



Approach

THE NEW ZEALAND AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS MAGAZINE
SUMMER 2020

*Darfield highlights
Covid-bound in NZ
Cessna to the Black Sea
Fostering safety*

AOPA FLY-INS • INDUSTRY NEWS & VIEWS • COMING EVENTS AND MORE



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Approach

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Coming up

- Southern Is Christmas lunch
Pink Glider Cafe, Omarama
5 December
- World's First fly-in
1 January 2021, Feilding
- SAA Great Plains fly-in
5-8 February, Ashburton
- Wings over Wairarapa
26-28 February, Masterton
- Kittyhawk Flying Club/
AOPA NZ 50th Anniversary
19-21 March 2021

For more information visit
www.aopa.co.nz

Cover photo: Stephen Field's Blythe Downs strip, 2020 Darfield fly-in

Photo credit: Aaron Murphy (you can see more of Aaron's images on pg 12)



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Deadline for ads, articles and photos for the next (Autumn) issue: 20 January 2020.



President's Comment

Have you ever sat back and wondered what AOPA does and why? Possibly not, and I guess that is our job as 'Exec' Committee. I do invite you to find some time to ponder over the summer break (trusting you will get a

break) and if you have any brainwaves, please let me know.

I have spent some time pondering. We Exec often fall back on our mission statement: 'Protecting our freedom to fly.'

This is good, but what does it mean? I think there are five components:

1. To be part of an aviation community which works together in Wellington to give our membership a constructive, coordinated and logical voice when dealing with The Regulator.
2. We are onto a 'good thing' with our aviating; we endeavour to share our experience and thereby grow our pilot fraternity. We also try to fly ourselves more often and further.
3. Safety is very close to our heart. Aviation safety has improved over recent years. Technology and improved training are reducing aviation accidents. However, we cannot relent in our pressure to make it even safer. Education and support are imperative and will continue.

4. Social activity is a keystone for AOPA NZ. We are so privileged to be able to run social events as we do, our country is small enough to get around, our numbers are manageable, we have great venues and we have a valued tradition of wonderful get togethers. Long may they continue.

5. Lastly, to provide some good old-fashioned value via our 'Membership Benefits', great magazine, discounted fuel and oil, AOPA VNC Book, Cessna Maintenance programme, AVSEC cards, and much more.

We must be doing something right, as membership applications keep flowing in.

Just to round out my contemplating, JPN was tied down at Omaka a couple of weeks ago and, with hopeless timing, Marlborough was hit by one of those weather bombs. I was watching her on the AOPA web cam. However, one of our members, recognizing the aircraft as one of ours, took the time to go around and check all the ropes and let me know she was safe. That warmed the cockles of my heart and I felt the value of being part of the aviation community.

Hope you enjoy this magazine and have a good and safe summer. Best wishes,

Steve Brown, President 🐣



S o m e t i m e s there's more aviation in my life, sometimes less. Since the last magazine, it definitely seems to have been more.

In October we teamed up with friends and headed for Darfield. The morning dawned clear and still, but the word was that weather was coming, so we waited. And waited. Late morning it hit, and so we waited. Our cut-off was 3pm. At two we went to the Aero Club to wait a little more. The worst of the weather passed over but it was still slightly murky. Through the Gorge and Manawatu or down the Wairarapa?

We opted for the east coast, and it proved an excellent decision. Not only smooth flying, but clear-skied and fascinating as we waggled wings at the coast's historic homesteads. And there's nothing quite like flying the variegations of our coastline...

It proved a four lighthouse flight: Castle Point, Cape Palliser, Cape Campbell and Kaikoura. The first three

looked spectacular, as did Rangiora as we dropped in to refuel with the evening light stretching the shadows long.

Charlie Draper's fly-in is covered on pages 6 and 12. Sunday's return flight took us through the rugged terrain of the Molesworth, included an impromptu lunch with co-pilot Caroline's parents at the Omaka Aviation Heritage Museum, and saw an easy flight across the Strait and past Paraparumu (on which, see the article on page 24 for the history behind current moves to decommission the airport), then into Hawke's Bay and home.

An excellent weekend all round, but it wasn't the only aviation event of note in our lives in recent months.

One Saturday in September Hamish disappeared to the Aero Club to give a lesson in the RV12. He was gone longer than I'd expected – but that's not entirely unknown with a trip to the Aero Club. Eventually he rang: everything was fine but the engine had failed just after take-off. He'd taken control and landed but there were a few formalities to attend to.

Turns out that phone call takes more than a minute or three to process. It also makes you think...



Much of the time, I feel lucky to live in New Zealand (right now, who wouldn't?), lucky to live the life I do, lucky in my family and friends. And every time I get in the plane, I feel lucky to have the pilot I have.

It's not luck, of course, that saw him and his student safely on the ground. "It's good to know the training works," he said, with typical understated calm.

And it is good. Very good indeed.

Anna Mackenzie, Editor 🐣

AOPA 50th anniversary & 2021 AGM

The weekend of 19–22 March 2021 will see AOPA marking its 50th anniversary in style, with anniversary celebrations and the annual AGM held at The Gate in Cromwell, Central Otago.

The first unofficial meeting of the Kittyhawk Flying Club was held nearby, at Walter Peak, in 1969, leading to the Kittyhawk Flying Club being incorporated at Taieri in March 1971.

To attend, you need to register via the AOPA Events page on the website and also book your accommodation by phoning Harvest Hotel on 03 455 1777. As we have booked the whole complex you will not be able to book online, as it will show no vacancies. The accommodation will be on a bed and breakfast basis of \$240.00 per room. When the hotel is full, the office at The Gate will offer alternative accommodation in Cromwell.

Weekend Programme

Friday morning: Christine Taylor Memorial Golf Challenge

This is a biannual event in which the North and South Islands compete... It is a fun round of golf devised by Christine before her untimely death. You do not need to be a regular golfer to participate. It's not too serious but there is a trophy at stake, as well as your island's pride! Eighteen holes of golf will be played at either Cromwell or Ranfurly.

Friday evening: Gather in the Conference Centre and courtyard at The Gate to catch up with members old and new. Great atmosphere with bar and finger food. For those in need of additional sustenance, the restaurants at The Gate are worth a visit.

Saturday morning: After breakfast we'll be transported to the Highlands Motorsport Park. Check out their website www.highlands.co.nz. A bus tour of the race circuit to check it out from a race car's point of view will be followed by Go Karting. This is a lot of fun for all ages. Other attractions include the National Motorsport Museum, with some very rare cars in the line up, the Highlands High Speed Taxi and Supercar Fast Dash. Lunch will be served at the National Motorsport Museum.



Saturday afternoon: Back to the Conference Centre at The Gate for the 50th AGM followed by afternoon tea.

Saturday evening: Put on your good gear and meet in the Conference Centre for pre-dinner drinks with other AOPA NZ members. Dinner in the Conference Centre will feature a wonderful guest speaker who is sure to keep the whole audience on the edge of their seats. She's one hell of a lady, and will also present the Annual AOPA awards.

Sunday morning: For those who have flown in, fill your spare seats and visit some great strips in Central Otago, en route Alexandra Airport, where those driving can join the fliers for lunch. There will also be the opportunity to look at the development at the airport including hangars with accommodation attached.

Meander back to Cromwell to enjoy another night of fellow aviators' company before heading home on Monday morning.

Register and book accom now

Get your accommodation booked as soon as possible, and register your attendance and details on the AOPA Events webpage. Early next year we will take bookings for individual events once we have firmed up pricing for the weekend.

Organisers: Murray Paterson, Ian Sinclair, Sue Kronfeld, Ivor Yockney and Steve Brown.

Future of Paraparaumu airport in the wind

Storm clouds continue to gather over Paraparaumu Airport, with Templeton Group, the majority owner of the airport, in August announcing they were 'considering all options' for the future of the airport while also claiming it was not 'economically viable'.

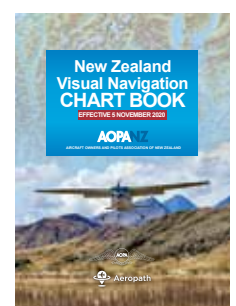
Since then, the Airport Chief Executive and Airport Manager have both resigned and the sale of the adjacent Kāpiti Landing Retail Park, which was established to provide a vital income stream for the airport, is now underway. Using Airways plans to withdraw Paraparaumu Flight Service as justification, airfield operators expect Templeton may announce the closure of the Airport late this year or early 2021, claiming increased risk.

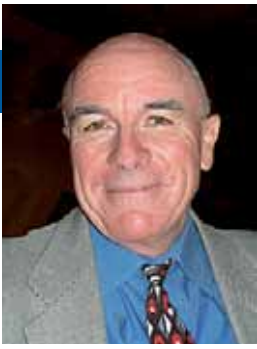
As an important staging point and safe haven for light aircraft crossing Cook Strait, sole provider of aviation fuel and aircraft engineering services on the North Island's west coast south of the Manawatu, and critical component of regional infrastructure, Kāpiti Coast District Council, NZ Aviation Federation, AOPA and local airport operators and community are fighting hard for the airport's survival. For more, see page 24.

VNC Chart Book #2

Over 400 copies of our 2020 VNC Chart book sold even before the new charts had come into effect. Thanks to all those who have already purchased their copy.

Note that significant improvements have been made in the new edition, which came into effect on 5 November 2020. Secure your copy now!





Vice-President's View

I recently had ADS-B in/out fitted to my Garmin 750. On my very first flight post installation I became an instant believer.

I was leaving Ardmore en route Tauranga on an outstanding VFR day. Visibility was excellent. Suddenly I got a voice alert, "Traffic less than two mile." Looking at the depicted ADS-B page on the 750, I could see we were on a converging track, then out the windscreen a Cessna 172 appeared just off my right-hand side. Did I have time to avoid it? Yes I did, but I am pretty sure the other aircraft never saw me.

Obviously ADS-B cannot replace looking out the windscreen, but in this case it proved invaluable. ADS-B only works if aircraft are fitted with it. Have you got plans to install in your aircraft? Yes, it can be expensive, but the CAA rebate system mitigates this to a good degree, and it's another safety tool for your aircraft.

We recently had a face to face Executive meeting in Christchurch. Due to Covid, all previous meetings since I joined the Executive had been via Zoom conferencing. It was good to catch up with Executive members in the real world.

I am on the AOPA NZ regulatory working group and we have a number of initiatives under way. They all take a lot of planning and results are not instantaneous, in some cases being likely to take years to achieve the result we desire.

We are working with CAA on revisions to the Instrument Training syllabus that will 'modernise' the exams required. Our goal is to make it more reasonable and 'real world' for GA pilots.

We are looking at owner self-maintenance on their aircraft, which is allowed under current CAA rules, and will shortly start a series of articles for members on this. Andy Hintz is leading this.

We are starting to look at 'controlled VFR' which will start with an owner survey investigating your experiences. The object is to build a database to try and improve the service with Airways. We will look at both sides of this service, customer and vendor.

Chris Hoffman is on the New Southern Skies working group. This is a long-term project in upgrading navigation in New Zealand.

I have also been participating in a review of tower closures in Rotorua and Invercargill, which has been commissioned by the respective airports. It investigates these proposed closures by Airways from a health and safety perspective.

Overall a lot of projects under way.

There are other working groups on the Executive. A big hit has been the social group, which organised a great fly-in at Haast, covered in the last issue, as well as the recent weekend at Charlie Draper's, covered on pages 6 and 12.

Summer is around the corner which should see a lot of members out enjoying the opportunity to fly.

Steve Horne, Vice-President 🐦

Pink Glider Cafe presentation

By Murray Paterson

Just before lockdown, AOPA southern members had planned a visit to the 2019 winner of the 'Aviation Watering Hole of the Year' but, alas, the pesky virus put the visit on hold, so we have only recently had the opportunity to fly in to Omarama to present the trophy and plaque to Tanya at the Pink Glider Cafe.

Looking at the Metvuw during the second week in October, things were on the improve. I flicked Tanya a text on Wednesday morning, suggesting a gaggle of members could visit on Friday if that suited. A reply came back very quickly: Friday would suit. A time of 3pm was set. As it turned out Tanya had not opened for the season, but was pleased to put on a batch of scones and make coffee for AOPA members.

As Shaun Gilbertson would say, an 'APB' went out, proposing gathering at the Wrinkly Ram before descending en masse on the award winning café.

The day was a stunner with not a bump in the air. Eighteen planes arrived from all corners – Taieri, Timaru, Geraldine, Fairlie, Cromwell, Wanaka, plus a few planes from the depths of Southland – disgorging a dawdle of thirty members, who strolled in from the airfield.



At the Pink Glider, Tanya greeted us with scones and hot coffee as promised, and made a point of talking to all visitors, ensuring everyone knew how warmly they'd be welcomed at the Pink Glider Cafe for breakfast, lunch and even dinner some evenings. The presentation took some time with lots of banter and good humoured interjections from the floor.

It was hard to leave but the day was drawing in. People departed in various directions, keeping a close eye on the gliders being towed into the air by the new on-field winch.

A good point for visiting pilots to remember is that when winch operations are taking place at Omarama, joining overhead is not encouraged. Winching can be from either end and the gliders can climb to 2500ft AGL before release.

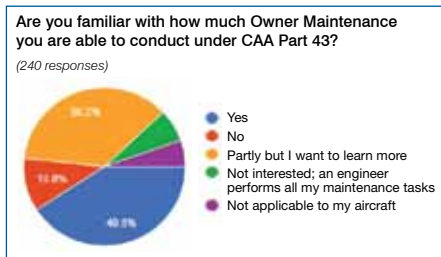
Thank you Tanya for such great hospitality. We look forward to coming to Omarama for the AOPA Christmas Lunch. 🐦

Owner maintenance survey

Aspects of maintenance, such as who can do what to an aircraft, together with questions around on-going maintenance costs, especially with ageing aircraft, have been one of the Executive's focus areas this year. Andy Hintz summarises.

After looking at what owner/pilot maintenance can be performed on type certified aircraft, operating privately, in countries including USA, Canada, UK and Australia, in comparison to New Zealand under Part 43, the Executive conducted an owner/pilot maintenance survey. Clear trends emerged, providing useful information to drive advocacy in the area of owner maintenance.

Of 240 responses, over 76% own a type certified aircraft maintained under Part 43. The remaining were a mix of amateur-built and microlight aircraft.



A combined 47% of respondents had no knowledge of owner maintenance allowed under Part 43, Appendix A, indicating a potential need for information regarding permitted owner maintenance.

Just over a quarter of respondents currently perform owner maintenance tasks as outlined under Part 43, while 46.4% perform some maintenance tasks under direct or indirect supervision of an engineer and 28.3% do not currently perform any owner maintenance tasks but would like to. 12.5% of respondents were not interested in owner maintenance, as an engineer completes all maintenance

tasks. (Note: multiple option question, thus responses exceed 100%.)

Exploring whether you would like to perform more owner maintenance on your Part 43 maintained aircraft, 35.8% of respondents believe the current owner maintenance under Part 43 should be expanded to allow more maintenance tasks, while 52.9% would be prepared to receive training from an engineer to conduct owner maintenance.

It was positive to see such a high percentage interested in maintenance task training, as this can increase an owner/pilot's technical understanding of the aircraft, has the potential to build a better relationship with the engineer, and ultimately increases an owner's involvement in the maintenance process.

Question 5 of the survey asked whether, if a new Owner Maintenance class existed, respondents would move their certified aircraft to this class. Such a class introduced in Canada for ageing aircraft has proved very much a one-way street, meaning a type certified aircraft has no way back, cannot be sold outside Canada and cannot be flown in USA.



Just under 10% of survey respondents indicated they would opt in and not expect a pathway back if New Zealand offered a similar owner maintenance class, while 38.8% indicated they would opt in but only if a return pathway existed. A third indicated they would not move their certified aircraft over to an owner maintenance class if offered in NZ.

Final thoughts

If you have an interest in owner maintenance tasks and are not familiar with CAA, Part 43, Appendix A, I recommend looking it up online, reviewing and discussing with your engineer. Additionally, if you have time, a base technical skill set and a good relationship with your engineer, it's worth asking if you can get involved in a future service, even if initially only to observe.

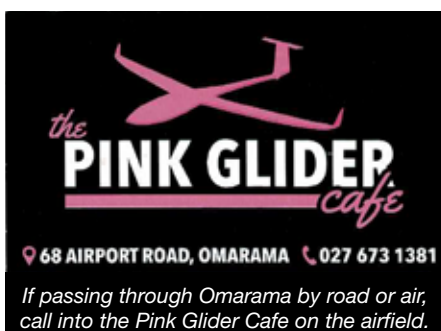
Avionics and maintenance in Canterbury

This month we have two new advertisers: Canterbury Aircraft Maintenance and Avionics Canterbury Wide Ltd. You will find their ads on pages 6 and 7.

Please consider supporting all our advertisers whenever suitable opportunities arise.

A warm welcome to new members:

Zachary Ashley; Barry Atkinson, Cessna 180 SHA; Albert Auckett; Dan Batchelor, Technam P92 Eaglet SJF; Mark Berger, Savannah CDZ; James Butler, Cessna 172 DWO; James Christie, Piper PA32-260 DSQ; Will Clarke; Raphael Davidge; Ross Edmondson, Cessna 182R; George Elworthy, Piper PA22 COX; Grant Gemmell, Piper PA18-150 BNX; George Gould, Cessna 206 OAY; Rob Hault, Zenith Zodiac ZAK, Yakovlev JPW; Scott James, Zenith 601XL SRF; Colin Last, Piper PA 38 WRB; Rob Lyon, Robin DR400 TZB; Trevor McIntosh, Piper Tomahawk COP; Darryl Payne & Simone Boulton, Cessna 182P SZC; Max Robertson; Amanda Rutland, Tiger Moth DH82A ANN; David & Shelley Stuart; Matthew Vaughan, Maule M5-235C DWR; Stephen Wendler, Falconer F12 DBI; Louise Woolf, Piper L18C KEZ; David Wright, Cessna 177B DWU



Charlie's Darfield fly-in

By Helen Watson

"Hey, darling... I'm going to buy an aeroplane."
"Are you kidding? Ridiculous, way too expensive to keep!" And there it began.

PPL renewed after many years, membership to the well recommended AOPA paid up, we were set to head out on new adventures.

Cantabrian at heart, Charlie Draper's Fly-in seemed a fitting start – we shouldn't get lost out there, and it would also be a fab way for Ross, an experienced aviator and gliding nut from Tauranga, to become more familiar with my turf.

After a week of varied weather in Canterbury, conditions improved and a primo weekend was on the cards, with the prediction that Saturday 19 September would be absolutely perfect.

On Friday evening the AOPA group gathered at the Darfield Rugby Club for a little socialising and the welcome opportunity for us to put faces to the names

we were becoming familiar with. The organising team had everything thoroughly prepared, with a shared dinner, plenty of information for the following day and even pre-packed lunches for Saturday, made by the local Plunket – what a great way to give back to the community. Good work Charlie for arranging this.

Key messages were delivered: Go out and be safe, have fun, and – strong emphasis – don't go anywhere or land anywhere you aren't happy with. How awesome to be encouraged and not judged!

With OzRunways, the AOPA app and airfield waypoints downloaded (thanks Ian for the info and Mike for helping me



Ross and Helen Watson are all smiles at Darfield

with the app), we were armed. Four groups, each featuring approximately twelve strips, were on offer. Everyone selected a group depending on aircraft suitability, location and experience. Ross (aka 'Darling') has a lot more experience than I, so we decided to hit the North Canterbury strips under the watchful eye of Team Paterson, though we did lose Dad Paterson for a few strips while he was helping a fellow aviator get back in the air after a small malfunction. Again, support and teamwork at the fore.

Saturday morning we elected to avoid



**Canterbury
Aircraft
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Introducing Tony Schischka and Nick Schischka

A new Maintenance Provider is underway at Rangiora Airfield. Canterbury Aircraft Maintenance is staffed by Tony and Nick Schischka, who have amassed a vast amount of maintenance, flying and admin experience between them.

A LAME holding Groups 1, 2, 3 & 4 Aeroplane Ratings and a Group 1 Power plant Rating, Tony's career began with the RNZAF. Over 24 years there he gained wide experience across the full spectrum of RNZAF operations, culminating as Flight Commander of the NDT Flight responsible for all RNZAF NDT personnel and equipment.

He then moved to the (then) Civil Aviation Department where he established a Surface Methods NDT Qualification Scheme for GA and held various leadership positions for process development, including in the new era of sport and recreation flying, and for oversight of maintenance activities for Operators & Maintenance Organisations.

Next was a role with Royal Tongan Airlines as Engineering and Maintenance Manager, later followed by becoming QA Manager for Eagle Aviation Limited and then with Alpha Aviation Group.

Tony's various professional memberships include being Past VP of the NZ SAA and he claims as one of his most satisfying achievements, the construction of a folding wing Thorpe T-18C metal aircraft from plans, for which he also undertook the test flying.

Nick grew up around aeroplanes and helped his father build the T-18. He obtained a PPL before completing an engineering degree and joining the oil and gas industry. He has lived and flown in several countries and earned his FAA CPL, Multi-Engine Instrument rating, and Instructor rating in Houston before returning to NZ in 2019. He also holds a NZ CPL and is a proud aeroplane owner. Now he has seen the light and decided to become an Aircraft Engineer, learning the skills necessary from his Dad, Tony.

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congestion by by-passing Charlie's strip at Darfield and heading straight to Broomfield, 3.5 NW of Amberley, for 9.30am. A lovely 550m strip with oodles of parking. Thanks Nicki for having us. Can we pop in again? Once all were accounted for and we'd been briefed on the next strip, we were off.

Motunau, just south of Motunau Beach, offers a gradual uphill with an awesome downhill departure over the cliff. Great to see Bill and Petrina, currently installing a new kitchen, so we'll be there for scones next year! This stop also provided a reminder for aviators: owners may have their dogs with them, so ensure you know where they are and don't be in too much of a hurry to start up until they are safely with their masters.

From there, it was on to Peter McKellow's, another one-way, tree-lined strip where we did a quick turnaround (Peter not being available to thank in person) and headed on to Blythe Downs. This long flat lucerne strip has a well-appointed hangar, which seemed to have a continuous supply of flasks of coffee and delicious fruit cake. Thanks Stephen and Phoebe Field, we really appreciated your hospitality.

Sheep on the strip at Hawkswood was the word on the frequency, so onwards and inland to Lyford. Now this is one cool strip, up at 2050ft. Join overhead then left-hand downwind against the mountain. Low gap in trees lines up final. Aim for the yellow marker landing uphill. One way in, one way out... Scott Philip wasn't in residence to see us arrive, something to do with Covid-19 and him being in the States. We sheltered behind his large hangar and lodge for our picnic lunch – just a light breeze from the south and a little cool at altitude. When you are towards the tail-end and parking is at a premium, be grateful for all airfield parking wardens who leap and bound guiding you into a spot. I'm sure Brian and Ann in

NOK can attest, as they secured the prize parking spot for lunch, avoiding a walk.

It took another team effort to spin the planes around and get everyone on their way again. Fabulous views from the top of the strip looking south where we were soon to head. Airborne downhill and the Hood's River Road Hanmer strip was next to host us. A great opportunity to refuel with RD. It's an easy flat strip. For most this was a quick turn around and on to Montrose; thanks to the Rutherfords for letting us zip in and out.

Over the Triangle and on to MacDonald Downs where Bill Paterson has a well-manicured, easy, long E-W strip. Good to get out and have another natter with new acquaintances.

From there our last stop was at Lou and Lesley McAlister's near Cust. This is not your average drop in spot. While the strip is long and inviting, it was not the main attraction. Lou has an outstanding museum filled with cars, machinery, and any manner of large and small items from petrol bowsers to a pianola. Clearly he started his collection and restorations many years ago. Thanks Lou for inviting us to look through your impressive collection. Not be outshone, Lesley put on a very welcome afternoon tea and allowed us to amble through her beautiful garden, which was at the time about to launch into spring flowering. A true credit to you Lesley, and we all enjoyed the opportunity.

Homeward bound, each to their respective hangars and tie-downs, then it was back to the Darfield Rugby Club for a debrief, fish and chips and, understandably, a few stories of our adventures. Smiles were abundant, new and old friends united to celebrate what was a cracker event, or, as Ross would say, it was 'Out the Gate'. I think that also means, 'It's now okay that I bought a plane and joined AOPA'. You're not a bad bunch, so we'll definitely be back for more!



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To the Black Sea

By David Berger

The patchwork green jewel of south-west England lay spread out below us as we approached the coast at Berry Head at 6000ft, en route Cherbourg.

The morning sun shone out of a cloudless sky, the English Channel glistened a deep, uniform blue, dotted here and there with ships of all sizes. Down the coast to our right, we could see the war-time Spitfire strip of RAF Bolt Head, still an active airfield, perched high on the cliffs above Salcombe. On such a day in the early 1940s, pilots no older than Tom's nineteen years, and with much less than half his hours, would have been setting off in the same direction in aircraft with seven or eight times more horsepower, on errands altogether more sinister, errands from which so many never returned.

The thought gave us both the shivers. Enough of that. We looked resolutely ahead to where, despite the cloudless sky, the usual mists and miasmas were gathering at sea level in the middle of the Channel. It brought back some of my

previous toe-curling Channel crossings in our Super Cub, when the twenty-two miles from Cap Gris Nez to the White Cliffs of Dover felt like an eternity as I groped my way across in appalling visibility from ship to ship at 500ft, or (whisper it) even less. Now, though, we sat like aristocrats, resplendent (both of us) and fat (me) in front of our TV screens in our private mini-airliner, shepherded here and there by the calm voices of the controllers. We dialled their instructions into the autopilot like proper captains.

After an ILS approach into Cherbourg, a decadence on this bluebird day, we pulled up in front of that type of cavernous, empty terminal which adorns so many French airfields, the only aircraft on the silent expanse of the apron. Once, regional air travel was the future in France. Today, where the trim men in sharp hats



The Matterhorn; inset: Wingman over France.
Right: Konkordiaplatz Aletsch glacier.

and ladies in 1950s sheath dresses once sipped Pernod and smoked Gauloise, there is now only a fading mural of vintage propliners, the echo of a large hall with marble floors and a small cubby hole in the corner, where the airport fireman completes the customs formalities. We pressed on him one of our 'Wrong Way to Australia' stickers, which had been kindly printed for us by friends in England: all pukka expeditions must distribute promotional material willy-nilly, after all. He was absolutely delighted, or so we convinced ourselves, and we moved on to the control tower, outside and up three storeys, where we also pressed one on



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the under-employed controller to whom we paid our landing fee.

The weather across France was CAVOK ('CAV-OKK', as they pronounce it in these parts), the wind was light, the morning still early and it felt like the whole of the country lay spread out at our feet, ours to do with as we will. We set off east on a low-level sortie along the Normandy beaches. Me? I was Pierre Clostermann on a tank-busting operation in my Hawker Tempest, 'Le Grand Charles'. Tom was the safety pilot, or, as he would have it, 'sensible' pilot. The still impressive remains of the Mulberry harbours passed offshore to our left, while under our right wing slid the immaculate American cemetery on the hill above Omaha Beach. The Americans do military cemeteries so well.

It was soon time to duck smartly inland to avoid the fearsome anti-aircraft defences of Le Havre and continue our ultra-low level Rhubarb Mission south-east towards the small grass airfield of Saint André de l'Eure, about fifty miles from the coast and nestled in the shadow of the much larger air base at Evreux. We found no targets of opportunity to shoot up on the way and, after some reflection, we decided against strafing the FW190s, Me109s and HE111s based on the field, but instead to land and have lunch with our old friend, Iza, and her air-minded twins, Arthur and Charlotte. Iza's husband, Arno, a former French Air Force Twin Otter pilot, was away on his airline flying job – the Paris-Tahiti milk-run. From their beautiful hangar on this WWII ex-Luftwaffe fighter strip, they keep the sound of the L-Birds

in our ears, with their own immaculate L4 and Stinson L5, called Ham and Jam. Iza organised the L-Birds Back to Normandy event for the 75th anniversary of D-Day in 2019 and put over sixty L-Birds in the air over the beaches. The four of them are flying people of the best kind. We shared a French lunch of baguette and brie in the hangar and when we left, Iza and Arthur escorted us for twenty or so miles in their Chipmunk, pointing out WWII landmarks, before, with a waggle of their wings, they peeled off and were gone.

We continued on alone towards our destination of Vichy. The heat of the afternoon was starting to wane, the light to soften, and the fields of the Loire valley passed quietly below as we continued on at low level. It was the weekend, so the low-level military transit lanes which criss-cross France so inconveniently on weekdays were not active. It was a sublime flight and we said hardly a word to each other, lest our voices break the



tranquil spell which had settled upon us.

There was not a breath of wind at Vichy and the asphalt of the apron was still radiating the heat of the day as we taxied in and shut down in front of another terminal relic of the 1950s. Waiting to pick us up was a school friend of mine and her husband, two good people attempting to turn life tragedy into triumph with a new start as owner-operators of a French chateau B&B, about ten minutes outside the town. The tension was evident and this valiant effort has, at time of writing, unfortunately not borne fruit. It is a curious affair, this dipping in and out of geographies and lives, like flicking idly through the channels on TV, but with so much more at stake. From bonhomie to sadness, welcome to hostility, from city to country, mountain to farm, you move dizzyingly between being the observer, the exhibit and the participant, sometimes all in the course of a single day.

After a rather poignant stay, we were not sorry to be on our way early the next morning. The tower controller at Vichy gave us a mild telling off for filing direct to Switzerland from a non-approved airport. We offered to divert to an approved airport for onward clearance, but with a gallic shrug, palpable even over the radio, he told us just to make sure we didn't do it again, and we humbly agreed we wouldn't.

Soon, the Alps were appearing on the horizon. We crossed their north-west guardian, the 5000ft Jura range, and ducked under the scary Geneva airspace with its clipped, business-like controllers to follow the north side of Lake Geneva across to the Alps proper. Before we knew it, we were flying past the castle at Gruyères, nipping up the valley of the Sarine and joining the eccentric circuit to land at Saanen airfield in western Bernese Oberland.

The airfield at Saanen sits in the base of a valley at elevation 3300ft. At first sight it looks like it's for lighties only, but actually the largest of the Falcon tri-jets regularly come in and out, ferrying billionaires to and from their chalets in the nearby exclusive resort of Gstaad. Respect to those pilots. They really do live up to their jet-jockey image as they pose in the FBO, an espresso pinched between thumb and forefinger, with their crisp white shirts and



On the ramp at Saanen, Switzerland.

epaulettes, Ray-Bans, immaculate Italian haircuts and film star looks.

I was lucky enough to grow up in that valley, so this was another homecoming of sorts. We spent a few days visiting old haunts and old friends and enjoying that late summer crispness which heralds the onset of autumn in the mountains. Tom even managed to get himself licked by a cow. One day, we took N185MW on a tour of the Pennine Alps, from the Grand Combin along to the Matterhorn then up the Aletschgletscher into the icy heart of the Bernese Oberland, before crossing the Jungfrauoch and turning for home again over the gentler crags, pastures and valleys of the Kandertal and Simmental. It's hard to comprehend that when Edward Whymper and his companions famously first climbed the Matterhorn in 1865, the precise geography of the Alpine valleys and the relationship of many peaks and valleys to each other was still relatively unknown.

The Alps run north from the Mediterranean at Nice to Switzerland then turn east in a sweeping arc, eventually petering out somewhere around Vienna. Our next destination was Szeged in Hungary, about 550 nautical miles east, so it was either north of the main Alpine chain through Germany and Austria, or south of it by heading south-east into the Rhone Valley and then on across the Simplon Pass into northern Italy, before turning more or less due east to the Adriatic coast, across to Slovenia then onwards into Hungary. Which we chose would depend entirely on the weather,

as it was unlikely it would be suitable on both sides at once. After a few days of our favourite hobby of refreshing windy.com twelve times an hour, every hour, a weather window duly opened for the southern route.

We left as early as we could the next day to try to avoid the afternoon build-ups. On our way across the Simplon in the cool air of the morning, we looked down on the spot where a British Piper Arrow had crashed the week before, killing a couple and their 6 month old baby as they headed for a holiday in Italy. The Simplon is the lowest trans-Alpine pass at 6600ft, but, for reasons still unexplained, they entered the narrow, tortuous valley leading up to it at only 6000ft and hit the ground just below the crest. An old story with only one possible outcome, but no less sobering for that.

The terrain on the Italian side of the pass is horrific for the first few miles – a deep, jagged valley with nowhere to go – but it soon opens out as you get to Domodossola, and the glorious sight of Lago Maggiore then Lago di Como glistening in the morning sun brightened our spirits. We potted along, crossing spectacular lakes and mountains, peering down occasionally into the sweltering Po Valley far beneath our right wing to pity its inhabitants, mere peasants scurrying around on their menial business in the heat and the haze, while we reclined aloft, Lords of the pristine atmosphere of the high Alps. What a privilege it is to be an aviator on such a morn!

Soon Venice was passing far below and

to the right and it was time to start thinking about descending over the Adriatic into our fuel stop of Portoroz on the Slovenian coast. It was absolutely sweltering and humid and we were pleased to fuel up at this very efficient and pleasant little airport and be on our way.

From Portoroz, our route took us across the wooded, mountainous terrain of Slovenia and Croatia then we skirted the Serbian border to arrive at Szeged, just two and a half hours after take-off. Europe seems so absurdly small now to this new Australian. Szeged is a delightful airfield, right on the edge of town, an enormous grass plain with a lot of flying activity, a café and friendly people. The flight over the mountains had been bumpy and I am not good as a passenger in the bumps, so after a few minutes lying flat on my back on the grass under the wing to recover it was off to meet our friend, Milan. Milan is a glider instructor from Omarama and was spending the summer back in Hungary. He arranged for us to stay with his friend Gabor, also a pilot and a part-time controller at the airfield, and his partner, Andra, a PhD biochemist, who were both so generous and kind. We were ferried around town by their eccentric friend, Peter, in his immaculate vintage Russian Volga, which made us feel like we were about to do a spy swap on the Glienicke Bridge. We revelled in the fin de siècle feel of the place, a feeling enhanced by the slightly down at heel air of the city and the gentle but pervasive melancholy of its inhabitants.

That evening we went to work on a feast of trencherman fare with Milan, Gabor and Andra, joined by Justin and Gillian Wills, also from Omarama, who were on their way to meet Norbert Scarlet, another Omarama hand, at a gliding competition in Romania. To hear tales of lucky escapes from Timaru Creek, landings out in the Hunter, retrieves from the Dingle and getting back from Milford by the skin of one's teeth ("It was dodgy, old boy, very dodgy!") was particularly incongruous in this exotic location to which we had all found our way by such different routes.

We would have loved to soak up Szeged a little longer, but the clock was already ticking on our 28 day Russian visa, putting us under pressure to make east as quickly as possible. The next morning,

then, found us filing VFR for Burgas on the Black Sea coast of Bulgaria, our jumping off point into Russia, which was now looming large, unknown and forbidding on the horizon.

Leaving Hungary meant entering the world of aviation bureaucracy, procedures and stern-looking officials, so we regretfully shelved our plan to stop in Romania as it would take too long. We had to content ourselves with remarking in amazement upon the sheer length and slimness of Romanian villages, which we did profusely and all the way to the gap where we crossed the western Carpathians, ducking between the gathering build-ups on each side. From there we turned east and followed the Danube for a while. The Danube! And just a few weeks earlier we had been crossing the Missouri and the Mississippi. It didn't seem real.

The sea breeze was blowing 25kt at Burgas, partly across, but all was well and we were soon renting a car. The airport is north of the city, at the imaginatively named Sunny Beach, where tourists from all over the former Eastern Block (and some of the less salubrious parts of the former Western Block) like to spend their summer holidays drinking themselves



The Black Sea at Burgas, Bulgaria. David Berger's journey continues in the next issue of Approach.

silly in soulless hotels by an unremarkable beach. Of Burgas, itself, there is little to say. We strolled along the pleasant promenade, marvelled at the Black Sea actually being the Black Sea then marvelled at us being there marvelling at it. We watched some Bulgarian dancing in a small cafe. We did our laundry at the only laundromat in the city, run by a manic chain-smoking Frenchman called Mike

Service, an entrepreneur who had seen an opportunity and grabbed it with both hands. We dubbed him, 'Le Superhero du Linge'.

But, Russia. Next was Russia, five hours' flight out there over the ocean to the east. To our knowledge, no-one had ever entered Russia via its Black Sea coast in a western light aircraft before. The next day was going to be interesting. 🦋



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Snapping up the opportunity

By Aaron Murphy



While 2020 has been a year to forget for many, Covid-19 has also inadvertently afforded new opportunities. With Covid ensuring I'm likely to be on the ground for an extended period of time, I finally have the time to follow up on my interest in photography.

With the notion of combining this with some on-the-ground aviation, I called Charlie Draper two days before the AOPA fly-in, hoping he might give me permission to snap some views on his property.

He went one better. "Arrive before 8am and I'll have you a pilot and a seat to come along with."

With two alarms set I was up ahead of schedule, packed and driving towards a weak nor-west sky down the Old West Coast Road.

As I farewelled home, my parting words to the family were: "I'm going up in an unknown aircraft with a pilot I'm yet to meet to destinations unknown."

I'm sure my wife was instilled with confidence.

My arrival at Kimberly Road well before 8am ensured stunning light to witness a gaggle of arrivals against the magnificent backdrop of the Southern Alps. The day was looking good.

Soon, I was introduced to my pilot and guide for the day, the aircraft I'd be in and, after a thorough safety briefing, we were first to depart Darfield, heading to Broomfield.

I feel embarrassed to admit that, even though I'm a Cantabrian born and bred, most of the locations we visited were new to me. Despite the annual family holidays



of my childhood, which saw us pile into the trusty Hillman Hunter with a roof rack and trailer to tour all over the South Island, it struck me there was much more to explore in my own backyard.

With two sets of keen eyes and a little bit of map reading we found Broomfield, where we were soon joined by a dozen or so aircraft. While no one was looking, I searched Google maps on my phone to work out where I was... aah, next to Amberley. That, I do know!

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Soon after the last arrival had shut down, the group was huddled together, already sharing stories, catching up with old acquaintances and listening intently to the briefing for the next stop, Motunau strip. A few planes departed ahead of us this time, which assisted in locating this very picturesque strip.

My slight guilt over missing my child's soccer match evaporated as the day warmed and more aviators and crew joined us for the next chat, debrief and briefing for the subsequent strip. I was starting to get a feel for how these rallies operate: exploring new locations, meeting new people, sharing a few tales, and basically having a ball.

With my very small amount of strip flying, I enjoyed watching the challenge of landing at the next stop, Forbes Mackenzie's strip. I knew we were in North Canterbury somewhere, but Googlemaps was of no use this time – no reception!

As the day progressed, I discovered as much about the local topography, geography and history of the areas we visited as I did about strip flying. Chatting to the local landowners and participants proved one of the day's highlights and confirmed how little I actually knew about my own backyard. After finally getting my bearings about midday, I realised how close to many of these places I had been over the years, without knowing they existed. Access by air was the way to go.

And so the day continued, with landings on strips long and flat, short and uphill, one-way, two-way, with my camera clicking away. I was bemused when someone asked if I was the professional photographer for the group. I'll be happy if my pictures aren't blurred and capture at least something of the feel of the rally. The big lens must have fooled them!

Having landed at a dozen strips, it was time to call it a day – but not without a sunset sightseeing flight over The Garden City and overhead Harewood, where my flying career began. Flying westward towards stunning rays of light peeking through the high nor'west cloud proved a fitting way to end a simply superb day.

I'd forgotten how much fun 'GA' flying is. I made many new friends, bumped into a few old friends, witnessed some of New Zealand's most stunning scenery up close



Far left: Evening light at Charlie Draper's strip; inset: Lionel Green provided the necessities. This page, top: Charlie Draper's and MacDonald Downs, Pyramid Valley. Second row, left: Lyford strip. Third row: Evening light at Charlie Draper's. Fourth row, right: overhead Harewood.

and first-hand – and all in the space of eight hours. I have a new-found appreciation for home and aviation in general.

Sincere thanks to Lionel Green for offering me a seat, the company and fun banter throughout the day and for teaching this old dog a thing or two. Special

thanks to Charlie Draper for organising a ride for me, and to all the AOPA members I met through the day. I certainly hope to be back again in the future. And, maybe, a small thank you to Covid-19 for allowing me more than just a few weeks at a time off work! 🐦

One-dayers hit the spot



AOPA's one-day fly-ins, organised a few days in advance, are proving a draw for members north and south. Offering a chin-wag, a picnic and a focus for a fine day's flying, that surely comes as no surprise. Keep an eye on the emails, grab a friend, and pop along to the next, coming soon to a scenic strip near you...!



Hakataramea

On Sunday 18th October, twenty-six aircraft flew into Nat and Shelley Small's strip at Hakataramea.

Excellent weather saw sixty or so folk from as far north as Rangiora and as far south as Mosgiel packing a picnic and a chair and gathering to shoot the breeze. At 800m long, Small's

strip proved approachable for a wide range of both aircraft and pilots. Organised a few days in advance, the short notice events are proving a popular format – watch out for the next. 🛩️

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The advertisement features a background image of several small aircraft on a tarmac. A white aircraft with blue stripes and the registration 'ZK-MOL' is prominent in the foreground. Other aircraft, including a yellow one with 'ZK-BPL', are visible in the background. A person is standing near the yellow aircraft.

Making a day of it

An inspiring turnout made the day at the AOPA fly-in at Centennial Park, Taupo.

Around thirty aircraft came from across the North Island, Feilding to Ardmore, Stratford to Whakatane, bringing about fifty members and friends. Cessnas were well represented with 150, 170, 172, 177, 180, 182, 185 and 195, as well as a good mix of Light Sport Aircraft and others.

Located just northeast of Taupo Airport and neighbouring Bruce McLaren Motorsport Park, Taupo Gliding Club very kindly opened the beautifully groomed strip to us.

In true mid-spring style, the wind was a bit blustery with some turbulence at 3000ft amsl over the surrounding forestry blocks. Picnic blankets and lunches were unpacked in the shelter of the Clubhouse, allowing us to get our daily dose of vitamin D while long yarns were shared.

When the time came to depart, it was suggested that a stop at River Lodge near Reporoa would round the day out nicely. It proved the perfect end to a brilliant day. Ten planes flew down the Waikato River and Ron Matsen and his wife offered a warm welcome, together with tea, coffee and donuts. Ron learnt to fly in the US many years ago, has owned several aircraft and has been a CFI, so there was plenty of common ground.

Thanks to the Matsens and Taupo Gliding Club members for such a warm welcome and hospitality.

Note that if you are wanting to visit Centennial Park, it is important to read the AIP Vol 4 and, due to the gliding operations, you need to phone ahead of arrival for landing permission. ✈️

With thanks to Gayle Wilson, Isabelle Blackwell and George Thompson



One for the bucket

By Ross Weinberg



Sunday 4th October dawned fine and clear. An email invitation had arrived on Saturday morning and I was definitely a starter.

I readied WBG for departure, rang a few locals to seek interest but in the end it proved a solo flight. At 10.30am I received a text from George Thompson to say they were cranking, so I fired up and climbed on a SE heading into clear sky, the chatter over the radio confirming we had more than a few from Te Kuiti.

On reaching Centennial Park I slipped in behind SGV (John Lissington) for a number three right base landing on runway 36, touched down and taxied to a parking spot outside the clubhouse. I was soon joined by ten Te Kuiti aircraft, tea and coffee lubricating the chatter. Great hospitality from the Centennial Park Club. Thirty plus aircraft showed for lunch with a welcome from the Club Captain, Tom Capman, and an inspection of aircraft of the non-powered variety.

After lunch the Te Kuiti bunch headed for River Lodge on the banks of the Waikato River. I'd never been there before, so was number two in behind WGT for a landing on a well-kept airstrip. We bunched at the western end until all ten aircraft had landed, then taxied down to park outside the Lodge accommodation. Lodge owner, Ron Matson, welcomed us and offered refreshments.

What a nice spot for a future fly-in and lunch venue! After a tour of the facilities, and with a promise of a return to our hosts, we departed to the west into a gathering sunset.

I returned to Cambridge while the rest flew to Te Kuiti. Put River Lodge on your bucket list: it was a great way to spend an afternoon, or just the place for that special weekend away. ✈️

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Fostering a safer culture

Congratulations to everyone who gathered at recent fly-ins. Lots of fun was had by many people and we have received very good feedback on the hard work done on the safety side.

Recent years have shown continuous improvement in AOPA, both in terms of safety management and of developing a safety culture; a culture that relies on the efforts of everyone.

We operate in a sector of endless variables. Whether you are PIC or a passenger, whether inside or outside the aircraft, you have a role to play. Keep your eyes and ears open.

If you see or hear something that doesn't seem right, what will you do? What effect will it have? When should you step in? What will people think? Should you look the other way?

Lots of questions, some of which need to be answered fast. To be fair, we don't always get it exactly right, and we should always think about what we could do better next time. As experience is gained, we get better at addressing these questions.

Over many years, two-pilot operations around the world have developed various strategies for smooth First Officer and Captain 'relations'. In some ways, the First Officer has the hardest job, balancing on a knife edge, deciding when to speak up



and when to let something slide. The 'PACE' mnemonic has been developed for the multi-pilot crew, and has relevance for us in General Aviation too.

PACE is based on four steps:

Probe – questioning for a better understanding

Alert – notifying the pilot of the anomalies

Challenge – telling the pilot of the unsuitable scenario

Emergency Warning – demanding action, avoiding critical and immediate dangers. 'Captain you must listen'. This requires the pilot to immediately stop and a report must be filed.

You might be thinking, 'Where am I going to use this?'

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Stay with me. Let's run through a couple of scenarios that you may be familiar with.

The pilot of ZK-ABC hasn't flown for a while and didn't bother to read the AIP for a busy aerodrome circuit. It's not his patch, and yes, he should have known better. Early one morning, before it gets busy, he jumps in the aircraft, warms up and takes off. A couple of bouncy landings later, a local realises he's doing circuits in the wrong direction. What should the local guy do?

Let's think about PACE again.

Probe: "Hey ABC, did you know the circuit is left hand?"

Alert: "ABC, circuits are left hand."

Challenge: "ABC, don't do another right circuit."

Emergency Warning: "ABC you're being reported to CAA for incorrect circuits."

In this scenario, ninety-five percent of the time the probe is all that is required. "Bugger, yes I got that wrong. Sorry." No harm done.

If the probing question doesn't have the desired effect, the Alert generally will – let's say four percent of the time. Of the remaining one percent, the challenge will almost always work.

So we're down to a fraction of one percent of the time that the ultimate emergency warning and follow up report gets used. Very close to never. But it is there, and can be used when there is concern about the ongoing safety of the aircraft.

Communicating in this manner is a challenge. It can be uncomfortable to receive, and even more difficult to transmit. But it's important, really important.

Don't be offended, or get defensive, if someone asks a question. Give them credit for putting their fear of approaching you aside. They might actually be saving you embarrassment, some paperwork, or even saving your life.

Let's work through another scenario. A pilot lands, taxis to the fuel pump, jumps out, swipes the card and starts filling up. The passengers are busy yarning, and don't bother to disembark.

As a local, you see this happening. What would you do? Let's think PACE.

Probe: "G'day there. What a nice aircraft you have. Can I give you a hand with the ladder? Hey, do you think it might be good for these guys to hop out while we refuel?"

Alert: "G'day, those guys should really get out while you refuel."

Challenge: "You can't have passengers onboard while you refuel."

Emergency Warning: "You're being reported to CAA, get those passengers out."

These are both scenarios that I have been involved with over the last few months. The first scenario was getting current on the first day of Summer Safari, Motueka. I hadn't flown a light aircraft for a while. A 'good b@5+ard' jumped on the radio. "FHR, do you realise the circuit is Left Hand on Rwy20?" My reply: "No I didn't, and thank you." I flew across to the correct circuit.

Job well done, and I'll shout that local a coffee.

The second scenario, refuelling with passengers onboard, was different. Yes, I should've known better. I was more interested in a quick fuel stop and getting away. Might sound familiar.

An observer spotted me, and went straight to the last stage in PACE. The first I knew about it was a call from CAA. Guttled.

This observer had a wonderful opportunity to use common courtesy, common sense, and to proactively contribute to the safety culture of General Aviation. Unfortunately that opportunity was lost.

There are endless examples like these around the country and around the world. Please take the opportunity to be a good, helpful, engaged participant in aviation and aviation safety.

A recent highlight was at Charlie Draper's Fly-in. There were at least two excellent examples of how we execute go-arounds. It was the first strip of the day, winds were fickle and pilots made great decisions. Well done.

Looking forward to more great flying this summer. 🛩️

To proactively contribute to the safety culture of General Aviation, use common courtesy, common sense, and PACE...



Q & A: Ross Edmondson

By Andy Hintz

Wandering around 'Warbirds on Parade' airshow at Ardmore Airport earlier this year, I met Ross Edmondson, who was flying his rather unique Cessna 182R, N9953H, around the world. He'd just arrived from Australia and was about to face border closures due to COVID-19, bringing his journey to a halt.

Fast forward five months to mid August, I'd just refueled DXK in Rotorua, and looked up to see Ross getting ready to depart for Nelson. It was a great opportunity to catch up, and sowed the seed for a Q & A session on behalf of AOPA members.

Tell us about your Cessna 182...

N9953H is a 1981 Cessna 182, R model, purchased early 2018 with the round the world trip in mind, but I also wanted to explore the United States and Alaska. I was looking for a somewhat late model aircraft with large fuel tanks (92 gallons standard), WAAS GPS and a 2-axis auto pilot. The engine is a Continental O-470 with the previous owner doing the O-520 'Pponk' upgrade (520 cylinders fitted to the 470 engine), without fuel injection and providing approx. 270hp. The engine had close to 80 hours when purchased, with approximately 3500 hours on the airframe.

The C182 is a very versatile aircraft that fitted my needs and could be configured to allow a flight of 2100nm – the longest leg of my round the world trip. Additionally, I wanted an aircraft I could take in and out of unimproved grass airstrips. A high wing aircraft allowed greater visibility, easy photography, shade from 50-degree sun in the Middle East and cover from rain in Asia.

The C182 is type certified to fly up to thirty percent over-weight for ferry operations. After working out the longest leg of the round the world trip, all up-weight calculation came in at approximately twenty percent over max gross weight; still well within the limits, especially with the engine having fifteen percent additional power over standard. The aircraft performance at twenty percent over-weight sees a 600–700 ft/minute climb at sea level with a cruise speed of 120 knots.

British accent, aircraft with an N tail reg and you're flying around the world: what's the story?

Originally from the UK, over the last three years I've spent half my time in Iraq working as a project manager in the oil and gas sector, and the other half flying.

I originally sat my pilot's licence in the United States, training to the European syllabus, but later converted the PPL to a

US licence. I gained my private licence after exactly fifty hours, completed over five weeks from start to finish while living in a trailer next to the airport in Florida. The weather was fantastic, with only a few non flyable days during the five weeks. Around five years later I decided to do my instrument rating. I had the hours, so it made sense to complete the commercial flight test to gain my FAA CPL. The US pilot licence is heavily tailored to light aircraft, with one written exam, an oral exam and a flight test once respective hours are achieved, and many private pilots also hold an instrument rating, which is great from a safety aspect.

I've now been flying for fifteen years, during which I've accumulated 2800 hours, flown throughout sixty countries and landed at around 900 airports and counting. I hold ratings for single engine piston aircraft, high performance for aircraft over 200 HP and a complex rating for aircraft with retractable gear and constant speed propellers.

When I was young I'd spend hours and hours on flight simulator, so by the time I passed my pilot's licence I had three big adventures awaiting. The first was to fly coast to coast across the United States, which I completed not long after getting my private licence at 150 hours, VFR, with a fold-out road map and a couple of sleeping bags. Each day the weather was checked and a point on the road map was selected, with the aim of getting to the West Coast of the US and back again in five weeks.

The second adventure was to fly the length of Africa from London to Cape Town, which I completed over four months in 2013, flying a Diesel Cessna 182 at 800 hours with a CPL licence and instrument rating. I ended up flying a British doctor around Africa so she could conduct medical training to combat maternal mortality in childbirth, which was one of the millennium development goals set by the UN. Getting a full four months off work for this project would typically be difficult, but the company I worked for approved my working remotely during this period, with laptop in hand the journey started.

The third adventure is the round the world trip I'm currently undertaking. This was the largest flying adventure I could think of. Very few people have done it and it seemed like the ultimate aviation adventure.

Any advice for prospective aircraft owners?

My first aircraft was a Cessna 172 I found on a Government website running an online auction. I put in a random bid and woke up the next morning as an aircraft owner. I was lucky: it was an ex Civil Air Patrol aircraft with a fantastic maintenance history. I definitely do not recommend this method of purchase!

When I saw the Cessna 182R for sale, I jumped on it. A lesson I've learned is when you see a good one, don't delay. Good honest aircraft are getting harder and harder to find, but the sale was contingent on passing a pre buy inspection.

What modifications did you make to your C182 and why?

I got straight into the annual inspection and in the first four months, I fitted a Garmin G5, USB charging ports and Flint Tip Tanks, providing an additional 23 gallons of fuel, in preparation for a six week trip to Alaska and Canada. During this trip I went up to Eureka, 600nm from the North Pole. If you see me flying around New Zealand, ask about flying over brown bears on the beach then landing to camp for the night...

After that trip, another Garmin G5 was fitted, allowing the vacuum system to be removed, to ensure instrument reliability. Wing tips with high intensity LED lights were also fitted, allowing ease of landing at airfields with no lighting.

I upgraded the Garmin 430 WAAS with an Avidyne 540 as the primary panel mounted GPS. I also changed the Garmin 496 for a Garmin Area 660 and hardwired to the primary GPS with both



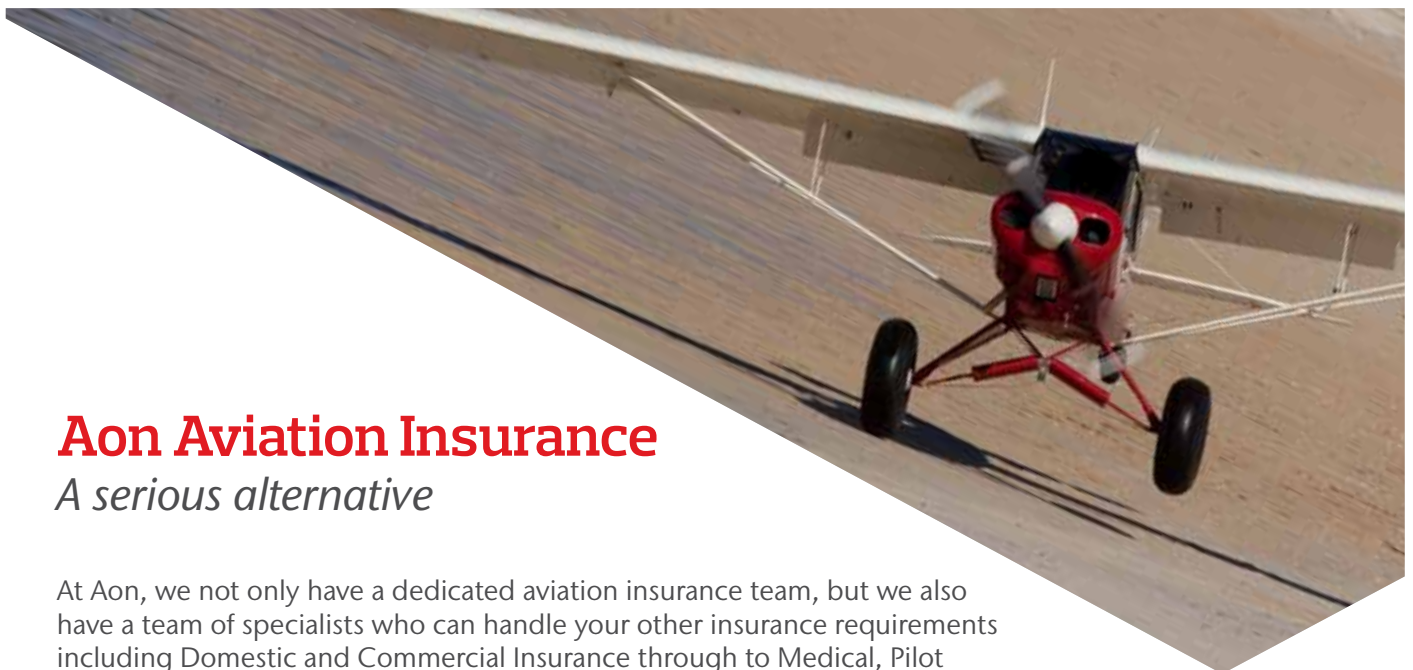
units connected to the transponder ADS-B in. The auto-pilot is an S-Tec 30 with altitude hold, connected to the Garmin G5 and into the Avidyne 540 for GPS heading to follow the planned route. The audio panel was changed from a GME340 to a PS Engineering PNA450B, gaining Bluetooth connectivity to listen to music, which is handy on longer routes. Finally, a Turtle Tank fuel bladder was fitted where the rear passenger seats are normally located, providing an additional 150 gallons of fuel to total 265 gallons on board, which provides the range I required.

What was your chosen route around the world?

North America to Europe, then the Middle East, Asia and Australasia. It was important to me to cross the equator into the southern hemisphere, visit New Zealand and cross the Pacific Ocean for long over water flights.

How did you prepare for the long legs of your journey?

In preparation for the longest leg over water (Hawaii to California), it was critical to not only understand how the aircraft



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would perform but also how I would perform. I decided to fly from Florida to Los Angeles to simulate the leg, but over land. Time in the air was 16.5 hours, distance was 2100nm and the autopilot failed, so the full leg was flown by hand, no stops. Fatigue finally set in once I had landed and shut down.

What's your best refuelling story?

Egypt was interesting. The airport where I landed typically refuelled aircraft from barrels, but they proudly informed me they had a new bowser and I was the first customer. The complication was the bowser was an old Jet A1 set up so the nozzle was significantly larger than the filler ports on the aircraft and the pumping rate was far too high, resulting in little fuel in the tanks and a lot of fuel over the wings and on the ground. In the end they reverted back to filling a barrel from the truck and using a hand pump into the aircraft, add to this the OAT of 45°C. The result was 2.5hr to get 200l of avgas into the aircraft.

Do you conduct your own maintenance?

Yes, under the US system I complete all routine maintenance between annual inspections under owner approved maintenance, including oil/ filter changes, spark plugs and general lubrication. I also carry a set of spark plugs on-board, spare inner tubes, oil filters, duct tape and some tools.

Any unexpected maintenance through your journey?

In Australia, metal was found in the oil filter with the engine time at 600hr since overhaul. Once stripped, corrosion was visible. This may well have been due to lack of use from prior owner – approximately eighty hours over four years. A bulk strip was



completed, as the safest option considering the length of the legs over water heading to NZ and on to USA. I ran the engine in, completing just over fifteen hours before departing Australia for New Zealand via Lord Howe and Norfolk Islands.

Tell us about your most memorable moments whilst flying...

During my solo cross-country, some weather ahead caused me to land at an aerodrome and look at alternative options. Once on the ground, a large dog came running across the ramp directly at the propeller. I managed to shut down just in time, but thought afterwards how I would have explained a dog strike during my cross-country. Another was during my instrument rating cross-country requirement. The instructor gave two options: going either north or south of Florida. I asked if we could go east to the Bahamas for lunch. The instructor said no one had ever asked before, but it turned into a great day for all.

How have you found flying in New Zealand airspace?

Compared to the UK, New Zealand airspace is more open, the controllers are more helpful and seem used to dealing with GA aircraft. I have not had any issues with clearances into and through controlled airspace, but the more confident and competent you sound on the radio, the more likely you are to receive the clearance you are requesting.

Any questions when seeking clearance with an N tail reg?

When I was flying through Ohakea airspace, the controllers googled my aircraft tail number and had a chat to me about my world trip. Also, when I was flying through the United Arab Emirates, an Expat American controller had a chat with me at about 4am as he was curious about what I was up to.

What is your headset of choice?

Light Speed Zulu 3 – I find the noise reduction to be fantastic.

What Electronic Flight Book (EFB) do you use?

AvPlan, for no other reason than running a free trial, getting used to it and later subscribing.

Any advice for planning international GA adventures?

Just go for it! It's just one flight after another but, instead of turning around and going home, you just continue on. It's a challenge with frustrations but the reward is worth it ten times over. If you're thinking of doing a trip, search out pilots who've completed similar and get advice; that's the best place to start. I'm currently adding content to my website to document everything you may need to know to do a similar round the world trip, and will be releasing this in the coming months. 🛩️

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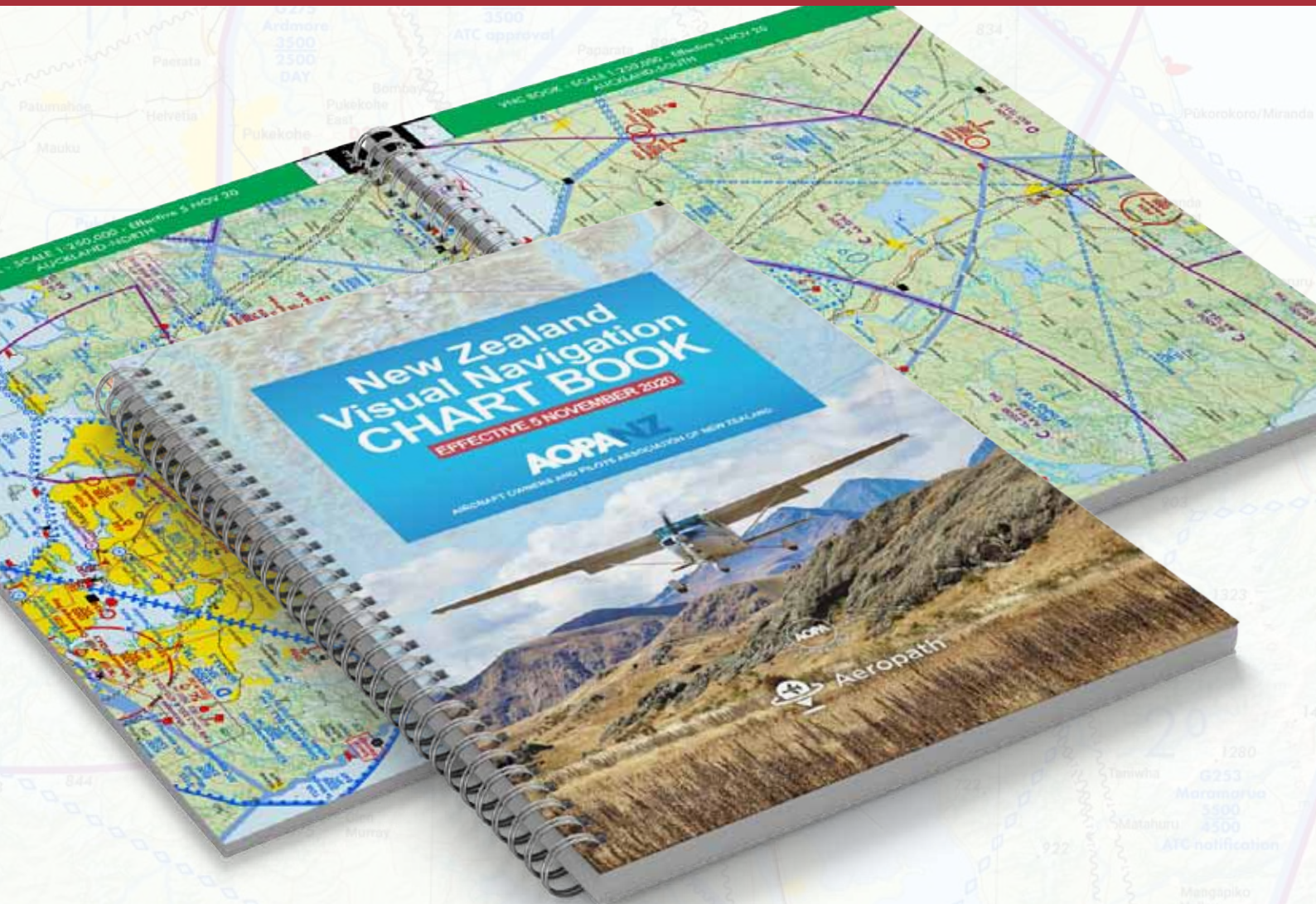
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You can follow Ross Edmondson's onward adventures at his website, www.katamarino.co.uk

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Jay McIntyre is the owner, LAME, IA, PPL and chief bottle washer of JEM Aviation, Omaka

Corrosion

Maintenance can be a tricky game at times. Lack of spare parts to complete the task in a timely fashion is probably the biggest hindrance, but lack of technical data or knowledge follow closely.

Sometimes poorly written procedures cause confusion and of course human factors, such as common sense failures, can play havoc. We regularly face situations where one or more of the above create a challenge, a good example being the case of rotten flaps on an older Piper Cherokee we maintain.

We took over the maintenance of this machine a few years back. Given its 1954 vintage, the aircraft is in very good condition and had a complete strip and repaint about a decade ago. Other than an engine change, maintenance since the paint job had mainly consisted of routine annuals and replacement of old perspex and such.

Last year the 200 hour repetitive internal inspection of the flaps (as per the Maintenance Manual) came due. Having not had to carry out this inspection before, we puzzled over how it was supposed to be done, as there are no inspection

holes/panels on the flaps. Eventually, we decided that all we could do was stick the borescope head through the cutouts around the mounting brackets and have a look around. We were only just able to get the head of the borescope inside in a couple of places, but we saw enough to raise eyebrows.

We were comfortable in releasing the aircraft back to service while repair/replacement options were worked through. In the meantime, we had a look at the other Cherokee we maintain and found it to be in a similar condition.

We found that we could buy replacement nose ribs for the flaps ex USA or have completely reconditioned flaps supplied ex Airframe Components in the USA – costing out both indicated the price would be similar, providing there were no other surprises waiting for us in the areas we could not inspect. In the end, the owner of the second Cherokee wanted



How to actually carry out an annual inspection?



Not easy to see in this photo, but with flaps removed, evidence of corrosion on the nose riblet was easy to see in the paint.

the certainty of the 'plug and play' option and these were ordered and delivered during COVID lockdown (the crate being one of the only packages delivered to my home during lockdown).

The owner of our subject aircraft decided to have us rebuild them as he was going overseas for a month. New nose riblets were ordered and the flaps dismantled. We were shocked to find the actual condition of them was worse than the borescope had indicated, but that the rest of the flap structure was in perfect condition. We had the steel flap brackets cad plated and painted, and reassembled the flaps with some extra corrosion proofing to go along.

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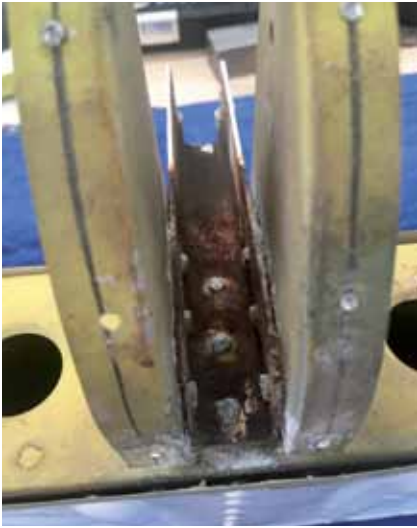
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Some examples of the corrosion found in the 1954 Piper Cherokee, including completely rotted out riblets.

Hindsight is a wonderful thing and we had perhaps got caught and not seen the forest for the trees. With the flaps removed it was easy to see that the external condition of the nose riblets on the ends of the flap indicated there was an issue – no internal inspection was needed, as succinctly pointed out by one of the older, crustier engineers on the field when shown the riblets. Of course he was correct and it probably should have been caught as far back as the repaint.

The corroded area was compromised by a number of design ‘issues’ including dissimilar metal corrosion (steel riveted to aluminium), lack of sufficient protective barrier between the two metals, age, and the riblets being of very light gauge aluminium (0.020”), so much so that on some of the brackets it was only paint holding what remained of the aluminium together. Luckily the area between the bracket and the spar, which probably does ninety percent of the work, was not compromised.

Google provided many examples of this issue worldwide, including CASA Airworthiness Bulletin 57-014 issued October 2014. A CAA 005D was submitted with no response from CAA.

Lastly, for those interested in the costs: the locally rebuilt flaps did turn out less expensive, but of course the completely reconditioned ones had brand new skins with no dents. We have not dismantled the second aircraft’s flaps to see what their true condition is. 🛩️

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Paraparaumu Airport under threat



Originally an isolated regional airport, Paraparaumu rapidly grew into an airport of national significance – which hasn't prevented the current threat of closure. Peter Merwood fills in the history.

In 1939, with war clouds gathering in the northern hemisphere, the Government built Paraparaumu Airport after acquiring 130ha from Māori and Pakeha owners

under the Public Works Act. After the war's end, Paraparaumu Airport became a thriving airport central to the Wellington region's growing population.

Until 1959, Rongotai had a grass runway considered unusable during winter. During the late 1940s Paraparaumu Airport was New Zealand's busiest airport and it wasn't unusual to see up to twenty DC-3s and Lodestars parked on its apron. From 1952 to 1957 Wellington had two domestic airports, with NAC running Herons from Rongotai and everything else from Paraparaumu. Considered too short when NAC introduced Viscounts in early 1958, the serious development of Wellington Airport began and Paraparaumu reverted to being the capital's secondary airport.

In the following years, GA grew largely unconstrained at Paraparaumu Airport and it became the home of a parachute school, multiple private flying schools, the Wellington Gliding Club, the Ministry of Transport's Calibration Flight, and a branch of the Wellington Aero Club which in 1983 became the present day Kāpiti Districts Aero Club.

In the early 1990s the Bolger-led Government decided this symbiotic General Aviation community was not commercially viable in public ownership, so began the process of selling it. As the land had been acquired under the Public Works Act for the "purposes of an airport", it had to be, and still must be, returned to the original landowners if it ceases to be used for an airport. The sale process recognised that and was subject to the Crown meeting its obligations to Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi and to former landowners under the Public Works Act. Thus began the current controversial ownership model and root of the risks to the airport's present operation.

The 1995 sale of Paraparaumu Airport



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for \$1.65million to an owner with a supposed genuine interest in aviation was intended to secure the future of the airport. Instead it was hotly contested. Negotiations with the preferred purchaser began before the tender closing date and Māori were side-lined during the sale process. This resulted in two Court challenges, a request to the High Court for a judicial review, claims of a conflict of interest by Ernst & Young, who were acting for the Government, a petition to the House of Representatives requesting Parliament legislate to safeguard the airport, and a resulting Private Members Bill. In 2005 there was an enquiry into the sale by the Controller and Auditor-General to try and clear up the mess.

The Crown's objective at the time of sale was to sell to someone who would continue to operate the facility for as long as it remained commercially viable, but no condition to that effect was imposed on the purchaser, thus setting the scene for the threat of closure faced by the airport today.

In 2006 the original purchasers of Paraparaumu Airport sold it to Sir Noel Robinson for a reputed \$40million. Not a bad return after eleven years, and in addition to the sale of some of the surplus airport land.

A supporter of the airport, Sir Noel was successful in encouraging Air New Zealand to include Paraparaumu in their network. He also recognised that secondary regional airports throughout the world struggle to make money, so set about creating a reliable income stream by developing the Kāpiti Landing Retail Park on surplus airport land. Although the Commissioners who heard Sir Noel's District Plan change request approved of his vision, they imposed no condition on the consent for the Retail Park to ensure that income stream would continue.

After purchasing the airport late in 2019, new majority owners Templeton Group put the Retail Park up for sale. Without the income the park generates, Templeton can claim Paraparaumu Airport is not economically viable and that a better return on the land (for them) can be realised by residential development.

Between Sir Noel Robinson and the present owners, Todd Property progressively bought out Sir Noel's interests in

the airport. While they claimed to be a committed airport operator, they did little to enhance the value of the airport to GA and the Kāpiti community. When Air NZ ceased operating from Paraparaumu in 2018, Duane Emeny, General Manager Air Chathams, recalls public support from Todd Property but difficulty behind the scenes as Air Chathams worked to replace the scheduled service abandoned by Air NZ: "They really didn't want us there."

Following the suspension of Air NZ services from Paraparaumu Airport, all eight Mayors of the Wellington region recognised that the long-term viability of the airport was under threat. They appealed to the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Defence to take steps to protect the airport's status as a strategic regional asset to the region's civil emergency plans. Although the Wellington Regional Policy Statement identifies Paraparaumu Airport as Regionally Significant Infrastructure which can be adversely affected by development, that seems largely symbolic and offers no protection should Templeton Group choose to close the airport.

Kāpiti Coast District Council Mayor, K (Guru) Gurunathan, and Chief Executive, Wayne Maxwell, see greater value to the community in Paraparaumu Airport than in residential development on airport land, and are working with airport stakeholders in support of the airport. Local iwi, arguably the greatest losers from the 1995 sale debacle, are adamant that the land remains an operational airport.

Paraparaumu Airport related activity includes more than 46 direct employees and a June 2018 report estimated the net economic benefit of the airport to Kāpiti residents to be \$4.3m per year.



Scheduled air services are operated by Air Chathams and Sounds Air.

The Wellington Northern Corridor, including the current Transmission Gully and Peka Peka to Otaki expressway projects, will change demographics and hasten economic growth of the Kāpiti Coast. Decreased travel times are likely to see the population balance of the Wellington Region shift north and the average age of those living on the coast reduce. While Wellington's population spreads north, if Paraparaumu Airport is closed, its major airport will be at the southern-most end of the region.

As an airport of national significance, closure of Paraparaumu Airport would be disastrous for both the Wellington region and for GA. Its loss would mean no aviation fuel or aircraft engineering services on the west of the North Island south of the Manawatu. Similarly we would lose an important staging point and easily locatable safe haven for light aircraft crossing Cook Strait.

Templeton Group are residential property developers and the land Paraparaumu Airport occupies has considerable development potential, but as a key component of transport infrastructure, the airport should be central to the region's growth, not a victim of it. ✈️



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