Approach

AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND
AUTUMN 2023

Back to Basics at Wakatipu
Local Government impact on GA
Soaring the length of NZ
What price speed?

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

Avcraft ENGINEERING NZ LTD

Now Accepting PayPal

Buy online
www.avcraft.co.nz

*All pricing Exc GST and Freight

Avcraft Engineering NZ Ltd
Feilding Aerodrome (NZFI)

06 212 0920

mat@avcraft.co.nz
avionics@avcraft.co.nz

www.avcraft.co.nz
Facebook.com/Avcraftengineering

Garmin Multi-Function Instrument

Garmin GI 275

REPLACE ANALOG GAUGES WITH ELECTRONIC DISPLAYS

Adaptable to a full range of instrument formats and functions, The GI 275 electronic display lets you keep the classic look of your panel while upgrading with modern, reliable glass touchscreen display technology.

Out with the old, in with the new. It flush mounts in a standard 3-1/8" round cutout.

From piston singles to jets, it's STC'd for more than 1,000 make/model aircraft.

How do you see it? Attitude, altitude, airspeed, CDI, HSI, MFD or EIS.

It's available with precise digital ADAHRS and interface to drive select autopilots.

Connect your cockpit with built-in Wi-Fi® connectivity and BLUETOOTH® technology.

Know you'll get home with up to 60 minutes of optional backup battery power.

GARMIN

From $3,395USD*

uAvionix tailBeaconX

Experimental AV-20-S and tailBeaconX $3,294USD*

uAvionix AV-30-C

Certified AV-30-C and tailBeaconX $4,598USD*

- Mode S + ADS-B OUT Transponder meets airspace requirements worldwide. **Certified GPS Receiver**
- tailBeaconX includes a certified SBAS GPS receiver and antenna.
- The tailBeaconX with integrated dipole antenna is specifically designed to maximize performance when tracked by space-based ADS-B satellite constellations.
- The integrated 20,000 hour rated LED position light ensures the tailBeaconX draws less power than your old incandescent bulb.
- tailBeaconX mounts in place of your existing rear position light. The GPS, space-based, and ground-based antennas are integrated into the lens housing. No new holes or penetration of pressure vessels are required making tailBeaconX the lowest-hassle easiest install period.

Sprague Wireless Cable Tension

SPRAGUE INSTRUMENTS
AVIONICS | TESTING | INSTRUMENTS

Demo unit available, call us today

Only $2,445NZD*

12 Reasons you need to be using the WIRELESS METHOD

- WIRELESS—more convenient than ever
- Comes Calibrated and Certified with +/-2% full scale accuracy
- Its so easy to use YOU ONLY NEED ONE HAND!
- Readings Are right in front of you. You don't have to lock/unlock to get a reading
- The SMALL HEAD will let you easily access hard to reach areas. No other Cable Tension Meter gets in these tight areas
- A cable-free connection between the head to the meter—no fumbling required to capture a measurement
- BUILT—TO—LAST All stainless-steel contact points with an aluminium lightweight body
- Includes a rugged carrying case
- Metric measurement capabilities
- Multiple cable sizes easily changed at the push of a button, enabling all your tension measurements in one tool
- Built in temperature sensor
- THE WIRELESS GRIPPER WILL PAY FOR ITSELF WITH THE TIME SAVINGS YOU WILL GET

APPROACH: *AUTUMN 2023*
ISSN 2422-8230 / 2538-1083 (*Online*)

Coming up

- *AOPA AGM 2023*
  Whitianga, 4 March 10.30am
  at Mercury Bay Aero Club
- *AOPA Northern Safari*
  5–11 March 2023
- *Classic Fighters*
  Omaka 7–9 April 2023
- *Watch your inbox for notification of One-Day Fly-ins*

For more visit www.aopa.nz

Cover photo: Hayden McIntyre at Greenstone Station Back to Basics, see story, page 5.
Photo credit: Robert Clarke

Contents

Regular Columns

AOPA (NZ) APPROACH Magazine is published by AOPA NZ Incorporated
Articles on relevant topics are welcomed. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity and/or length. Submission does not guarantee publication. Editorial submissions should be sent directly to the editor at editor@aopa.co.nz
ISSN 2422-8230 (print) / **ISSN 2538-1083** (online)
Editor: Anna Mackenzie ph 027 3345466; anna.mackenzie@aopa.nz
Advertising enquiries: Don Ryder ph 04 479 1367 / 027 442 0016 / don.ryder@aopa.nz
Editorial support: Ross Millichamp ph 027 9600724 / ross.millichamp@aopa.nz
Administration: Mary Bruce ph 0272 940819 / admin@aopa.nz
Postal address: AOPA NZ Inc, PO Box 659, Wanaka 9343

Deadline for ads, articles and photos for the next (Winter) issue: **20 April 2023**.

President's Comment

Autumn generally provides the best flying weather and I look forward to this for the AOPA NZ Northern Safari in March. This will be my first AGM as President of AOPA NZ. By the time you read this article it will be – or will soon be – in the history books. The main item for discussion will be the incorporated society charitable trust status for AOPA NZ. Your Executive Committee wishes to move forward with the advantages this will have for the future development and operation of AOPA NZ.

Please list as a task for your 2023 diary, ensuring that you are up-to-speed with your local District Council's resource management plan, and what this has in store for your community, particularly regarding aviation as a land owner and aerodrome user.

My new year's mission is not to bust airspace. On two occasions my 'halo' was dented. When I planned to land at Omaka from the north and did not move over far enough east of the line from the 'ponds' to remain outside the controlled approach area, I was pinged. Yes, I did have a moving map, but the transit blue line and the dotted blue line were misunderstood. Plan prior to departure? Yes, but made no difference.

General comment is that infringements are often made in this particular area and it is best to pay the Airways service fee and radio your intentions to Woodbourne for a landing at Omaka and avoid the infringement. Statistically these infringements are listed with CAA, with the intention being to improve transit areas.

The second ping was climbing around cumulus clouds from Canterbury. Yes, I was certain of my levels being maintained while climbing west, and all I can blame is the convective lift experienced in my departing climb between 5500ft and 7500ft where I must have busted the level 'just' prior to the purple line on the map. Once again, I elected not to bother the controllers as this VFR 'lightie' was departing toward the mountains and remaining clear of controlled airspace.

Overhead rejoins

How often do you find that the subject of 'overhead rejoin' comes into a conversation? There is an 11 minute CAA Safety Video that offers a good, common-sense explanation of this procedure. Take a look at CAA NZ Standard Overhead Join 2022 which you'll find at https://youtube/5Z0CRecXues

Note that whenever you visit an AOPANZ fly-in, safari or other event, you will be furnished with joining instructions to accommodate the flow of traffic. For the safety of all, adhering to overhead procedures, as well as ensuring you have good situational awareness, is vital.

The AOPA NZ website (www.aopa.nz) additionally hosts a range of articles and videos that support your ongoing safety in a wide range of flying scenarios.

Our AOPA comms team recently put together a video to further enhance pilots' understanding of strip flying and low flying during setup to land. Check it out at https://aopa.nz/introducing-low-altitude-manoeuvring/ on the new AOPA NZ website.

You can set up your login in the 'new look' AOPA NZ website by visiting https://aopa.nz/new-aopa-nz-website-set-up-your-password/ and from there you'll be able to navigate throughout the website.

As you do so, please let us know whether you find everything you need – we welcome your feedback as we aim for continued improvement in the services we offer to members.

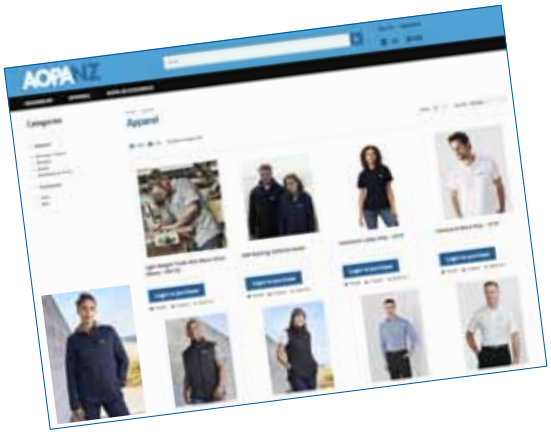
Sue Kronfeld, President

A warm welcome to new members:

Bill Fairclough & Joanne Lee, Auckland; Arthur Ruddenklau, Darfield; Nick Warren, Timaru; Ryan Howard, Queenstown; John Abbott, Lyttleton; John Southworth, Auckland; Malcolm Forsyth, Auckland; Bob Swaney, Waihi Beach; Jessica Smith & Katherine Kirk, Cambridge; Rowan Worsley, Auckland; Matthew Croft, Christchurch; Regan Andrews, Kumeu; Jeremy Bell, Wanaka; Jonathan Wood, Auckland; Garry Bluett, Tauranga; Mark Owens, Arrowtown; Shannon Surridge, Nelson; Steve Coombes, Queenstown; Lance O'Sullivan, Kaitaia; Phil Richards, Cust.

New range of AOPANZ branded gear

A new range of practical and stylish AOPA NZ branded gear is now available to members, and can be ordered online.



The extensive range offers casual and smart options in easy-to-wear styles and natural fibres, all featuring the AOPA NZ logo.

Polo, tradie and business shirts, caps and bucket hats, puffer vests, jackets, merino jerseys and more are now available. There's even an AOPA NZ branded picnic rug in three classic tartans – what better to have tucked away in your plane for your next fly-in or family picnic?

Prices are very competitive and our model assures us the quality is great. To browse the range and purchase your gear, follow the link from the AOPA NZ website or go direct to aopa/businessuniforms.nz

Changes to fuel suppliers

Motueka: This site (for both Avgas and Jet A1) has now been taken over by BP.

Oamaru: Z Aviation is continuing with supply of avgas at this site, but supply of Jet A1 has now been taken over by BP.

Notice to Marlborough pilots

One of our members has pointed out that the conspicuous old visual reporting point 'domes' in the Waihopai Valley has now been changed to 'circles' – because the radar domes are no longer there.

The circles that mark that same spot are not quite as conspicuous, but still fairly easy to spot. Please bear this change in mind when flying in that area.

From the Editor

Any volunteer-based organisation is as strong as the commitment of its members. As we approach our annual AGM, it's worth reflecting on the time and effort that members put into AOPA NZ, not only through serving on the Executive Committee, but in many other capacities.

Every fly-in, safari, magazine, industry meeting attended, online resource developed, new member benefit secured – to list just a few of our organisation's activities – relies on the donated time, talent and hard work of members. Too few members, probably; in that we're similar to most volunteer-based organisations.

If you attend AOPA NZ events, you'll doubtless notice the people who give their time and energy to organise and front these activities. They're often familiar and they're easy to thank. They're also easy to take for granted. Please don't. Everyone's energy eventually runs out.

It's also worth remembering those who prefer a behind-the-scenes role. They are just as integral to ensuring the smooth running of every activity we engage in. Thanking these volunteers can be harder, but is just as essential.

Our organisation's part-time staff also give above and beyond, putting in additional unpaid time and effort. A particular thanks here to our administrator Mary Bruce, who has been with us for seven years and seen us through numerous changes.

Thinking about how much we rely on volunteered time may well lead to thinking about what we might personally have to offer our organisation to help spread the load. Everyone can make a difference and every little bit helps.

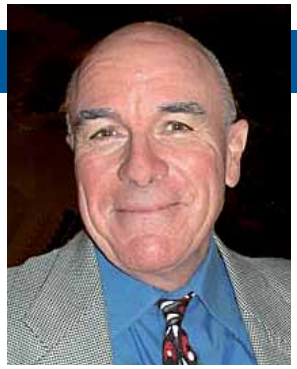
Anna Mackenzie, Editor

2023 AOPA NZ AGM and Summer Safari

AOPA NZ's AGM weekend, followed by the AOPA NZ Northern Summer Safari, kicks off in Whitianga on 3rd March 2023, just as this edition of *Approach* is launched.

Don't miss the opening night BBQ at Mercury Bay Aero Club on Friday 3rd; AOPA NZ AGM at 10.30am Saturday 4th March at Mercury Bay Aero Club Hangar; and later the North vs South Christine Taylor Memorial Golf Tournament, AOPA NZ AGM dinner and annual AOPA Awards. The subsequent Safari will visit Waiheke, Taupo and Te Kuiti with plenty of adventures on offer from 5th to 11th March. Fly safely and have fun!

Safari Cancelled



Vice-President's view

By the time you read this I hope my weather comments are reversed. So far, as I write, the weather up here in Auckland and out at Ardmore has been uncooperative for this period of early 2023. We have been pummelled by various storms that seem to gravitate down the east coast and make a beeline for my area on Waiheke Island. Airfields on the Coromandel Peninsula have taken a hammering including Whitianga. Yes, I know those living and flying down on the 'mainland' have had superb weather. I hope it holds out for the SAA annual event and fly-in at Ashburton in early February.

By the time this is in print we will be enjoying our AGM and heading off on the Summer Safari out of Whitianga.

I did get a couple of good days for fly-ins in early December. A trip to Spring Hill, just north of Auckland, for a great BBQ lunch and fly-in organised by the Northern Aviators group attracted a good turn out and some interesting machines. I try to post various other clubs' fly-ins and events on our Facebook group page, and our Wednesday comms also broadcasts them.

The next day it was down to Turangi for our annual Christmas BBQ. It had been postponed once, but we had an absolutely perfect day for it in the end. My co-pilot and navigator was Phil Pacey, who gave me a good commentary on the way down about his preferred routes and useful tweaks for flying in this part of the country.

We had a great turnout of thirty plus aircraft and an excellent lunch provided by our friends at the Turangi Aero Club.

We even had a crosswind take-off challenge when leaving. I was one of the last, so watched an overall very good display of airmanship with only a couple of, "I wonder what he's doing?" moments. The lone Tiger Moth handled it with aplomb and lots of footwork.

I am continuing to monitor unleaded fuel status in the USA. A recent article in the AOPA USA magazine is suggesting at least late 2028 before we see it available in retail outlets. Gearing up production is the big issue and finding refineries that are willing to commit expenditure to produce a bespoke and unique fuel is difficult. It will happen though.

I like to watch You Tube aviation videos and particularly those doing long distance adventures. A great one that I really enjoyed is a young Dutch/South African couple flying a Sling High Wing from the Netherlands back to South Africa VFR. This particular aircraft had already completed a trip from South Africa to Oshkosh. It's clearly an amazing, capable aircraft to have completed this journey. Check it out here if you're interested. There are a number of episodes. Check out https://youtube/MwwywdCOY-E and https://www.youtube.com/@PilotBambi

Steve Horne, Vice-President

Greenstone Back to Basics

By Hayden McIntyre

Flying runs in my family. My late father Colin, brother Jay (author of *Approach* magazine's 'Thoughts from an aviation mechanic' column) and myself have all contracted the aviation bug.

I started flying at high school and slowly progressed to my PPL. Around 2000 I purchased a poor man's helicopter (Bantam B22) and subsequently had a blast inspecting our sheep and beef farm in the Wendon Valley, north of Gore. There was hardly a paddock I couldn't land in, and I learnt a lot from the experience. I sold the Bantam after a few years with the intention of upgrading, however life got in the way for twenty odd years.

After trying a lot of different aircraft, Maule M5 235 DWR came up for sale. I'd always had a soft spot for the A10 of bush planes, and was impressed by my test flight. After some pondering, I became the owner of a Lycoming 540 powered aircraft – someone's got to keep the oil industry alive! I have a rating in a Cub and Jodel and soon added a Maule. CSUs were new to me and that was probably the biggest thing to get a handle on.

I try to fly her at least once a week and enjoy honing my skills on the strips on the farm and beyond. DWR has also become the farm supplies hauler as the local Mossburn Farmlands is located beside Bob Cleland's airstrip – it can earn a few funny looks when the forklift comes over to load her up.

I joined AOPA with the intention of going to last year's mid-winter fly-in at Haast but the weather didn't play the game and the recent Greenstone Station Back to Basics ended up being my first fly-in. My wife, Claire and daughter, Holly are reluctant flyers at this stage, so I suggested they drive our trailer tent in on the Thursday for a bit of extra time in paradise. Being keen campers they agreed, and a long weekend holiday was organized.

The weather in the south was hot and westerly and I had a rather bumpy flight in. On arrival a stiff nor'wester was blowing straight over the hill across the strip; on joining for downwind there wasn't much need to power back to loose altitude due to downdrafts from the hill. I did a cautious go around to assess and make a decision. The bonus of being the first one there was that no one saw my four touch and go's. The strip looks deceptively short so, note to self, there was plenty of run out for the next landing.

Hayden and Claire with daughter Holly and Maule M5 235 DWR

I had a snooze under the wing while I waited for Claire and Holly to arrive. Claire had been apprehensive about driving the trailer in and thank goodness we didn't realise there were some small river crossings. She drove like a champ.

Friday 6am saw steady rain, much needed by Andrew at Greenstone Station, but less than ideal for flying. It began to clear mid-afternoon and eventually aircraft started to arrive, mostly from close by; with the weather worse further afield,

many opted for a Saturday morning arrival. Those there enjoyed convivial company and an awesome paella whipped up by Sue Kronfeld's friends, Emily and Radar.

Saturday morning dawned with some cloud and perfect flying conditions to the south. Briefings were held and two teams formed to go on separate missions. One would track for 'The Spit' at Preservation Inlet on the southwest tip of Fiordland while another would try their hands on a variety of strips around the south. As I'd recently been to the Spit, I decided to go on the strip tour.

Shaun Gilbertson and Geoff Rogers took me on as their wingman, and there was no dilly-dallying about with a nice long one-way sloping airstrip at Bullock Creek on the southern end of Mt Nic station. I have a 300m one-way strip on the farm that I regularly practise on, so I felt pretty comfortable and was pleased with how I pulled it off. Shaun grew up just over the hill from my farm and his late father, Hugh, and my father did a lot of flying together in Dad's Champion 7EC and Hugh's Cessna 170. I'd always heard a lot about him, so it was great to have him show me the ropes.

We landed on another topdressing strip down the Mararoa, then I got my wires crossed and thought we were heading to Malcom Swanson's strip while the others went to Te Anau Downs. A search party was almost called before a photo of DWR on deck at Swanson's was spotted on WhatsApp (whoops!). I think I was hungry and just wanted one of Marilyn's scones. Malcolm is a micro-lighter and helped me out immensely when I had my Bantam years ago. His strip was formally Bill Black's and it works very well. He loves having aircraft drop in to visit and has placed a house right alongside the runway with a deck overlooking the action.

After morning tea we departed for Jericho Station's topdressing strip. A few bumps in the middle caused some issues but it was awesome to see Matt Anderson, who flies in Papua, making it look easy in RV4 RVI.

Jericho Station owner Ed Pickney joined up with the team and we headed off to Derek and Bronnie Chamberlain's new strip, situated right beside their house. Heaps of room and lamb chops for lunch, very Southland! Then on to inspect a couple of golf course style strips owned by Michael Bloomfield then Russel Brunold. A credit to them both and in way better condition than the average lawn!

Back to Mossburn to visit the oil refinery and grab an ice cream to cool off in the 28 degree heat. Mossburn is a great $1000 hamburger destination if you're after a change of scenery. It was hard to believe an 'Apocalypse Now' weather event was in progress in the north. It made me appreciate the awesome southern summers we quite often have. The day was disappearing and I headed back to Greenstone to cool off with a dip in Lake Wakatipu then to wrap up the day's events with a ribeye steak from the farm and a couple of cold ones with the rest of the crews. Andrew had invited some of the local Glenorchy community to visit to see the aircraft, and through pilots' donations, the fly-in raised $800 for the Glenorchy Play Centre.

Thanks to Andrew Green for making the strip available and to AOPA for organising it all. I'm looking forward to the next one – and hoping Claire and Holly may join me in the plane, opting for a 45 minute trip home rather than five hours in the car!

Outlanding in the Fairlie Basin

By Ross Millichamp

Glider pilots describe landings made away from known airfields or strips as 'outlandings'. A lack of rising air or poor visibility means that they land wherever they can and worry about retrieving the aircraft later. Outlandings are less common in the powered aircraft world but, if you fly long enough, sooner or later it will probably happen to you.

My outlanding experience happened when I would have least expected it, on a beautiful day in the South Island backcountry with clear skies and calm conditions right up to the main divide. A friend and I had taken off from my home strip near Darfield on a mission to check out some hunting spots in South Canterbury and Central Otago. It was the type of flight I really enjoy, snooping around the backcountry with no pressure to be anywhere at any particular time.

I was in no rush to get home and when I suggested an early lunch at Omarama my passenger leapt at it. The Pink Glider Café is located on the Omarama Airfield with a taxi-way leading right up to it. Sitting in the shade on a hot January day enjoying coffee and a hot scone, we had no indication of the drama that was about to unfold.

The forecast that morning indicated that low cloud would probably push inland from the Canterbury coast towards the end of the day, but I was confident we would be safely back home before then. However, as we taxied out from the Glider, I could see cloud building behind Mackenzie Pass, which was the most direct route into the Fairlie Basin and home. Mackenzie Pass runs slightly west to east and you do not get a great view through it until you are quite close. I was reasonably confident that I would be able to sneak under the cloud and through the Pass, so I headed in that direction.

In the time it took to fly across the Tekapo Plain, the weather deteriorated and cloud started pushing through the Pass and moving into the Mackenzie Basin. Knowing that the cloud was coming from the east, we diverted west and tracked towards Burke Pass, which is generally a very reliable route home from the Mackenzie country.

Burke Pass looked better, with a clear view of the paddocks on the far side, so I descended and tracked through 700-800ft above the ground. Once through, however, the weather ahead looked pretty average. In the past I'd got through here in cloudy conditions by flying down the Opihi River past Pleasant Point and out onto the plains. As we approached Albury the cloud ahead lowered, forcing me to turn around and head back west.

I arrived back overhead Fairlie and found that the weather had got quite a bit worse in the short time we'd been away. I had a quick look to the west where the weather did look better, but after a short time came to the view that I would not be able to get over the higher terrain in that direction.

"Go back to where you know the weather is good," I told myself, and so I turned towards Burke Pass and the sunny Mackenzie Basin.

As we approached, I saw that the cloud had lowered further and that route was now blocked.

On previous trips through this area I'd heard radio calls from a pilot landing near Fairlie but had no idea where the strip was. My headset has Bluetooth connectivity to my phone so I called local AOPA NZ Executive Committee Member Ian Sinclair and asked for advice.

"Don't come east," he said, "it's absolute rubbish here."

"What about the private strip near Fairlie?" I asked. Ian also had vague recollections of a short strip near Fairlie but was uncertain about where it was and

whether it was suited to a Cessna 182.

"You might be best landing in a paddock," he said. "Give me a call when you are down and I will come and get you."

By now the tension was starting to build. Fairlie is located in a reasonably big basin but it is littered with high tension power lines that move electricity from the Waitaki River hydro schemes to consumers in the north. For the time being I was at a safe altitude but at some point would have to descend to assess the ground conditions and approaches to a potential landing spot.

I briefed my passenger about what was going on and gave him a job. "Keep your eye on the iPad and tell me if I get anywhere near any of the squiggly lines that depict transmission towers."

Of course, I was furiously looking for the towers as well, but things can get busy during a precautionary landing and I figured one set of eyes on the iPad and one out the windscreen made sense.

There were plenty of suitable paddocks in the vicinity but in January most of the big, flat ones were full of waist-high wheat. Others were under centre pivot irrigators which are generally accompanied by a multitude of curving fences that are really hard to see from the air. Finally I spotted a long 'into the wind' paddock next to a meandering creek on the northern outskirts of Fairlie.

I did an inspection run and it looked reasonable but was covered in tall, scruffy clover with lots of thistles poking through. It looked a little un-loved compared to the immaculate wheat fields nearby and I was worried that there could be a dry creek channel or other obstacle hiding under the clover. Looking back at the wider basin I saw that the weather was continuing to deteriorate so I decided to go for the clover paddock.

They say that all your training comes back to mind in situations like this and ... "keep flying the plane all the way to the ground" stood me in good stead.

At the back of mind was a post made to a back-country pilot's forum where people were discussing what to do in the event of an engine failure. After reading lots of advice from people who had yet to experience such an emergency, I came to a post by an Alaskan pilot which was the real deal. He had had two engine failures during his long career and his opinion was "In an emergency, the plane belongs to the insurance company; your primary responsibility is to get you and your passengers safely onto the ground."

I was also aware that if I kept flying around the Fairlie Basin in worsening weather looking for the perfect paddock, I would eventually fly into cloud or make another serious mistake. Once I'd come to a decision, the approach and touchdown were straightforward. All of those non-standard circuits conducted during AOPA NZ fly-ins made it seem comfortable and familiar.

The time between the main wheels touching down and getting the aircraft stopped seemed to take an eternity as I waited for the bogey man hidden in the clover to bite. That is when thoughts about the brand new engine being ruined by a prop strike came flooding into my mind. Luckily we came to a rest quite quickly with no obvious damage but there was a fair bit of undergrowth tangled up in the landing gear. I later discovered a cracked hydraulic line leading to one of the brakes but that was all.

They say that all your training comes back to mind in situations like this and I guess that was true for me. I was never great with the emergency drill checklists during flight training and don't recall doing one in the Fairlie basin, but the basics of "keep flying the plane all the way to the ground" stood me in good stead.

I shut the engine down and called Ian to tell him that we were safely down and to give directions to the pickup point. It is well and good to give a GPS position but how do you get there by road?

Another difficulty was finding the landowner where the Cessna was now parked and to ask him to keep any stock or harvesters out of the paddock until the weather cleared. In the end we left a note on the nearest house and that evening the landowner called. He was relaxed about the intrusion on his operation and kindly agreed to us "flattening" a strip of his clover with the truck to reduce drag when I attempted to get the plane out. Driving up and down the vector was also a good way to check for any hidden obstacles lurking in the undergrowth.

We came back a few days later under sunny skies and flew the plane home. With hindsight I probably could have chosen a paddock with less growth but it was very long, which made the retrieval flight straightforward. The problem with most light aircraft in these situations is not in finding a paddock adequate to land in but also in finding one long enough to take-off from.

Cessna

BY TEXTRON AVIATION

VERSATILITY
THAT SOARS

Whether you're commuting with your family or moving cargo, the CESSNA Turbo STATIONAIR HD aircraft knows how to haul. Its turbocharged muscle will take your adventure almost anywhere. Make your touchdown on rough fields as well as on remote lakes - this versatile piston supports amphibious floats.

For further information and new orders, contact us directly:
Kath Pagsolingan
Textron Aviation
Regional Sales Director (Pistons)

+65 8323 1937
kpagsolingan@txtav.com

#WITH MY CESSNA

www.cessna.txtav.com

Wrong way to New Zealand: part 12

Coasting into Aus

By David Berger

'The traveller must learn... that the travel has changed only him...'

From Balikpapan on the east coast of Borneo, Broome, on the northwest coast of Australia, now lay less than 1100 nautical miles away. In still air, we would just be able to make it on the fuel in our wings.

Top down: Dampier Creek, Broome; thumbs up on final refuelling at Lombok; Kimberly coast.

Barry and Sandra Payne had done exactly that in their absurdly long-legged (and rather faster and more comfortable) Comanche a few days earlier, but we needed another US$2,500 refuelling stop to make it with any degree of safety. (Note to self: for the cost of one refuelling stop in Asia you can install a Turtlepac which will get rid of the need for that stop.)

The 450 nautical mile route south from Balikpapan to Lombok, which we'd planned as our refuelling stop, parallels the Borneo coast for about an hour and a half, then crosses the Java Sea via a few scattered atolls to the eastern tip of the Kangean Islands, from where the volcanoes of Bali and Lombok become visible above the shimmering haze. Fellow transoceanic pilots will well recognise the feeling of security and comfort which proximity to land gives. While it is, to some extent, justified in a light twin, it is an illusion in a single – but, hey, you might as well enjoy it as not, right?

The first part of the flight was taken up with commenting on the degree of urban development in the region of Balikpapan. At the time of our flight, it had just been announced as the new future capital of Indonesia, to be called Nusantara, due to be inaugurated in 2024. Coming from a country with a tiny population, such as Australia or New Zealand, it is hard to comprehend the sheer press of humanity in Indonesia. Overcrowded Java, home to the present day and historic capital, Jakarta, has a population of 145 million. Even Lombok, dimensions approximately 40 by 40 nautical miles and with half its area taken up by a 12,000ft volcano, has a population of 3.8 million.

The volcanoes of Bali were visible from far out and before long we were descending along the east coast of Lombok into the international airport. It had been a relaxing three and a half hour flight. Handling via our handling agents at Indoasia was very smooth and we had soon refuelled the aircraft – the last time we would hand-pump an avgas drum on the trip – and were in a taxi heading for a cheapish hotel at Sengiggi Beach, about an hour away.

What can I say? Asian beach resorts have lost their lustre for me since I was last in one in the late eighties, at which time they seemed the height of exoticism and cool. Probably because both they and I have aged, they now seem rather tawdry places, desperately trying to hawk their shoddy wares to an increasingly demanding and intolerant Western tourist throng. But, as unattractive as a holiday destination Sengiggi Beach may be, it was still a welcome location for some tired pilots contemplating the end of their trip. We sat in a beach bar and exchanged emails with the Australian Border Force in Broome while downing a couple of ice cold Bintangs and reflecting that life could have been much, much worse.

Offshore from Broome, about 150 nautical miles to the west-northwest, lie the Rowley Shoals, a group of three atolls, whose fringing reefs poke the odd tiny sand island above the surface. They represent one of the most pristine marine environments in the world and are the destination for a couple of dive boats working out of Broome. Overflying would only be a small diversion, so we planned a route via the Rowleys.

After a lazy day at Sengiggi, we decamped to an anonymous, modern, depressing hotel near the international airport, where almost nothing worked,

ready for an early departure next day.

I was pilot in command for this leg and, due to my instrument rating deficit, we had to file VFR. After an uneventful departure, HF communications soon faded out, more through lack of interest from Indonesian ATC than lack of reception, and we were left to the reverie of our own thoughts on the 650 nautical mile trip in the smooth air over the sparkling ocean. My thoughts, WW2 tragic that I am, drifted towards the desperate days at the end of February and the beginning of March 1942, when this very patch of airspace had been a hive of frenetic activity.

The Japanese advance, already rapid, now stepped up even more following the loss of most of the Allied naval fleet in the disastrous Battle of the Java Sea on 27th February, and the chain of islands from Java to Lombok were full of desperate Allied civilians and servicemen trying to escape to Australia, with Broome the nearest suitable bolthole. A revolving door ferry of overloaded landplanes and Dornier and Catalina flying boats brought out as many as they could and, on the morning of the third of March, up to fifteen flying boats lay at anchor on the turquoise waters of Roebuck Bay, packed with the passengers they had brought in the night before, who had remained on the aircraft as there was no accommodation in town. Just after 9am a dozen Japanese Zeros came roaring in from their base on Timor and spent an hour strafing the flying boats and the airfield. It was carnage. As many as a hundred and fifty died in the raid and a B24 Liberator was shot down, along with a KLM DC-3 carrying not only escapees from West Java, but a cargo of diamonds. Piloted by a flamboyant White Russian called Smirnoff, it made a forced landing on the beach about 75 nautical miles north of Broome and, after an epic four days, the survivors were eventually rescued. The only sign of the diamonds, however, was a tiny trickle here and there over the next several years. The bulk of them were never found.

As usual when we flew over the ocean, we were monitoring Channel 16 on the panel-mounted marine VHF and we got a surprise as we descended through about 4000ft towards the Rowley Shoals: an Australian Border Force Dash 8 was

A close inspection of The Rowley Shoals, 150 nautical miles northwest of Broome.

overhead and interrogating each of the three dive boats at the Shoals as to their names, origins, souls on board, etc.

We thought it best to announce our presence, which we did on the marine frequency, followed by which there was a long, suspicious pause before they asked us to change to an aviation frequency and then grilled us in the same, rather officious manner. The Australians take the security of their northwest maritime border very seriously.

After a little low level zooming around the Rowleys, and oohing and aahing at the lovely blue and green colours, we



Crossing Cable Beach (left); Final 28, Broome (centre); A quiet celebration of six months and around 18,500 highly memorable nautical miles (right).

climbed back up to five thousand feet and set course for Broome. I have been a doctor at the hospital in Broome since coming to Australia from the UK in 2013 and we have a house there, so it was pretty special to see the fuzzy brown line on the horizon firm up, and to then approach the town from the ocean side for the first time ever. The colours and landscape of Australia were as striking, outlandish and distinctive as ever.

We crossed Cable Beach and joined left downwind for runway 28, taxiing in to the itinerant parking on the northern apron, where Border Force was waiting for us to go through the formalities of entry. I shut the aircraft down and, in homage to HG Tilman, who famously remarked, on conquering the previously unclimbed 26,000ft peak of Nanda Devi in 1936 with his climbing partner, Noel Odell, "I believe we so far forgot ourselves as to shake hands on it", we did the same.

The cheery chappies from Border Force ran through their formalities very pleasantly and efficiently. Also waiting for us was our welcoming committee: one of my nurse colleagues at work and his infant son! They had been following us on Flightradar 24 and had kindly come to welcome us home. Apart from that, it was just a normal day in Broome and, of course, an anticlimax, as any homecoming after a long trip is bound to be, even one as momentous as this one.

We relaxed in Broome for a couple of days, basking in no glory whatsoever:

"Oh, hi, you're back for another run!" said everyone I met.

"Yes, flew in this time in my own plane from America, via Russia and Lombok, what do you know!"

"Nice. Hey, look, can you swap a shift next week…?" Came the typical reply.

"Don't I look different? Can't you see the changes wrought by the extraordinary experience of crossing the world with my son in this tiny gnat of a plane these last ten weeks? Don't you understand I am not the same person as when you last saw me? Are these experiences and gems of knowledge not etched on my very face? How could you?" I wanted to reply, but didn't. For the traveller must learn every time the painful lesson that the travel has changed only him, and that the world and the people he left remain unchanged by the events and experiences which have altered him forever. It is for the traveller, alone, to renegotiate his relationship to the world to which he has returned, not vice versa.

The romance of air travel was further punctured when I tried to refuel the aircraft at Broome for a sightseeing flight up the Dampier Peninsula to the Aboriginal-run lodge and airstrip at Cape Leveque. It transpired two out of three ain't good:

- I had an Australian BP fuel card
- The fuel in Broome is supplied by BP
- The registration on the card was that of my Super Cub, VH-YUP

It would require an email to BP head office in Melbourne for permission to refuel the aircraft, either by BP fuel card

or credit card, because it had a foreign registration and that registration was not printed on the fuel card. It may take three days to get a reply.

We had bestraddled the turning globe, refuelling from Iqaluit to Ust'Barguzin, from Fukushima to Vichy, from Burgas to Luzon, and nowhere had made a fuss about refuelling, except back here at home in Australia. Nowhere. Reader, please believe me when I say I dropped to the ground. I wailed, I keened. I gasped. I stretched my eyes. I beat my fists. Finally, as I knew it would, the hassle of not refuelling the aircraft started to look a lot more than the hassle of refuelling the aircraft and thereby dispensing with this embarrassing and awkward fool as soon as possible. A phone call was made, attended by frowns and sighs and sideways glances and, lo, soon the aircraft was being refuelled for our joyride.

After our trip up the peninsula to Kooljaman Lodge, since sadly closed, reality was about to intrude. It was now mid October. Having been together continuously for nearly six months, it was almost time for Tom and me to part. After a cardiac life support refresher course in the East Kimberley at Kununurra, to which we were going to fly in N185MW, I was scheduled to return to Broome to work in the hospital while Tom continued on in the aircraft to our home on the east coast of Australia and then to New Zealand, where in late November he was due to start his second season of towing gliders at Omarama.

We had both reached the point where we felt like our nomadic existence was naturally going to continue indefinitely, living from daily leg to daily leg, flying on in this magical state forever, removed from reality and everyday cares, concerned only with the weather, permissions, accommodation and availability of fuel. It felt like the natural order of things… but the truth was that we were almost out of both time and globe to fly around. Not only that, but a bit of cash in the bank account from an actual job was starting to seem like a good idea too.

The trip from Broome to Kununurra was a lengthy and bumpy reminder of what flying in Australia in the hot months is like, with turbulence reaching as high as twelve or thirteen thousand feet. The stress on aircraft and crew can be considerable, especially if, God forbid, you get caught up in any of the fearsome summer build-ups in the Top End, at which point it would be extremely reassuring to look out of your window and see a beefy strut holding your wing in place, such as we had in the 185. It is well worth planning for a pre-dawn departure to get your flying over with as early as possible when the air is bubbling in Australia.

And that was it. At dawn on the second day of my cardiac course, I found myself standing on the ramp at Kununurra, saying goodbye to my nineteen year old son, with whom I had shared so many adventures. Eighty years before, young men of the same age had climbed into similar, but even more powerful machines and gone off to war, many of them never to return, so what was a solo trip across Australia and the Tasman Sea to the southern tip of New Zealand for such a lad?

Next time, in the final instalment of *Wrong Way to NZ*, we follow Tom from Kununurra to Omarama and encounter a few surprises along the way.

Soaring the length of NZ

By Abbey Delore

New Zealand's dry nor-westers make for great soaring. For six summers my father, Terry Delore, and I watched weather patterns, seeking the perfect conditions to attempt to soar the length of the country, from Bluff to Cape Reinga.

With a few attempts under our belt, the logistical pre-take-off process had become streamlined and when the ideal day arrived, we were ready. It was 20 December 2021, and in less than 24 hours the nor-west airstream was inbound with an approaching southerly front.

Terry self-launched in GZF ASH-25mi from Canterbury Gliding Club, heading for Omarama, where I was managing logistics for the launch from our gliding base on the airfield. Oxygen systems for high altitudes, supplies for a long day in the cockpit, gear that looks more appropriate for a day's skiing… all were packed into the limited space. By 8pm we were organised. Airways New Zealand had been notified of our proposed flight plan, and Terry headed to bed while I liaised with ground ops crew all over the country, getting set for grid at 4:45am, ready for launch at first light.

5:18am, Terry and I had parachutes on, toothbrushes packed and we self launched in GZF. We had wind on the ridge, a great sign, and climbed overhead Omarama as the sun rose. Established in weak wave, we headed south relatively slowly as the upper level wave system dumped on the lower level. A few hours in it was cranking and ZF was soaring at 26,000ft in -30°C temperature. We had the south coast and Stewart Island in sight.

8:27am and we reached Bluff. The plan from there was to soar north as far as we could, working with a tricky and dismantled wave run up the South Island. Rugged skies and reports of 100kt ground winds kept us well east of the Southern Alps, where clouds marked turbulent areas.

With high altitude mountain flying comes many complexities. One encountered was the batteries in the tail getting cold which causes them to drain. We chose to descend out of the upper level wave to warm the sailplane – and ourselves – aiming to conserve the batteries left. The entire flight ahead would be without electrics: old school soaring in silent flight so that we'd have essential power for the radio and transponder.

On up the South Island in multiple flight levels connecting and reconnecting with wave. Terry was primarily flying, while I was in the rear getting ATC clearances, navigating, seeking weather reports, webcams and communicating with our ground crew, scattered around the country. We swapped roles, sharing the flying, and collaborated throughout on reading the sky.

1:00pm and we were approaching Cook Strait. Reports were still blue skies further ahead, however we remained optimistic; the day was constantly improving. We approached the decision point of no return, and it was a green light for crossing Cook Strait – a barrier only a handful have soared across. Dad handed over controls and we were at 22,000ft, bound for the south coast of the North Island. Stopping midway to climb in wave, the excitement really kicked in.

ZF had a smooth crossing, reaching the North Island at 18,000ft, with two wave options in the offing. An excellent wave overhead Masterton gave us a great wave run up the middle of the Island, maintaining 19,000ft. Meanwhile our TrackMe tracker and midflight reports on our Delore Soaring Facebook page were gaining interest all over the world, capturing attention for our sport, and showcasing the performance and capabilities of these sailplanes.

Eleven hours on the trot, fueled by Pure Sports Nutrition electrolytes, we got the last squeeze of wave and veered towards Taupo. Removing some layers in the North Island heat, we cruised at optimal best glide, conserving height. A breeze coming off Lake Taupo was diminishing thermals, and we were steady on maximum glide as we passed Taupo Gliding Club at 9000ft.

4:50pm, we turned for our last weak thermal. By persevering and hopping from one thermal to the next, we got over the Kaimai Ranges. Gulps of relief, and ZF was in excellent ridge lift at 2500ft. For the next 100km we watched our shadow humming along the green native bush.

We'd been airborne for thirteen hours and it was getting late in the day as the lift began to fizz out. We jumped back on some weak convergence and a few

thermals, pushing as close to Auckland Gliding Club in Drury as possible. Around 20km out we made the decision to use the motor to get altitude, allowing us to glide into a warm welcome at the Auckland Gliding Club.

Touch down: 14hrs, 7pm, 1600km or so. ZF had squeezed every inch out of the weather, light and sky to get there. Terry and I were chuffed: it had been a fantastic flight. The adventure was to be continued after Christmas, when another big challenge lay ahead.

11 January 2022: Auckland Gliding Club, Drury to the northern tip of New Zealand at Cape Reinga. Terry returned to Auckland a few days early, using powered flight to scope out what lay ahead. The landscape in the north gets very low, the island shrinking in width with minimal land-out options; plenty of coastline, but retrieval headaches could be mammoth. We needed a great convergence day with colliding winds from both east and west. Terry collated information from local soaring pilots and, with encouragement from the Gliding NZ community, it was game on.

Terry had prepared GZF by the time I reached Auckland, flying commercially the night before our attempt.

11:40am, once the sky had established, we rolled down the runway and set GZF south, backtracking to the Bombay Hills where we'd left off. Patiently thermalling, we held altitude to where we could see cloud markers across the busy Auckland sector. One of the biggest challenges of the day was to soar across the Hauraki Gulf, at uncomfortably low level and in sync with Air Traffic Control so that we could remain clear of the region's busy air traffic… Bingo! We had a 20 minute window: "Golf Zulu Foxtrot cleared to cross Auckland Sector, remaining above 2000ft."

Hopping from thermal to thermal we maintained altitude clearance, ensuring we stayed a click ahead of recycling thermals to maximise every possible inch of lift. An hour later we were graced by an emerging convergence street that, once set up, proved to be a ripper. Gaining altitude, we cruised past the stunning coastline of Whangarei and the Bay of Islands. Our average ground speed was so good that our chase plane, carrying friends Al Kearney and Georgia Schoefield, were struggling to catch us.

2:30pm, the heavy showers forecast were visible. We decided to veer to the west coast and Ninety Mile Beach. We had 150km to soar but we were in unfamiliar territory with a low cloud base and rain showers threatening to shut us down. The landscape was dark, smoke from large wildfires, which had burned for weeks and were now smouldering, limiting visibility.

North of Kaitaia we got through a tense patch of air and were back in weak convergence. The chase plane caught up and flew ahead and lower to be our eyes. The distance clicked away: 100km, 80km, 70km to go. The island narrowed so that we had coastline off both left and right wingtips. GZF was getting near Cape Reinga. We called ahead: "Go ahead guys, we can see the lighthouse, we're good."

Hooking a weak thermal at 1800ft, a mere 700ft above the ground, we leapt over the tip of New Zealand. Cape Reinga. Terry and I had reached our goal, we were there! Georgia captured the moment at 4pm.

You'd think there would be a celebration in the cockpit, a sigh of relief: years of planning, preparation and energy had come to fruition. But returning to base was at the forefront of our mind.

We flew overhead a safe landout beach and raised the motor to get altitude on our side. ZF climbed to 6000ft and we continued the endurance flight southbound, reconnecting with convergence and soaring towards Auckland Gliding Club. Seven hours after take-off, we were back on the ground being handed champagne and Stella, celebrating with the gliding community and our team of supporters who had helped us achieve this unforgettable, first flight to have soared the length of New Zealand.

But ZF was still 1000km from home. The next day we soared south through the North Island in thermals and low level ridge lift, motored across Cook Strait and landed back in the South Island before a southerly front came through. Gliding friends, the Ackroyds, retrieved Terry and I for a wonderful layover in the Marlborough Sounds before the weather improved and we soared the final flight back to Springfield Aerodrome, Canterbury Gliding Club. A dream come true, soaring the length of New Zealand; one we could not have achieved without the fantastic support and encouragement of the Gliding New Zealand community.

The goal achieved: soaring over Cape Reinga, 1400km from Bluff – and next, the trip home! Centre and facing page: Terry and Abbey Delore in GZF ASH-25mi. **Photos: Georgia Schoefield**

Might your District Plan restrict GA?

By John Evans

If you have an unconsented airstrip or 'informal airport', you attend fly-ins or visit private strips, your farm requires the aerial application of product, or you are training and use airstrips to practise on, the rolling out of new rules/regulations within District Plans will affect you.

District Councils operate somewhat independently of central Government (probably less and less so in the current environment), and the 67 territorial councils within New Zealand each have their own rules, as set out in their District Plan, which has a tenure of ten years. Each council does, however, need to meet Government requirements as laid out in the National Policy Statement (NPS) and the Resource Management Act (RMA). When District Councils initiate the process to develop each new District Plan, almost inevitably these become more prescriptive – not only because of changes within RMA/NPS, but also because districts change (urban sprawl, population density, population sensitivity/culture), and because other districts set precedents and Councils seemingly feel the need to follow that lead with additional rules and regulations, irrespective of their existing need.

As an example, I'll use the Timaru District with its Proposed District Plan (PDP).

In mid-December, myself and most of the private strip owners individually submitted on the proposed restrictions, as detailed in the new District Plan, the 'PDP'. The Cessna 180/185 Group, Recreational BackCountry Pilots Association, AOPA NZ and SAA also made a joint submission.

The particular point in this PDP that I'd like to bring to your attention is as follows: "GRUZ-R14 PER-3 take offs or landings must not exceed 10 per month; and the airstrip or landing site is setback a minimum of 500m from: any Residential zone; and the notional boundary of a building containing a noise sensitive activity not located on the site of the airstrip or helicopter land site."

Ten take offs or landings is five flights per month. This severely limits how you can use your airstrip, and hosting a bunch of fellow aviators (more than five in a month) would be prohibited. The agricultural aviation industry has their own set of issues with the proposed plan, and their industry has responded accordingly. That's a Timaru District Plan issue, you say. Well yes, but you could have said the same thing when the Queenstown Lakes District Council initiated its drive to introduce prohibitions, so it could well be assumed that your district is next!

In the Timaru District, it is unclear what the existing issue is regarding airstrips that the Council is trying to solve. Many private landowners who have airstrips have located them so far from neighbouring properties that those neighbours cannot even hear the aircraft movements, while others have neighbours with whom they maintain a positive relationship and operate with no ill-effect.

I contacted the Timaru District Council

planners for clarification on the issue needing to be resolved, the justification for the five movement limit and to discover what, if any, guidelines they've been given from Central Government in addition to the NPS and RMA. It is difficult to find the right person to talk to, but the person contacted, who is not directly involved in this rule part, could only say that it was what had been decided was necessary to manage the effects and was in line with other District Council approaches. The only way to get anything more than an anecdotal picture is through an Official Information Act Request.

Next step, Local Government Official Information and Meeting Act Requests (LGOIMA), lodged on January 10 with a statutory response time of 20 working days, with two straightforward requests:

All written communication concerning the formation of GRUZ-R14 PER-3

Evidence supporting implementation of GRUZ-R14 PER-3

At the time of publication they are within their statutory response time.

Of course, we could all apply for resource consents, but at huge bureaucratic cost with questionable benefit, as most of us do not consider our private airstrips to be airparks or airports. A consent would likely limit you in ways you probably wouldn't know the effects of for some time to come. You might have to record/report movements, pay inspectors to audit, have safety and risk systems in place, who knows? We don't want to go there, and there should be absolutely no need to do so. What about existing use rights? That's a tricky question and a little hard to answer, more in Part 2.

The Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) led the way in imposing restrictions, starting in the early 2010s. With the foresight of Jules Tapper, Vance Boyd and others, including AOPA NZ, the QLDC was tackled over the issue. The concern was that a precedent would be set; QLDC was one of the earliest councils to roll out the second generation of district plans, and there was the very real concern that other territorial councils would simply follow their lead. With an investment of tens of thousands of dollars and volunteer hours, significant inroads were made. Refer to Spring 2019 *Approach,* which summarised their efforts. The QLDC Plan, while fairly restrictive, is in many aspects far less restrictive than what the Timaru District Council is proposing. For example, QLDC (outside the Wakatipu Basin) allows for two flights per day, five flights per week or twelve flights per month; 275m set back; and AOPA NZ is able to host six fly-ins per year with unlimited movements, a right exercised for our January Greenstone Station Fly-in.

Will we, in our fight with Timaru District Council, need to lodge an appeal with the Environment Court, enlist a court-appointed mediator and have a decision ratified by a judge of the Environment Court, all to play out in the next 5-10 years? Well, if we need to, we will.

In the next issue we will report on the response to our submissions once they have been heard, and will provide a summary of the content released under the Local Government Official Information and Meeting Act Request. It's unknown territory. Best case, the Council removes any reference to limiting private airstrips – otherwise we'll have to fight to retain our existing rights without the imposition of unjustified restrictions.

In the meantime, if this issue concerns you, then be proactive when your council puts out its PDP for consultation. Look it up. Rally around your district's airstrip users/owners to ensure everyone is informed and personally submits. It may help to set up an email group so information can be disseminated. And also, and just as important, fly neighbourly.

When an ill wind blows...

By Kerry Conner

Friday August 5th 2022 is a day I would rather forget, but one that is now permanently etched in my memory, a day I wouldn't wish upon anyone, and still find it hard to believe happened.

At precisely 1.48pm, wind gusts in excess of 86 knots per hour collapsed a steel-framed hangar on top of my Piper Pacer, destroying it instantly and writing it off.

The day started off windy, with the wind slowly increasing in strength all day, culminating in gusts over 86 knots for a half hour period (around the time of the hangar collapse) and continuing for two hours afterwards with gusts over 70 knots. Kingston township lost power supply at 12.30pm on Friday and didn't get it back on for three days, as well as no cell phone coverage for a day.

Other damage from the storm included shelter belts blown over, pivot irrigators mangled, haybarns, farmers sheds and glass houses damaged, a complete four car garage lifted off its foundations and the roof dumped intact over the fence into the golf course.

AOPA NZ President Sue, asked if I would write an article about the process involved regarding insurance when an event like this happens – so here goes.

While waiting for the wind to calm down enough to get anywhere near the hangar to assess the damage, I called the insurance company representative (at AON). The process is that he lets the insurance assessor know of the claim, and the assessor then calls you back and asks for some info and arranges a time to come and view the aircraft.

The next call was to my aircraft engineer to let him know what had happened.

I also called the Rescue Coordination Centre and told them what had happened to the aircraft, just in case anything else happened that could set off the ELT – thus saving an inadvertent search.

If you find yourself in such a situation, don't forget to also complete a CAA 005 form, notifying of the events that have occurred. You can do this via the online form on the CAA website.

All there was to do now was wait for the wind to stop, so I could assess the damage.

The next day was spent taking lots of photos – the more photos and videos you can take the better. This gives a good record for the assessor of where everything was at the time of the event, especially if you need to move the aircraft to secure it.

With all the evidence of the collapse recorded, the remains of the hangar were removed, as it was too dangerous to leave it lying around. With the hangar gone, the aircraft was moved back onto the concrete foundation, tied up and covered awaiting the assessor's inspection.

Monday 8th – Assessor emails paperwork for completion to myself and the aircraft engineer and arranges to view the aircraft on Wednesday the 10th.

Wednesday 10th – I meet with the assessor, who agrees that the aircraft is a write-off as it cannot be repaired for less than 80% of its insured value.

The insurance company offers the first right of refusal on a written-off aeroplane to the aircraft owner. To take up the offer of buying the wreck from the insurance company, the owner has to send an email to the insurance company with an offer to retain the aircraft, stating the amount the owner is prepared to pay. (A few wise words given to me in this regard were not to think of the aircraft in terms of what it was worth; what it is now worth is the amount the insurance company saves through not having to dispose of the wreck). If the owner doesn't want to retain the aircraft, the insurance company will advertise it for sale.

Five days later I was signing the paperwork for the disbursement of the aircraft, and two days later received payment in full.

The whole process took less than two weeks. I highly recommend the insurance partnership AOPA NZ has with AON. I found them easy to deal with through a highly stressful time.

If anyone wants to sell their taildragger – I'm still looking for a replacement!

Dealing with 'non-normal' ...

The chances of a genuine emergency are low and pilots practise emergency situations, such as a well-rehearsed engine failure drill, semi-regularly. But how much thought do we put into less time-critical non-normal situations?

The non-normal is a tricky one. Not really an emergency, but not a typical flight either. 'Expect the unexpected' they say… but how do we cope when the unexpected sneaks up on us?

Have a pattern to fall back on. There are various options around, but one I quite like is 'E-D-C-B-A' – it's not perfect, but not a bad start.

E – Emergency tasks. Deal with them first. Memory items, etc

D – Decide. Gather info on various options and make a safe decision. There may be options later to improve things, but in the meantime you're on a pathway to safety

C – Communicate. Who do you tell that you have a situation? Who might you get advice from? Squawk a distress code (7700,7600,7500) if it's appropriate. (I think of the 6 in 7600 as like a C = communications, or lack of). If you can, use bluetooth calling on your headset, which is straightforward and minimises distraction.

B – Books. Is there info in a checklist, a quick reference handbook or flight manual or AIP that may be of help.

A – Approach brief. More for multi-crew or IFR operations, but it's worth discussing with passengers what's going on, and at the very least offering reassurance that you have the situation under control and that you have a good plan.

Options, Options, Options

As pilots we're always looking at options when we fly, starting from before we depart. Fuel and weather options are the obvious contingency considerations, but there are others.

Recently I was flying with a pilot who did a wonderful job of calculating fuel levels required before we departed, loading enough for the planned mission but no extra. There were two of us in a lightly loaded, high performing aircraft. As we were not limited by performance on the airstrips we planned to operate, I suggested adding more fuel, but got out-voted; it wasn't my fuel card and I was comfortable we had enough.

Isn't Murphy a beauty? We hadn't been airborne for more than five minutes when another aircraft joined us and additional options were offered. It was a tough decision to abandon opportunities further afield, but the right call. We were a bit gutted to miss out on visiting a fun location, simply because we were about 20 litres short. Disappointing, but there will be a next time.

Ross Millichamp's excellent article in this issue (see page 7) on his non-normal situation reminds me of a similar scenario in almost exactly the same place.

In the year 2000, in my very first commercial job, I was sent to pick up a new aircraft for an operator. The mission was to hitch a ride from Wanaka to Christchurch in a Cessna 206 and bring back the new aircraft. Beaut day across the Mackenzie but, just like Ross's scenario, weather was deteriorating over the Canterbury Plains.

Between Fairlie and Geraldine the pilot got spooked as he remembered the high voltage power lines. Without even drawing breath, he opened the throttle and pulled up. Straight into the cloud. I couldn't believe what was happening. It was a crazy decision, made far too hastily without considering better options.

Looking back afterwards, he hadn't planned far enough ahead. The aircraft had got ahead of him, he was out of his comfort zone and had run out of options. Sadly, that pilot didn't live much longer.

Two takeaways: first, don't let the aircraft get to somewhere your mind didn't get to ten minutes ago. Second, do not choose to fly into cloud. This is a terrible, terrible option that has taken the lives of many pilots. Make good early decisions.

Ross's decision-making process was far better than that of my friend in the C206 and he deserves congratulations. He showed very good early decision making. He didn't wait until he had to use his superb low flying skills to get him away from a late or poor decision.

The decision to turn around can be a tough one and is not to be underestimated. We all have varying degrees of 'get-there-itis' and the desire to complete the mission, and it can be hard to see past that and make a good decision.

Ross's landing area assessment was good – and it's worth practising, even between BFRs.

When assessing a landing area, think: Size, Slope, Surface, Surrounding, Stock, Sun, Shape, Communications, Elevation.

Some of these will be obvious, some less so. If you take an extra few moments to give your landing area a good look, with the structured analysis of 'Seven Ss, C and E', you'll have a better chance of identifying challenges and mitigating them safely. This is a pattern that is essential to any landing area assessment and is well worth learning.

Ross made a conscious effort to keep things as normal as possible by:

- Flying a normal circuit
- Using a normal, stable, approach to his chosen aiming point
- Using standard operating procedures

Fly the aircraft! Aviate, Navigate, Communicate

Ross did a nice job of prioritising. He remembered that his responsibility was to get himself and his passengers safely onto the ground. He wasn't in danger of crashing, but if that scenario develops – and it can happen very quickly – the best thing to do is to 'Fly the aircraft as deep into the crash as possible'.

If you can get to the ground unstalled and make a reasonable attempt at a landing, there is a very good chance of surviving. If you have to hit something, choose to aim between objects. The wings breaking off as you go between the base of trees or through a gateway is a great way of slowing down. Whatever happens, DO NOT STALL.

We live in some of the windiest areas on earth, the roaring forties. That wind, mixed with terrain and being surrounded by sea, means the weather changes, and can change fast. Keep an eye on all the resources we have for watching the weather.

Ross didn't mention being in a poor visibility configuration, and it may not have been required. Slowing down has a bunch of benefits. Not least, reducing workload, allows more time to make better decisions. It's a worthy consideration for a scenario like this, and well worth practising.

Some aspects to consider in a non-normal situation:

- Options, options, options. Never stop considering options, even once you've made a decision.
- Keep things as normal/standard as possible. Normal circuit. Stable approaches.
- With a non-normal, unless the engine had stopped or you're on fire, there's always more time than you realise. Slow it down. Take a deep breath. Try and stick to a planned process.

Well handled, Ross, and thank you for sharing your story for us to learn from.

If you have a story, don't be shy – we've all made mistakes, had a whoops or done something we wish we hadn't. Reading about someone else's experience can help ensure we're prepared should a similar thing happen to us. Please get in touch (phone, text, email, fax!) if you have an experience to share.

Please Mr, we'd like our bung back…

Jay McIntyre is the owner, LAME and IA of JEM Aviation, Omaka

By Jay McIntyre

Sometimes not everything is as it seems or should be!

We've recently been working on a newly rebuilt aircraft imported from the USA early in 2022. Logbook entries had been run past CAA prior to purchase, in particular the engine overhaul which did not include an FAA 8130-3 and just a very basic 337. I'd thought this might be a problem, but our authorities were happy to accept it.

The aircraft was duly shipped and put through its NZ C of A process. Beautifully restored, it was expected that there would be no real issues with the aeroplane even though it had only flown once after its rebuild. The backstory on the sale was that the owner, the proprietor of a busy restoration shop, had built the aeroplane for himself but on finishing it, was unable to get insurance due to his advanced years. A single proving flight was carried out – and that seemed to fit with this story.

During regular contact with the restorer during the reassembly, he asked us to check the condition of the old stock military primer fitted, as it had been noted that there was quite a bit of black smoke from the RH exhaust during engine runs and that first flight. He told us he'd seen this before and that it was a sign that the primer was leaking. We were a bit puzzled as to why this would only effect the RH exhaust.

Engine runs went smoothly and the C of A was granted. All seemed well and the owner was duly rated.

As time went by it was noted the RH exhaust was much sootier than the LH exhaust, and gradually the engine seemed to not be as happy as it once had been. Oil consumption started increasing and we thought that we had somehow glazed the bores on the overhauled engine.

The decision was taken to remove the three cylinders associated with the sooty exhaust. Number 2 cylinder came off and we were a bit alarmed to see that the rocker boxes on the cylinder appeared to be completely dry with no sign of lubrication. Hm… Number 3 cylinder came off and it had a bent pushrod and dry rocker boxes. Number 4 came off and it had a broken valve spring. Being down the bottom of the engine, it had oil in the rocker boxes. Hmm… Guess we had better remove the other cylinders for a look. Sure enough, they all exhibited similar faults, including one with an extremely worn rocker arm bearing.

By this stage we had concluded there was no oil getting to the rocker boxes, but why? After talking to an overhaul shop in the USA we conducted some checks on an time-expired engine and eventually found that the person who had overhauled the engine in the USA had left a 1/8 NPT bung out of an oil gallery in the crankcase. Oil from the pump goes off to the bottom end and also through another gallery, which has a relief valve that lowers the oil pressure from around 65psi to 15psi for the rocker boxes. The missing bung was downstream from the relief valve and all oil meant to be going to the rockers was going straight back into the crankcase. Because it was downstream from the take-off for the oil pressure gauge, we had no idea that oil was not getting to the rockers.

Hindsight is, of course, a wonderful thing as, given the engine had been overhauled, we had not carried out valve clearance checks at the C of A. We'd intended to do these as part of the first oil change to let everything bed in.

With oversight and help from Southair Ltd, we were able to put the bottom end of the engine back together in preparation for a new set of pistons and cylinders from the USA. A big job in the end due to a moment's inattention.

The engine has since flown around ten hours and is going well except for a pesky leak from the oil pump. Removal and inspection of the pump showed this also to be in less than ideal condition, and an overhauled pump is currently on its way to NZ.

Unfortunately, the previous owner's response to the situation has been to just shrug his shoulders and tell us that he won't use that engine guy again! Some of you may not be aware that in the USA, an A&P can overhaul an engine and sign it off, unlike here where a standard category engine must be signed off by a Part 145 shop.

I guess the moral of the story is that sometimes the paperwork (or lack of) does tell the true story!

In Europe, GA is joining the climate debate. Michael Erb, CEO AOPA Germany, asks whether the tax revenue from general aviation could be used to finance compensation payments for the carbon-dioxide it generates.

Compensation instead of ban?

Anyone who books an airline flight today usually also receives an offer to compensate for the climate-damaging effects of the flight with a payment. Is this nothing more than a kind of modern sale of indulgences, as it was in the churches in the Middle Ages to buy one's sins free? Or is it actually effective against climate change?

Most importantly, is the model suitable for general aviation? The basic assumption of the current environmental discussion is that humanity emits too much carbon dioxide (CO_2) overall. Today, CO_2 emissions per person in Europe are 8400kg per year. According to plans by the German Federal Government, it is to be reduced by about half by 2030. Environmental groups are setting much more aggressive targets, some wanting to get down to just 600kg per person per year, others wanting zero.

It becomes clear that the environmental goals differ greatly depending on the political point of view – not the right topic for this column. In any case, we are still a long way from covering human energy requirements from wind, water or solar energy "without side effects". To solve the problem, many political groups are calling for renunciation: stop flying, stop driving, stop eating meat, and so on. But such demands for renunciation and fundamental change are apparently not accepted by a majority of the population. Another approach to reducing the amount of CO_2 in the atmosphere is to get the gas out again. The natural way to do this: plants or algae use photosynthesis to extract CO_2 from the air. Large-scale afforestation could bring about a significant reduction in greenhouse gases; a much-noticed scientific study has just confirmed this again. This is exactly what the compensation payments for flight tickets are aimed at.

A practical example: I was looking for a flight from Frankfurt to Bordeaux and back for a business trip. The ticket cost was about €500. I was offered to offset the 194 kilos of CO_2 that result from burning my share of the fuel consumption: 62 litres of kerosene. There were two options to choose from: I could have paid €3.88 for the planting of trees and their effect over 20 years, six cents per litre. However, there is no generally recognised price level for offsets; other providers calculate with a little over ten cents per litre of kerosene; 'Fridays for Future' and the German Federal Environment Agency (UBA) are even demanding €180 per tonne of CO_2, which corresponds to 45 Eurocents per litre.

A potentially quick solution using sustainably produced synthetic fuel is significantly more expensive and not yet really practicable: That costs €94.70 for the example flight, ie, €1.53 per litre – 24 times more expensive than the cheapest assumption for reforestation, three times higher than the UBA-Calculation. Synthetic fuel is produced from CO_2 in the air with the help of electricity using the 'Power to Liquid' process. The big problem is that huge amounts of sustainably generated electricity are required. With the development of industrial production, the high price would probably drop to around one euro in the long term. Advocates of compensation, however, see limits: they only want to compensate for CO_2 emissions from sources that have a chance of becoming sustainable in the future. Air transport is obviously one of the sectors with such future prospects, both on short and long-haul routes.

Is this a model for us? Private General Aviation already pays very high taxes on its fuel: in Germany this is currently 72.1cents per litre of avgas; with VAT the tax burden increases to over €1. A government that is serious about CO_2 reduction could invest a fixed percentage of the tax revenue already generated by GA into corresponding compensation projects. I would definitely prefer such a constructive approach over a clumsy discussion of bans or absurdly high lump sum payments 'per flight' which lack any factual basis.

What price speed?

Optimal flying in a world of expensive avgas

By Mike Busch

With fuel prices at all-time highs, it's more important than ever for pilots of general aviation airplanes to fly in a fuel-efficient fashion. I am especially sensitive to this issue because I fly a piston twin that guzzles 30 gallons per hour and I suffer post-traumatic stress each time I refuel.

So, how can we get the best bang for our avgas buck? Well, it turns out that there are a bunch of things that contribute to fuel-efficient flying.

A good place to start is our choice of airspeed. There are several contenders for the title of 'most fuel-efficient airspeed'. The most obvious candidate is the airspeed at which drag is minimised, often referred to as 'best L/D' and often found in the POH as 'best glide speed'. For my Cessna 310, best L/D is 111 KIAS at maximum gross and lower at lighter weights. For a Cirrus SR22, it's 92 KIAS, and for a Cessna 172 it's 65 KIAS.

This airspeed will get you from point A to point B using the least amount of fuel and will provide the greatest range.

Another candidate is 'best endurance speed', which sailplane pilots refer to as 'minimum sink speed'. This is the speed that lets you remain aloft for the maximum amount of time with a given amount of fuel. This speed is about 32 percent less than best L/D speed. That would be 84 KIAS for a Cessna 310, 70 KIAS for a Cirrus SR22, and 49 KIAS for a Cessna 172.

Best L/D can be useful when flying maximum-range missions, and best endurance speed may be appropriate for loiter-type missions such as aerial surveillance, fish spotting or pipeline patrol. But frankly, these airspeeds are slower than most of us are willing to fly. Much as we'd like to minimise fuel consumption, we'd also like to get where we're going reasonably expeditiously.

Carson speed

How can we strike an optimum balance between our desire for fuel efficiency and our need for speed? One answer can be found in a seminal research paper written in 1980 by renowned professor Bernard H 'Bud' Carson, PhD, of the US Naval Academy. In his paper, Carson examined this question: How much does it cost (in extra fuel) to fly faster than the most fuel-efficient airspeed (best L/D)? When he looked at the ratio of excess airspeed to excess fuel consumption, he found that

it reaches a maximum at an airspeed of about 32 percent greater than best L/D. Carson referred to this airspeed as "the least wasteful way of wasting fuel." The rest of the aviation world calls it 'Carson speed'.

For my Cessna 310, Carson speed is 146 KIAS. For a Cirrus SR22, it's 121 KIAS and for a Cessna 172 it's 86 KIAS. Now, that's a little more like it!

Mixture

To optimise fuel efficiency, you need to lean the engine aggressively. So-called 'best economy mixture' – which is the mixture that achieves minimum brake specific fuel consumption and maximum miles per gallon of fuel – occurs well on the lean side of peak exhaust gas temperature, typically somewhere between 30°F and 70°F lean of peak. But you don't need to worry about EGT. If you simply pull back the mixture knob to the onset of perceptible roughness, then push it back in just enough to make the roughness go away (and not any farther), you'll be in the best economy ballpark.

In addition to optimising fuel efficiency, operating LOP has other benefits. The engine runs cooler and cleaner. The stress on critical engine components is reduced, as is the build-up of harmful exhaust deposits on valves and other combustion chamber components. LOP is a kinder, gentler way to operate the engine, and pays dividends in engine longevity.

Many pilots believe carburetted engines can't be operated LOP, but that's a myth. Most carburetted Lycoming engines will run quite well LOP because the symmetrical design of their induction system provides reasonably even mixture distribution to the cylinders. Carburetted Continentals can be more challenging – particularly the O-470 that powers the Cessna 182, whose poor mixture distribution is legendary – but with attention to detail and a few tricks it can be done.

Throttle and prop

It would be easy to conclude that achieving optimum cruise is simply a matter of throttling back to Carson speed. But our piston aircraft engines convert fuel into power most efficiently at wide-open throttle (WOT). Pulling the throttle back chokes the engine's air supply, reducing its volumetric efficiency. The engine wastes energy pumping air past the restriction created by closing the throttle. These 'pumping losses' are minimised at WOT.

For best efficiency, we always want to operate the engine at WOT – or as close to WOT as possible without exceeding the engine's operating limitations. Normally aspirated and turbo-normalised engines usually can (and generally should) be operated continuously WOT in cruise. Highly boosted turbocharged engines may need to be throttled back to remain within operating limitations, but shouldn't be throttled back any further than absolutely necessary.

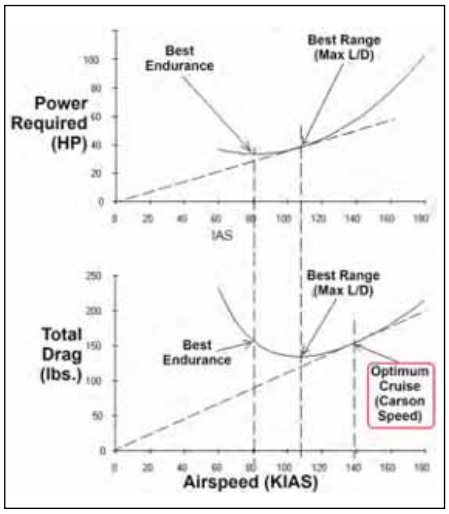
If the plane has a constant-speed propeller, best efficiency is generally achieved by pulling the prop control back to the lowest rpm that the book allows. Low rpm dramatically reduces friction losses, improves volumetric efficiency by reducing pumping losses, and usually improves propeller efficiency. Low rpm also gives the engine more time to convert the heat and pressure of each combustion event into mechanical energy before the exhaust valve opens and discards what's left.

Operating at WOT and low rpm will make some pilots uncomfortable, because they had a CFI who taught them never to operate the engine oversquare. That's what my primary flight instructor taught me in the 1960s when we didn't know any better. This notion that oversquare is bad is another one of those myths that refuse to die. It's dead wrong. For three decades, I've operated the Continental TSIO-520s on my Cessna 310 at 32 inches of manifold pressure and 2,200 rpm in cruise – that's 10 inches oversquare if you're counting – and achieved legendary longevity.

If your airplane has a fixed-pitch prop, you can't control rpm from the cockpit, but you can maximise fuel efficiency by making sure that you have a cruise prop rather than a climb prop installed. The cruise prop has greater blade pitch and will operate at lower rpm than a climb prop, and give you better performance and efficiency in cruise (at some sacrifice in climb performance).

Altitude

So, to achieve optimum fuel efficiency, we want to cruise at Carson speed (which is a relatively modest indicated airspeed), but at the same time we want to operate the engine at WOT with low rpm and a LOP mixture. Is it possible to do all these things at the same time?



Relationship among three key indicated airspeeds: best endurance, best range, and optimum cruise (Carson speed).

It is indeed, but to do this you need to cruise at a relatively high altitude that allows you to be WOT without exceeding Carson speed. In a normally aspirated airplane, this generally means cruising up around 12,000ft. In a turbocharged aeroplane, it usually requires climbing up to the high teens or low flight levels where these aeroplanes are most efficient.

Bargain hunting

When planning a long cross-country flight, it makes sense to refuel at airports and FBOs that offer the best fuel prices. However, it almost never makes sense to make an extra fuel stop in order to load up on cheap avgas. The additional fuel consumed in making the descent, landing, take-off, and climb usually costs more than the savings from the lower-priced fuel. Also, loading up on lower-priced fuel and tankering it to your destination extracts a weight penalty on aircraft performance that can at least partially offset the cost savings of the lower-priced fuel. So, while it can be excruciatingly painful to purchase high-priced fuel, it sometimes turns out to be the optimum thing to do. Ouch!

Mike Busch is a CFI, A&P, IA and regular contributor to *AOPA PILOT*. Article published with thanks to Mike Busch and AOPA USA.

Aviation Personalities

John King

By Ross Millichamp

With nine books, countless articles and a string of editorial roles to his name, John King has been a respected figure in the New Zealand aviation media for more than fifty years.

John King at work (left), and in his happy place, flying Tiger Moth ANQ (photo: Jerry Chisum)

John traces his love of all things aviation to growing up in Christchurch in the 1950s. "Aviation was such a big part of the city's life in that era," John says. "The 1953 London to Christchurch Air Race was a particular highlight, but with the Wigram Air Force base on the outskirts of the city, Harvards ("noisy"), Devons ("quiet") and Mustangs ("exciting") made regular appearances up above.

John's working life started with an administration role at CWF Hamilton before he moved to a similar role with the National Airways Corporation (NAC), New Zealand's government-owned domestic airline. Not long after he joined them, NAC made an offer to employees that these days seems amazing: to train staff as airline pilots! John had an interview with the Chief Pilot who suggested he complete a PPL before re-applying. John joined the NAC Flying Club and started training in an Auster.

In those days the instructors were air force pilots from Wigram who would come across to Christchurch Airport to train club members. John's first lesson was entirely ground-based and focussed on how to start the Gipsy Major engine by hand, the Air Force way. In his later flying career, John had a close call hand-starting a Tiger Moth when the person in the cockpit confused commands – which would not have happened had he been trained by the likes of Gavin Trethewey, Gordon Ragg and Gerry Brown.

Towards the end of his training the Auster went off-line and John was forced to switch to a Piper Tri-Pacer. "I never liked it," he says. "It felt claustrophobic and landed much too fast." To this day the Auster and Tiger Moth remain his favourite aircraft types.

By the time John completed his PPL the NAC direct entry training scheme had ended so he never undertook commercial flight training. Instead, he moved to Wellington to join NAC's newly established computer department working as a programmer on their big IBM mainframes.

His first foray into photo-journalism came when he suggested to NAC that they needed more real flying stories in their in-flight magazine, *NAC Airline Review*. John was commissioned to write an article about one of NAC's first airliners, a Fox Moth operating the South Westland route between Hokitika and Haast, which had proven a lifeline to the South Westland community before the Haast Pass Highway was built. He joined David Lilico in ZK-ASP in a flight to Haast in 1972, the airline's 25th anniversary year. The resulting article featured in Issue 62 of *Review.*

The experience led John to plan a move to aviation-related photo-journalism. He enrolled in a writers' training workshop at Victoria University, the only formal journalism training John has had. Everything else, including the technicalities of air-to-air photography, has been self-taught and learnt on the job.

By the early 1980s John was living in Auckland and had started working full-time freelance as a contributor to a string of aviation publications. Life as a freelance photo-journalist and editor is a tough gig; that John was able to make a career of it is testament to his skill and commitment. Over the years John was Assistant Editor/Chief Photographer of *NZ Wings*, Editor of *Sport Flying* (SAA), but is probably best known as Editor of *New Zealand Aviation News* between 2008 and 2022. He also contributed all of the photographs to the popular 'Wings Over New Zealand' calendars between 1995 and 2013.

Air-to-air photography is a feature of John's work. This typically involves removing the door and right-hand seat of, preferably, a high-wing aeroplane (his favourite is a Beaver) and sitting on the floor facing backwards and shooting photographs from there. A special harness supplementing the passenger lap belt guards against premature departure.

"All aviation photographers strive to get a sharp picture of the aircraft while also getting a full propeller blur," says John. This is much easier in an air-to-air setting because the subject is stationary in

relation to the photographer. A lens as small as 135mm and shutter speeds of 1/40 – 1/60 of a second can generate sharp pictures when shooting air to air. On the ground it's much more difficult because the aircraft is moving quickly past the photographer and it is difficult to achieve a sharp image while retaining the sense of movement conveyed by a blurred propeller. Interestingly, the image stabilisation technology incorporated into modern camera lenses works really well for air-to-air photography but not for ground-based photography where the photographer is moving the camera to keep up with the aircraft. "You're better off turning it off for this work," says John.

In addition to working as an editor, John has written nine books, all but one of them on aviation. The book which had the most impact was New Zealand *Tragedies: Aviation Accidents and Disasters*, published in 1995. In a twist of fate, John's biggest scare as a pilot came just before the publicity that accompanied the release of this book. He was trying to fly to Dunedin in an Auster when, to stay clear of cloud, he was forced out around the Otago Peninsula at low level in rough conditions. As he battled to get to Taieri, he was struck by the irony that the writer of a book about aviation disasters might himself end up as one. When he finally spied a rugby ground on the outskirts of the city, he knew he was safe because that would be plenty for the Auster on a windy day.

John's flying activities started to wind up 1995 when he was grounded by CAA after being diagnosed with kidney stones. The letter from CAA was literally written in red ink! He remains bitter about the harshness of this decision as since being treated, the kidney stones have not reappeared in close to thirty years. John did a little microlight flying after losing his PPL medical, but Tecnams with their Rotax engines never evoked the same joy as he experienced when flying Austers, Tiger Moths and Cubs.

John's most memorable flying experience was in 1984. It was his last opportunity to get a discounted flight as an employee of Air New Zealand before going in to photo-journalism full time. Nick Oppegard had bought a Cessna 195 floatplane in Upstate New York and invited John to accompany him on the trip to ferry it back home to Seattle. The big radial-powered aircraft didn't have great range so they were forced to make many stops for fuel along the way, generally landing on lakes and taxying up to boat-fuelling docks and taking on motor grade fuel. John was surprised at the courtesy extended to them by boat operators, who invariably moved out of their way and gave them priority access to the fuel pumps. Nick had a different opinion, pointing out the large metal prop acting like a scimitar!

In November 2021 *NZ Aviation News* was taken over by NBR and John was made redundant. He is now semi-retired and keeps his hand in the publishing game as Editor of *The Aero Historian*, the quarterly magazine put out by The Aviation Historical Society of New Zealand. He continues to travel around the country attending airshows and aviation events. He is a long-time member of AOPA NZ and would love to attend more of our events if anyone has a spare seat (hint-hint!).

"To me, aviation has always been about going places," John says. "We pilots see so many things that most New Zealanders miss out on."

Mandeville

By Michael Parks

For an interesting flying destination that provides for a multitude of different interests, look no further than Mandeville Airfield.

Mandeville is tucked under the Hokonui Hills at the south-eastern corner of the Waimea Plains in Southland. This gem is well worth a visit!

The airfield features over 900m of well-maintained grass runway running east–west; right hand circuit for runway 27 and left for 09. There is plenty of aircraft parking available. You can taxi almost to the front door of 'Miss Cocoa' and make food and coffee your first on-field stop.

A landing fee of $5 is payable at the Croydon Aviation Heritage Centre, located on the airfield.

While there's no fuel available on the field, fuel is available at nearby Gore Aerodrome. Gore is a short flight around the eastern end of the Hokonui Hills and

The focus at Mandeville Airfield is on preserving and maintaining our aviation heritage – but that's not all there is on offer!

has the bonus of zero landing fees.

Mandeville airfield was established by John Crombie on his home farm soon after his return from WW1. The NZ Aero Transport Company Avro 504Ks would pause here for refreshments, for both aircraft and crew, while flying between Timaru and Invercargill, searching out people keen on a joyride during 1921-22. The local store provided cans of petrol for the Avro, while the hospitality of the Railway Hotel (now Miss Cocoa café) was extended to equally thirsty aviators.

The development of the airfield we know today is thanks to Colin and Maeva Smith (neé Crombie). Maeva's family have farmed in the area for at least four generations.

Today, Mandeville Airfield has something to delight all the family including:

- Croydon Aircraft Company
- Croydon Aviation Heritage Centre
- Waimea Plains Railway Trust
- Miss Cocoa Coffee at the Moth
- Collaborate Fashion

The first business to be established on the airfield was the Croydon Aircraft Company. This is where you'll find Colin Smith and his son Malcolm, busy restoring vintage aircraft within a 10,000 square foot hangar/workshop. A number of de Havilland aircraft are currently under restoration or in storage. The Smiths are very personable folk and more than happy to share their knowledge of vintage aircraft.

A must see is the Croydon Aviation Heritage Centre, established as a museum in the early 2000s, and dedicated to preserving and celebrating New Zealand's aviation heritage. The museum is home to rare and historically significant aircraft and includes an extensive collection of de Havilland aircraft. The latest arrival is a de Havilland vampire jet formally operated by the RNZAF. Unlike many aviation museums, several of the aircraft on display at Mandeville actually fly, and a key feature is that you can get up close to the aircraft without barriers.

The reception area of the heritage centre contains a broad selection of aviation themed books, Airfix models and general merchandise. An adjoining gallery offers for sale artworks by local artists.

Adjacent to the Heritage Centre is the Waimea Plains Railway Trust. A working heritage railway precinct is in the process of being established, with the centrepiece a working and fully restored Rogers K Locomotive K92. This magnificent locomotive is fired up twice a month during the summer season and you can ride in a restored carriage behind her on a small length of track which will be expanded as resources and funds allow.

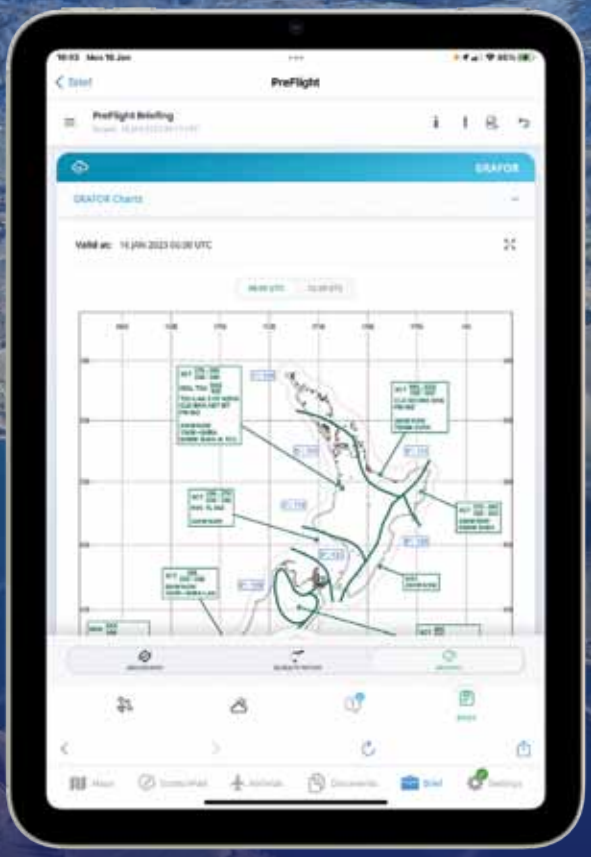
A great place to take in the surroundings, have a break and satisfy the inner person is Miss Cocoa Coffee at the Moth (inside the old Railway Hotel). If you're a coffee connoisseur, you'll be pleased to find Allpress Coffee, along with a delicious range of tasty snacks and meals, all served by friendly staff. The café can be a busy place (testament to the good food) and you'll generally find friendly folk who are happy to chat about all things aviation – especially if you pull up in an aircraft! On our last visit we met a couple of Australians who, after owning a section on the airfield for eight years, are now in the process of building their hangar and home so they can become permanent residents. Miss Cocoa is also home to a range of gifts, specialist foods and treats.

Another business that has its home in the old Railway Hotel is 'Collaborate Fashion' where, according to my wife, you'll find stunning fashion for women and children, clothing accessories and gifts galore. In addition to the garments made on-site, Collaborate also stocks several other NZ labels. Gift vouchers are also available.

In February each year, Mandeville Airfield hosts the Mandeville Fly-In and Steam Festival. This is a celebration of flight and a chance to get up close to vintage aircraft, motorcycles, cars and steam engines in all their glory. I thoroughly recommend a visit; you're sure to find something for all the family!

Croydon Aviation Heritage Centre is home to a collection of rare and significant aircraft, with development of the adjacent Waimea Plains Railway Trust adding another aspect of our transport history.

OzRunways
Electronic Flight Bag



Preflight *with* PreFlight

Now integrated in OzRunways for a complete briefing.

PreFlight is New Zealand's one-stop weather and NOTAM source and the newest platform from Aeropath and the MetService.

Don't leave OzRunways for your safety-critical information. Get all the meteorological and aeronautical data you need in a modern and interactive format, right from inside the app.

Head to OzRunways → Settings → Integrations, and enter your PreFlight credentials.

Try OzRunways EFB today! Download from the App Store or Google Play for a **FREE 30 day trial.**

COME SEE US AT

YEALANDS WINES

CLASSIC FIGHTERS Omaka 2023

7th-9th APRIL

OzRunways Download on the App Store

RWY GET IT ON Google Play

ozrunways.com