

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

CAPE TOWN FLYING CLUB

5 September 2007

ALEXIA MICHAELIDES & RAFI WEINER

HISTORY:

The CTFC came into existence at a meeting of the joint committees of CAC and GHFC. The new club adopted a constitution which is essentially an amalgamation of the GHFC and CAC constitutions which were very similar. Thereafter, CAC and GHFC were incorporated into the CTFC or, as we refer to it as "the amalgamated club". Our constitution is not written in stone and contains provisions for members to amend the constitution.

Process of amalgamation between Good Hope Flying Club and Cape Aero Club began in July 2005 with a meeting between the two committees. After receiving a mandate from the members in February 2006, the combined committees formed the Cape Town Flying Club in March 2006. The new committee elected Rafi Weiner and Alexia Michaelides to co-chair this group to steer the new club through its first year. The actual date of formal amalgamation was to be 1 May. Rod Rodrigues was appointed CFI and instructors and staff from both clubs merged to form one club. The challenge was enormous and at times quite overwhelming, and the committee was under no illusion as to the difficult road ahead.

The first committee meeting of the CTFC took place on the 24th April 2006 and less than 24 hours later we were dealt our first and most dreadful blow. Our newly appointed CFI, along with two other Cape Aero Club members, were killed during a training exercise in the Travelair. This event had a devastating effect on many people at the club and we would like to extend our gratitude to Pieter Wesselman who stepped in as temporary CFI during this very difficult time. Pieter has a long and rich history with Good Hope Flying Club and his experience and advice is invaluable.

Our initial challenges going forward were multi-factorial and required patience, time and quite a lot of money. The selection of a new CFI was now required again, we needed space for all the instructors and staff, and we merged with an ageing and insufficient fleet. Furthermore, our Club manager and receptionist both resigned and later our maintenance officer moved on as well. We started with a small clubhouse with very little office space and a small combined membership, and we have now grown to a clubhouse with 7 extra offices, as well as a new aircraft. We sold CAC's 152, but not before she had earned us some money being in a TV advertisement.

The committee received a lot of criticism regarding the merger, mostly regarding lack of communication with the members, and we addressed this issue and hopefully have resolved the problem. We furthermore made a request that all new members come to the committee meetings to meet us all, but this has not been very successful but we would however, like to continue to try and meet all new members this way. We encourage all members to speak to the committee members freely.

A suitable CFI was finally appointed with great success, and now all full time instructors have their own office space as well as an office for the maintenance officer. The committee would like to acknowledge and congratulate Jaco van Zyl for the special commendation the club received from the CAA for the excellent manner in which the training facility is run.

In terms of marketing, R26 000 was spent on advertising during the first year and a new website was created with new signage for the club. A new Cape Town Flying Club logo and wings badge was created with the involvement of all the members.

The actual move from the GHFC premises to CAC was undertaken by Christian Marais, who also oversaw all the renovations and improvements. Christian gave up weeks of his personal time and it is indeed unfortunate that he has decided to take a break off the committee for the next year. We are extremely grateful to him for all his effort and we extend a heartfelt thank you to him for all his hard work and hope to see him back on the committee next year. Christian also arranged for the container which stands at the back of the club which is full of surplus furniture, and we need to reconcile the contents of the container in the year going forward.

A decision was made to give all the Tommy's an extreme make over and so far we have only done KKC. We would like to have sent more aircraft for a nip and tuck, but the demand for the planes has been so great and we were advised by the instructors to delay the process to winter. Unfortunately, during the winter months the demand was as great as during the summer, so planning needs to be done to include the rest of the fleet for plastic surgery. Chris Gamley is aware of this and will be making arrangements to allow for aircraft improvements.

Attention was also given to the outside area of the clubhouse. A large area has been paved and the club house painted and fully burglar proofed. Hilda Kallis has been an invaluable part of the team and she worked extremely hard to reconcile CAC accounts to amalgamate the books with GHFC. Kay left us in October last year and we were extremely lucky to find Beverley Combrink at very short notice. Bev is a huge asset to the club and at times its hard to believe she has only been with us since November last year.

It is quite interesting to see how the year has developed and how the membership has grown. Both Good Hope and Cape Aero had long and rich histories, and we hope the memorabilia of both clubs is testament to the glory days of both clubs. How they started, by whom, facilities they offered, aircraft they flew, etc. If one looks back and sees how two social flying clubs developed into the leader of flight training in Cape Town today, we can be proud to be associated with either and now, both. There were many members who had serious reservations regarding the amalgamation, but we believe that the teamwork of the committee members, the dedication of the instructors and staff, and the loyalty of the members have proved that this merger has exceeded all our expectations. The growth in the membership has been vast and the demand for aircraft surpassed realistic predictions. If the committee should be criticized for anything, it should be for

failing to predict the growth of our membership base and for not being able to keep up with the demand for flight training.

Another big challenge we faced was the fuel crisis. We now have drums which we keep in storage, but the fuel shortages are of great concern to us as we try to plan for a change in the fleet. We leased a Diesel 172 for a month and would have liked to have continued, but the aircraft was no longer available to us.

The social side of the club is in the very capable hands of Vossie Vosloo. It is sometimes disappointing when the social events are not well supported, as a lot of effort goes into the arrangements. Thank you to Vossie, Christian and Gareth Pinnock for all the effort. A very special mention goes to Linda Hodgkinson who arranges all the wonderful fly-aways. They fly-aways are really fun and highly recommended to anyone who still has not had the opportunity to go to one. One of the challenges for the forthcoming year is to encourage and hopefully see more of our students at the fly-aways. Not only are they a lot of fun, but one gains really good experience in terms of navigation exercises, not to mention circuits on short and dusty surfaces. Social functions and fly-aways are arranged throughout the year, but despite a large membership, less than 15% of members will attend. The social parties are not just for handing out awards and certificates, but to meet other pilots and have a good time.

In May this year the CAA instituted the new on-line PPL exam system which we were committed to installing at the club. Yet another wendy house grew in the garden, with new computers, ADSL to CAA and this is working very well. Unfortunately the financial cost to the club was great, and we don't expect to see huge returns from it, but we had no choice. Perhaps if we can offer COMM exams as well one day, we will be able to recuperate some of the costs. The office staff are also now on ADSL, which helps them enormously and makes communication more effective.

The committee would like to congratulate and thank Tony Russel profusely for the development and installation of our new on-line booking system. Tony developed this excellent program at no expense to the club, although the club supplied the computer and special large screen. Bookings can now be done from the comfort of your home. Apart from being extremely innovative and convenient, it also solves all the problems we have had with the bookings in the past.

Flight safety meetings have started again with great success and excellent attendance. We would like to thank the instructors, in particular Morne Kleinhans, for his contribution to flight safety and for the success of these meetings.

Tonight you will be electing a new committee. We would like to see "new blood" as we always welcome new ideas and new people to deal with new challenges. However, people who do come onto the committee must bear in mind that meetings are held at least once a month and attention to club affairs can be time consuming.

Going forward into our second year, remaining challenges to address are that of our ageing fleet and try to decide how we are going to proceed. Rationalizing our current fleet will need to take place over a period of time, finance dependent.

We are hoping to obtain a twin engine aircraft soon and Jaco is busy liaising with an aircraft owner. Alexia is busy liaising with an owner regarding the lease of two 150's to our fleet. It would be quite a thing to offer ab initio training on both Piper and Cessna. 80% of flying being done at the club is training and the committee would like to acknowledge the efforts of the instructors. We hope to see more members involved in "hire 'n Fly", although we recognize that the shortage of aircraft remains an ongoing problem.

One of the most difficult challenges to a Flying Club is the question of rates. The committee is always mindful of the fact that the main object of the club is to provide affordable flying for its members. We have established that the cost of flying could be reduced by increasing membership fees. Whether or not this is a viable option will no doubt be considered in the forthcoming year.

The committee would like to extend a special thank you to Gareth Pinnock who has been the Committee secretary for the past year. Gareth is about to cross over to the other side and will be instructing at the club full time very soon. We hope Gareth will continue to manage the club newsletter and advise us with the website.

A special thank you goes to David Barnes for helping us out with his solid knowledge of aircraft maintenance. David has been very resourceful in finding parts all over the place for our planes and has saved us a lot of money because of this.

We would like to thank our trustees, Jim Dean, Schalk Burger and Craig Mockford for advice and assistance when we have required it.

And a huge thank you to Charles Dickinson, our treasurer. Charles keeps a tight hold over all monies spent at the club, and he will now provide you with the financial report, after which we will then take questions and vote for the newly proposed committee members.