERS

## **“An accident is a series of bad decisions executed to perfection”**

Whenever someone gets nice and hurt there are the usual questions. What happened? How could it have been prevented? And the creeping thought; “Would I have done any different? Any better?” Too often not enough information comes in. We go around trying to get a number of perspectives just to get one good idea of what happened. Ever notice how many malfunctions are called “I don’t know?” Most of them, it turns out. And how many bruises and breaks are inflicted mysteriously? Mysterious, that is, to the one who knew the least when it was needed most.

Another aspect of injurious behaviour is the embarrassment. Embarrassment over the incident and the crippling effects of embarrassment that prevents us from asking someone what we did. Once

we get hurt, how fast are we to learn how not to do so again? Suddenly, as if recently anointed, there appear dozens of ersatz “instructors” too ready to disperse their wisdom. But what actually gets learned? Does anyone ever really pursue a course of instruction to prevent further injury?

Sometimes it’s easy to understand what went wrong. Often it’s a technical manoeuvre that needs correcting in order to execute properly. For these problems there is a source for learning. Some drop zones may offer further instruction in canopy control to help with landing troubles. All DZs should provide equipment and instructors to help in staying current with malfunction procedures.

Sometimes the required learning is best suited to a good therapist. There’s only so much one can do for the cocky, self assured individual with no skill to back up the claim. And too often the claim is made mid flight.

But what’s confusing to the non-therapist is the human tendency toward self education with an ignorant instructor. Especially when there seems no shortage of available knowledge if one would only ask. Another enigma of the human makeup is the passion for learning it all now. And the posing necessary to maintain the image of a learned one in lieu of real intelligence.

How does one teach patience and the concept of all things in their own time? How might we learn that no matter how hard we try to perform otherwise, the elements ultimately win? Laws of the universe prevail. Broken bodies and disfigured pride are seldom the acquisitions of wise decisions or solid knowledge. What would it take for us to take advantage of all the knowledge

that’s out there? What would it take to never get hurt, yet progress in the direction we wish to pursue? Surely we can’t all want nothing more than to remain somewhat stagnant; warm and secure in the embryonic state of student days when coddling and ever present guidance were with us every baby step of the way. So how do we make the trip out of “studentia” and into the world of skill based knowledge? (And who among us is in possession of the ego that declares independence from perpetual student status? When are we no longer in need of learning?)

Every year our members get hurt. Some were the accidents of the neophyte. Some were ignorance - not enough knowledge while attempting to broaden skill. And there was also the shroud of ego infested pride. Can we all guarantee that, though we’re not impervious to accident, we won’t make those same mistakes?

We need to question our motivations as rigorously as we need to question what went wrong. And we need to settle our differences with pride. So prepare continuously and along with that, make new opportunities to grow and learn. Learning is armament against injury. Build an arsenal. Ask how.

**“Acquire knowledge and make a continuing effort to add to and improve that knowledge. Accurately evaluate personal capabilities and limitations. Evaluate the risk factors. Practice and prepare for both the expected and the unexpected.”**

Safety has always been of paramount importance in the sport because of the inherent dangers involved in using two different types of flying equipment and falling towards the earth at speeds of 200mph between the two modes of transport.



The results and efforts to make this sport safer are seen in the changing accident and fatality rates. The most reliable figures are kept on fatalities, which shows that in the early sixties, the frequency of deaths was as high if not higher than it is today, yet the number of participant

was a fraction of the current number.

**Equipment** is becoming more and more user friendly; (However obviously High Performance Canopies have introduced an increase of major injuries and fatalities to especially the ‘experienced’ jumper category)

**Instruction** has become more effective;

**Safety Awareness** is more prevalent;

**APF Direction and Control** via safety officers and instructors ensures that all parachutists in



Kim as a student at Hillman Farm, WA, 1983

**Compiled by  
Kim Hardwick**





# SAFETY MATTERS

Australia work within the system and meet standards set by our most experienced members.

So what is survival in a skydiving context? It is not the "whew that was close pulled it out of my butt – thank you AAD" technique that some skydivers have mastered. Survival is avoiding any type of injury that requires serious medical attention beyond that of a bandage. In view of the magnitude of the risks encountered every time we jump, survival can also be said to replace pride with humility.

None of us should be sitting idly by while even the biggest fool gets hurt, especially if the cause is ignorance rather than just misfortune. Our sport is more survivable than ever before. Our equipment and our training have reached new heights. So, it is almost inexcusable that we suffer any casualties at all. Finding accurate tips are the true challenge. What one 'legend' has to say, another 'guru' offers a different approach.

Ultimately the foundation of skydiving survival is knowledge. As our knowledge and experience expands so do our chances of survival.

- Avoid making decisions that will cause you harm
- Do not do stupid things,
- The more you know about what you are involved in, the safer you are likely to be.

## How Dangerous is it?

148 Fatalities have been recorded in the APF records over the last 50 years.

Thanks to the media, skydiving is generally viewed as a dangerous sport when, in fact, skydiving has become a much safer activity since the advent of the tandem parachute system – especially to the 1st timer. Statistically, skydiving is much safer that it was in the 1960s or 1970s. Skydiving accidents and fatalities are generally a result of "pilot error". Gear malfunctions or failures are few and far between. A skydiving death is a big story for the media. Unfortunately, they fail to report on the millions of successful skydives made that did not result in a death or fatality or even injury.

### The Big Picture

Estimated APF Licensed members: ~2200  
 Estimated Australian skydives in 2009: ~300,000  
 Estimated tandem jumps during the year: ~100,000  
 Average annual skydiving deaths since 1960: 2.9  
 Average annual deaths last 10 years: 2.8

Considering in the 1960s and 70s there were only a few hundred jumpers across the country making some thousands of skydives, the fatality rate per participation has greatly reduced!

Skydiving has become a safer sport in some regards, safer gear for example. However, with regard to non fatal injury, the industry does not effectively gather and report those statistics. It is evident world wide that the injury rate is still quite high. And, what goes unreported is reflected as a skydiving epidemic, ranging from rash and foolish choices to stupid canopy selection to adding dumb risks before adding skill. Skydiving is still a high-injury risk sport.

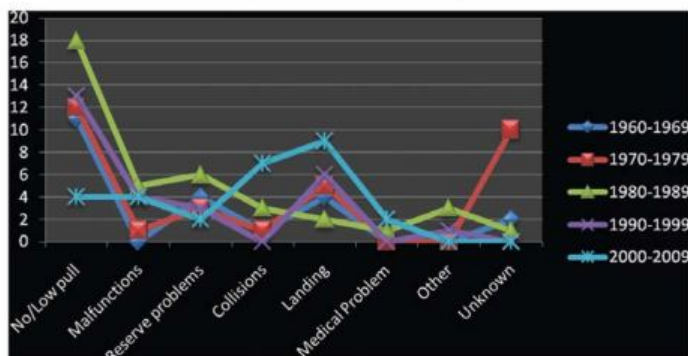
### Getting the Canopy Safely on the Ground

While our equipment is becoming safer, jumpers are mastering safety at their own slow pace. Compared to the progress our equipment is



making, we seem to be producing faster jumpers prone to making dumb mistakes. Many accidents occur these days under fully-functioning parachutes. In part, this is what seems to be mostly smashing us up and killing us these days. And too often the most common ratio we see is one new jumper to one overloaded canopy.

Australian Fatalities by Category 1960 – 2009 (From APF records)



### Category Definitions

- **No Pull/Low Pull** A skydiver did not begin opening a main or reserve parachute in time.
- **Malfunction** The jumper was unable to successfully respond to a main parachute malfunction in time.
- **Reserve Problem** The reserve system did not save the skydiver
- **Collision** Skydivers collided with aircraft, in freefall or under canopy prior to landing.
- **Landing** A jumper died while attempting to land a fully inflated main or reserve parachute
- **Medical** Jumper experienced a medical issue that directly influenced survival of successfully completing a skydive
- **Other** Deaths that do not fit into any of the categories shown.
- **Unknown** No information is available in APF records. (Note – it is likely the unknowns in the '70s would mainly fall into the No/Low pull category considering these made up over 50% of the 'known' deaths.)

Prior to the advent of high performance canopies in the early 90s, landing fatalities (landing under fully functioning canopies or pilot error such as collisions and low turns) contributed relatively little to fatality counts.

NOTE: 100% of the reported Landing fatalities over the 1960/70 period were due to drowning! They also made up only 17% of the total.

The percentage of deaths from landing (usually hooking in too low and too fast) has soared – making up ~30% since 1993. This is a figure reflected in World Wide trends.



### No Pull/Low Pull

Until the early 1990s world wide, this category, combined with the fatalities in the malfunction group, accounted for the



majority of skydiving deaths. On one hand, it was a mystery as to exactly why a skydiver didn't start his pull on time; on the other hand, it can be understandable given the very small window of operating time – after a long freefall and after reaching 3000ft, a jumper has little more than ten seconds to start deployment of the main or reserve parachute – before it is too late. It doesn't take much of a loss of altitude awareness to burn 10 seconds of freefall time; distractions such as a spinning or tumbling body position or difficulty locating a deployment device can eat up that time quickly.

The widespread use of dependable AADs (automatic activation devices) by experienced skydivers and their mandatory use by student jumpers have lowered the percentage of deaths in this category over the years.



After the death after a freefall collision in late 1992 of one of the Worlds most well known, experienced, respected, lauded, international champion competitors, whose fatality could have been avoided by the use of a functioning AAD (he had one in his rig – turned off), the popularity of choosing to use an AAD has multiplied each year in Australia.

Between 1990 and end of '92, almost 80% of the Australian Skydiving fatalities, possibly could have been avoided by the use of an AAD.

In the last decade, this has reduced to 15% (and 50% of these were suspected to be suicides)

## Experience

During the pioneering days of the '60s and '70s, of the 54 recorded Oz fatalities, only 9 of these skydivers had more than 100 jumps.

In the decade of the 80s, students made almost 40% of the fatalities, whilst 28% of fatalities were of skydivers with over 100 jumps.

Over the last twenty years, student deaths have been reduced to 16%, due in a huge part to the introduction of AADs.

While students no longer represent the major portion of annual deaths, each one is a tragedy for the sport. These are the people who are most dependent on instructors and staff for their safety.

What does stand out now is that the most hazardous jumper is now the one that used to be the safest – the one with the experience. Possibly 40% of APF members have more than 500 jumps. During the decade of the naughties, almost half the skydivers that died had more than 500 jumps.

## Looking out for our Mates



Many drop zones have a strict package of rules and the DZSO serves as the primary enforcement officer. These DZSO's tend to rule a DZ with the fear of penalties such as groundings. The result can be a DZ that is held pretty tightly in check, but

the local jumpers tend to see safety as strictly a function of the enforcement threat and not a desirable goal in itself.

Some DZs and individuals can be pretty resistant to rules, but most understand the core need for safety, and work together

to keep each other alive. In general, most pretty much agree on what is safe and unsafe. When one of our members pushes safety limits the rest of us can use collective peer pressure to hold him/her in check.

## Promote survival - watch out for some key things.

- New jumpers with limited experience exceeding wind guidelines.
- Jumpers planning a skydive without regard to wind or turbulence that we may have experienced or witnessed on a previous jump.
- Jumpers flying in large or small groups beyond their specific ability and experience. This can include FS, CF, and VFS flyers.
- Skydivers progressing to small canopies, or doing radical parachute manoeuvres close to the ground, too early in their careers.
- Jumpers ignoring or unaware of exit separation requirements, given specific daily local conditions.
- Canopy pilots ignoring landing pattern or direction, or doing radical manoeuvres in a crowded traffic pattern.
- Jumpers opening their parachutes below APF minimum heights as per the Operational Regulations
- Skydivers performing unusual or experimental jumps without seeking guidance from more experienced jumpers.
- Jumpers using outdated, inappropriate, or illegal equipment.
- Instructors exposing their students to excessive risk, or jumping without due regard for student safety.

## Below is a random selection of fatal incidents over the past 50 years. Which decade? Answers on page 111.

- 1) 29 jumps. Exiting at 7000ft on a planned 31 second delay, the student jumper was observed in a stable position in a head down attitude with hands in, apparently attempting to pull, until impact. No attempt was made to pull reserve. Jumper had a history of 'hard pulls'.
- 2) 2000+ jumps. Jumper misjudges a 'swoop landing', executing too low a 270 deg turn.
- 3) 150 jumps. Jumper cutaway from a malfunction. No release of reserve. Suspect jumper pulling on 3-rings – reserve ripcord covered by jacket.
- 4) 63 jumps . One main CAPEWELL was not locked correctly & released on opening; the other CAPEWELL could not be released. The reserve lines wrapped around the legs.
- 5) 42 jumps. Jumper deployed Throw-away pilot chute from leg-strap pocket. Main did not deploy due to twisted leg strap. No reserve was deployed.
- 6) 1st jump. Held pilot chute after exit, until impact.

### References:

APF Annual Reports  
APF Fatality Reports, Regs and Publications  
The Skydiver's Survival Guide, Emerson & Antebi  
USPA Parachutist Magazines – various  
Blue Sky Ranch Safety articles – various  
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# DZ DAYZ

## COMMANDO SKYDIVERS - SINCE 1961

By Kelly Brennan



In a Dakota over Melbourne five decades ago, enthusiastic young military men were placing two shilling bets over who could land closest to the target. They had demanding training and cumbersome equipment, but these adventurous members of a specialist Army Reserve unit were hooked!

Corporal Warren Hutchings persuaded Army bosses to let him start a club. At a Military parade night, in February 1961, Warren put on some movies to inspire the lads and there was a rush to sign up. Claude Gillard was one of those 60 founding members who each paid ten quid to join. Claude also became the inaugural Treasurer of the 2 Commando Company Skydivers Club.

Their first drop zone was at Laverton RAAF base, where members were advised to bind their ankles with bandages because of the concrete hard ground. Warren Hutchings was Chief Instructor and he'd snaffled some old X-type chutes that the 2 Commando Company had been using for ground practice. The jump planes were a Cessna 172 and a Cessna 185, with a special treat for Air Force week when members would leap from a Dak. Warren tried to enforce a dress code of a white neatly pressed shirt and a blue tie, with polished boots and a 'short back and sides' haircut.

The club had some interesting misadventures in those days before incident reports were invented. One student went crashing through an asbestos hangar roof. Another landed right beside the railway line as a train approached.

The Chief Instructor also had some scares. Warren Hutchings' ripcord once got caught on the Cessna's door at 8,500 feet, wrenching him from the plane. Warren, who always had a knack for spin, managed to have this written up in the papers as a new Australian record height for an immediate opening. He also had the dubious honour of recording the club's first official injury; a minor fracture after a canopy collision at about 30 feet.

After a couple of years, army support was withdrawn and the club continued under the simplified name, Commando Skydivers. It moved to Pakenham drop zone, joining two other clubs already there, the Victorian Parachute Club and Southern Cross Skydivers.

During the next forty exciting years at Pakenham, Commando Skydivers became one of Australia's most enduring parachuting organisations, producing some incredible individuals.

2CDO Coy Skydivers Circa 1962





Larger than life member and long time Chief Instructor Bill Kenny made one of his first media appearances in 1964 when he set an altitude record. That was the day that a teenager named Jo Chitty first set foot on the DZ, triggering a lifetime passion for the equipment that enabled humans to fly.

Ray Williams was also a jumper in these early days, learning the hard way that such equipment didn't always behave the way it should. First, he stalled a Delta Wing triangular chute, breaking his leg on landing and making front page news. Then, he survived a spectacular main-reserve entanglement with his revolutionary Para Plane square chute.

As the equipment changed, baton passes had become old hat and a new trend of relative work emerged. Commando Skydivers members were part of Victoria's first known eight man star in 1971.

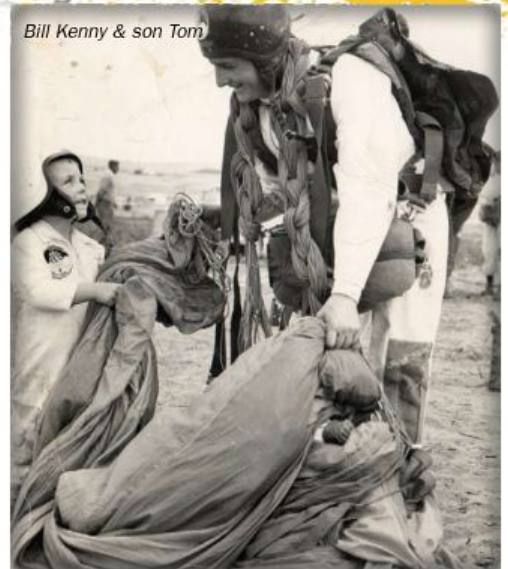
The club played starring roles in a BHP steel can advertisement and in the risqué film, Alvin Purple. Pakenham's 10-man team "The Mixtures" led the way as the popularity of rel work exploded across the nation. In 1973, a 19-man star over Pakenham set an Australian record, and it was the biggest formation yet outside the U.S.A.

In 1976, Commando Skydivers merged with the Victorian Parachute Club under a deal hammered out on the nature strip of a pub.

Dick Ryland Hoop Jump



Bill Kenny & son Tom

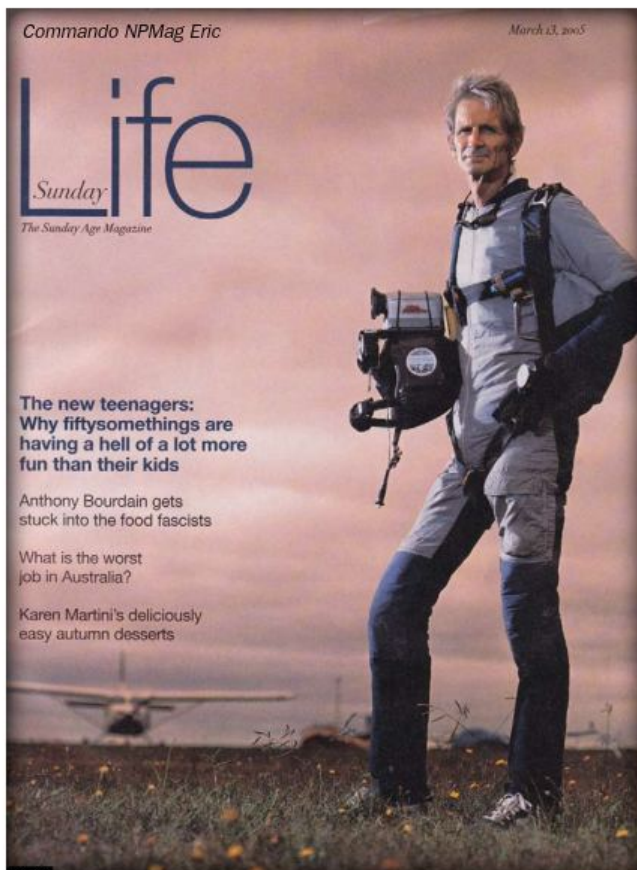


Members of the newly merged club still had some firsts to create. There was a total eclipse jump with canopies landing just as sunlight swept back across Pakenham. Two members made 60 descents in a day to raise money for the national team. In 1978, three members made the first jump into the MCG. And, as the decade drew to a close, a Pakenham 4-way team, Rapid Transit, won bronze at the World Championships in France. (Current CI, Peter Knights, was part of that team.)

The club continued to thrive in the eighties, when Canopy Relative Work took off and jumpsuits ballooned in size. Australia's first legal tandem jump was done at Pakenham in 1985 by Greg Chambers and Dave Parsons, under the watchful eye of aviation officials. This led to a trial period for tandems and eventual approval.

Two years later, pilot John Wattis had a miraculous escape as the Commando Skydivers Cessna plunged towards chicken sheds. A jumper's premature deployment had ripped off the plane's tail. John managed to extricate himself from the spinning mess of metal and landed safely.

In the nineties, the club trained the entire Footscray Football Club, despatching fifty footballers and support staff under round chutes into the water off Williamstown. On the same day as the Footscray water jumps, a young paraplegic woman who'd done several tandems was finally able to do a solo static line leap into the bay.



Ray Fosters Ashes Jump





Mixtures 72



The Bulldogs only did the one jump each, but another doggie developed quite a taste for adrenaline. A little pooch named Tobi did several skydives at Pakenham in a specially made tandem harness.

In 2001, Commando Skydivers celebrated the club's 40th anniversary. Some of the old boys from the Laverton days came back to jump these newfangled square canopies, including the original Chief Instructor, Warren Hutchings. Some of the new boys dragged out the roundies that had been gathering dust and gave them a whirl. And a group of four jumpers leapt into eight drop zones around Victoria, completing their mission with a jump into the 40th birthday bash.

The urban sprawl finally won out in 2003 and the club moved down the road to the Tooradin airfield. The Beer Bell Boogie in 2006 offered numerous fun 'firsts' like jumps from balloons, a bi-plane and an aerochute. Two years later, our inspirational club stalwart, Jim Brierley, did his 3,000th jump with much media fanfare.

Just like Jim, our club is a great survivor in the sport. We're now gearing up for a huge golden anniversary celebration in February next year. The countdown has already begun, with Claude Gillard doing a tandem leap in the February just gone to help us kick off the year-long party.

Things have changed a lot since Claude and his army mates first formed the club, but we reckon the newbies of today can put on a party to make him proud!

More details to be found in 'A History of Commando Skydivers' due for release in 2010.

Ian Young 'Our Flying Doctor' 1963



Clock Jump



Warren Hutchings, Dave Millard (front right) (tie) and boys





**ODE TO ALL RAMBLERS**

By Allison Raynor

There once were 12 keen jumpers who used to cry and moan,  
They never had a Drop Zone to call their very own.  
From Kerry to Caloundra they'd all been pushed around,  
So McEvoy and Holmes and Nobbs set off to buy some ground.

Macca quit the real world in 1974,  
He set up shop in Norman Park and opened up the door.  
He had a vision splendid, which now was full in view,  
And from this small beginning the "Ramblers" story grew.

They bought some land at Too-galaha in 1978,  
They built themselves a drop zone and opened up the gate.  
Macca trained up students and Alan Tricky flew,  
The Ramblers had a home at last – a happy little crew.

In '78 the Ramblers had a Demo Team of three,  
Took a tri-plane to the Ekka, for all of Bris. to see.  
By '93 the team had grown to 24 plus 1 dog,  
An Aussie flag, the ground crew and the Ekka Team Bomb Squad.

The Premier of Queensland (Jo Bejelke at that time),  
Opened Ramblers Drop Zone, in June of '79.  
In '81 an "Air show" full of skydiving and planes,  
In '82 the Ramblers Crew closed the Commonwealth Games.

In '84 the World Cup was at Toogoolawah,  
In '86 the World Champs brought teams from near and far.  
In '88, the Ramblers sent the "Early Openers" team,  
To France to grab the "silver" in a C-R-W dream.

Students and teams were training hard, all aiming at the Nats,  
Out to grab a medal in "Free" or "CreW" or "Flats".  
There've been lots of champions and there'll be plenty more,  
'cause Ramblers is a breeding ground for skydivers - hard core!

"Rambling On" kept Rambling, until the new millen-nium,  
"Sky Magpie" was flying high, but then put down his pen-nium.  
Susie stepped in as editor and ASM was born,  
A flagship for the APF and a Ramblers Next-Gen dawned.

Macca's dream kept growing, but the world was slow to wake,  
To the thrill and joy of jumping until they saw "Point Break".  
When Patrick Swayzee wooed them with the tandem jump desire,  
God rest his soul, he set the "Skydive Ramblers" world on fire!

With all the tandem jumpers and teams so keen to train,  
With AFF a winner, they needed a bigger plane.  
So Big Al went a-hunting, he had a clever plan,  
Then he declared Toogoolawah "Home of the Caravan"

Then there came the Boogies, "Skysisters", "POPS" and "NOX",  
Caravans and novelties and don't forget "the Box."  
And then came the Addictions and the Learning Curves and such,  
The Rigging Loft and Air Suits, to add the final touch.

There's the bunkhouse and the motel, the gym and the canteen,  
There's TSC, the bar, the pool, to complete the Ramblers scene.  
There's Macca's snags on Friday night and the pub for tea on Sundee's,  
Don't snooze and lose when your playing Fooze, 'cause you could lose your undies.

Macca lives for jumping and there simply is no doubt,  
Too long away from freefall and his feathers all fall out.  
So come and visit Ramblers and you'll be back for more  
Get lost in the "Be-wilderness" behind the old "Green Door".

We'd like to mention everyone, it simply can't be done  
So we'll just thank all Ramblers who made this journey fun.  
We thank you for the friendships and laughs that made each day,  
For all the hops and pops, and thumps and jumps along the way.

To all the staff who made it work, for all their dedication,  
We bid you thanks for all the years and humble salutation.  
And there are all the Ramblers who got lost along the way,  
Our fallen friends and loved ones who have gone to pave the way.

In the words of old Chick Clayton, (some will remember his name)  
He was the oldest Rambler of Red Beret, Red Devil fame.  
He used to recite this ditty, it's one that all jumpers should know,  
It's apart of our Ramblers history and this is how it goes:-

"STAND BY YOUR GLASSES, BE STEADY!  
DRINK A TOAST TO THE MEN OF THE SKY.  
HERE'S TO THE DEAD ALREADY,  
AND HERE'S TO THE NEXT BASTARD TO DIE"



Brothers Dave and John McEvoy about to go up for John's first freefall jump.



Karen McEvoy's first 8-way. Photo by Tony Lee (who joined in).  
Top L-R: Geoff Holmes, Macca, Peter Nobbs, Graham Jeffery  
Bottom L-R: Alison Blackett, Karen and Chumley Thornton.



Chick Clayton



Ramblers first big aircraft. Ian Hunter & Macca proud as punch.





McEvoy Family-way (L-R) Karen, Debbie, TM Macca with daughter Kylie, Susie & Dave Junior. Photo: Belgium Steve

## Stanley Dallas

Among Australia's aviation pioneers as Hinkley, Kingsford Smith and Ulm, there is a compelling figure named Stanley Dallas. His personality, achievements and ability invite comparison with other pioneer Australian pilots of international reputation. His story, authored by Tex Wixted, was featured in Issue 41 of *Rambling On*, 1980.

Dallas was born in 1891 at Mount Stanley Station, a property north of Toogoolawah in the Brisbane Valley. His name Stanley honours his birthplace. Ramblers Drop Zone was named the Stanley Dallas Airfield in 1980, and the big gumtree at the embarkation area has since been fondly known as "Dallas".



**MAJOR R.S. DALLAS**  
D.S.O., D.S.C. and BAR, C. de GUERRE

**"A PILOT OF QUITE EXTRAORDINARY SKILL,  
A GREAT LEADER OF MEN"**

STANLEY DALLAS, BORN IN 1891, RECEIVED HIS NAME FROM HIS BIRTHPLACE, MT. STANLEY STATION, NORTH OF TOOGOO LAHAW. DALLAS HOLDS A PLACE OF HONOUR AMONG AIR ACES OF WORLD WAR 1, AND COMMANDED 1 SQUADRON, R.N.A.S., AND 40 SQUADRON, R.A.F. HIS LEADERSHIP, COURAGE, AIRMANSHIP AND PERSONAL QUALITIES WON HIM AN ENDURING REPUTATION. AFTER MANY AERIAL VICTORIES, DALLAS LOST HIS LIFE IN COMBAT OVER LIEVIN, FRANCE, ON 1 JUNE, 1918, AGED 26 YEARS. AMONG QUEENSLAND AVIATORS STANLEY DALLAS RANKS WITH SIR CHARLES KINGSFORD SMITH AND H.J.L. HINKLER.

## What's in a Name

### Origin of "Ramblers" By Macca

Bob Morrison, Art Littlemore and Sam Clarke along with Jan Petty and Donna Berthelsen, were competitive jumpers and they called themselves "The Ramblers" because they rambled from one dz to another chasing the best options. It was originally RASP (Ramblers Association of Sport Parachutists). Art gave up jumping and Sam moved into freefall photography. Ramblers started up again with Bob Morrison and Jan Petty down on the Gold Coast. They kept it running and they took on students who had their own gear - Woody Woodford, myself, Phil Whatmore, Bruce Brogan and Mike Minehan. Bob also trained up new students John Shurte and Ron Law.

A few of us were heading to the World Championships in Bled in 1970 and Bob coached us up for that. Bob then spent a couple of years in the USA competing and cleaned up. He came back to Australia for the Nationals and killed himself driving down there, on the wrong side of the road. Once Bob died RASP died a natural death. I started Ramblers Parachute Centre in 1974.



The *Courier Mail* of May 2, 1934 contained this picture and the following caption: "A HOUSE AFLOAT.— Complete with furniture, this house was yesterday transported down the Brisbane River to Bishop Island. It was placed on a punt at Bulimba, and a motor boat supplied the necessary motive power. Even the occupants were undisturbed." The house belonged to Jim Crouch, and was some years later moved back to Bulimba. (John Oxley Library)



25 years at the Ekka. L-R: Macca, Cameron Sherrington (Snakey), Brandon Van Nie Kirk, Sean Hoffman, David "Bully" Bailey, Wayne McLachlan and Tibi Nagy front.

### Of Bob Morrison

A deeper vision rests with him  
And we suffer for his loss  
But I'm sure when ten mans take the sky  
...He's still the bloody boss  
And style of course he watches close  
To wee we try our best  
For, that's all he ever asked of us  
The best...and nothing less  
So now and then we carry on  
In this the Morro manner  
And take our places with the best  
And bear the Morro manner  
"Ramblers"



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# SKYDIVE MACKAY HISTORY

By Conrad Inkson



Skydive Mackay began operations in 1978 at Nebo, a geographical paradox that continues to this day with weekend fun jumping operating out of Marian during winter and over the ocean during summer, with some jumpers barely making it back onto Far Beach.

*Operations first began with Ray and Kathy Makin combining their first two loves, Ray's affection for silky material and Kathy's for harnesses and tight straps.*

Ray and Kathy have raised not just two successful skydiving children, Kristen and Shane, but also helped feed, educate, clothe and shelter dozens of skydivers in their backyard shed (The Cave). Several of which can be found tucked in the fetal position each Sunday morning soaking up the coolness of the air-conditioning and tiled floor, or learning to walk again, such skills seemingly being lost the night before.

There exists a rich culture of togetherness and sharing, each skydiver bringing whatever skill he or she may have, to donate towards the club. Both "The Cave" it's swimming pool and Marian Hangar have been built with skydive labour - concreting, tiling, electrical and painting all done in one massive working bee (don't stand under the hangar when it's windy).

Drop zone fees haven't been seen for over a decade or two but remember it's an invitation only drop zone so when Ray calls curfew, you know it's time to serve Kathy another drink.

Thanks to Ray's tutoring, Skydive Mackay Skydivers possess fantastic flying and decision making skills, topped only by the pilots, some of whom prefer to carry a bible rather than a G.P.S. Most weekends include Tandem Jumps on Saturday and Sunday morning with fun jumping in the evenings till dusk. Far Beach offers cool consistent air, beautiful views (both in the air and on the ground [white pointers]) and Marian Airfield offers



views of the majestic Pioneer Valley and a selection of light aircraft, sometimes you might see a crazy person jump from an Ultra Light, dirt bike or cane harvester.

In thirty years Ray Makin has been able to hold onto an unbeatable Tandem safety record, one twisted ankle in THIRTY YEARS! It didn't even happen during the landing! His skills are unmatched, Ray's students can clearly hear him under canopy without radio headsets and his instructions and spotting advice rings in the ears of everybody on the drop zone, shortly after landing.

Skydive Mackay is a perfect drop zone, sitting nicely in the Goldie Locks Zone of not too big, not too small, harmoniously placed and course corrected by Ray, one of God's own prototypes. A high-powered mutant of some kind never even considered for mass production.

Skydive Mackay: You're welcome to come, as long as you're invited and have money for beer.





# HISTORY OF SA SKYDIVING

By Katie Fluin

The journey for SA Skydiving began when Greg (Miff) Smith started skydiving in 1977 at Labertouche, in Victoria. After that he travelled, lived and skydived in many locations from Byron Bay, Blackwater in Queensland and the famous Katherine and Darwin Skydivers, before settling in South Australia and becoming the Chief Instructor of Lower Light in 1989. In 1990 SA Skydiving was formed and operated there.

Prior to SA Skydiving forming, Miff operated Blue Skies/ Southern Skydivers (at Lower Light) originally with Vic Balfour, bringing the AFF program into South Australia. Then collaborating with Gavin Norsworthy and Kevin Taylor, bringing tandem skydiving to South Australia.

SA Skydiving remained at Lower Light until 1996 when Miff resigned as Chief Instructor and begun operations at Pallamana Airfield, near Murray Bridge. SA Skydiving operated at Pallamana until 1997 when the operation was relocated to "Rollo's Airfield" also close to Murray Bridge. Over the next 10 years substantial infrastructure and building took place at Rollo's before the relationship with the owner of the land broke down and a search took place for an alternative airfield.

Some of the achievements that SA Skydiving are proud of are initiating twin action student equipment and throw away pilot chutes into Australia. SA Skydiving is the longest operating skydiving business in South Australia and originally introduced both tandem skydives and the accelerated freefall course in South Australia.

Eventually the perfect property of approximately 350 acres, fitting all the requirements of a drop zone, was located in 2004 and purchased shortly thereafter. SA Skydiving then spent the next two years working on development applications and was given the green light in 2006. The drop zone is situated on



Like father, like son - Miff and Jed

the banks of Lake Alexandrina, Langhorne Creek and offers a spectacular place to skydive. The aim and goal of this drop zone is to create and continually develop a skydiving training operation, which caters for the needs of first time skydivers through to the highly experienced.

The drop zone's opening weekend was the first weekend of July 2007 and our Chief Instructor (Miff) was absent from the opening due to the birth of his second child Jazz! What perfect timing - the birth of a new drop zone, combined with the birth of a new drop zone kid!

Since the inception of the new SA Skydiving airfield, infrastructure building has continued and over 20,000 trees planted to the outside areas, the hangar is near completion, runways extended, accommodation buildings are being erected and our proud edition of the swoop pond completed with many wet skydivers and canopies to show for it!

One of SA Skydiving's most recent achievements was that of Jed Smith's "A Licence in a Day!". Jed (Miff's son) celebrated his 16th birthday in January by completing his first solo skydive, he then followed this up with another 9 skydives finishing his AFF and also signing off his 'A' licence all in one day. We are quite curious to know whether anyone else has completed their 'A' licence on the day they turned 16 - or perhaps this is a record?

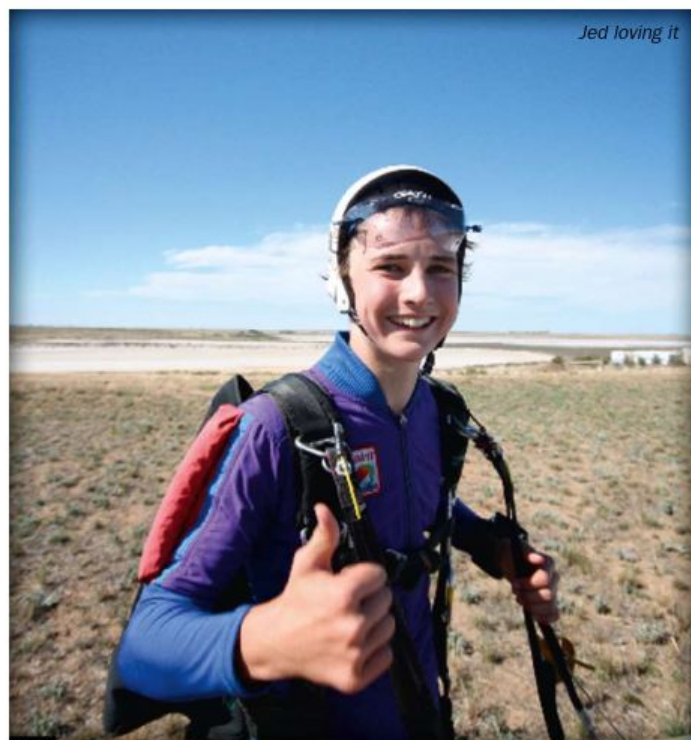
Jed, having grown up on drop zones, showed huge awareness on his skydives and after completing over 26 tandems since his 14th birthday, was able to land without assistance on every skydive, most within less than 10 metres of the target, some right on it!

Since Jed was 14, each tandem skydive acted as a tool for learning and development and Jed's ability to fly solo, stable and land unassisted on his very first skydive is demonstrative of how the tandem skydive can be a valuable learning tool. SA Skydiving strongly believes all first skydives should be tandem and should be utilised as a valuable training tool, not just a joy flight.

After 13 skydives Jed competed in the State Meet with his father, in the 2-way comp with 3 rounds and scored 5, 7, and 6 points, beating others with much more experience!

There are many people to thank that have assisted Jed over the years and provided inspiration for his current skydiving passion. A big thanks though to Roger Mulckey for putting on a great Funny Farm and allowing Jed to be exposed to the wider world of skydiving - his enthusiasm after Funny Farm went to a whole new level. Also thanks to the sport of skydiving - what a thrill to watch your child's face in freefall!

Pictured are Jed and his father on his first solo/non tandem skydive - great father and son moment. Looking forward to the day that perhaps Jed can take his younger sister on her first skydive!

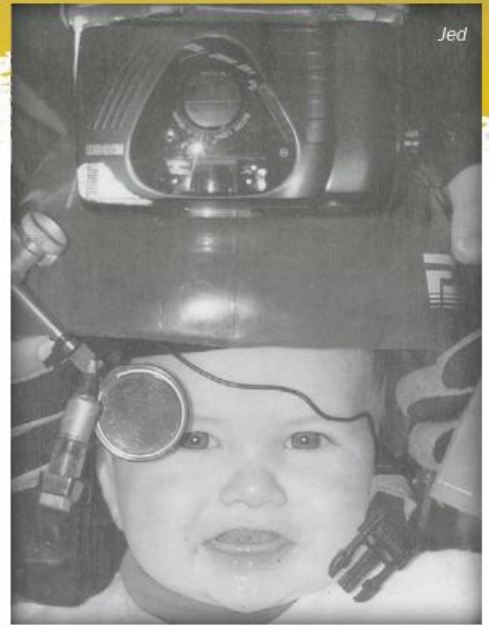


Jed loving it





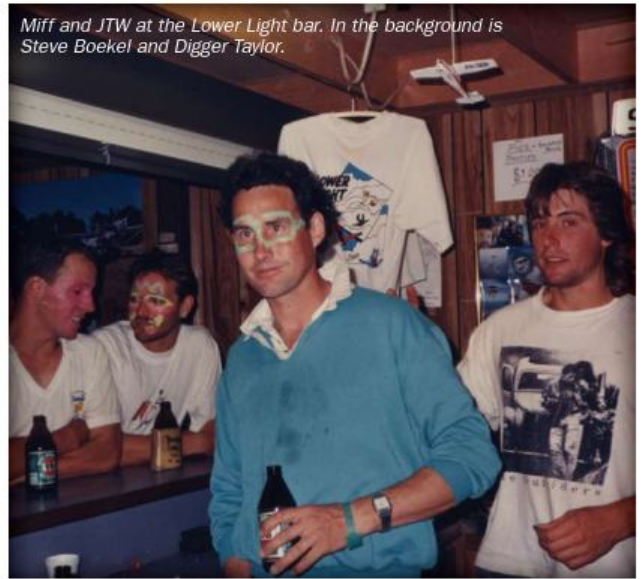
L-R Geoff Cooling, Miff Smith, Ralph Nichols, Pop Smith, Front: Wayne van Dongen



Jed



Landing into Footy Park, Adelaide



Miff and JTW at the Lower Light bar. In the background is Steve Boekel and Digger Taylor.



Miff running an AFF Instructor Course, letting him pose under the propellor!

**The Safety Matters answers are:**

- 1) 1970s
- 2) 2000s
- 3) 1980s
- 4) 1960s
- 5) 1990s
- 6) 1980s



# NEWCASTLE SPORT PARACHUTE CLUB – A BRIEF HISTORY

*Kath 'Oatsy' Oats NSPC Club Secretary*

Newcastle Sport Parachute Club is Australia's oldest established skydiving club, with our 50th Anniversary being celebrated in April this year.

The original meeting to set up the club occurred in April 1960 at the Aero Club in Newcastle. Earlier parachuting operations were running as 'schools' set up predominantly by military personnel. The first jumps by the club were not made until later that year in September at Rutherford Airfield.

This all came about from a group of adventurous pioneering young men who decided to pursue the idea of freefall parachuting instead of static line jumps.

With the help of some instructors from the Williamtown Airborne School in Newcastle and using U.S. Army surplus gear the idea of a civilian independent operation became a reality.

Most of the Airborne instructors and packers were located around Newcastle and it was very appealing to stay local rather than drive hours to jump.

Ted Davis was a stand-out RAAF fellow who taught these 'young guns' to pack their own parachutes and was prepared to train them as instructors in their own right.

Ted was the first club member to be awarded Life Membership.

Founding members Andy Keech, Allen Jay and Don McKern used to drive from Newcastle to Camden to jump. It took about eight hours and a packed lunch to get there in those days! On Anzac Day, 1961, Andy Keech and Laurie Trotter achieved the first successful baton pass in Australia.

Founding club members Roy Bray, Allen Jay, Andy Keech, Harry Pugsley, Don McKern and Colin King formed the core group of jumpers. John Donkin was the first president of the club. Not to forget the girls.... Barbara Lewis, Robyn Chipperfield,

Beryl Blakemore and Iris Wilson were all active members in NSPC's early days.

Barbara and Beryl went on to represent Australia in the 1964 World Championships in East Germany with two other members of NSPC - Colin King and Andy Keech.

Colin King was the first Australian to win a world meet medal, placing second in accuracy at the 1968 Graz Austria World Meet.

There was a tide of jumpers leaving the club for the 1964 World Meet and there was some doubt whether the club would survive! Thanks to some dedicated work and excellent financial management by Harry Pugsley and Pat Cahill, the club went on to purchase its own aircraft, then clubhouse whilst continuing to produce quality skydivers.

The 70's bought an influx of skydivers from all over the country and overseas when word spread about the quality of skydives being made at NSPC.

Jas Shennan's seminal work "Walking on Air" documented life at Elderslie around this time. It remains a collector's item and still great to watch nearly thirty years later. Around the same time the legendary Australian 8-way team Prometheus made its home at NSPC.

Chris Bramhill, Ray Morgan, Peter Eadie, David Jacobs, Digger Flood, Guy Mainwaring, Dave Hancock, Ray Palmer, Graham Jeffrey, Mossy and others began training and inspiring club members. The Prometheus seminars of the early 80's were great fun and top learning experiences for jumpers from near and far. A long list of Kiwis had been arriving for years and continued to do so... myself included! In the early Eighties, Elderslie saw great things in the development of CRW.



21ST - 26TH APRIL 2010



*A bunch of Newcastle jumpers at Corowa for the Channel 7 jump from a DC3.*



The NZ CRW team (and Gary McMahon) was formed from pond jumpers who called Elderslie home.

I arrived in the late 1980's to a place that ROCKED! Legendary skydives and even more legendary parties! Sky Gods with thousands of jumps mingled and shared their knowledge with two hundred jump wonders like myself. I learnt almost as much about skydiving at the bar as I did in the air!

As numbers increased poor old DGL couldn't cope with the volume of loads and demand. This led to a string of awesome aircraft...Nomads (well maybe not the Nomad), Islanders, a DC3 out of Rutherford and culminating in the best aircraft EVER - the Aeropelican Twin Otters.

NSPC became the place for big aircraft.

The theme of pioneering freefall skydiving has continued with NSPC becoming renowned for producing a fair percentage of the Australian Formation Skydiving team. In 1993 Rijidij 8 way team took on the world with a large percentage of the team NSPC jumpers. Many of Australia's top female skydivers also made their home at NSPC.

Over the years, NSPC, fondly known as 'The Land of the Free' or just plain Elderslie has had some major upheavals. In the late 90's, NSPC faced its biggest challenge when a local farmer that protested our existence took us to the Land and Environment Court.

It cost the club big money and reduced our operations to one non-jumping weekend a month, a restriction still in force today.

Somehow despite the rise of big money commercial operations, little old NSPC is still kicking on with the help of a few dedicated members who are fighting to keep the club alive.

We own the land and we own the history as one of Australia's premier drop zones.

In the words quoted from 'The Sydney Skydiver' magazine 1963:

'We have the best D.Z in Australia and the best safety record.. And we jump for fun'.

Not much has changed in 50 years!!

Blue Skies/ Black Death - Rock on NSPC.

*The author of this article takes NO responsibility (whatsoever) for quotes, claim to fame and incorrect facts. No animals were harmed in the production of this article except maybe my husband for being neglected!!*







Relworkers was established in 1989 primarily to provide an opportunity for skydivers in Victoria of all levels to come together and enjoy the best the sport has to offer. From 1989 to present Relworkers has consistently created environments and atmospheres that have met the original objectives.

Many things set Relworkers apart from other clubs within the APF though these are the major differences

- The club is not affiliated with any drop zone but instead associated with all drop zones throughout the state.
- We have no home DZ or regular manifest person or planes etc. though do enjoy travelling, visiting and jumping at numerous DZs that host Relworkers events.
- The club is not politically aligned and remains an independent identity in the skydiving arena representing the interests of jumpers at forums such as the Victorian Parachuting Committee (VPC).

Over the years Relworkers has visited most DZs in Victoria; some still operating, others not - Traralgon, Tooradin, Violet Town, Nagambie, Barwon Heads, Redcourt, Bairnsdale, Bridgewater, Euroa, Pakenham, Mangalore, Meredith and Corowa.

Often a difficult balancing act exists between visiting different drop zones during the league and other events or catering for lift capacity and higher altitude. The turbine Vs cessna drop zone quandary has often divided RWU members. Sport development, promoting sport skydiving, exploring different drop zones, attracting new members, catering for existing member's wants, sticking to the clubs purpose for being and more are all factors that are considered year by year by each new committee when organising a schedule of events.

Relworkers also importantly has a focus on the social aspect of skydiving. Winter Olympics/Games, 7 year Itch, Golf days, League Balls, 16 year Scratch, Grand Final parties, parties, parties, fun stuff, parties, fun. The club brings people together for fun and socialising.

Relworkers created a Skydiving League way back in 1994 and since that time "the League" has provided an excellent format

for those individuals and teams attracted to 4-way formation skydiving. Whether you are a serious team training for the nationals or a world meet or a beginner looking for a 4-way team or a group of jumpers looking for some fun, the League has always provided ideal opportunities including:

- Jumping alongside some of the greats in the sport (too many to mention - members of The Shovels, Airtite, Fetish, XLR8, Force, It'll Happen the and list goes on);
- Learning from excellent ground coaches and;
- Being judged and critiqued by arguably the best in the world (thanks Gail, Phil, Ray, Julie and others).

The League and other Relworkers events are instrumental in providing and developing coaches, mentors, camera fliers, judges and meet directors.

Anyone that has been involved with Relworkers and those who have watched from afar I'm sure will attest to the clubs significant positive impact on Sport Skydiving within Australia. It is my hope that Relworkers can maintain it's status as a skydiving club with the interests of skydivers at it's core and organise many jumping and social events that bring out the best the sport has to offer for many years to come!

### Interesting RWU Facts

- Sharkey and Ben Mc have been involved in every League since the first in 1994
- In 1995, two Nomads were ferried around the state for League
- Airtite, National champions for years, started their 4-way ambitions at the League
- Gail Bradley, esteemed Judge, has been Chief Judge or Judge at every League since the first in 1994
- A 4WD got swallowed during a round at Mangalore
- A Freefly League was born in 2001 that ran side by side the 4-way comp
- Interstate teams were invited to compete in the League in 2002











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# A SHORT HISTORY OF REL WEEKS IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

By Christine Collins



## A Landmark in 2009 – 30th Rel Week

2009 marked an important milestone for arguably the most significant skydiving event that occurs in the Northern Territory – the Territory Rel Week. 2009 was reported to be the most successful NT boogie in recent years – two Caravans, 170 skydivers, great skydives and memorable antics. ASM, issue 47, reported that in 2009, there were 225 loads and 3600 jumps completed. Apart from a few malfunctions and incidents over the week, there were predominantly loads of high quality skydives of all types – flat, vertical, birdman, CRW, atmonauti, tracking, novelty, 'B' Rels, student, tandems and lots of others – which got better and better as the week progressed. Rel Week always marks the significant achievements of individuals in these various disciplines and 2009 also saw the accomplishment of the SOS jumpers (skydivers over sixty) who marked the event with the successful NT record 11-way SOS jump. The average age of these guys was 65 and there was probably a good chance that they were novice jumpers around the time that Rel Week started. Yet here they still were, jumping and loving it all these years later. Take note novice skydivers of today – this is a sport that gets into your blood and it is hard to stop once you get started!

The success of the 2009 and every other Rel Week was no accident. Ever since its inception, it has been a small band of hard-working club members that have pulled it together, doing everything from refuelling, driving the pickup car, cleaning the dunnies, to working behind the bar until closing time. The nocturnal pursuits of the Territorians are also legendary and the locals are only too happy to also put in the extra hours training novices at night as well as during the day! And just when you think that it is impossible for your body to take any more of the indulgences, there is the mid-week break, chilling out at Litchfield Park, or feeding crocodiles, or catching crabs with Handbrake. It's a formula that hasn't changed because just like the Territory hospitality, it is just right already.

Each year the instructors ensure that the quality of the skydives are maintained. After all, that is the core reason why we all attend (except for the Southern states which may need to thaw out midwinter!) For many years Fiona McEachern and Stretch (Mark Szulmayer) have organised the relative work jumps for all levels of experience; they have created safe yet constantly challenging slots for big loads, where no one can be complacent. Although video has helped enormously with critiquing jumps these days, the instructors don't miss anything in the air anyway. If you think you got away with something, you probably didn't! 2009 also saw Hayden Galvin as the Birdman instructor and Pony and Dingo as the freefly tutors.

## The Beginnings

There was one instructor who jumped in 2009 and who was also the instructor at the first Rel Week in 1977 – David McEvoy. Dave and others were invited up to the NT then to assist the local jumpers improve their relative work skills. It was an inauspicious beginning in May 1977, when 'Rel Week' was conducted in Katherine at Manbulloo using a Cessna 182 (RFO) and 206 (RCO). Dave flew to the NT at Brian Murphy's invitation (then CI) accompanied by Ron Law and Peter Barnett. The local jumpers – Brian, Trevor Collins (TC), Mike Braun,

Dave Opitz, Geoff Cowie, Gordon Gecele, Louie Wilson, Michael Braun and Vic Balfour completed many 4-ways and attempted a few 10-ways over seven days of that first Rel Week. At the end of the week, they jumped into Katherine Gorge. Little did anyone realize then how big Rel Weeks would become and that Dave and Trevor would still be attending Rel Weeks 33 years later!



Back L-R: Ron Law, Trevor Collins, Louie Wilson, David McEvoy, Michael Braun, John Fitzner (pilot) Front L-R: Ted Davies (pilot), Vic Balfour, Dave Opitz, Brian Murphy, Gordon Gecele, Geoff Cowie



## 10-way dirt dive – Katherine 1977

In 2007, to mark the 30 years since Rel Weeks started, the NT presented Dave a monstrous set of mounted buffalo horns, which now hangs proudly at Toogoolawah drop zone. It was quite funny to see the horns being loaded into the full Caravan at the end of the 2007 Rel Week, for their long trip back to Queensland!

The presentation of the '2 Galahs' in 2009 from David McEvoy to TC, was in recognition of the 30 Rel Weeks since the first Rel Week in 1977. It not only represents the relationship between Queensland and NT jumpers and drop zones, but also the personal connections that these two guys have had



through Rel Weeks since 1977. Not only have they attended each other's meets over the years, but they have stayed abreast of the incredible changes to the sport during this time and have had a huge amount of input into the running of the sport at local and national levels.



Dave presenting the '2 Galah' award to TC at the 2009 Rel Week

### The Second and Third Rel Weeks – 1978 & 1979

The Rel Week of 1978 was much the same as 1977 but with a few more jumpers and a noticeable improvement in the quality of the skydives – successful 4, 5, 8 and 10-ways were completed and an 11-way attempted.

By 1979, there were 32 jumpers at the meet. A Beaver from Brisbane and three 182's were used, and 8-ways were consistently being completed. Jumpers attended from Brisbane, Alice Springs, Mt Isa, Adelaide, Darwin and Katherine. 160 sorties and 830 jumps completed. Dave was reported to have topped the jump tally with 45 jumps.

### The 10th Rel Week - 1986

The report for the tenth boogie states, "It has taken 10 years for the Katherine Rel Week to turn into the best boogie on the Australian (some say the world) skydiving calendar. The meet is

undoubtedly the best party and skydiving meet in the country if you want fun jumping, perfect weather and laid back Territory hospitality..." (What has changed?)

By 1986, Rodney Wilson and Bruce Towers were bringing their DC3 (VH-CAN) with the ultimate luxury at that time – an inflight door! Consequently the loads were now much bigger – 16, 20 and 24-ways without needing to have regular formation loads. There were also attempted 42 ways, with a 38 way being achieved. Instructors included Chris Bramhill, Dave Flood, Paul Osborne and Leonie Ivanins. There were now 160 registered jumpers and 200 people camped at Manbulloo Drop Zone. The girls put together a 12-way NT record.

The organisers were Lee Hunt, Evan Slocum, Greg Wright and Paul Thomas. These club members, as well as Chook Chandler, were the organisers of the Rel Weeks consistently through the 1980s. At the tenth Rel Week, a chef was now employed to cook meals, a live band provided entertainment and skydiving was publicised in a positive light around the country.

The report in 'Rambling On' included the best freefall photography of Rel Weeks so far. The parties were bigger and better than ever, with reports of missing eyebrows, packing races (which had to be jumped the next day!), entertaining performances and 1,000 cases of beer being sold over Murphy's Bar.

### The 21st Rel Week - 1997

1993 was the last Rel Week in Katherine and a decision was made to transfer Rel Week to Batchelor for the 1994 Rel Week. Numbers of club members in Katherine had dwindled substantially and Darwin had a much stronger club to continue the Rel Week tradition. It also meant that jumpers could now fly commercially into Darwin and be at the drop zone in an hour!

So the 21st Rel Week in 1997 was held in Batchelor. It was reported that there were 170 jumpers in attendance and the Twin Otter and Porter were the jump ships of choice that year. Highlights of the meet included TC completing his 4,400th jump and 22nd anniversary of jumping. TC was now the main organiser of the Rel Week and the DZSO since they had moved to Batchelor. The women completed a 16-way NT women's record at this Rel Week, breaking the record set at the tenth Rel Week.



The DC3 at Manbulloo














## Other Rel Weeks

By 2003 it was decided that Rel Week should become a biennial event. Numbers attending had been in decline due to a number of factors at the time, including rising fuel costs affecting ferrying costs, rising travel costs for visiting jumpers, a smaller number of club jumpers and a significant number of other boogies that had now sprung up around the country. As many jumpers could only attend one big meet per year and Toogoolawah conducted the Equinox Boogie on even years, NT Rel Weeks was now to be held on odd years – so it would be a two year wait until the next Rel Week in 2005. This seemed to be a good decision, as 2005 Rel Week was as popular as ever. The wait seemed to ensure people knew what great weather and parties they were missing out on!

A full outline of these and other Rel Weeks will be part of the current compilation of the History of Sport Parachuting in the NT. Do you have something to add about Rel Weeks or other events in the NT – a funny story, a significant Territory achievement or some great photos? Especially for the Rel Weeks of 1981, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1993 and 1998? Please let me know! Either contact me at [trevor.collins@bigpond.com](mailto:trevor.collins@bigpond.com) or post information to PO Box 4692 Darwin NT 0801. I hope to have more stories to share at the APF Golden Anniversary Night and aim to publish all of these stories by the end of 2010, so your input could be part of it and is most welcome! Rel Week T-Shirts

Do you have any Rel Week T-shirts that aren't shown here? Please let me know if you do, as it is not a complete set!

<b>1978</b>  NO TSHIRT	<b>1979</b>  NO TSHIRT	<b>1980</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1982</b>
<b>1983</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>1985</b> 	<b>1986</b>	<b>1987</b>
<b>1988</b>	<b>1989</b> 	<b>1990</b>	<b>1991</b> 	<b>1992</b>
<b>1993</b> 	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b> 	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b> 
<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b> 	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b> 	<b>2002</b> 
<b>2003</b>	<b>2005</b> 	<b>2007</b> 	<b>2009</b>	





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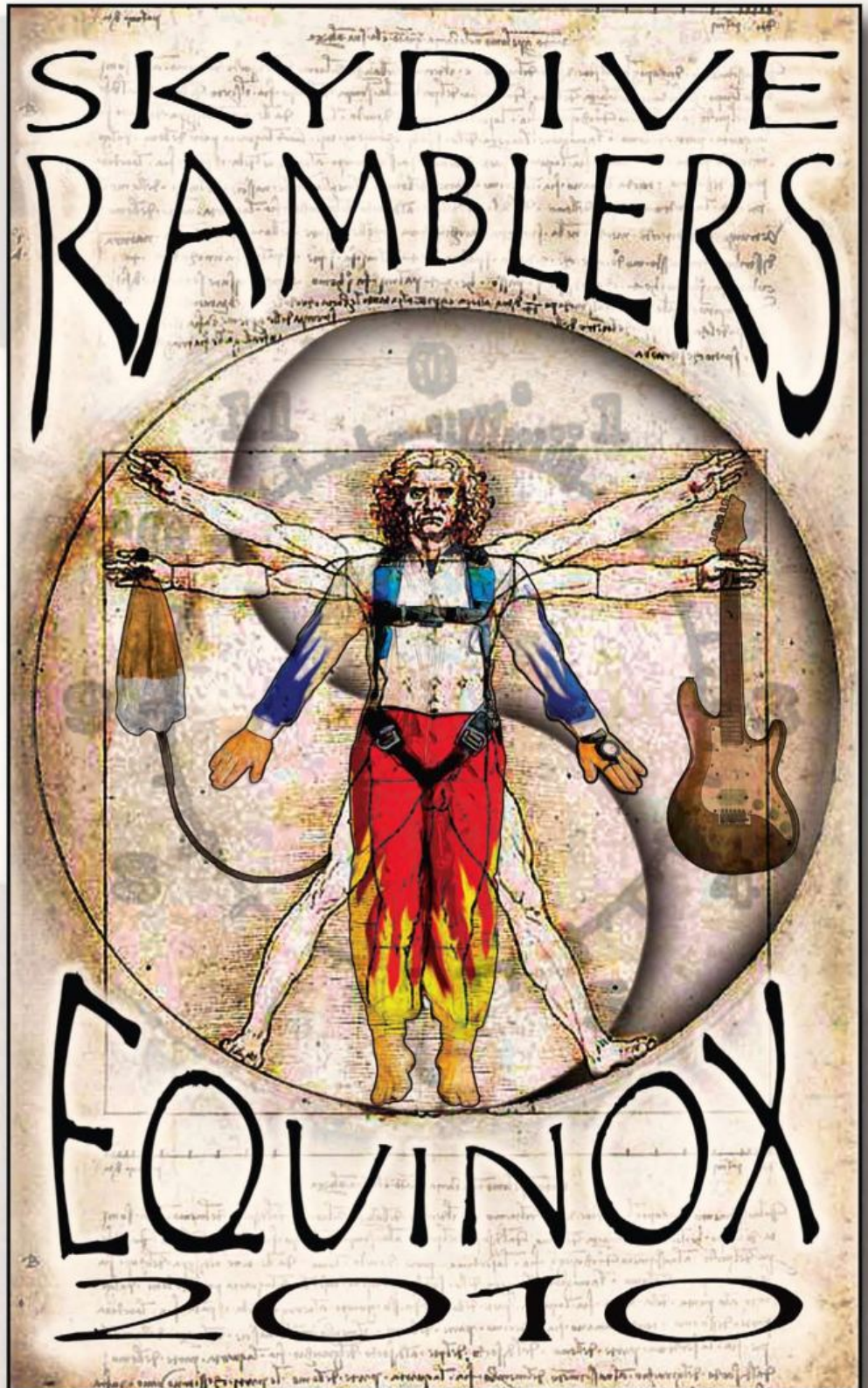
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# Ring the Bell







# DROP ZONE DIRECTORY

Source: APF Database as at deadline time.

## AIRCRAFT LEGEND

Aircraft Type	Max. Skydivers
Cessna 180	4 place
Cessna 185	4 place
Cessna 182	5 place
Cessna 206	6 place
Islander	10 place
Islander	20 place
Piper Navajo	10 place
Beaver	8 place, turbine
Cessna Caravan	16 place, turbine
Cresco	10 place, turbine
XL	17 place, turbine
Skyvan	20 place, turbine
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DZ Ph: 08 8976 0036  
Email: skydive\_territory@yahoo.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: BATCHELOR AIRFIELD  
Web: www.skydiveterritory.com.au  
Aircraft: Cessna 182 and 206

**TOP END TANDEM**  
PO BOX 692, SANDERSON NT 0813  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: ASHLEY SMITH  
Club Ph: 0417 190 140  
Email: topendtandems@bigpond.com  
Drop Zone Location: DARWIN - Lee Point Beach  
Web: www.topendtandems.com.au  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

## QUEENSLAND - NORTH

**AYRSPTS INCORPORATED**  
35 ROBERTS ST, HERMIT PARK QLD 4812  
Non Training Operation  
Club Ph: 0407 601 387  
Email: correspondence@ayrsports.org.au  
Drop Zone Location: The Ayr Aerodrome  
Web: www.ayrsports.org.au

**CORAL SEA SKYDIVERS**  
PO BOX 1786, TOWNSVILLE QLD 4810  
Non Training  
Club/DZ Ph: 07 4721 4721  
Email: info@skydivetownsville.com  
Drop Zone Location: STRAND BEACH  
Web: http://www.skydivetownsville.com  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

**FAR NORTH FREEFALL INC.**  
PO BOX 1058, TULLY QLD 4854  
Non Training Operation  
Club Ph: 0419 024 413 (Gavin)  
Email: Brian: bdore77@hotmail.com  
Drop Zone Location: TULLY AERODROME  
Aircraft: Cessna 182 and Cresco.

**MACKAY PARACHUTE CENTRE**  
9 ELAMANG ST, MACKAY QLD 4740  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: RAY MAKIN  
Club Ph: 07 4957 6439  
DZ Ph: 0408 703 554  
Email: ray@skydivemackay.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: MARIAN AIRFIELD  
Web: www.skydivemackay.com.au  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

**PAUL'S PARACHUTING**  
PO BOX 90N, CAIRNS QLD 4870  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: GLENN BOLTON  
Club Ph: 07 4051 8855, DZ Ph: 0418 770 250  
Email: info@australiaskydiver.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: EDMONTON - CAIRNS & MISSION BEACH  
Web: www.australiaskydiver.com.au  
Aircraft: 2 X Cessna Caravan

**SKYDIVE AIRLIE BEACH**  
PO BOX 1152, AIRLIE BEACH QLD 4802  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: JONNY GOSS  
Club Ph: 0418 762315, DZ Ph: 07 4946 9115  
Email: info@skydiveairliebeach.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: WHITSUNDAY AIRPORT SHUTE HARBOUR  
Web: www.skydiveairliebeach.com.au  
Aircraft: Two Cessna 182s & GA8 Airvan

**SKYDIVE CAIRNS**  
PO BOX 105N, NORTH CAIRNS QLD 4870  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: STEVE LEWIS  
Club Ph: 07 4031 5499, DZ Ph: 07 4068 3801  
Email: reservations@australiaskydivercompany.com.au  
DROP ZONE LOCATION: PAGE ROAD, EDMONTON, MISSION BEACH & TULLY  
Web: www.skydivercairns.com.au  
Aircraft: Cresco 750, Cessna Caravan & Cessna 182

**SKYDIVE THE WHITSUNDAYS**  
PO BOX 291, CANNONVALE QLD 4802

Non Training Operation  
Club Ph: 07 4940 7260  
Email: nqpc@mackay.net.au  
Drop Zone Location: PROSERPINE/SHUTE HARBOUR  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

**SKYDIVE TOWNSVILLE**  
PO BOX 1786, TOWNSVILLE QLD 4810  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: ALAN MOSS  
Club/DZ Ph: 0412 889 154  
Email: info@skydivetownsville.com  
Drop Zone Location: Ayr AIRPORT AND THE STRAND, TOWNSVILLE  
Aircraft: C-182

**TANDEM CAIRNS**  
PO BOX 753, BUNGALOW QLD 4870  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: ADAM DAVIES  
Club Ph: 1800 805 432, DZ Ph: 07 4061 7897  
Email: admin@tandemcairns.com.au  
DROP ZONE LOCATION: MUNDOO AERODROME INNISFAL  
Web: www.tandemcairns.com.au  
Aircraft: Cessna 185

## QUEENSLAND - SOUTH

**AUSTRALIAN PARARESCUE TEAM**  
PO BOX 86, SOUTHPORT, QLD 4215  
Non Training  
Club Ph: 0416 611 499  
Email: paulweir56@yahoo.com.au  
Web: www.ipsgonline.com

**BRISBANE SKYDIVE CENTRE**  
PO BOX 29, IPSWICH QLD 4305  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: BRIAN SCOFFELL  
Club Ph: 07 3333 2077  
DZ Ph: 0438 734 845  
Email: admin@BrisbaneSkydive.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: WILLOW BANK  
Web: www.brisbaneskydive.com.au  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

**GOLD COAST SKYDIVE PTY LTD**  
PO BOX 332, COOLANGATTA QLD 4225  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: Robert McMillan  
Club Ph: 07 5599 1920  
Email: info@goldcoastskydive.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: KIRRA BEACH AND LEN PEAK OVAL  
Web: www.goldcoastskydive.com.au  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

**QUEENSLAND ADRENALIN SKYDIVERS**  
PO BOX 166, GEEBUNG QLD 4034  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: Ian McGregor  
Club Ph: 07 3314 3664, DZ Ph: 0417 079 460  
Email: tandemjump@optusnet.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: WOORIM BEACH BRIBIE ISLAND  
Web: www.adrenskydivers.com.au  
Aircraft: C182 & C-206

**RAMBLERS PARACHUTE CENTRE**  
PO BOX 136, TOOGLOOLAWAH QLD 4313  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: DAVID McEVROY  
Club Ph: 07 5423 1159  
Email: skydive@ramblers.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: TOOGLOOLAWAH and COOLUM BEACH  
Web: www.ramblers.com.au  
Aircraft: Cessna Caravan and Cessna 182

**REDCLIFFE CITY SKYDIVING**  
PO BOX 105, REDCLIFFE QLD 4020  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: JOHN COOK  
Club Ph: 07 3283 8911  
Email: alicec@skydiveredcliffe.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: SUTTONS BEACH (REDCLIFFE)  
Web: www.skydiveredcliffe.com.au  
Aircraft: C182 & PA31 Navajo

**RIPCORD SKYDIVERS**  
PO BOX 266, CANNON HILL QLD 4170  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: JOHN FRISWELL  
Club Ph: 07 5466 5521  
Email: ripcord@ripord-skydivers.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: GATTON  
Web: www.ripord-skydivers.com.au  
Aircraft: C-182 and C-206

**RIPCORD SKYDIVERS ASSOCIATION**  
67 MITCHELL ST BARELLAN POINT QLD 4306  
Non Training Operation  
Club Ph: 07 5466 5630  
Email: ripcordskydiversinc@hotmail.com  
Drop Zone Location: GATTON  
Web: www.ripord-skydivers.com.au  
Aircraft: C-206 & C-182

**SKYDIVE CABOOLTURE**  
PO BOX 268, GLASS HOUSE MOUNTAINS QLD 4518  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: IAN MCGREGOR  
Club Ph: 07 5496 9562, DZ Ph: 0414 704 415  
Email: imc@big.net.au  
Drop Zone Location: CABOOLTURE AIRFIELD  
Web: www.skydivecaboolture.com  
Aircraft: Cessna 182 Cessna 206

**SKYDIVE HERVEY BAY**  
PO BOX 5422 TORQUAY QLD 4655  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: RAY CURRY

Club Ph: 07 4015 2466  
Email: admin@herveybayskydivers.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: HERVEY BAY AIRPORT  
Web: www.herveybayskydivers.com.au  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

**SKYDIVE RAINBOW BEACH**  
PO BOX 7, RAINBOW BEACH QLD 4581  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: ROB CARBERRY  
Club Ph: 0418 218 358  
Email: info@skydiverainbowbeach.com  
Drop Zone Location: RAINBOW BEACH  
Web: www.skydiverainbowbeach.com  
Aircraft: C-182

**SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND SKYDIVERS INC**  
PO BOX 928, REDCLIFFE QLD 4020  
Non Training  
Club Ph 0429 020 865, email: seqsclub@gmail.com  
Web: www.seqsclub.com.au

**SUNSHINE COAST SKYDIVERS**  
PO BOX 1079, CALOUNDRA QLD 4551  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: TIBOR GLESK  
Club Ph: 07 5437 0211  
Email: jump@jumpscs.com  
Drop Zone Location: CALOUNDRA and VARIOUS BEACHES  
Web: www.jumpscs.com  
Aircraft: Cessna Caravan, C182 & C206

**TOOGLOOLAWH SKYDIVERS CLUB INC.**  
18 DESERT FALLS CRES, PARKWOOD QLD 4214  
Non Training Operation  
Club Ph: 0418 154 119  
Email: tscoqld@gmail.com  
Drop Zone Location: TOOGLOOLAWH  
Aircraft: Cessna Caravan

## NEW SOUTH WALES

**ADRENALIN SKYDIVE**  
4 RADFORD STREET, HEDDON GRETA NSW 2321  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: BILL TUDDENHAM  
Club & DZ Ph: 0419 297 014  
Email: skydive@pacific.net.au  
Drop Zone Location: LUSKINTYRE AIRFIELD, HEXHAM AIRFIELD  
Web: www.askydiver.com  
Aircraft: Cessna 182, 206

**COASTAL SKYDIVERS**  
15 WEISMANTLE STREET, WAUCHOPE NSW 2446  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: TONY MAURER  
Club & DZ Ph: 0428 471 227  
Email: jumpportmac@bigpond.com  
Drop Zone Location: PORT MACQUARIE AIRPORT NSW  
Web: www.coastalskydivers.com/  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

**COFFS CITY SKYDIVERS**  
PO BOX J208, COFFS HARBOUR JETTY NSW 2450  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: TONY MAURER  
Club & DZ Ph: 02 6651 1167  
Email: jump@coffsskydivers.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: COFFS HARBOUR AIRPORT & WEST MARSHALLS FIELD  
Web: www.coffsskydivers.com.au  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

**FUNNY FARM SKYDIVING**  
11 MARINE ST, BALLINA NSW 2478  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: ROGER MULCKEY  
Club Ph: 0402 008 924 DZ Ph: 1800 302 005  
Email: info@goskydive.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: KINGSFORD SMITH PARK - BALLINA  
Web: www.goskydive.com.au  
Aircraft: C-182 (Super)

**JUST JUMP SKYDIVE**  
PO BOX 4009, EAST GOSFORD NSW 2250  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: DEE WATKINS  
Club Ph: 02 4322 9884  
Email: bookings@justjumpskydive.com.au  
Drop Zone Location: WHITTINGHAM AIRFIELD, SINGLETON  
Web: www.justjumpskydive.com.au  
Aircraft: Cessna 206 & XL-750

**NEWCASTLE SPORT PARACHUTE CLUB**  
PO BOX 116 BRANXTON, NSW 2335  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: KIM HARDWICK  
Club & DZ Ph: 02 4938 1040  
Email: committee.nspc@skydivenewcastle.com  
Drop Zone Location: MOORES LANE ELDERSLIE  
Web: www.skydivenewcastle.com  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

**SIMPLY SKYDIVE - PENRITH LAKES SKYDIVING CENTRE**  
43 Birch Street, NORTH ST MARYS NSW 2760  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: DONOVAN CASEY  
Club Ph: 02 9223 8444  
DZ Ph: 0403 088 697  
Email: donno@simplyskydive.com.au

\*Some members have commented that a few of these Club records are not accurate. We can only print what we're told. Please contact Kim Hardwick at the APF if you find any inaccuracies.



Drop Zone Location: PENRITH LAKES, West White Water Stadium  
Web: [www.simplyskydive.com.au](http://www.simplyskydive.com.au)  
Aircraft: Piper Navajo, C-207, C-210, HELIO COURIER

#### SKYDIVE BYRON BAY

PO BOX 1615, BYRON BAY NSW 2481  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: STEPHEN EDWARDS  
Club & DZ Ph: 02 6684 1323  
Email: [info@skydivebyronbay.com](mailto:info@skydivebyronbay.com)  
Drop Zone Location: TYAGARAH AIRFIELD  
Web: [www.skydivebyronbay.com/](http://www.skydivebyronbay.com/)  
Aircraft: Caravan

#### SKYDIVE MAITLAND PTY LTD

PO BOX 202, RUTHERFORD NSW 2320  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: JASON CLARKE  
Club Ph: 0425 200 185  
DZ Ph: 02 4930 7989  
Email: [info@tandemskydiving.com.au](mailto:info@tandemskydiving.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: RUTHERFORD AIRPORT  
Web: [www.skydivemaitland.com.au](http://www.skydivemaitland.com.au)  
Aircraft: Two C-182's

#### SKYDIVE COFFS HARBOUR

PO Box 351, COFFS HARBOUR NSW 2450  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: MARK BRODY  
Club Ph: 1800 800 840  
DZ Ph: 0433 254 438  
Email: [skydivecoffsharbour@australianskydive.com](mailto:skydivecoffsharbour@australianskydive.com)  
Drop Zone Location: PARK BEACH & ENGLANDS PARK OVAL & COFFS HARBOUR AIRPORT  
Web: [www.skydivecoffsharbour.com](http://www.skydivecoffsharbour.com)  
Aircraft: C-182

#### SKYDIVE NOWRA

PO BOX A32, NOWRA NAVAL PO NSW 2540  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: RALF JAEGER  
Club Ph: 0419 446 904  
DZ Ph: 02 4424 2138 (weekends)  
Email: [jaeger@shoalhaven.net.au](mailto:jaeger@shoalhaven.net.au)  
Drop Zone Location: NOWRA AIRFIELD  
Web: [www.shoal.net.au-skydivenowra](http://www.shoal.net.au-skydivenowra)  
Aircraft: Cessna 185, 182

#### SKYDIVE OZ

PO BOX 925, MORUYA NSW 2537  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: PAUL SMITH  
Club Ph: 0438 185 180  
Email: [fun@skydiveoz.com.au](mailto:fun@skydiveoz.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: MORUYA & TRANGIE AIRFIELD  
Web: [www.skydiveoz.com.au](http://www.skydiveoz.com.au)  
Aircraft: Cessna 180 and Cessna 185

#### SKYDIVE TEMORA

PO BOX 2, TEMORA NSW 2666  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: GREG COX  
Club Ph: 02 6978 0137  
DZ Ph: 0417 695 759  
Email: [sales@skydivetemora.com.au](mailto:sales@skydivetemora.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: TEMORA AIRPORT  
Web: [www.skydivetemora.com.au](http://www.skydivetemora.com.au)  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

#### SKYDIVE THE BEACH

PO BOX 5361, WOLLONGONG NSW 2500  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: GLENN HOGAN  
Club Ph: 02 4225 8444  
DZ Ph: 1300 663 634  
Email: [info@skydivethebeach.com](mailto:info@skydivethebeach.com)  
Drop Zone Location: STUART PARK WOLLONGONG  
Web: [www.skydivethebeach.com/](http://www.skydivethebeach.com/)  
Aircraft: Navajo, Cessnas 206 & 182 and Caravan 208

#### SKYDIVING NSW DROP ZONE

PO BOX 764, TAREE NSW 2430  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: MARK BRODY  
Club & DZ Ph: 0418 730 741  
Email: [skydiving@westnet.com.au](mailto:skydiving@westnet.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: TAREE AIRPORT  
Aircraft: C182

#### SYDNEY PARACHUTE & SKYDIVING CENTRE

PO BOX 4274 Milperra Bc 1891  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: GRAHAME HILL  
Club Ph: 1800 805 997  
DZ Ph: 02 97919155  
Email: [admin@sydneyneyskydivers.com.au](mailto:admin@sydneyneyskydivers.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: PICTON  
Web: [www.sydneyneyskydivers.com.au](http://www.sydneyneyskydivers.com.au)  
Aircraft: Skyvan, 750 XL & Beaver

#### SYDNEY SKYDIVERS

PO BOX 4274 Milperra Bc 1891  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: PHIL ONIS  
Club Ph: 02 9791 9155  
DZ Ph: 02 4630 9265  
Email: [admin@sydneyneyskydivers.com.au](mailto:admin@sydneyneyskydivers.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: PICTON  
Web: [www.sydneyneyskydivers.com.au](http://www.sydneyneyskydivers.com.au)  
Aircraft: Skyvan, Beaver & 750XL

#### TANDEM SKYDIVING

37 SEGENHOE ST, ARNCLIFFE NSW 2205  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: DICK PETERS  
Club Ph: 02 9597 5918  
DZ Ph: 0418 275 200  
Email: [rpeters@ozEmail.com.au](mailto:rpeters@ozEmail.com.au)  
DROP ZONE LOCATION: CAMBEWARRA  
Aircraft: Cessna 180

#### WESTERN DISTRICTS PARACHUTE CLUB

BINDI, WANDARY LANE, FORBES NSW 2871  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: MIKE CARRE  
Club Ph: 02 6852 1221  
DZ Ph: 02 6852 3845  
Email: [juliehurkett@hotmail.com](mailto:juliehurkett@hotmail.com)  
Drop Zone Location: FORBES AIRPORT  
Web: [www.wdpc.info](http://www.wdpc.info)  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

## ACT

#### AERIAL SKYDIVING PTY LIMITED

8 FRASER PL, YARRALUMLA ACT 2600  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: GRAEME WINDSOR  
Club Ph: 02 6285 1453  
DZ Ph: 0418 487 953  
Email: [aerialskydiving@ozEmail.com.au](mailto:aerialskydiving@ozEmail.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: CANBERRA DEAKIN MINT OVAL, ACT  
Web: [www.jump-act.com](http://www.jump-act.com)  
Aircraft: Cessna 206

#### JUMP! AUSTRALIA

PO BOX 224, CURTIN ACT 2605  
Non Training Operation  
Club & DZ Ph: 0418 829 977  
Email: [george@jump.com.au](mailto:george@jump.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: Mint Oval Deakin  
Web: [www.jump.com.au](http://www.jump.com.au)

#### SKYDIVE CANBERRA

4 BADGER PL, OXLEY ACT 2903  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: TERRY RIDDLE  
Club Ph: 02 6296 1911 (BH)  
DZ Ph: 0458 736 920  
Email: [neilandsharan@fergiefamily.com](mailto:neilandsharan@fergiefamily.com)  
Drop Zone Location: CANBERRA - MINT OVAL, DEAKIN  
Web: [www.skydivecanberra.com.au](http://www.skydivecanberra.com.au)  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

## VICTORIA

#### AERIAL SKYDIVES

PO BOX 266, CHURCHILL VIC 3842  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: JANINE HAYES  
Club Ph: 0408 070 991  
Email: [janine@aerialskydives.com](mailto:janine@aerialskydives.com)  
Drop Zone Location: LATROBE REGIONAL AIRPORT, TRARALGON  
Web: [www.aerialskydives.com](http://www.aerialskydives.com)  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

#### AUSTRALIAN SKYDIVE

PO BOX 839, TORQUAY VIC 3228  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: RALPH: HAMILTON-PRESGRAVE  
Club Ph: 1800 557 101  
DZ Ph: 0434 174 443  
Email: [info@australianskydive.com.au](mailto:info@australianskydive.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: BRIDGEWATER ON LODDON & TIGER MOTH WORLD TORQUAY  
Web: [www.australianskydive.com.au](http://www.australianskydive.com.au)  
Aircraft: Cessna 182 & 206

#### COMMANDO SKYDIVERS INCORPORATED

PO BOX 2066, ROWVILLE VIC 3178  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: PETER KNIGHTS  
Club Ph: 1300 555 956  
DZ Ph: 03 5998 3702  
Email: [info@commandoskydivers.com.au](mailto:info@commandoskydivers.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: 3260 STH GIPPSLAND HWY, TOORADIN  
Web: [www.commandoskydivers.com.au](http://www.commandoskydivers.com.au)  
Aircraft: 2 x Cessna 206

#### FREEFALL UNITED INC

14 ITKESTON ST, HERNE HILL, VIC 3042  
Non Training Operation  
Club Ph: 03 5221 8606  
Email: [geoffg@oamps.com.au](mailto:geoffg@oamps.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: various  
Web: <http://freefall.alphalink.com.au>  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

#### MELBOURNE SKYDIVE CENTRE

285 AUBURN ROAD, HAWTHORN VIC 3122  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: PAUL MURPHY  
Club Ph: 1300 734 471  
DZ Ph: 03 9739 0333  
Email: [sales@melbourneskydivecentre.com.au](mailto:sales@melbourneskydivecentre.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: Lilydale Airport  
Web: [www.melbourneskydivecentre.com.au](http://www.melbourneskydivecentre.com.au)  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

#### RELWORKERS INCORPORATED

30 A ROODING STREET, BRIGHTON VIC 3186  
Non Training Operation  
Club Ph: 0413 303 635  
Email: [info2009@relworkers.org](mailto:info2009@relworkers.org)  
Drop Zone Location: No fixed DZ  
Web: [www.relworkers.org](http://www.relworkers.org)

#### SKYDIVE NAGAMBIE

PO BOX 311, NAGAMBIE VIC 3608  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: DON CROSS  
Club Ph: 03 5794 1466  
DZ Ph: 03 5794 2626  
Email: [jump@skydivenagambie.com](mailto:jump@skydivenagambie.com)  
Drop Zone Location: NAGAMBIE & PHILLIP ISLAND  
Web: [www.skydivenagambie.com](http://www.skydivenagambie.com)  
Aircraft: XL 750 & Cessna 185

#### SKYDIVE VICTORIA

PO BOX 16, COROWA NSW 2646  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: FRANK SMITH  
Club Ph: 0415 704 748  
DZ Ph: 02 6033 2435  
Email: [enquiries@skydivevictoria.com.au](mailto:enquiries@skydivevictoria.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: COROWA  
Web: [www.skydivevictoria.com.au](http://www.skydivevictoria.com.au)  
Aircraft: VARIOUS

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

#### ADELAIDE TANDEM SKYDIVING

PO BOX 1014, GOLDEN GROVE SA 5125  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: ALLAN GRAY  
Club Ph: 08 8261 4161  
Email: [info@adelaideskydiving.com.au](mailto:info@adelaideskydiving.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: Port Wakefield Road Lower Light  
Web: [www.adelaideskydiving.com.au](http://www.adelaideskydiving.com.au)  
Aircraft: C-182

#### ADVENTURE AIR SKYDIVING PTY LTD

PO BOX 571, GOODWOOD SA 5034  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: SCOTT GRIST  
Club Ph: 08 8322 7788  
Email: [info@skydivegoolwa.com.au](mailto:info@skydivegoolwa.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: GOOLWA AIRFIELD, AIRPORT RD, CURRENCY CREEK  
Web: [www.skydivegoolwa.com.au](http://www.skydivegoolwa.com.au)  
Aircraft: C-182

#### SA SKYDIVING

89E GOODWOOD RD, GOODWOOD SA 5034  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: GREG SMITH  
Club Ph: 08 8272 7888  
DZ Ph: 08 8531 1516  
Email: [skydive@skydiving.com.au](mailto:skydive@skydiving.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: LANGHORNE CREEK AIRFIELD, SKELDON ROAD  
Web: [www.skydiving.com.au](http://www.skydiving.com.au)  
Aircraft: Cessna 206 & 182

#### SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SPORT PARACHUTE CLUB INC

PO BOX 884, NORTH ADELAIDE SA 5006  
Non Training Operation  
Club 0422 469 608  
Email: [skydive@saspc.asn.au](mailto:skydive@saspc.asn.au)  
Drop Zone Location: LOWER LIGHT, LANGHORNE CREEK, GOOLWA  
Web: [www.saspc.asn.au](http://www.saspc.asn.au)

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

#### HILLMAN FARM SKYDIVERS INC.

125 RIVERTON DRIVE WEST, ROSSMOYNE WA 6148  
Non Training Operation  
Club Ph: 0415 714 585  
DZ Ph: 08 9736 1386  
Email: [lwilthshire@inet.net.au](mailto:lwilthshire@inet.net.au)  
Drop Zone Location: HILLMAN FARM  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

#### KAMBALDA SKYSORTS

PO BOX 79, KAMBALDA WEST WA 6444  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: MICK MURTAGH  
Club Ph: 08 9027 1043  
DZ Ph: 0419 853 193  
Email: [murtagh@bigpond.net.au](mailto:murtagh@bigpond.net.au)  
Drop Zone Location: KAMBALDA WEST AIRSTRIP  
Aircraft: C-182

#### PETE'S PARACHUTING (NW) Pty Ltd

PO BOX 810, JURIE BAY WA 6516  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: PETE LONNON  
Club Ph: 0417 180 064  
Email: [jumpnow@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jumpnow@bigpond.net.au)  
Drop Zone Location: WICKHAM AIRSTRIP & JURIE BAY  
Web: [www.australianskydivingadventures.com](http://www.australianskydivingadventures.com) and [www.skydivejurienbay.com](http://www.skydivejurienbay.com)  
Aircraft: Cessna 182

#### SKYDIVE ADVENTURE

116 BLAIR ST, BUNBURY WA 6230  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: PETER SWANN  
Club Ph: 08 9791 7311  
DZ Ph: 0417 965 763  
Email: [swanny@gateway.net.au](mailto:swanny@gateway.net.au)  
Drop Zone Location: HILLMAN FARM, DARKAN  
Web: [www.skydiveadventure.com.au](http://www.skydiveadventure.com.au)  
Aircraft: C-182

#### SKYDIVE BROOME

PO BOX 2820, BROOME WA 6725  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: RALPH FORD  
Club Ph: 0417 011 000  
Email: [info@skydivebroome.com.au](mailto:info@skydivebroome.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: BROOME TURF CLUB  
Web: [www.skydivebroome.com.au](http://www.skydivebroome.com.au)  
Aircraft: C-182

#### SKYDIVE EXPRESS

PO BOX 151, LEEDERVILLE WA 6903  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: DON WOODLAND  
Club Ph: 08 9444 4199  
DZ Ph: 08 9641 2905  
Email: [jump@skydive.com.au](mailto:jump@skydive.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: YORK  
Web: [www.skydive.com.au](http://www.skydive.com.au)  
Aircraft: Cessna Caravan and Cessna 182

#### SOUTHERN SKYDIVERS

PO BOX 1478, BUSSELTON WA 6280  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: AUSSIE POWER  
Club Ph: 08 9753 1661  
DZ Phone 0439 979 897  
Email: [annkerrawn@gmail.com](mailto:annkerrawn@gmail.com)  
Drop Zone Location: BUSSELTON REGIONAL AIRPORT  
WEB: [www.southernskydivers.com.au](http://www.southernskydivers.com.au)  
Aircraft: BN2A Islander, Cessna 182

#### SPORTING SKYDIVERS CLUB OF WA

10 VALENCIA GROVE, MOUNT NASURA WA 6112  
Non training Operation  
Club Ph: 08 9399 7333  
Email: [cblenco@bigpond.net.au](mailto:cblenco@bigpond.net.au)  
Drop Zone Location: VARIOUS

#### WEST AUSTRALIAN SKYDIVING ACADEMY

PO BOX 439, NORTHBRIDGE WA 6865  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: ROBIN O'NEILL  
Club Ph: 08 9227 6066  
Email: [wasac@inet.net.au](mailto:wasac@inet.net.au)  
Drop Zone Location: PINJARRA  
Web: [www.waskydiving.com.au](http://www.waskydiving.com.au)  
Aircraft: 2 X Cessna 182s, PA 31-30 Navajo

## TASMANIA

#### SKYDIVE TASMANIA

20 MCVILLY DRIVE, HOBART TAS 7000  
CHIEF INSTRUCTOR: KEN HIGGINS  
Club 0400 500 123  
Email: [info@skydivetasmania.com.au](mailto:info@skydivetasmania.com.au)  
Drop Zone Location: SWANSEA & HOBART REGATTA GROUNDS  
Aircraft: C-182  
Web: [www.skydivetasmania.com.au](http://www.skydivetasmania.com.au)



