

A FAMILIAR TUNE

Sam Richards was simply looking for a place to assemble his plane, but what he found was a whole community ready to welcome him.

In 2003, Sam had finished building the parts of an RV6 kit plane at his home in Newcastle. He needed somewhere to assemble it, so called up an old friend in Temora who had some hangar space.

Sam rented an apartment in Temora and rode his bike out to the hangar each day to work on the plane. His wife Carol remained in Newcastle, but made regular visits to Temora. "We gradually extended our network of friendships and associations in the town.

"At the same time, the Airpark was starting to become more interesting and a point of focus," Sam describes.

When Sam first asked Carol what she thought about buying a block of land at Temora's Airpark, she told him he was out of his mind.

However, overtime they both started feeling more at home. They bought two blocks of land with the intention of building a holiday home at the Airpark.

"It didn't take us long to decide that it was time for a permanent change and we made the move to Temora in 2005," he says.

Their love of aviation has made it easy for them to make connections and meet people.

"Everyone in the Airpark has one common interest that draws them together and that has helped create such a diverse community".

Sam and Carol have become well-known at the Airpark, partly due to Carol's cooking and their famous hangar parties.

They both have a love of music and have hosted a number of events in their hangar. Sam helped launch TEM FM; Temora's community radio station and hosts a regular guitar segment on the show. It is through his role at TEM FM, that Sam has been able to entice some well-known guitarists to Temora.

"I saw that guitarist Nick Charles was looking to do a show around this area, so Carol and I invited him to perform a concert in our hangar.

"Carol had tables of soup and bread rolls for everyone and we ended up with around 70 people attending. It was a great night and Nick certainly left with a positive impression of Temora," Sam describes.

Sam and Carol have found Temora's location to be perfect for them. With Carol regularly overseas for work, they have found getting to Wagga's domestic airport, just an hour away, to be a breeze. "A lot of people have misconceptions about small towns and think that they're all the same. But I've found Temora to be an outward looking town; if you come from somewhere else, they are very welcoming".

"When you're out looking at the Airpark, don't be afraid to knock on someone's door and have a chat with them".

