

Issue 582  
March 2024

Victorian Association of Radio Model Soaring



1405 Stud Road, ROWVILLE 3178



# Aspectivity

*Deadline for the next Aspectivity is Friday 5 April or earlier please, one week prior to the general meeting held on the second Friday of the month, i.e. Friday 12 April at 8:00pm in the club rooms.*

## President's Prattle 6

by Ken Madill



Well summer has finally arrived [*and gone too, Ed.*] and there has been some good flying weather. It has been pleasing to see larger numbers of members flying and enjoying themselves.

Knox Council arranged for the building contractor to come on site and modify the seals on the bottom of the roller doors. They pass the jug of water test, so I am hopeful that they will be OK for heavy rain. The bases of the uprights on the pits shade have been re-painted to, hopefully, stop the rust that was forming.

Ron Hickman and I met Council representatives on site. They have drilled some sample holes and will develop a specification and indicative cost for an all-weather surface on our overflow car park. Council does not have any funding available but we will know what it will cost us should we decide to go ahead with the work ourselves. They are also going to look at what would be required for improved site drainage and have added some gravel to the lower point of our existing car park which should prevent it flooding over winter.

Council have approved our installation of artificial turf in the pits area. We will hopefully get it installed in the next month.

Our Funfly on the 24<sup>th</sup> February was well attended with excellent flying weather. We had a total of 22 participants. Two of these

contested both the Power and Glider sections. The results are published elsewhere in Aspectivity. It was great to see so many relatively inexperienced pilots having a go and gaining confidence throughout the day.

A big thanks to Mick Barlow for his timekeeping. Graham Sullivan for marking the runway and counting numerous loops, to Paul Van Tongeren for his excellent assistance with my overly complicated scoring system, Kieth Schneider and David Anderson for the catering and all others who helped on the day. Peter Mack deserves a special mention for his spectacular fast pass and the explosion of his Teksumo. On the entry sheet he listed his plane as “Wing, if glue dries”. Sorry Peter, it didn’t.

Our scale modellers held their first meeting on Friday the 23<sup>rd</sup> February. An overview of the group and its history is included in this issue of Aspectivity.

We are seeing a large increase in new members. Evan Green has kindly volunteered to take over the Registrar role on a temporary basis and also assist us to streamline the process. Evan’s assistance is greatly appreciated. We are having to work out a new way of printing membership tags so please be patient on issuing up to date name tags. It is important and a club requirement that all members wear their name tags while flying. If you see somebody without a name tag please feel free to ask who they are and verify they are a paid up member. I encourage everyone to welcome and assist new members. Don’t be afraid to advise them if they are not conforming with club rules.

Happy flying.

## February General Meeting minutes



<b>Date:</b>	9 February 2023
<b>Time:</b>	8:00pm
<b>Venue:</b>	VARMS Clubroom, Rowville
<b>Apologies:</b>	Colin Kahn
<b>Visitors:</b>	Bruce Neil (prospective member)

### Meeting

- Opening:** Meeting was opened by President at 7:55pm with 32 members present.
- New Members:** None
- Previous minutes:** The previous minutes were accepted as published in Aspectivity.  
**Moved:** Keith Schneider      **Seconded:** Robert Cossell      **Passed**
- Business arising from the minutes:**
  - Shade cloth review with KM.
  - Field maintenance: under review by GS and committee. Due to mild weather no action has been required so far this summer.
  - Recommendation of using “Good Sam” at the club and having a guest speaker on safety, specifically on using the defibrillator and bandages for snake bites. Snake bite bandage purchased, “Good Sam” to be organised at a future date.
  - Fun fly – February. Agreed that an event will be scheduled for Saturday 24th Feb.
  - Second windsock moved - completed. A third windsock on the North end of the runway to be added on the 10th February.

5. **Correspondence:** The following items of correspondence were received and sent.
- a. **Received:**
    - i. VMAA Executive minutes
    - ii. Australian Men's Shed newsletter.
    - iii. Australian Men's Shed re round 27 grants.
    - iv. Multiple emails from KCC re maintenance .
    - v. Email from Bruce Talbot re rust at the bottom of the vertical rectangular uprights in the pits area.
    - vi. KCC – A note from Leisure.
    - vii. Quotes re artificial grass.
    - viii. MAAA Jungle on indefinite hold.
    - ix. Anonymous email complimenting VARMS on the website.
    - x. A couple of incident reports – No injuries or damage to property.
    - xi. Email from Scale modelling group (under 20 members) asked to use club facilities every second Friday night for meetings. KM to action.
    - xii. Email from David Hobby to use VARMS for commercial training of students. Secretary has asked for clarity of times, duration, dates, days and number of students. Payment to be discussed.
    - xiii. Other emails – political party and junk.
  - b. **Sent:**
    - i. KM requesting updates for the artificial grass quote.
6. **Treasurers Report:** The treasurers report was presented.  
**Moved:** Kevin Fryer                      **Seconded:** Keith Schneider                      **Passed**
7. **Reports:** The following reports were presented.
- a. Aerotow – Next scheduled for Saturday 17 Feb.
  - b. Training – Sunday training continuing successfully.
  - c. Power – It was reported that Saturday power flyers were not flying circuits appropriately. Ken Madill to investigate.
  - d. Helicopter – Nil to report.
8. **General Business:** The following items were discussed.
- a. Colin Collyer advised that the Glenfern Rd site is open to anybody who wants to fly there and VARMS pilots have no rights regarding the actions of non VARMS member pilots.
  - b. Colin Collyer gave an update on the planned improvements to the workshop. This included approximately \$1,000 for a dust extraction workbench and dust extraction system, an air-conditioning unit, drop down power points and a blind to reduce heat from the northern roller door. \$1,000 expenditure on the workbench and dust extraction system was approved and detailed costings of the other items to be tabled and discussed at the next meeting.  
**Moved:** Ken Madill                      **Seconded:** Grant Spriggs                      **Passed**
  - c. Andrew Allan provided an update on the changes made to the security system. The entry door now remains unlocked when the alarm is switched off. All doors are to be closed before the alarm system is activated. The display scrolls showing any doors that are not closed.

- d. The quote for synthetic grass for the pits area from Supernatural Grass for \$10,950 was discussed. It was agreed to proceed with this work as quoted.  
**Moved:** Ron Hickman      **Seconded:** Grant Spriggs      **Passed**
- e. A request has been received from Christian O'Dea for 10 to 15 scale modellers to use our club facilities to meet approximately every two weeks on a Friday night. It was agreed that they be invited to join VARMS as Associate Members. Ken Madill has verified with our insurer V Insurance, as long as they are identified as club members, they would be covered by our policy.
- f. The Rowville Men's shed has invited VARMS members to join them for a BBQ lunch at 11.30 am on Thursday 15th February. They will provide us with a tour of their wood and steel workshops. Ken Madill will provide a presentation on VARMS planes and activities.
- g. A fire extinguisher trolley has been positioned just inside the main clubhouse. Members are requested when flying to ensure the roller door is open to allow quick access to it in the case of fire. The Location of fire extinguishers will be reviewed depending on the dryness of the grassed areas.
- h. Ross Armstrong has advised the committee that he will no longer be able to carry out the duties of Club Registrar. Jack Bhalla has offered his services to assist in this role.
- i. Mark Irving has advised that he will no longer be able to carry out regular cleaning of the clubhouse. Mark has been doing an excellent job over the last 12 months. Ken Madill called for volunteers to take over cleaning duties. There were no volunteers.
9. **Next Meeting:** The next General Meeting will be 8:00pm Fri 8 March 2024 at the Rowville clubhouse.
10. **Closure:** There being no further business, the President closed the meeting at 9:15pm.

## General Meeting

The next general meeting will be 8:00pm on Friday 8 March at the VARMS clubrooms.

## WANTED - Articles for Aspectivity

New articles for Aspectivity needed now. Looking for some "Hints & Tips" items if you can do it. Send your images and imaginings to [editor@varms.org.au](mailto:editor@varms.org.au). Thanks to prior contributors.



OR



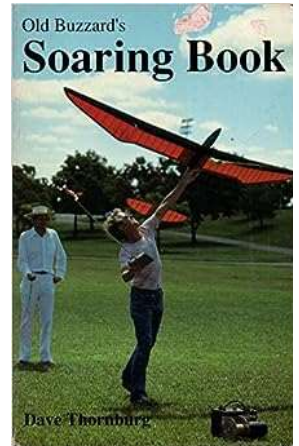
# Library

The VARMS library is looking very neat and organised. If you have items on loan, please return them to the Library at your earliest opportunity.

In particular, would the person holding "**Old Buzzard's Soaring Book**" by Dave Thornburg please hunt it down and return it.



Max Haysom has offered to exchange it, on return, with a DVD copy of "**Old Buzzard Goes Flying**".



# Dandenong Scale Model Club

The Dandenong Scale Model Club was established in 1996, led by inaugural president Vin Flagg. In 2024 we have continued to thrive as the Dandenong area model club and have welcomed four new members in recent months as part of our drive to increase the opportunity for anyone to join us who is interested in scale modelling.

As a club that is now approaching 30 years old, we have had several club locations including Rowville Baptist Church, Scoresby Sea Scout Hall, Noble Park SES, and club member locations including a factory at Hallam and one at Keysborough. All through that time the club's aim has been to provide a space for all modellers no matter what their skill level or interest to talk about and build models. It didn't really matter where we were, it mattered who we were with.



We are very informal in that we don't hold regular meetings. We hold club meetings where you can bring a model to display, or one to build, or your latest purchase or 3D print. We enjoy the fact that we are a diverse bunch of modellers, with guys who focus on figures, cars, planes, ships, armour, science fiction and scratch building. We love a chat, sometimes a pizza and a cuppa.

We are an active club with participation in the annual Waverley Club interclub challenge, that DSMC has won the

past three years in a row, as well as providing a display at the annual Model Expo held at Sandown Racecourse each June.

Currently we are 18 members with only 15 active, and one “at large” member who lives in Anglesea, but we aim to grow and to keep providing a space for all modellers to enjoy the hobby. We want to thank the VARMS club for so generously opening their facility to us, and allowing us to join as associate members. We love the location and the facility, and I already have one member who is likely to want to join the flying ranks very soon.



Thank you for the chance to become part of your club, and we look forward to a long association with you.

Christiaan O’Dea  
President 2024

VARMS extends a warm welcome to the scale model-building group joining as non-flying members.

**Question:** Will invisible airplanes ever be a thing?



Answer: I just can't see them taking off.

# Club Room Alarm System

by Andrew Allen

To make it easier and more secure to access the club, we recently made some changes to the alarm system.

1. Once the alarm has been disarmed, the entry into the club room (not the workshop) will remain unlocked until the alarm system is armed again. We don't need the aluminium flap or the FOB to enter via that door.
2. The last member to leave must ensure that the two access doors (club room and workshop) and the roller doors (verandah storage, club room to verandah, club room servery and three workshop roller doors) are all shut.

There is a scrolling display mid-screen that will indicate if any doors are open. If the message says doors are open, close the door/s indicated on the display before arming the system.



**“Open Club Room ... PIR”**

may be displayed because you are still in the room to arm the system. This is of no concern.

The same scrolling display will show only the time and date when all doors are shut and there will be a tick icon in the bottom left corner of the keypad display. The system can now be armed.

3. If the system has not been armed by the last member leaving, it will automatically arm at 9:30pm.



If you are in the club room at this time, the keypad display unit will start to beep indicating it is about to arm the system. Simply use your FOB to disarm the system and, when you are leaving, arm the system using your FOB, as per normal last person to leave procedure.

**NOTE: There have been occasions when the alarm has not been armed by the last member to leave. The automatic arming is a backup to ensure our valuable assets are kept safe and secure. The procedure still remains that the last member to leave arms the system.**

**Each time the system is left unarmed, one of our committee members receives a phone call between 10pm – 1am informing them the alarm is not armed.**

If you unlocked and disarmed the system when arriving at the field then, if other members are present when you leave, have a conversation with them to ensure they know to lock up and arm the security system.

Modeller: "Darling, I'm just off to the flying field; shouldn't be too long."

Modeller's Mate: "OK, see you next week!"

## F-F-F @ R-R-R

R-R-Regular F-F-F (Feed, Fix, Fly) nights are held at R-R-R (Rowville Recreation Reserve) 5:00 to about 9:00pm on W-W-Wednesday each w-w-week. Come and j-j-join in the F-F-FUN.



# Captain Blonkhead wants you



Drinks \$1.00 per can

Ice creams \$2.00 each

We use the honesty system ... do YOU?

**R-E-S-P-E-C-T**

Fridge empty? Top it up from the box below or tell a committee member.

## Club Merchandise

I have VARMS embroidered caps in stock for \$20 each, embroidered VARMS logos \$10. If you would like one, email me at [lewmar@iprimus.com.au](mailto:lewmar@iprimus.com.au)

see me at the club or call me on 9887 1060.

**Lew Rodman**



## Upcoming Events

VARMS General Meetings are held at 7:30pm on the second Friday of the month (except January) in the Rowville clubrooms (8:00pm during Daylight Saving). Committee meetings are held on the Monday two weeks before the General Meeting at the clubrooms. Here is the schedule for 2024. Dates for June and September (in bold) have been corrected from those listed in the February edition of Aspectivity.

C'ttee Mtg	General Mtg	C'ttee Mtg	General Mtg	C'ttee Mtg	General Mtg
29 Jan	9 Feb	26 Feb	8 Mar	25 Mar - note changed date.	12 Apr
29 Apr	10 May	<b>3 Jun</b>	<b>14 Jun</b>	1 Jul	12 Jul
29 Jul	9 Aug	<b>2 Sept</b>	<b>13 Sept</b>	30 Sept	11 Oct
28 Oct	8 Nov	2 Dec	13 Dec		

Date	Description	Location	Contact	Host
2 Mar	RCGA F5J comp	Rowville 11AM – 3:30PM	Jim Houdalakis <a href="mailto:jimhoud@gmail.com">jimhoud@gmail.com</a>	<a href="#">VARMS</a>
9 – 11 Mar	F5J Aust Team selection	Milang, SA		<a href="#">SSL</a>
16 Mar	VARMS aerotow	Rowville	Anthony Peate <a href="mailto:ordinary@varms.org.au">ordinary@varms.org.au</a>	<a href="#">VARMS</a>
16, 17 Mar	RC Funfly	Koroit	Rod Mitchell 0423 964 781	<a href="#">WMAC</a>
29 Mar – 1 Apr	Scale Glider Rally	Jerilderie, NSW	Jim Houdalakis <a href="mailto:jimhoud@gmail.com">jimhoud@gmail.com</a>	<a href="#">LSF</a>
6, 7 Apr	Showcase Scale	Wangaratta	<a href="#">Roly Gaumann</a> 0411 550 481	<a href="#">Wangaratta Aero Modellers</a>
13, 14 Apr	<a href="#">Annual Funfly</a>	Echuca	Fred West, Secretary 0418 362100	<a href="#">EMMAC</a>
19 – 21 Apr	F5B Aust Team selection	West Wyalong, NSW	Brett, 0410 502 613	<a href="#">LSF</a>
20, 21 Apr	Blue Rock Float Fly	Baw Baw		<a href="#">BRAG</a>
25 Apr	Annual Warbirds	Byaduk Nth, VIC	Enzo Diana <a href="mailto:enzd@bigpond.com">enzd@bigpond.com</a>	HMAC
18, 19 May	Autumn Scale Rally	Albury-Wodonga		<a href="#">TMAC</a>

Also see more RC events listed on the [VMAA website](#) and in the [VMAA News](#).

## Training

VARMS training sessions are free to VARMS members and to the public and are run at the Rowville flying field from 10am to around noon every second Sunday. You will learn to fly an electric-launch, two-channel (rudder/elevator) glider. Training can take you from newbie to your bronze wings and going solo.

VARMS encourages members to continue training through to Silver and Gold Wings and eventually to become qualified as instructors.

<b>L</b>			10 <sup>th</sup> Mar	24 <sup>th</sup> Mar	7 <sup>th</sup> Apr
	21 <sup>st</sup> Apr	5 <sup>th</sup> May	19 <sup>th</sup> May	2 <sup>nd</sup> June	16 <sup>th</sup> June

**Question:** What do you call it when a giraffe swallows your model glider?

**Answer:** A plane in the neck.



# BRAG Raffle

by Walter

Bawbaw Radiomodellers Association Gippsland Inc. ([BRAG](#)) proudly stands as Victoria's newest MAAA-affiliated club, nestled on a spectacular peninsula overlooking the Blue Rock Lake in West Gippsland. Just a 70-minute drive from the VARMs field, our 18-acre site provides a unique and idyllic setting.



At BRAG, a 120m main runway, float flying access from both sides of the peninsula, designated areas for helicopters, a spacious multipurpose shelter, toilets and numerous scenic camping sites await all aeromodelling enthusiasts.

These initial facilities were the result of a huge effort from our exceptional founding members and have enabled us to host a series of popular flying event weekends in addition to our regular flying days.



We've been grateful to have received financial assistance from the VMAA, MAAA, Baw Baw Shire Council, sponsorship from Bendigo Bank, Trafalgar and support from a range of local businesses to kick start the club into what it is today.



Having laid a solid foundation, the BRAG committee on behalf of its 50+ members is eager to keep building the site into a premier flying field for both land and float flying. Our ambitious vision includes a club room, water tanks, solar power, defibrillator, model setup tables and battery charging facilities, increased shading and more. To fuel these enhancements, we're reaching out to the aeromodelling community and kindly requesting your support for our major [fundraising raffle event featuring over \\$5000 in quality prizes](#).

The BRAG mega raffle will be drawn on April 21st, coinciding with our [April float fly event weekend](#).

For detailed prize information and to purchase tickets, please visit <https://rafflelink.com.au/brag-mega-affle-24>

Explore more about BRAG on our website: <https://www.bawbawrc.com.au/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Bawbawrc/>

email: [events@bawbawrc.com.au](mailto:events@bawbawrc.com.au)

Please join us in making BRAG a flying site that the entire aeromodelling community can be proud of by supporting our fundraising raffle, buying a few tickets and sharing the raffle entry link with friends and family.

We'd love to see you at our [Fun Fly weekend April 20-21](#).

Regards,

BRAG Events Coordinator

## Glenfern Road

This is a reminder that flying at Glenfern Rd is not restricted to VARMS members. The property owner does not mind who flies there as long as they do no damage and lock the gate. So, we can't insist that VARMS members wear their badge when flying there or ask flyers who are not VARMS members to leave.

Col Collyer



# News from the Committee

- Still working on a Welcome Pack for new members.
- The President is in discussion with Knox City Council regarding the provision of drinking water filtration and artificial turf. Committee is also investigating the best way of providing shade cloth.
- Approval was granted to extend the security system by adding a sensor to the window.
- Membership fees for 2024/25 have been set at \$100 (Full), \$50 (Non-flying) and the joining fee has been set at \$100. Committee considered the reduced fees during Covid were no longer warranted since activities have returned to normal and we have a fantastic new facility.
- Evan Green is taking the role of Web-master by the horns and has plans to develop the VARMS website with a focus on building in redundancy and security. As interim Registrar he is also analysing workflow processes for new and renewing members.
- The next Committee meeting has been brought forward one week to 25 March.

## Nigel Murray, Editor

HE



SHE



HE



SHE



HHMMM!

SHE



HE



[Ed. I had a really good model aeroplane joke that I wanted to share here; but it went right over my head.]

# Aerotow



## by Anthony Peate

The next club aerotow is Saturday the 16th of March, weather permitting.

VARMS is keen to encourage members who haven't tried aerotowing to give it a go. This includes both new glider and new tug pilots.

Aerotow is a lot of fun and the tow phase of the flight is fairly simple as follows.

Before take-off, ensure controls operate correctly and the tow release works on an easily accessible transmitter switch.

Keep the glider wings roughly level using ailerons during the tow.

When the tow plane turns, keep the glider on the outside of the turn, like water skiing, so there is no slack in the line. The tow pilot will let you know when they are about to turn and which way. Talk to the tow pilot to ensure the tow angle is adjusted for the weight of your glider so the tow line doesn't get slack and the air speed is kept in the sweet spot. If the tow pilot asks you to release, do so immediately. Gliders have priority for landing.

The timings for the day are: 11:30am BBQ lunch; 11:50am Pilots' briefing; 12:00pm start aerotowing.

# VARMS Funfly

On Saturday 24 February VARMS ran a Funfly event.

Advanced Power	Fast Slow	ETA	Most Loops	Precision Landing	Hightst Overall
1st 2nd 3rd	Geoff Moore Tim Moreland Colin Kahn	Grant Spriggs Graham Sullivan Colin Kahn	Colin Kahn Paul Van Tongeren Tim Moreland	Andy Smith Anthony Peate Tim Moreland	Tim Moreland Grant Spriggs Colin Kahn
Beginner Power					
1st 2nd 3rd	Jarrold Bathie-Moore Georgio James Keys	Jarrold Bathie-Moore James Keys Georgio	James Keys Jarrold Bathie-Moore Lew Rodman	James Keys Jarrold Bathie-Moore Georgio	James Keys Jarrold Bathie-Moore Georgio
Advanced Glider					
1st 2nd 3rd	Kevin Fryer Colin Kahn Colin Collyer	Colin Kahn Colin Collyer Peter Cussons	Colin Kahn Kevin Fryer Colin Collyer	Peter Cussons Colin Collyer	Colin Kahn Colin Collyer Peter Cussons
Beginner Glider					
1st	Ian Badenoch	Ian Badenoch	Ian Badenoch	Ian Badenoch	Ian Badenoch

The first VARMS Family Fun Day in the Rowville club rooms was planned for Saturday 2 December. Unfortunately, the weather, despite it being already summer, proved somewhat daunting: cold, wet and windy. Nonetheless, a good turnout of VARMS families arrived to enjoy the barbecue.

## Workshop Consumables

by Paul Van Tongeren

### Background

With our relocation to the new site, and a larger workshop area, it has been decided by the committee to provide commonly used spares and consumables in the workshop. To paraphrase Ken: "If it can fall off, bend or break" it would be useful to have ready access to spares. So far, we have identified about 100 items that are commonly found on our models. We will shortly be buying cabinets with lots of small trays for all the smaller items, and evolve how to store the larger items.

### What You Can Do

If you have any of these items spare, or would like to donate some to the club, then please do so by putting them onto the workshop bench. They will then be sorted and put into the appropriate trays.

### Spares and Consumables

M3 x 16mm metal socket cap head  
M3 x 25mm metal socket cap head  
M3 x 35mm metal socket cap head  
M3 x 5mm metal socket grub screws  
M3 machine washers  
M3 steel hex nuts  
M3 T-nuts  
M3 Nyloc nuts

2-56 steel hex nuts  
2-56 T-nuts  
2-56 nylon insert lock nuts

4-40 x 3/8" socket head cap screws  
4-40 x 1" socket head cap screws  
4-40 steel hex nuts  
4G x 3/8" metal self-tapper screws  
4G x 1/2" metal self-tapper screws  
6G x 10mm metal self-tapper screws  
6G x 12mm metal self-tapper screws  
6G x 25mm metal self-tapper screws

2-56 nylon Kwik Links clevises  
2-56 Spring Steel Kwik Links clevises

M4 x 15mm metal socket cap head  
M4 x 20mm metal socket cap head  
M4 x 30mm metal socket cap head  
M4 x 40mm metal socket cap head  
M4 x 6mm metal socket grub screws  
M4 x 30mm plastic bolts  
M4 machine washers  
M4 steel hex nuts  
M4 T-nuts  
M4 Nyloc nuts

6-32 x 3/4" metal socket head cap screws  
6-32 x 1" metal socket head cap screws  
6-32 x 1-1/4" metal socket head cap screws  
6-32 T-nuts

1/4" x 2" Plastic Thumb Screw Bolts  
1/4" T-nuts  
Socket Head Servo Mounting Screws  
Servo Horn Screw Set 2.6mm for Metal Gear Servo  
Servo Horn Screw Set 3mm for Metal Gear Servo  
Servo Horn Screw Set for Nylon Gear Servo

2-56 x 12" control rod  
2-56 x 12" full threaded rod



2-56 Swivel Ball Links

4-40 Spring Steel Kwik Links clevises

4-40 Safety Lock Kwik Links clevises

4-40 Heavy Duty Ball Links

2mm wheel collar

3mm wheel collar

4mm wheel collar

5mm wheel collar

6mm wheel collar

Robart Steel Pin Hinge Points 1/8"

Robart Steel Pin Hinge Points 3/16"

Nylon Hinges (with Hinge Pin)

CA Hinges 3/4" x 1"

2.5mm x 150mm cable ties

3.6mm x 140mm cable ties

5mm x 300mm cable ties

Titebond Original Wood Glue

Utility 3g super glue - 6 pack

Bear 36mm x 4.5m Heavy Duty Double-sided Tape

Scotch Tough Transparent Duct Tape

Sellotape 18mm x 25m Sticky Tape

VELCRO Brand 25mm x 5m Black Stick-on Loop Tape

4-40 x 30" full threaded rod

4-40 x 12" full threaded rod

1/2A Control Horns

Nylon T-style Control Horns

1/16" wheel collar

3/32" wheel collar

1/8" wheel collar

5/32" wheel collar

3/16" wheel collar

7/32" wheel collar

1/4" wheel collar

## Electric Tow Plane

The February edition of Aspectivity featured an article by Edmund Ansell on an electric powered tow plane: a Seagull Models Decathlon owned by Trevor Pearce from South Australia. Here are a few more photos of this model that there wasn't room for in February.



# Laser Cutter Update

by Andrew Allen

The VARMS laser cutter has been operational, cutting a variety of parts and projects for about seven months now. During that time six VARMS members have been trained to operate the laser cutter hardware and the computer software interface to make the magic happen.

Names of trained operators are displayed on the wall above the laser cutter. They are, in no particular order;

- Andrew Allen – Operator / Trainer
- Geoff Trone - Operator
- Jack Bhalla - Operator
- Alan Mayhew - Operator
- Gary Ryan - Operator
- Paul Van Tongeren – Operator

The laser cutter is for the use and benefit of all members, but it doesn't make sense for all members to be trained operators. Laser cutter operators need to be computer literate, have some basic knowledge of what CAD software is, and some understanding of the mechanics of the laser cutter hardware and cooling system.

In addition to the above in a similar way that we all need to fly regularly to keep our skills up, it wouldn't make sense to train a laser operator for a one-off project. The hope and expectation is that our trained operators are using the laser regularly for both their own projects and for other VARMS members. If you have a one-off project, we would recommend you work closely with one of the trained operators and be present when your project is being cut to assist the operator and answer any questions that may arise during the cut process.

Note that not all materials we typically use for constructing our models can be cut on the laser.

We are set up to cut the following:

- Laser grade Lite Ply (up to 3mm thickness)
- Balsa (up to 6mm thickness)
- Foam Board (up to 6mm thickness)

Maximum material length we can cut is 800mm. The laser cutter table is 800mm x 500mm.

In addition to cutting parts, the laser can be configured to engrave text to aid in identifying parts when building the model.

If you have a project you think the laser could be used to cut parts for, get in touch with me to discuss your requirements. A project might be a kit of parts for a wing, a ply servo tray, a single bulkhead for a repair to a model or anything else you need cut out of balsa, ply or foam board. Think about group project builds too. If we go through the process to create a set of cut files, it makes good use of that time & effort to then cut multiple kits rather than just one.

The input file the software needs before we can set up to cut parts is a "DXF" or "PLT" file and the laser operator's skill set is focused on cutting a good set of parts from one of these two file formats.

If all you have is a "PDF" file, we may be able to assist you with converting the "PDF" file to a "DXF" file. Please note the conversion process is not always successful, and will likely require work in CAD software to correct errors in the conversion before the laser cut process can be begin.

As this conversion process is outside the skill set of laser cutting from a "DXF" file, any such conversion work is at the discretion of the laser operator. Please understand the team want to help you with your projects, but a laser operator may not have the expertise, or time, to undertake the conversion process.

If any club member is experienced in CAD and would like to offer their assistance to other members in converting "PDF" files to "DXF" files, please get in touch with me.

For small single items, such as a single bulkhead or a servo tray, a hand drawing with accurate dimensions should be sufficient for one of the operators to draw the part in CAD software in the “DXF” or “PLT” format ready for cutting. Please note this would be for a single part only. If multiple parts need to be drawn this would best be done before approaching the laser operator team.

Once the work of creating a set of cut files has been completed, whether it be for a one-off part or a full kit, we would like to retain a copy of the cut files on the laser cutter PC.

Balsa and foam board to be supplied by members as these are readily obtained and easily transported.

The club will endeavour to hold a small stock of 3mm laser ply that can be purchased at cost by members when they have their project laser cut.

The main consumable item of the laser cutter is the laser tube. These are quite expensive \$1200 or more, so we are asking for a donation to club funds for each project we cut in an attempt to ensure operation of the laser cutter is revenue neutral.

Gold coin for one-off parts, \$10 for kit of parts.

We recently worked with a member to cut a kit of parts for a “Spirit Elite” glider so we now have that sitting in our library of cut files. The CAD file for this model was downloaded from the Outerzone site: [Oz : Spirit Elite plan - free download \(outerzone.co.uk\)](http://outerzone.co.uk).

Thanks to Area17 we will have a set of cut files for the “Bird of Time” ready in the near future.

We are very fortunate to have such a capability within our club, and to have members with the knowledge and time to make the laser available to all.

Dig out your project plans and let’s see what we can create!

Andrew Allen ([andrew\\_j\\_allen@yahoo.com.au](mailto:andrew_j_allen@yahoo.com.au), 0483 199 766)

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Avanti - 3m REAS electric glider kit, glass fuselage	\$640
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Vinco TR - 4m F5J moulded glider . . . . .	\$3,220
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ASW 12 - 6.3m Scale GPS racer . . . . .	POA

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# And that’s your bloomin’ lot.

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If you change your address, please notify the Registrar and the VMAA, so we can maintain the correct addressing of this Newsletter. If you are interested in joining VARMS, or learning more about our activities, please contact the Secretary or any Committee member.



## Victorian Association of Radio Model Soaring Inc.

Affiliated with Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI),  
The World Air Sports Federation, Organisation No. A0001504U,  
Model Aeronautical Association of Australia (MAAA), and  
Victorian Model Aeronautical Association (VMAA)



VARMS inc. was formed in 1968 to bring together aero-modellers who were interested in building and flying radio-controlled gliders. Members fly at many places and the club has just established a new base on Police Paddocks at 1405 Stud Road Rowville, an outer eastern suburb of Melbourne, Australia with the assistance of Knox City Council.

VARMS organises competitions in slope and thermal soaring and members operate models from fun-fly to scale, open competition, aerotow, bungee, winch and electric gliders. Members also fly a range of power and rotary wing models.

General Meetings are held at 2:00pm on the second Sunday of each month (except January) at the club rooms in Rowville. Visitors are welcome. Formalities, and sometimes a special presentation, are usually followed by lively discussion on matters of interest to aero-modellers followed by a cup of your favourite brew.



If undelivered return to:  
VARMS Inc.  
P.O. Box 4096  
KNOX City Centre VIC 3152

