



Volume 17 Issue 2  
March-April 2026

# HOLDFAST BUZZ

Holdfast Model Aero Club Inc

modelflight RC

## In this issue

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Early days of RC  
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Find your lost model  
Cracks in the field  
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Plus more



## Early days of radio control

Club member Mal Dyer with his old timer model aircraft operated by a single channel radio control unit (updated to modern 2.4 GHz).

*This is how it was done in years gone by. Could you manage with just a single channel?*

*Read Mal's article on page 3.*

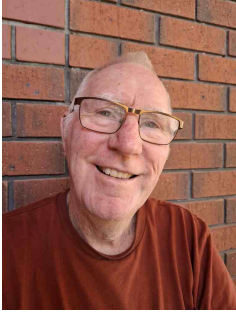
Got a story or photo to share? Send it  
to the editor at  
[buzz@holdfastmac.asn.au](mailto:buzz@holdfastmac.asn.au)



The HMAC newsletter is your vehicle for sharing information, experiences, building projects etc. with your fellow members. If you have photos of your latest model, a construction in progress or handy tip you'd like to share, please send it to The Editor at [buzz@holdfastmac.asn.au](mailto:buzz@holdfastmac.asn.au) for inclusion in a future edition of BUZZ.

## From the President

### HMAC - THE FRIENDLY CLUB



**Club President  
Andy Hollitt**

Recent events at several clubs have made me think about how they've treated their members, how we treat our members, how we treat each other and how we treat visitors and prospective members. We're all here to socialise and to have fun flying model planes. I expect everyone to use common sense. We don't 'tell members off' for little things. For major things (safety), an instructor may have a quiet word. So let's all of us keep in mind that we're 'The Friendly Club'. It will bring us members.

Our runway has done great over the summer, the whole field gets water, but concentrating our watering and maintenance efforts on a specific area, rather than the whole field has paid off. We've extended this for two diagonal runways, which have been marked. Cracks in the diagonal runways have been filled at our working bee on 7th March. Turn points to line you up for these diagonal strips are the tall post in the south east corner of the field and a very tall post on the north fence. We had a good turnout for the working bee. Thanks for helping out.

There's now a white line marked across the runway. Check out 'STOL Competition - World Record Shortest Landing' etc. on YouTube.

SA Water overcharged us \$1,200 for some mythical estimated consumption. Bryan Christie noticed it and Stewart Jackson has sorted it. The meter is now very easy to see (it's next to Majors Rd) and we regularly send pictures of the meter to SA Water.

I've moved the plane rescue pole to the side of the tractor shed, so it's more visible. You'll see it on your way to the outside toilet.

HMAC business cards are in plastic holders on the white board in the pilot shed. Put a couple of cards in your wallet and if you're talking to someone about flying model aircraft, you can give them a card. There's room on the card to write info.

I've earned quite a lot of money for the club by selling off donated goods from deceased estates. Stuff I can't sell is dumped in 'The Boneyard' (the kitchen annexe) so feel free to fossick in there. I'll clear all the boneyard junk to the dump occasionally.

HMAC is a dangerous place, if you're a mouse! We're in a rural situation and we'll get mice, rabbits, snakes etc. A few weeks ago a kangaroo hopped across the field in front of me. Cool. You may have seen the little trays with yummy peanut butter. They act as an indicator and if the peanut butter starts disappearing, I know I have a mouse. They're wary of the traps, but as they now have a taste for peanut butter, so the traps are irresistible. Snap. The score so far is tractor shed 0, tool shed 3, kitchen 1, kitchen annexe 2. I don't use poison as they can die in the wall cavity and stink.

You may have noticed that our Web Page hasn't dropped out for some time. It took us a while to sort this out, but the installation of an industrial router fixed the problem. We're now in the process of changing our service provider, moving the weather station sensors to the pilot shed (where they will give more reliable data) and adding a new camera to give an alternate view.

The ditches next to the roadway were untidy with overgrown weeds. I gave it all a couple of doses of Glyphosate and I'm gradually clearing the ditches with the brush cutter and mower. Once done I'll keep it under control with Glyphosate.

Bryan Christie has been doing a great job slopping white paint on our fence posts. That job was completed at the working bee, thanks to two of our artists. Next we'll use Gripples and Gripple pliers to fix the fence. What's a Gripple? If you want to join a couple of broken fence wires together, you insert the ends in to a lead slug called a Gripple and then squish it. I never knew either, until Mike Nelson told me.

We have a pilot safety fence. The idea is you stand behind the fence when flying your model plane.

Ian Briggs is having operations to both knees. He helps out around the place and I hope he recovers well and is back helping out at HMAC soon. In the meantime, there is now a car park behind the pilot shed for those displaying a disability permit.

## **HMAC - The Friendly Club continued**

As at 1 March our membership was 44 senior, 16 pensioner, 6 associate, 9 junior, 8 life and 13 social. Total 96 members. Looking good.

Congratulations to our pilots who were recently awarded Wings:

- Previous member Graham Smith got Bronze Wings and a Timber X and is off and flying. Have fun mate.
- Dave Graham had been practising hard for Gold Wings for months, coached by Ian Williams. Dave successfully flew the Gold Wings schedule, well done. Dave plans to be an instructor.
- Tristan Harbour recently re-joined HMAC and got Gold Wings promptly, great to have you back. Tristan also plans to be an instructor.

Andy Hollitt 0499916733

From page 1...

### **Early days of radio control**

by Mal Dyer



The model is called "Wizard" and featured as a plan in an issue of the American magazine *Radio Control Modeler* in the late 70s as a model for single channel or lightweight 2 channel radio. The model has a 1250 mm wingspan and is powered by a Cox 049 motor. There is no throttle, elevator or ailerons, just rudder control.

The radio was assembled by the late HMAC member Ross Lloyd from a 2.4 GHz module he purchased from a chap in the UK. The modules are sold for modellers with electronics knowledge to assemble into a working single channel transmitter, to be used with a standard 2.4 GHz receiver and a single servo.

The transmitter has only an on/off switch and a simple press ON switch to operate the servo. The control of the rudder works as follows:

- Press and hold the switch and it gives right rudder.
- Release and the rudder cycles momentarily through left rudder and then to neutral.
- To turn to the left, press the switch, release and then press again and hold.
- Releasing the switch again returns the rudder to neutral.

There are no trims or rates, so a gentle turn requires multiple short bursts of rudder in the desired direction.

When the motor runs out of fuel, the model is trimmed to glide down to land. Good fun to fly.

## Find your lost model

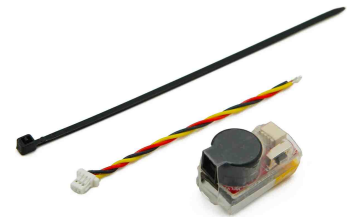
There have been a few planes which have crashed in the southern and eastern fly over areas. These crashes can occur due to a myriad of reasons; disorientation, mechanical failure, signal loss etc. These areas are heavily forested and finding the lost plane can lead to many hours of fruitless searching. Plus a lot of heavy physical exercise and possible health issues through exhaustion. We are not getting any younger! I have been trialling a lost plane beeper alarm device. The model I have been trialling is a ViFly Finder 2. It is tiny, about the size of a twenty cent piece and weighs 5 grams. It beeps very loudly at over 100 db. It can be heard from over 100 metres away. This unit has its own battery which is charged by your main plane battery. It has a lead which you have to solder to a servo plug. Then you plug this into a spare socket; aux 1, gear etc. Then on your transmitter you allocate a switch.

If you crash your plane and the plane's main battery is still connected, flick the switch and the alarm will sound, beeping every few seconds. If you crash your plane and the main battery disconnects, this is when the unit's own battery activates after 40 seconds and it will start beeping. The unit can run for around 30 hours. It also has a flashing LED light which is activated by a light sensor and once it becomes dark the beeping will stop but the light flashes continually until dawn then it starts beeping again. To turn the sounding unit off there is a small button on the side of the unit.

The cost of this beeper is around \$20-\$25. To me it is a good investment. There are numerous videos on YouTube about this beeper. I highly recommend it.

Neil Oxley

*For information - Apple and Android have trackers which you use via your mobile phone.*



### Terry Gold with his Luscombe

Terry built this nicely finished lightweight short kit of a Luscombe over some 200 plus hours. It's a model of the first plane that a young 10 year old Terry flew in. The pilot was an ex WWII fighter pilot who put the plane through its paces, giving Terry a "full on" experience. Now it's Terry's turn to put the plane through its paces!

*(Luscombe Airplane Corporation operated in the US from 1933 to 1950)*



If you see any visitors come to the public viewing area, please spend a few minutes talking to them. If they are interested in having a trial flight, refer them to our website where they can make a booking, provided they are 14 years of age and over.

## Cracks in the field

As I write this, it's early February; we've had 2 mm of rain in two months and our runway is in great shape. Electric ducted fan jets with their small wheels are taking off and landing and I even have students close to Bronze Wings taking off and landing on the runway. Obviously it's best if you use the central area and avoid landing in the outer edges of the field.

I didn't feel that watering alone would prevent cracking in the clay; we had to do a combination of watering and filling cracks as they appeared. I felt that wasn't viable for the whole field, but I did feel that it would be possible for the club to maintain a 12 x 60 metre runway by watering and filling and I'm very pleased with how that's gone.

We have known for years that our field is located on very reactive soil and cracks appear, predominantly during dry weather. Our strategy is to focus on watering the main landing area, which assists in minimising the cracking, but doesn't eliminate it. However, we have to be mindful of how much water we use as our annual budget is \$6,000. The club has had diminishing membership numbers which means less income available to pay our two main obligations – rent and water – plus other expenses. This puts pressure on the committee to set a realistic and responsible annual operating budget.

The committee invested in a remotely operated, computerised watering system which is more efficient than the old system where timers had to be adjusted at the field. Bryan Christie manages the watering regime under direction from the committee – thank you Bryan; you're doing a great job.

The cracks in the main landing area can also be minimised by filling in with soil. There is a pile of good quality soil at the southern end of the pilot shelter, together with a wheelbarrow and tools under the shelter. Please take a wheelbarrow full of soil and fill in those cracks. Don't wait for someone else to do it. If you want to enjoy the facilities at the club, do your bit and help out.

I've been using a drone to regularly monitor our field. This picture was taken on 3 February. You can see me standing lower left. For reference, the green area where I'm standing is thick green grass. The white dots are the 10 metre safety zone and the white line is the runway centre line. The picture shows that the north east and south east corners of the field are just as green as the runway. Club members have done a great job maintaining the runway.

If you have any constructive comments, please send an email to the committee.

Andy Hollitt



## Clean up time

On 2 February Andy Hollitt hired a woodchipper and "deconstructed" the pile of dead branches and assorted vegetation situated at the northern fenceline adjacent to the water tank. David Graham and Jeff Prosser assisted. Well done guys!

PS - The club now has its own Ozito woodchipper suitable for smaller jobs.



## Model aircraft noise problems

The previous issue of BUZZ contained an article on the history of our club. The article mentioned "In the mid 1950s, when most model aircraft were control liners, fliers from all over the Adelaide suburbs would converge on Colley Reserve at Glenelg on the first Sunday each month, set up three flying circles, and take over the area for the afternoon."

Model aircraft noise was a problem at Glenelg. In the early days model aircraft engines generally had a straight out exhaust system. It was later that effective exhaust mufflers were made specifically for these engines.

The club has a rule that no engine should exceed 96 dBA, measured over a grass surface, at a distance of three metres. In addition, internal combustion engines are restricted to operation between the hours of 10:00 am and 7:00 pm daily.

The Advertiser has a column called "The Last Word" by Marty Smith. Interesting that Marty found a reference from 1953 to excessive noise from those operating model aircraft at Glenelg. Some of those fliers would have been the initiators of our club.

Washington.

### WORD NERD

For many years, public libraries in New York City marked some books with three stars \*\*\* to indicate they were erotic and unsuitable for lending.

### JUST A THOUGHT

Don't expect anything original from an echo.

### REMEMBER WHEN

Today is February 3, International Eggplant Day and the 34th day of the year. There are 331 days remaining until the end of the year.

On this day:

**1921:** Alec Macaskill, the first local Top 40 disc jockey on Adelaide radio, was born in Sydney. (He died in 2007.)

**1953:** Glenelg Council decided to investigate complaints by ratepayers of excessive noise created by model planes during demonstrations at Colley Reserve on the first Sunday of each month.

**1954:** Queen Elizabeth II became the first reigning British monarch to set foot on Australian soil.

**1954:** The pet galah of Mr S.C. Illman, of Berri in the Riverland, was attacked by a snake. With a broom, Mr Illman put the reptile out of action and then cut it

ADVERTISER 3/2/26

## Seen at the field



### **Master Painter**

Bryan Christie does a great job of painting our boundary fence posts. Here he is duly spattered with white paint after attacking the posts.

Bryan operates a maintenance business and this type of work at our club is second nature to him.

Thank you Bryan.

### **Night Owls**

Terry Gold and Carlo Espartero are keen night flyers. Here they are with their respective models all lit up.



### **And they're racing!**

John Jefferson's Extra is being outpaced by a flock of galahs.

## Holdfast Social Meetings

I thought that it would be a good time to remind members about the very knowledgeable group that gathers on the first Friday of the month to share their projects and tell a few yarns.

Friday 6 March we had twelve people attend and just about everyone had something to show. A special welcome was given to young Lachlan Gray and his dad who came along to show the project model which he is building at senior secondary school. Lachie is scratch building an MD11 passenger jetliner and he is learning a lot about building methods.

The biggest model was Andy Hollitt's hilarious looking fun machine that apparently flies quite well. Ian Briggs showed his latest 3D printed model project, a very nice twin-engine DHC Otter. Horst Dahms had a fun combination of a small glider mounted on top of a power model, just for fun. It's a bit tricky but works well. Merv Harris had a strange looking free flight bi-plane that took his fancy. Merv scratch builds everything! Terry Gold had a beautiful Luscombe that had a story attached to it from his earlier life in the USA.

There is plenty of friendly chat to be had and we always have a cup of coffee and biscuits available. The gathering winds up at about 9.00 pm. Why not come along and experience this aspect of our club.

There will not be a gathering on 3 April due to the Easter weekend. The following month we expect a general meeting of club members to consider the annual budget. I will advise exactly what is planned via a circular to all members.

Kingsley Neumann (Secretary)



*Terry's Luscombe  
(Story page 4)*



*Horst's composite  
(Story page 10)*



*Chat room in session  
Lachie's project is visible at the top of the table*



*Ian's Twin Otter*



*Merv's unusual biplane*



*Andy's most unusual ???*

## HMAC SHORT TAKE OFF & LANDING (STOL)

I've put a line at 90 degrees to our runway centre line and I'm calling it the 'STOL Line'. Each year the town of Valdez in Alaska hosts a STOL competition. With excellent power to weight ratio and low wing loading they can leap off the ground.



And with low wing loading and flaps down, they can land in a very short space.



I've been trying out a few of my bush planes and really liking the E-flite Maule on 3S so far.

Here are my proposed HMAC rules, based on the full size competition:

**For take offs:** the plane sits on the STOL line, goes to full power and takes off. The distance from the line to the point where the mains left the ground is measured in mm.

**For landings to a full stop:** the distance from the intersection of the runway centre line and the STOL line, to the centre of the mains, is measured in mm. A touch down before the STOL line is disqualified!

The pilot with the least points wins.

If there's a strong SE wind, the STOL line and the runway centre line swap over.

It's a lot of fun trying for the shortest take off and the perfect landing, give it a go.

*Andy Hollitt*

## And now for something different

Horst Dahms has come up with a double decker model. Essentially it's two separate models joined to form a composite upper airframe and a lower airframe.

It's a bit reminiscent of composite aircraft such as the Maia/Mercury, Ju88/Fw190, B747/Space Shuttle and An225/Buran; but on a much smaller scale of course.

In the air it looks like two aircraft flying perfect close formation.

Good one Horst.



Short S.20 Mercury (top)  
Short S.21 Maia (bottom)



Fw190 (top)  
Ju88 (bottom)



Space Shuttle (top)  
B747 (bottom)



Buran (top)  
An225 (bottom)

## Pylon racing results

### 1 February

#### Open class

Bryan Christie (HMAC)	87
Pete Robertson (HMAC)	76
Graham Paterson (HMAC)	74
Tom Jacobsen (Noarlunga)	26

#### Electric class

No races flown



### 1 March

#### Open class

Tom Jacobsen (Noarlunga)	43
Graham Paterson (HMAC)	39
Bryan Christie (HMAC)	23
Pete Robertson (HMAC)	22

#### Electric class

No races flown

*Racing stopped due to rain*



## Buy and Sell Marketplace



If there's any modelling equipment you want to buy or sell, please email a detailed description and photo to the editor (buzz@holdfastmac.asn.au) and it will be advertised in the next issue. Don't forget to include your name and phone number. Your advertisement won't carry over to any subsequent issue of BUZZ unless you make another request. Don't forget there is also a separate Buy and Sell section on our website.



Does anyone have an OS 46 AX motor they no longer need?

Condition is not important. I need one to replace parts on my existing motor.

Let me know if you have one and we can negotiate a price.

Mal Dyer  
0438 803 373

email: [amdye@bigpond.com](mailto:amdye@bigpond.com)



## Junior club member Lachie Gray is raising funds for a worthwhile cause. Can you help?

Hi all,

I, Lachie Gray, have created a team for my Air Force Cadets Squadron to participate and raise funds for the March On Challenge. This challenge requires participants to walk 96 kilometres during March (the distance of the Kokoda Track) to raise money supporting veterans' mental health programs.

Please consider donating to me or my team to support this worthy cause. More info can be obtained at the link below.

<https://www.marchonchallenge.org.au/fundraisers/lachiegray/virtual26>

Kind regards,  
Lachie Gray





## Flying training

Newcomers to radio control modelling are catered for by setting aside Sunday mornings (except the first Sunday of the month) from 10:00 am when qualified instructors teach all aspects required for the safe operation of model aircraft.

During the training period no other models are allowed to fly, ensuring the least possible distractions to the student. Always check the HMAc website for the latest weather update as we cancel instruction if it is too windy, wet or excessively hot.

## New members

Mike Keele, a former member has rejoined the club after a few years off. Welcome back Mike. We trust you will enjoy the facilities which have improved somewhat during your absence.

Tristan Harbour, a member of Noarlunga club, has joined HMAc as an associate member. Welcome to the club Tristan.

Nathaniel Hobbs has joined as a junior member and is undergoing LIFT training. Welcome to the club Nathaniel.

## Flying achievements

### Bronze Wings

Graham Smith achieved his Bronze Wings on Sunday, 8 February. Instructors were Andy Hollitt and Dave Whitten. Congratulations Graham.

### Bronze Wings

Drew Robertson achieved his Bronze Wings on Sunday, 15 March. Instructors were John Jefferson and Andy Hollitt. Congratulations Drew.

### Bronze Wings

Tobin Porteous achieved his Bronze Wings on Sunday, 22 March. Instructors were John Jefferson and Ian Williams. Congratulations Tobin.

### Gold Wings

Tristan Harbour achieved his Gold Wings on Tuesday, 10 February. Instructors were Andy Hollitt and Bob Tait. Congratulations Tristan.



### Gold Wings

David Graham achieved his Gold Wings on Saturday, 21 February. Instructors were Andy Hollitt and Ian Williams. Congratulations David.

## Upcoming events

Pylon racing:	5 April; 3 May
General meeting:	No April meeting (Good Friday); 1 May

## HMAC Committee meeting updates

Your committee meets regularly to discuss and manage the club's ongoing activities to ensure we comply with our obligations to CASA, MAAA, MASA, Department for Environment and Water (our land owner) as well as field operations so that we all can continue to enjoy our model flying.

### Summary of Committee Meeting 17 February 2026

#### Financial Report

- Monthly reports were presented showing that we are well within budgeted expenditure thanks to sale of donated items from various sources. The sales raised \$1,300 so far.
- Term deposit renewal is due. After discussion the club decided to reinvest its fixed term deposit for 12 months and increase the amount to a total of \$30,000.

#### Safety Matters

- All incidents resulting in a model hitting the ground beyond our authorised overfly area must be reported in writing as soon as practical. HMAC must investigate the circumstances and then advise MASA/MAAA. Any landing incident outside the leased area but within the authorised overfly area must be reported to the committee verbally or in writing but need not be forwarded to MASA/MAAA.

#### Field & Grounds Report

- Some sprinkler heads have been relocated for efficiency.
- The water meter location on Majors Road has now been cleared of bushes and weeds and is now easy to locate and read. HMAC is now able to provide a reading and a photograph of the meter direct to SA Water in order to avoid missed readings by their contractor and subsequent estimated consumption billing which has been very misleading in the past.
- An industrial chipper was rented to deal with removed branches etc. HMAC has purchased an Ozito electric chipper to deal with vegetation.
- Our trees haven't had rain for months. The dripper system has been restored with two mechanical timers.
- Ditches next to the roadway are overgrown with weeds. Glyphosate treatment and clearing with mower and brush-cutter has been undertaken.
- The ride on mower needs a service, oil, air filter and spark plug.

#### Buildings Report

- Tool shed flat roof leaks have been fixed. Corrugated foam on a base of silicon sealant was used.
- External flywire installed on the north vent in the kitchen stops bees entering and allows ventilation.
- 'Beware of Snake' sign has been installed on the outside toilet door because a snake has been seen in there.

#### General Business

- A space for a disabled car park behind the pilot shed was approved. Appropriate signage has been installed.
- A proposal for a large sign with graphics to be installed at Lonsdale Rd entry area was discussed. Our landlord DEW has agreed in principle. The cost for the sign is \$2,500. Costs are "underwritten" by a member. Provider is Artcraft Signs Australia. They will do a complete installation.

## Summary of Committee Meeting

17 March 2026

### Financial Report

- The meeting covered several financial updates and administrative matters. The treasurer's report was presented, noting current membership at 96 (down 7 from last year) and total bank balances of \$42,455, including a new \$30,000 term deposit maturing in August.
- The main expense discussed was a water bill of \$2,600, which was higher than expected due to a locked gate preventing meter access.
- The upcoming proposed budget for 2026-27 was discussed. It was agreed to hold a general meeting on Saturday, May 2nd at 11 am to discuss and approve the budget.
- There have been discussions with Marion Council about potentially accessing cheaper water from a new pipeline which is expected to go past our northern boundary.

### Safety

- The committee noted a safety concern about some members wearing open-toed footwear at the flying site. Members are encouraged to be aware of the potential risk of accidentally dropping a model or other equipment on their feet.
- It was noted that the no-fly zones plan was missing from the pilot shed and needed to be replaced.

### Field & Grounds Report

- The committee discussed a proposal to excavate and improve the field by adding 150 mm of dirt. This would be subject to ministerial approval through DEW before proceeding. The group explored alternatives including top dressing, but it was considered that 150 mm of dirt was necessary to prevent clay cracking during hot weather. The discussion included cost considerations and potential grant opportunities, though no final decision was made. Further consideration is needed on whether to proceed with the project.

### Bronze Wings Certification

- The group discussed the process for solo standard pilots transitioning to Bronze Wings certification. They clarified that the current policy allows instructors to issue restricted certificates to allow pilots to fly specific aircraft under safe conditions while working toward their Bronze Wings. The discussion confirmed that the existing wording in their documentation remains appropriate, as it allows for flexibility in handling cases where students need additional practice time before achieving Bronze Wings certification.



Holdfast Model Aero Club Inc  
Corner Majors and Lonsdale Roads, O'Halloran Hill SA 5158  
Web: [www.holdfastmac.asn.au](http://www.holdfastmac.asn.au)  
Newsletter editor: [buzz@holdfastmac.asn.au](mailto:buzz@holdfastmac.asn.au)

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## HOBBYZONE Apprentice STOL S 700mm RC Plane

Start your RC journey with confidence!  
The HobbyZone Apprentice STOL S 700mm is scaled down from the popular Apprentice 1.5m and 1.2m models. The result is a compact, ultra-stable trainer designed to make learning to fly easy, with SAFE technology and smooth, predictable handling. Perfect for parks, ovals, and smaller flying spaces.

**Bind-N-Fly Basic**

**\$349.99**



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