

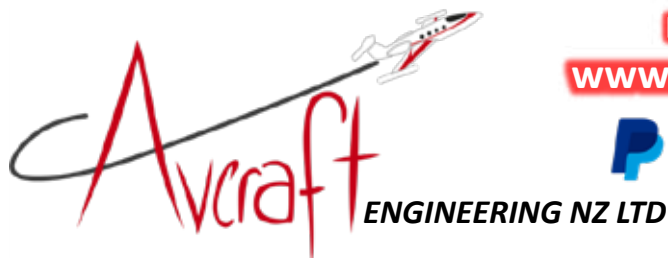
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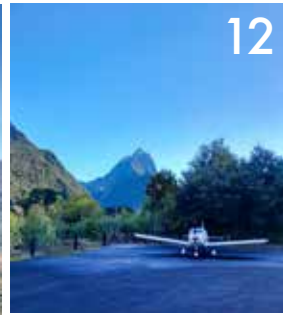
Coming up

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- Taildragger weekend
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& Bridge Pa (Cub Cup
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Cover photo: Ross Macdonald's
Porterfield (story page 8)
Photo credit: Jerry Chisum



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Deadline for ads, articles and photos for the next (Summer) issue: **20 October 2024.**



President's Comment

July's Haast AOPA NZ gathering saw a manageable group of 22 aircraft enjoying great weather with a very high 1042 QNH, and excellent performance of both aircraft and pilots.

In the future our fly-ins will be a mix of events with fixed and flexible dates. Events in places such as Haast, which are heavily weather dependent, are likely to involve a pre-registration process, with dates being confirmed seven days prior based on the forecast. Events in places such as Darfield are likely to continue to take place on dates announced well in advance. As always, feel free to contact me or other Executive Committee members with your thoughts about our social programme.

We are currently running a survey regarding avgas prices, which can be accessed via a link on the AOPA NZ website.

Please do complete this survey. The information will arm AOPA NZ with data to pursue discounts and benefits for you from fuel providers. Yes, we are still working on this initiative.

With regards membership information, in future we will require an indication from members who wish to remain anonymous. Such data is shared to allow discount allocation from fuel companies to individual members, and to allow us to assist the Rescue Co-ordination Centre of NZ, especially in cases involving missing GA aircraft.

I was fortunate to represent AOPA NZ at the IAOPA conference in Washington DC earlier this year (read Chris Hoffman's article on page 18 for more), and to be part of the Oshkosh Airshow tour in July. An AOPA NZ OSH24 WhatsApp group allowed members to stay in touch during this eventful week.

Do make the most of those superb winter flying days.

Sue Kronfeld, President 🇺🇸



From the Editor

While most of my recent flying has been long-haul – an activity which

has little in common with getting out and about in a Cessna – there was a flying highlight. Having thoroughly enjoyed our flying safaris in southern Africa over the years, we were ready for something different, and in May-June spent the better part of a month driving 3500km around Kenya. The wildlife was spectacular, the street life fascinating and the driving utterly chaotic.

During one rest stop in Nairobi we took the opportunity to visit the historic East Africa Aero Club (EAAC) on Wilson Airfield. Tucked away in an overcrowded airport precinct – Wilson hosts safari and regular domestic flights around Kenya, as well as multiple flying schools, commercial operators and private flying – my expectations weren't high. A marathon combined with a political demonstration had gridlocked the city, the main gates into Wilson were completely shut off and the back route in was an experience in itself. Entering the Club, however, was like stepping into a mirage of times gone.

A member gave us a tour – reception rooms, lounge, reading room (for those who want a little quiet), bar (for those who don't), restaurant, swimming pool, squash courts, gym, gardens... There is stylish pilot accommodation, which helps the Club's coffers, and a capped membership. Founded by 24 enthusiasts on 31 July 1927, the Club acquired its current name in May 1928, a year later moving to the new Nairobi (now Wilson) Aerodrome.

The honour roll is impressive. Beryl Markham, the first person to fly the Atlantic from east to west, and Tom Campbell Black, who won the London to Melbourne Air Race in 1934, were members. Also on the roll are nineteen members killed during WWII, which saw the aerodrome converted into a military base for the duration. With a return to civil aviation, the Club thrived.

Recent renovations have emphasised the 'Out of Africa' style, perennially popular with safari camps. Even with workmen painting the ceiling and the the apron chronically overcrowded, it felt like an oasis of calm. "Could we do this at Bridge Pa?" Hamish asked. "Sure," I replied, though I'm not sure the rental accommodation will cover it.



This issue sees some new contributors, not all of whom needed their arms twisted! Contributions are very welcome; please consider sharing your flying experiences with your fellow members. Do get in touch if you'd like to discuss a possible story or the best approach to take... you'll find me at editor@aopa.nz

Enjoy your winter flying.

Anna Mackenzie, Editor 🇺🇸

Keep your charts current!



The 2025 VNC Chart Book will soon be available to purchase from the AOPA NZ website; charts effective from late November 2024.

Just log in to www.aopa.nz then go to Member Resources and select Member Benefits. As soon as the new edition is available, you'll see it listed and can click on 'Order your Chart book here'.

Nice cover pic by Aaron Murphy of Lionel Green's Auster J1 too!

Charitable Trust update

Work continues apace on the AOPA NZ Charitable Trust. With the Trust now legally registered and attendant formalities well underway, including setting up a bank account, the trustees' focus can now turn to achieving the goals of the Trust.

A draft strategic plan has been developed, to be finalised with the AOPA NZ Executive.

Steps are underway to establish an AOPA NZ Flying Scholarship. Chairperson Sid McAuley expects the Trust to invite applications later this year, with the expectation that an inaugural recipient will be announced early in 2025.

The Trust is now in a position to receive and bank donations. Watch this space!

Records broken at Oshkosh '24

AirVenture Oshkosh is an annual aviation mecca. The extravaganza this year drew plenty of New Zealanders, including a goodly cluster of our members, across an ocean and a continent – read Ian Sinclair's epic of getting there the hard way on page 24.

Described by organisers Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) as 'inspiring the future of aviation', the week-long event held at Wittman Regional Airport, Wisconsin this year hosted 686,000 people – the biggest turnout yet. Forty thousand of them camped on site.

As well as being a showcase of aircraft – over 2800, including 1200 vintage, nearly 1000 homebuilt and hundreds of warbirds – there are also forums, workshops and presentations. (But how do you choose??) This year also saw a record 861 commercial exhibitors covering every aspect of aviation you can imagine and a few more you probably can't.

Amidst the crowds and frenetic schedule, AOPA USA celebrated its 85th anniversary with a full-to-capacity party.

If the thought of joining the stream of international visitors to EAA AirVenture Oshkosh next year appeals, best start planning now. Dates are 21-27 July 2025.



Airpark living at Te Kowhai

Max Clear's original vision for Te Kowhai Airfield is, fifty years after he converted several farm paddocks into an airfield, finally coming to fruition, with sections now available on this landmark aviation development.

Rezoning, resource consents and compliance, significant investment in airfield upgrades and meticulous planning to support local biodiversity have all paved the way, driven by the passion and perseverance of the community.

"Te Kowhai Airpark is more than just a haven for aviation enthusiasts, it's also a vibrant community hub," says Paul Andrew, local resident, recreational pilot,

and one of the new owners. "Our vision is to create a community where flying is accessible to everyone, fostering a passion for aviation that can be enjoyed by all."

For more information about Te Kowhai Airpark and how to become part of this groundbreaking development, check out the inside back cover of this issue, visit www.tekowhaiairpark.co.nz or contact Paul Andrew on 021341261.

Welcome to new members:

Wayne Godfrey, Rangiora; Iain McPhail, Christchurch; Russell Moylan, Gisborne; Peter Thomas, Selwyn; Geoff Peake, Te Awamutu; James Butcher, Christchurch; Emily Blakey, Wanaka; Adrian Snow, Queenstown; Robert Llewellyn, Auckland; George Ivey, South Canterbury; Jonathan Mauchline, Wanganui; John Headifen, West Melton; Bill Day, Wanaka; Bruce Raubenheimer, Wanaka; Brendon Sheehan, Onehunga; Rod Willis, Auckland

Otago flying scholarships

Attention Otago current and future fliers! The AV & BJ Hogan trust provides three aviation scholarships a year in the Otago region, one for fixed wing pilot training, one for rotary wing pilot training, and one for CPL extension training, for example, an instructor rating or instrument training. The value of each scholarship is \$4000.

If you'd like further information about this opportunity to progress your flying dream, email ajhogan05@yahoo.co.nz



Vice-President's view

It has been a busy few months for the Executive Committee. Making submissions on District Council plans to protect our 'Freedom to Fly' has been front and centre of our increased activity in the advocacy space. For some reason, most councils have

chosen to include restrictions on private airfields in the recent round of district plan renewals. Nothing has changed in the RMA to cause this change in focus, but once one council includes a rule, others are inclined to follow suit.

I recently hit up a Selwyn District Council planning manager about why they had included more restrictive aviation rules in their latest draft plan. When I asked whether the more restrictive rules were in relation to complaints from the public about aviation noise, he admitted that there hadn't been any that he was aware of. "Why, then, the new rules?" I asked.

He replied that they were trying to achieve consistency across districts and that their new rules were replicas of those in Queenstown! The old 'cut and paste' plan writing process, instead of a considered analysis of local issues and solutions.

AOPA NZ has reasonable financial reserves which we always say we are saving for a rainy day. It's raining! Unfortunately there is no way of participating in the planning process without spending money on consultants and lawyers. The Executive Committee has targeted a number of draft plans containing anti-aviation rules in an attempt to turn the tide. While we understand that we cannot afford to fight every plan, we hope that success in the early rounds may influence other councils to follow suit. Another thing that can help is contributions from AOPA NZ members who stand to benefit from protecting the freedom to fly in their area. Member contributions were of great help in putting up a professional case in the recent Timaru District Council Long Term Plan hearings.

I have to admit to being concerned about the future of our advocacy work when Chris Hoffman stood down from the Executive Committee earlier this year, however John Evans, Neville Bailey and Rueben Hansen have more than filled his shoes and are doing a sterling job in this space.

SouthPAN

You may have seen a news story in July about the Southern Positioning Augmentation Network (SouthPAN) which will increase GPS accuracy from five to ten metres down to a few centimetres. The story indicated that SouthPAN came about through a collegial process between the New Zealand and Australian aviation, road, rail and agricultural sectors. In reality it was the result of a long-running and hard-fought battle between end users and their respective governments, with AOPA NZ and AOPA Australia as the prime movers.

Ian Andrews and Andrew Anderson (then Presidents of AOPA NZ and Australia respectively) first started pushing for an enhanced GPS system in 2012. Initially there was strong opposition from both government agencies and end users, including the NZ Ministry of Transport, Air New Zealand and Airways. Ian travelled to and from to Australia on multiple occasions, generally at his own expense, to make presentations to government and end user organisations. He acknowledges Simon Bridges, then Minister of Transport, as the first person in the New Zealand government to see the potential of the proposal and to get behind it. One by one the key players came on board, eventually reaching agreement in 2020 for the system that is now being installed. In that time the project costs and delivery dates ballooned, but we have the desired result. Ian also acknowledges the contributions of Phillip Reiss and David Bell (AOPA AU), John Macilree (NZ Ministry of Transport but also a pilot) and Matt Amos (LINZ), who, once onboard, became passionate advocates for the new system.

In the transport and agricultural sectors, SouthPAN is about increased accuracy and efficiency. In the aviation sector it's all about safety, something that all aviators have a stake in. Once complete, SouthPAN will greatly improve approach accuracy, particularly in the vertical dimension where 50 or 100 feet make a big difference in terms of glide slopes and missed approach decision points. This is achieved by using geometric altitude data rather than barometric data, which is prone to mechanical and human error (inputting an incorrect barometric pressure setting).

Ross Millichamp, Vice-President



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Advocating on your behalf

By Neville Bailey

Advocacy (Noun) 1. 1. Public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.

With a view to enhancing and protecting your flying, AOPA NZ's advocacy team has been busy dealing with a number of matters from many different angles.

Council long term plans and landing fees

Ashburton District Council gave notice that they intended to change landing fees on a weight-based formula with one fee charged every twenty minutes. They had already abolished the bulk annual landing fee, which essentially meant a very large increase for all participants.

The advocacy team drafted a proposal and submitted it to the Long Term Plan (LTP), campaigning for the bulk annual landing fee to be reintroduced and a more moderate itinerant landing fee to be applied to recreational users. We also encouraged other users, such as aero clubs, to contribute towards landing fees.

The Councillors listened, and after many days of deliberations announced their decision to adopt the AOPA recommended proposal. That was great news for locally based aircraft owners and pilots, and also for the 'frequent fliers' who use Ashburton Airfield, and who can now pay an annual \$200 for a year's worth of landings.

Motueka and Takaka airfields

Next we became aware, though one of our members, that Tasman District Council was intending to increase their landing fees to \$30 per landing, with no annual fee option.

The advocacy team submitted a proposal in support of local aviators, which Council subsequently voted to adopt. Both of these airfields have sealed runways, and a bulk annual landing fee of \$375 is now available.

Tokoroa airfield

South Waikato District Council had been discussing closing Tokoroa Airfield completely in an effort to raise money. This airfield is home to a number of non-aviation clubs as well as the local aero club.

Once again the advocacy team drafted a proposal and submitted in support of the local community. The thrust of our argument in this case is that airfields, much like parks and reserves, are there for community use and benefit, rather than being a disposable asset that Councils can sell to developers as a means of topping up their coffers. We are currently awaiting the outcome.

Pukaki airfield

As with the above airfields, the advocacy team submitted a proposal to the Council LTP. Our main drive in this case was the introduction of a bulk annual landing fee for the local recreational aviation community. (Commercial operators will have direct discussions with airfield management.)

We are awaiting the outcome of our proposal.

Airfield ground rents

One of the advocacy team members is challenging the Ashburton District Council on a proposed ground rent increase of 75% over three years. This increase appears to be based largely on a report authored by Colliers (a commercial real estate services company).

At this stage we have obtained an independent ground rent report from a valuer, which suggests the ground rent was already set above market for the previous three years.

There has been a theme at airfields around New Zealand of local councils attempting to increase revenue in the form of increased rents and landing fees. Commonly, the Council obtains a valuation report that quotes rent comparisons from nearby industrial areas, and in one case shipping ports, the argument

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being that this supports such activities reflect the ‘best use’ of the ground.

Our counter argument is that ‘best use’ should not be applied to a recreational facility.

Landing fee database

AOPA has compiled a landing fee database, with the intention of maintaining a resource that will be updated annually.

The information has been a huge help with writing our proposals for LTP submissions. We have been able to quote actual landing fees across the country, and additionally the data can be broken down according to, for example, grass runways vs sealed runways, availability of passenger terminals, etc.

Hangar ground rental database

Thank you to all who contributed via the online survey. This has enabled us to compile a list of ground rents at airfields across New Zealand.

Fire and Emergency New Zealand

Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) had proposed to levy insured aircraft owners, a category of levy that had previously been exempt.

We submitted, albeit at late notice given we were blindsided, alongside many of our counterparts, enquiring what resources and costs FENZ have incurred through aviation related issues, why the aircraft levy (uncapped, so purely proportional to aircraft value) was proposed to be more than almost everyone pays on their motor vehicle, which is capped at \$40, and why no costing analysis was provided.

We additionally sent a letter to Minister van Velden, and understand that ongoing discussions are being had with our aviation counterparts and various government departments.

Civil Aviation Authority

When the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) intends to change rules, they publish a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM). This is a process where anyone can submit, with the information readily available on the CAA website.

The NPRM published in February and subsequent process has been nothing short of a cluster. It proposed to prohibit cost sharing on a DL9 medical and prohibit cost sharing on an aircraft with more than six certified seats, along with a few other features of interest to the training environment (like aerobatics within trial flights).

Following round one of consultation after we had submitted, the CAA “identified an administrative error in the preamble of the NPRM relating to the criteria for an issue to be included in an Assorted Issues Rule”. So next came Revision 1, published in July 2024, with the first document published having no redress for the issues we and many others submitted on. The docket clerk of the CAA was contacted, who was able to produce a new copy in light of the table of contents needing to be updated. NPRM 23-01 Revision 1 removes reference to restrictions on cost sharing with those holding a DL9 and other features, welcomed by the likes of training institutions.

There are other issues to work through, with those being submitted on, as well as aspects of the NPRM 23-01 Revision 1 that we support.

District Plans

We are busy submitting on District Plans (either Plan Changes or Proposed District Plans), and, as at the time of this publication, seeking relief from the Timaru District Council with their Proposed District Plan at the up and coming hearings.

We need to keep working on issues with District Councils, given the collusion seemingly occurring with consultant planners across territorial authorities, and the possibility that rules proposed by territorial authorities are not applied through the process defined by the Resource Management Act.

AOPA’s Advocacy efforts are seeing some good results, especially in holding decision-makers (i.e. civil servants) to account, but that does not come without a lot of time from our volunteers, especially when efforts are required to correct the decision makers on the process. We thank those who feed us information, support our collective cause, and co-fund legal resources to take on the battles when we cannot do it alone. 🐟

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Omarama fly-in

By Ellie Keehan

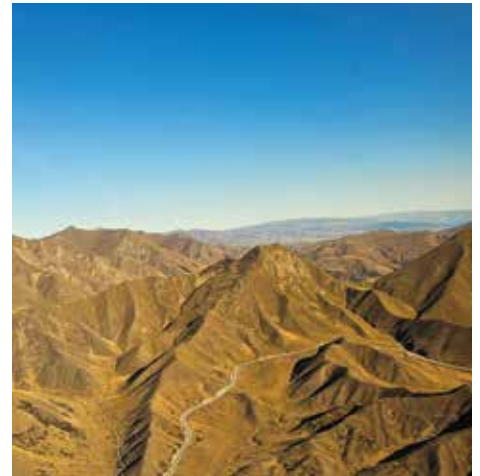


Over the last weekend in April I was very lucky to be a part of the AOPA fly-in to Omarama. With light wind and blue skies, it proved the perfect weekend to be flying.

Having trained through a flight academy, strip flying was a completely new experience for me. Sitting next to Dave Robinson in his Europa, I got to see what 'real flying' really was. As well as being totally exciting, it was fantastic to see the

skills I'd been taught in the classroom adapted to suit the quirks and challenges of each individual and unique strip.

The views throughout the flights were incredible, and my phone was soon filled with pictures of this stunning weekend.



At Omarama, Ian and the team were very welcoming and efficient, and I'm confident that an awesome time was had by everyone present. I'm also incredibly grateful for the opportunity to tag along. I thoroughly recommend it! 🛩️

ODF at Ranfurly

By Murray Paterson

The morning started with a minus three degree frost and high overcast, with the weather north of Waitaki River threatening to deteriorate as the day went on, and Taieri Valley also marginal.

That's exactly how it played out. Claire had a big batch of scones to go with tea or coffee on arrival, and a big pot of soup to supplement lunches.

Some of the Cromwell-based attendees had shifted their aircraft to Alexandra in advance due to morning fog over the previous three days, however Cromwell proved clear while Alexandra experienced a good frost with little thaw until later in the morning. The Ranfurly Hospital paddock is ideal for most aircraft, offering plenty of space, and is handy enough for a wander into the village for a coffee.

Attendees included Roger Simpson with his father in an R22; Carlton Campbell in a Citabria; Mike and Kate

Evans in an RV6; Don Grant and Ivan in a Piper Pacer; Gavin and Mandy Wills in a Piper Cub; Kynan, Kristan, daughter Kaitlyn and Harry Simpson in a Cessna 206; Gerald Harrex and Jeremy Browne in an Alpi 300; Lawrence Mathewson in an R22; Shaun Gilbertson and Rod Key in a Cessna180.

Nine other aircraft pulled the pin early or couldn't get to Ranfurly due to weather at their end.

For those who made it, it proved a very enjoyable day and a great catch up was had; proof of concept for the one day fly-in, and great for an excuse to give the plane a run. 🛩️



The Porterfield story

By Ross Macdonald



In February 2020 I attended the annual RAANZ fly-in at Feilding in the Manawatu. While there I noticed a wonderful looking aircraft in the hangar beside the club house, a small two-seat tandem taildragger with a five cylinder radial engine. I'd never seen anything like it.

It was a 1935 Porterfield 'Flyabout' with 70hp, five cylinder LeBlond radial engine.

Stan Hyde wheeled it out and started it. He had owned it for a few years, he said, but had done very little flying in it. When he offered me the chance to fly it, I jumped at the opportunity and, after a bit of a briefing in which he emphasized its lack of performance and ground hugging tendencies, I taxied out to the sealed runway at Feilding.

I chose the seal rather than the more friendly grass because the seal was longer and his warning about lack of performance was ringing in my ears. Within fifty metres of the take-off roll, I realised I'd made a bad choice. The seal at Feilding is quite narrow and the view through the tiny windscreen and around the circular cowling is very limited. The dance of the feet followed and by the time I got the tail up to improve the view, we'd done several weaves, luckily none too severe, and shortly after we became airborne.

Once flying, she was a delight and I flew around the local area for fifteen minutes or so before carrying out a successful landing, this time on the grass. What a little honey. I was in love.

In the ensuing years of covid and lockdowns, no further opportunity to fly the Porterfield presented itself, but that flight stayed in my mind and I always looked in on her whenever I visited Feilding. She never flew again, although Stan used to start her up occasionally.

Roll on 2022 and Stan began hinting that he might relinquish ownership to the right person for the right deal. Stan is a Norton motorcycle fan, and I had a 1976 Norton Commando 850. With a cash difference, very generously from Stan's side, the deal was made. On 12 March 2022, I trailed the bike to Feilding and flew ZK-POR back to Waipukurau, this time taking off from the grass.

Two years on, I have put just under 20 hours on her. I have yet to take a passenger. Two reasons. First, it takes some flexibility to manoeuvre oneself into the front seat and the back seat is worse. The 1930s stature must have been smaller than the modern day one. Second, conditions haven't suited it. It's not a STOL machine. The 70hp is adequate, but only just. At NZYP the climb out to the north is peppered with obstacles for a flat climbing aircraft, and we seemed to have been



in a northerly wind pattern for ages. On top of that we've had the two wettest winters for many years, which has seen the usable length of our runways considerably reduced. It will happen though.

It's a wonderful aircraft to stooge around the local area on a nice day. It cruises at around 80mph at 1900rpm. On one of my flights to Hastings a southerly got up for my return and everyone, including trucks, were passing me on SH2. On a longer trip one may be more inclined to carry a calendar than a watch.

The level attitude at cruise affords little forward vision. The upper curve of the cowl sits right on top of the horizon. Gentle S turns are the order of the day to

keep a good lookout in front. I wouldn't describe the controls as harmonised. The elevator and rudder are sensitive and effective but the ailerons are 'high geared', in that only a small movement of the stick is required to effect some roll. The ailerons are rather large and slotted, which makes her slightly ungainly in roll. The stall is benign and conventional with little showing on the ASI apart from the manufacturer's name.

Approach speed seems comfortable at 65mph as any slower and visibility over the nose is limited. The speed washes off very quickly in the flare and she easily settles into a three-pointer. The undercarriage uses a bunch of rubber doughnuts being squeezed together to afford a semblance of shock absorption, but I could count on the fingers of one hand the number of landings achieved with zero bounce or skip. Once down, the task is to keep straight using only peripheral vision. The heel brakes serve as little more than a convenient footrest, however future fettling may improve them.

Porterfield history

Designed by Noel Hockaday, the aircraft was built by students at Wyandotte High School as the Wyandotte Pup. Porterfield Aircraft Corporation of Kansas City recognised the craft's potential and bought the design rights, also taking on Hockaday as works manager and designer. The Pup was developed, appearing in 1935 as the Porterfield Model 35 Flyabout, a braced high-wing-monoplane with a fixed tailskid landing gear and room for two. It was originally powered by a 60hp (45kW) LeBlond 5D radial engine. Variants later appeared with different engine installations, including a deluxe model, the De Luxe Sport. Over 240 aircraft were built.

LeBlond Aircraft Engine Corporation was a small engine manufacturer incorporated in 1928, originally a subsidiary of the R. K. LeBlond Machine Tool Company in Cincinnati, Ohio, a manufacturer of metal machining lathes. In December 1937, to offset a large tax liability incurred by the parent company, LeBlond Engines was sold at a significant loss to Raymond Rearwin. The purchase was a perfect fit for Rearwin whose company, Rearwin Airplanes, was one of the largest

users of LeBlond engines, and gave him a well-accepted radial engine to use on his designs. Rearwin renamed the company Ken-Royce Engine Company after his two sons.

An interesting aspect of the LeBlond engine is that there is no pressurised oil feed to the overhead rocker gear. The rocker shafts have grease nipples which are greased with special low melting point grease and the same grease is used to fill the cavities above and around the valve springs. This I do around every five hours of operation.

My example, ZK-POR, started life in the USA as N14480. It was imported into New Zealand from Florida by well-known South Island aviator, Trevor Collins of Omaka, sharing a container with beautiful Fairchild 24 C8C, ZK-ABE, which Trevor also imported and rebuilt. POR had been restored in the USA some years before so required just assembly and NZ certification. She didn't do many hours in Trevor's care, (probably spending his time on the Fairchild) and was sold to Stan in 2015.

As Stan had a Microlight certificate, ZK-POR was assigned to the Microlight Category, which fitted well with a MAUW of 1310 lbs (594kg), but he also did little flying in her. She came to me with about twelve hours of flying since arriving in New Zealand.

The research I've done suggests that two Porterfield Pups were imported into New Zealand in the 1930s, both going to the Hawke's Bay & East Coast Aero Club in Hastings. One of these, ZK-AFS, was destroyed in a hangar fire some years later while the other, ZK-AFT, was sold to the New Plymouth Aero Club before being impressed by the Air Force during the World War II. Upon return to the civil register, she became ZK-AHJ, and now resides in the Ashburton Aviation Museum, but has had the radial engine replaced with a flat four, spoiling the original lines, in my opinion.

I mentioned in the opening paragraph that I'd never seen a Porterfield before. A photo of the HB&EC Club's one, AFS, adorns the wall of the clubhouse at the Central Hawke's Bay Aero Club, where I spend most of my time, and will have been hanging there for all of the 48 years that I have been a member. 🐦



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Mid-winter privilege

By Steve Clarke



It was a privilege to join my third AOPA NZ Haast Winter Fly-in this year. The stars aligned and I was able to wrangle time off work to indulge in this pleasure. I decided to head over after lunch on the Wednesday and was rewarded with clear skies and a super high pressure system that had me dialing in 1045 on my altimeter.

Departing from Waimate in my Alpi 200 (yes, microlight), I made a bee line for Mt Cook. Circling the peak at 13,000ft, the thought occurred to me 'I hope there aren't any mountaineers perched at the top being annoyed by this mosquito buzzing them'. Following the Fox Glacier down, I dropped into Fox for the world's best pizza at Café Neve and caught up with fellow Alpi owner Steve Lyttle (Steve was actually flying his Carbon Cub). We headed south and arrived into Haast with ease. After fueling up, Doris was tied down and put to bed.



The Heartland Hotel was welcoming and after checking in and a wee rest it was over to the restaurant to meet old and new friends and catch up on those aviation stories that get shared at these events.

Thursday dawned with the high pressure system still lurking around and we were presented with a crisp, clear, still morning. The buffet breakfast, including the nicest bacon I've had in a long time, set me up for the day. Ian Sinclair gathered the masses together and briefed us for the day. Groups were organised on aircraft and pilot capability and I found myself in a gaggle of five being led by Kevin Anderson. We consisted of two 172s, a Maule, an Archer and Doris. Kevin identified a number of farm strips and it was agreed we'd head north then make our way back.

Our first stop was a farm strip called Paringa. The strip is about 2nm east of the scenic Lake Paringa. It's a long narrow strip that eased us into the groove of strip landing. A quick chat once we'd all landed safely then Kevin talked us through our next destination, Bowater.

The strip is located on the edge of the Whataroa River about five miles upstream



Bowater farm road strip at the edge of the Whataroa river; inset: Alpi all set to go. Lower left: Following the Fox Glacier into town.

from the coast. We tracked the coast north, scooted around the edge of the Southern Alps MBZ, then headed north-east over Lake Wahapo to land on a solid internal farm road with a slight kink in it. We were greeted by a mob of cows and a fertiliser delivery truck, all most likely wondering what was going on. Our aircraft were backdropped by the snow-capped Southern Alps: how lucky are we to be able to indulge in this passion?

Next on the list was a reclaimed stopbank on the edge of the Pourea River. In less than ten minutes we were on the ground, where Kevin shared photos from a previous fly-in prior to the stopbank being washed away and reclaimed. Work to shore up the bank was still underway, with a lone Moxy carting rock on the river edge. It was looking like our gaggle of five was impeding the Moxy's path so we were soon airborne again heading for Scully Road.

Another short flight south and we



arrived into a very well maintained dairy farm strip just west of Whataroa known as Scully Road. The farm owners were there to greet us, unsurprisingly given they have recently built a lovely RV7. A few more stories swapped, world problems solved, and it was time to head over to Okarito for a packed lunch and coffee.

Okarito is one of those 'must do' strips if you're ever cruising the South Island. Situated on the southern edge of Lake Okarito, it is the quintessential West Coast village. There's a mix of modern houses and original baches. It really does feel as if time stood still in the seventies as you wander from the strip down the main street. This is both the attraction and the charm of the place. That, coupled with a narrow strip with a bend in it, fickle winds and having to avoid a bird sanctuary makes for a fun approach from the north, ticking all the boxes to challenge your flying skills.

Hidden at the northern end of the village is Okarito Kayaks. As the name suggests they hire kayaks and take tours on the lake. The hidden gem of the business is an espresso coffee machine! Gemma and Baz, who own the business, are

truly welcoming hosts. Hearing through the grapevine that we were coming, Baz made sure he was around to ply us with his delicious coffee, share a few stories and gain a break from the odd jobs he was avoiding on the house.

Fed and watered we set off for Fox Glacier and an ice cream. Fox is a challenging strip, land uphill, take-off downhill, and if you're going to go around do it sooner rather than later as the Southern Alps are not far from the threshold of runway 09. At 640m the length is good but the 3.3 slope and the alps to the east do make it intimidating. A short walk to the village and ice creams all round. Ian Sinclair left the group at this point and headed east, hoping like hell the wife hadn't noticed he'd been gone. The gaggle of four headed back to Haast with just a flyover of the Karangarua strip as it was a little rough for this group of sensible flyers!

Dinner and a catch up sharing the adventures of the flying day rounded off what had been one of the best flying days I've experienced in a while.

The familiar clear but somewhat breezy skies welcomed us to Friday. Another

*Above: Getting into the groove at Paringa strip;
Left: Great coffee at Okarito Kayaks, an easy stroll from the 'must do' strip of Okarito.*

hearty breakfast and we said our good-byes, and just like that the Haast airstrip was left to the mob of cows grazing the northern side.

Wanting to round out the trip with a bang I headed south down to Milford for that \$100 coffee. A stunning fly into the Sound, I landed just as the ice had melted. Coffee had, it was up over the McKinnon Pass with Te Anau as a fuel stop. The layer of low cloud that had hung around Te Anau was still lingering so it was a diversion to the Airspread strip at Mossburn. A venison pie at Bracken Lodge and a top-up of fuel, then it was home to Waimate.

This was my third Haast fly-in and I'm extremely grateful to the organisers, fellow aviators and weather gods. These fly-ins add to my flying experience, taking me safely outside my comfort zone at times, but in the knowledge that I have experienced and capable folk with me who make it feasible. It is a privilege denied to many. Events like these make me reflect on how good it is to be alive! 🐦

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Magic days: Haast/Fiordland

By John Parsons and Richard Lee

As guests of Jamie Gunson from Hawke's Bay in Cessna DXA, we recently attended our first ever AOPA Fly-in, arriving at Haast late on Wednesday afternoon, 10 July, to a bustling, warm and hospitable Haast Hotel, filled with aviators from across New Zealand.

The weather forecast over the next few days was primo, with a widespread high-pressure system across the South Island. The vibe was infectious: things were set for a great day in the air tomorrow!

On Thursday we flew south with the Cessna group, landing first on the beach at Big Bay, where low tide ensured a great 'strip', then on to Milford Sound.

To say that flying into Milford in a small aeroplane is spectacular is an understatement. We were gob-smacked and treated to quiet, clear bluebird skies and had Milford airport almost to ourselves.

While there we were lucky to be able to accompany AOPA NZ President Sue Kronfeld, and a few other AOPA members, into the Milford Control Tower for the presentation of the AOPA NZ 'Most Helpful Control Tower' award, accepted on behalf of the duty controllers by Perry Barr and Matt Horsman. The presentation took Perry and Matt by surprise, and it was a buzz for everyone present to

witness this recognition of great service.

The day progressed with multiple small remote strip landings – Martins Bay, Alabaster, Gorge River, then eventually back to Haast. Another lovely evening and dinner at the hotel with much time devoted to the sharing of the day's adventures.

Friday began with much consideration of the changing weather across the country as all prepared to fly home. Jamie became 'man of the moment' with two saving starts for other flyers which enabled them to exit the west coast and head home.

Our trip home delivered more magic moments from Aoraki, the Southern Alps and a misty flight over the North Island to Bridge Pa and home – capped off with a celebratory beer and grateful thanks to our top pilot for these magic days.

Why would anyone want to travel overseas when the best is on our doorstep? Thank you Jamie, DXA and AOPA NZ. 🐾



While in Milford Sound on a perfect blue-sky day, the fly-in's Cessna group supported AOPA NZ President Sue Kronfeld in presenting the 2024 'Most Helpful Tower' Award to Milford Tower, accepted on behalf of the duty controllers by Perry Barr and Matt Horsman.

Teamwork on the DC-3

You may recall last edition's instalment had the JEM Aviation crew heading off to Wanaka on a road trip to get DC-3 ZK-JGB ready for a ferry flight... Oddly enough, as I am writing this, I am about to head back to Wanaka to show some interested buyers over her.

Backing the truck up, the inspection went very well, and I was pleasantly surprised to find the aeroplane in much better condition than I had hoped.

The team had a pleasant road trip south and we all convened at the aeroplane on Monday morning. We were very lucky to hit a warm patch of weather, and this was to serve us well. The boys all got stuck in with two on each engine, two on the airframe and me as general dogsbody! Seven people toiling away on the one aeroplane was a refreshing experience and we were really able to power through the work, aided by the beautiful weather.

Birds had got into the carburettor intakes and the nests were packed as tightly as a hay bale! Once cleared, and other rudimentary inspections carried out, the engines were ready for hot-oil priming, and on Tuesday we were able to fire up both engines.

A dodgy wire in the left-hand engine booster coil meant that engine proved reluctant to start but, once rectified, both engines ran beautifully, with all performance specifications being met. Hot leak-down checks were also carried out,

with no significant change from the last annual. The only fault we had was an in-operative CHT gauge, which was easily traced to a burnt-out wire found too close to an exhaust.

Meanwhile, Marty concentrated on the fabric flight controls. Birds had pecked holes in some of these, including a couple of significant holes with birds' nests inside. Once cleaned out, the elevator ailerons were patched up and doped. He completed this more quickly than we'd expected and, as the weather was so good, was able to give them a light sand and get a good number of coats of clear and silver dope on the top surfaces to really bring them back to life. Although we had re-covered the rudder a few years back, the flight controls were something I had been really concerned about, thinking they might even need a full re-bag.

As we were so far ahead of the game, Wednesday was spent on the airframe and we were even able to get undercarriage retraction checks carried out, which I hadn't expected. As the owner had the aircraft jacks on site and the ground was good and hard, it would have been silly

not get these checks out of the way and satisfy as much of the annual inspection checklist as possible.

Thursday was ANZAC Day and the weather was on the turn. Being so far ahead of where I thought we'd be, we took the day off. Friday saw a good dump of snow on the hills and notably cooler temperatures. We took the opportunity to give the belly of the aeroplane a really good clean and, with nothing for it, we packed up and the team got on the road back to Blenheim, via a sight-seeing trip up the West Coast.

We left the DC-3 pretty much ready for a ferry flight back to Blenheim in order to carry out the final parts of the annual inspection and install ADS-B. This has not yet happened, as getting two rated pilots who could convene in Wanaka at the same time has proved difficult.

In the meantime, the owner has put the aeroplane up for sale and, as I write, there is a very keen Australian buyer interested. If the sale goes through it will be sad to see her go... we seem to be losing all sorts of aeroplanes to Australia at the moment! 🛩️



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



Jay with a team of NMIT students whose week of 'deployment' saw the DC-3 back in shipshape condition.

Making the right decisions

By Stu Haynes



I am a 350hr PPL and own a Cherokee6-300, aviating about 100hrs per annum. Based in New Plymouth, we love cross country flying. In the past 18 months my highlights have been Cape Reinga and northern North Island, Milford Sound, Kaikoura, Wanaka, Southern Alps and Great Barrier day trips.

I also really enjoy caring for my aircraft. Each year I save up for a project. In the past these have included ADS-B In, Out and communications panel; this year I am embarking on autopilot installation. I also plan to study towards IFR, and have been doing the Sportys.com online ground course. The study helps me get prepared for flight training as I learn the language, terminology and experiences in advance of hitting the skies.

The following story, about travelling from New Plymouth to Gisborne for a work meeting, illustrates the need for good decision-making on the wing.

With the option of an 8hr drive or a 1.5hr flight, the decision to fly was pretty easy! Regularly weather watching for the week prior, I was excited to see a small front clear the way for my NP-GS route. With a wee tailwind I made the trip on a blue sky

day and got to my destination in 1.47hrs. The route I chose wasn't the most direct, but it overflew some familiar strips, Taumarunui and Turangi.

There were three aircraft active on Gisborne tower frequency and I was given a hold at a VFR waypoint. I completed a left-hand orbit but still didn't have the aerodrome in sight. I was to be number two, and was asked to confirm sighting. I was mid orbit, facing the opposite direction to the field, and started to feel the need to say 'Aerodrome in sight' immediately so I sounded like a grown-up pilot, but I took a breath and responded, 'I am mid left-hand orbit over XX and am new to the area, looking for traffic'.

The traffic was a training touch and go; I sighted them, reported such and then was cleared to land.

I had my work meeting, caught up with some awesome

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coasties that night and after dinner did the usual APP check over Preflight, Met Flight and YR.no (my favourite civil weather app). It was looking a bit gnarly for the following day with high winds forecast. I rang home to tell my wife that it was looking marginal and I might be stuck a night or even two. Once I said it out loud, I felt at peace with accepting a possible NOGO.

The next day I had a good breakfast, did my IMSAFE checks and confirmed I was good to fly. Next I checked the weather apps. My favourite route, back the way I'd come, was showing strong winds, low cloud and rain. An alternate route was to get to Paraparamu before lunch when high winds were coming in. My parents live on the Kapiti coast, which made it a viable option. I checked Napier, calmer, though the entire route had some good winds at 2000ft and above, so I did a plan to remain seaward at low level away from the wind over the hills.

I tracked 5nm seaward at 2000ft, down to 1000ft, up to 4000ft, and just couldn't find any still air. It was getting lumpy but was still okay for no passenger flying. The plan was to go via Porongahau then across to Levin and down to Paraparamu where I would stay the night with Mum and Dad.

On overheading Porongahau I was getting really beaten up, and heading towards wind-making country (power wind turbines everywhere). I thought better of it and made a bee-line for Waipukurau, despite never having been there.

She was pretty lumpy and I was ready to get my feet on the ground. I did an overhead join, no one else was flying... and there was a full sock 90 degree cross-wind. I joined on the downwind and made a beautiful cross-wind landing, the strongest I've ever taken on, so gave myself a little high five.

Rolled up to the clubhouse and tied the plane down with the help of Oli, who was doing some training work before heading to Aus chasing Ag work.

Oli dropped me to the closest motel (at the end of the field) and I checked in. Next I wandered into town and found a café to celebrate my awesome cross-wind landing and reflect on my decision-making with a chocolate milkshake (full cream and in the genuine kiwi giraffe cup!).

With time on my hands I decided to look up AOPA members in Waipukurau, and found Richard and Wendy Bradley. I dropped Richard a message saying 'You don't know me but I'm a member,' etc. Within five minutes Richard had picked me up and we set off to do some farm chores. Being a townie, I love the opportunity to hang out in utes, talking cattle and getting shown the rural life.

Along the way Richard sized me up, and invited me to stay. At the motel they refunded me (because I was with Richard). There was even space in the hangar to accommodate my Cherokee6 for the night, now how cool is that?

A wonderful afternoon and evening of great conversation and beautiful food prepared by Wendy ensued. In the end I stayed a second night due to weather, but got myself home to New Plymouth eventually.

People often ask what they get for their AOPA NZ membership fee. There are many things, but perhaps the best is friendship, camaraderie, and such truly unexpected and heartwarming hospitality. 🐦

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Autopilot considerations

Events near Picton in June this year have seen people speculating about the causes of a significant maritime incident – one that should also some self-questioning on the part of aviators.

How does this relate to us in private aviation? How would we handle a situation that wasn't going quite as planned?

Automation is by no means a bad thing; today's autopilots, with associated navigation equipment, can greatly reduce cockpit workload and help pilots fly with precision and accuracy. However, pilots must be keenly aware of each automation system's capabilities and limitations, and the potential pitfalls.

Reducing pilot workload gives us capacity to achieve tasks that don't necessarily involve keeping the aircraft 'upright'. Pilot workload management is a huge topic in itself, and the appropriate use of an autopilot is one tool in the toolbox.

A few questions to ask:

Why use autopilot? How should we use the autopilot? When and where should we use the autopilot? What does the autopilot do? How do I interact with my autopilot? What discipline is required when using the autopilot?

At a basic level, autopilots are designed to improve safe and efficient aircraft operation, regardless of aircraft type. Like any good computer, an autopilot is designed to do exactly what is programmed. Unfortunately, this is not always what we think we've programmed.

A well-programmed, cross-checked, monitored and executed operation is a symphony to behold. But, as with anything, things don't always go to plan. Stuff changes, and as trained pilots, it's our job to have the tools to handle the scenario when that happens.

One challenging situation is when you find yourself saying, 'What's it doing now?'

If we don't know what the autopilot is doing, it can cause a significant increase in workload, and in some cases introduce major hazards to safe flight when scenarios are misunderstood or mishandled.

Let's go back to basics. Basic, manual, flying skills are the basis of every flight. Anticipation of upcoming events is vital, whether using an autopilot or not. As a pilot, it's critical that we monitor the aircraft into the desired flight path, with the desired energy level.

These skills all decline with a lack of practice, no matter the size of aircraft. As with so many things, competency and currency are key.

Competency starts with knowledge. Knowing your autopilot requires training, a good portion of which can be done yourself – but not in the air, in the 'heat of battle'. Don't learn to fight, in the fight. Preparation is key.

Learning the modes is important

How do you confirm a mode is selected? What to expect once engaged? One of the biggest traps is pushing the A/P button, but not confirming the engagement. This can happen in any size of aircraft and with any selection. It's critical that we confirm what we select, or nobody is flying.

Know how to increase or decrease the level of automation. Increasing might be engaging a NAV or VNAV mode after being in a heading or pitch mode. Decreasing automation is moving back down again to a manual selection of heading or vertical speed from a computed navigation mode.

As a pilot using automation, the trick is to know when to choose to increase or decrease the level of automation, and to confirm. Most systems have some type of annunciation of these modes, and this quickly becomes the most important information in the cockpit. Nothing should distract you from checking

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the selection. Inappropriate mode engagement by the pilot can lead to unintended consequences and loss of situational awareness. If the workload of using the autopilot is such that its use is reducing your capacity, it's time to learn your autopilot better, and to spend more time practising.

Preflight preparation is important, IFR or VFR

Navigation relies on good data. Organisations put a huge resource into the integrity of the databases in commercial aircraft, especially for modern IFR/PBN operations. Although not necessarily as arduous, the same discipline needs to be used by private operators, and applies to VFR operations using charts (gotta be current) or Electronic Flight Bags (EFBs). And it's not just the maps. EFB AIP data also needs to be current. Put simply, an app like OzRunways or Avplan is no use if out of date.

Programming any device is far easier on the ground than in the air. Preflight is physical with programming, and mental with anticipation.

Data errors due to navigation programming and entry errors (mistakes like typing errors) have potential for the ultimate consequence. Ever used the wrong hemisphere by accident? It's just one example of an easy mistake to make. There was once a Convair that landed in Gisborne with just a few cups of fuel in the tanks due to exactly this problem. The crew were lucky to have identified the issue and taken action to divert to the nearest airport.

Once airborne, changes by ATC requiring a departure or approach change are challenging, whether VFR or IFR. The discipline of data cross-checking to avoid the possibility of incorrect data entry is critical, despite the time-critical situation. This can increase workload, and is a pinch point for management and prioritising.

Abnormal situations, or situations where changes need to be made, are wonderful times to have an autopilot engaged. With a confirmed mode selected, our trajectory can be monitored periodically while achieving other tasks, such as running a checklist, reprogramming a GPS, talking to ATC or other aircraft. Just like hand-flying, a decision to reduce pressure by putting the aircraft in an area of reduced workload and a more manageable energy state will help increase our capacity.

Unfortunately some abnormal situations cannot be handled by an autopilot. This can lead to uncommanded disengagement. What do we do now? **Fly the plane.**

There will be a surprise or startle effect, and this instantly changes the workload and stress levels. It's important to take a breath and keep things upright.

Unanticipated changes to autopilot modes can be difficult to understand and manage. To recover the situation, one option is to manually override the autopilot. Another option is to keep the autopilot engaged but reduce the level of automation to a selected level, i.e., change from a nav or approach function to a selected heading mode.

An autopilot failure may be difficult to understand in the heat of the moment, and to gain/regain control when it disconnects can be a challenge. There might be limited alarms or warnings, or contradictory information. It is imperative that we know our system, and the 'automation downgrades' we're being informed

about. Autopilots often use different interfaces (visual and oral) to give the pilot information about what is occurring. Autopilot Dependency is when a pilot operates an aircraft with an autopilot, but they are only fully confident controlling that aircraft when all the functions of the autopilot are used, and often more confident than hand-flying. This lack of confidence usually stems from a combination of two factors:

- Inadequate knowledge of the autopilot systems;
- Lack of manual flying and aircraft management skills.

Several safety issues arise from automation dependency:

- affected pilots are reluctant to reduce the level of automation to deal with situations that arise, be they routine or abnormal;
- if automation is no longer available, there can be a tendency to use partial autopilot systems (that might be only partially understood) rather than reverting to manual flight controls;
- pilots don't stay competent and current in normal hand-flying operations, often resulting in a loss of situational awareness from task saturation, referred to as 'falling behind the aircraft'.

The solution is not black and white. It's a fine balance between using the automatics for the benefits they offer in terms of workload management, and choosing to fly manually or with partial automation to maintain competence, currency and confidence using the same manual flying skills developed early in a pilot's aviation journey.

Tips and best practices

- Ensure the autopilot system is understood at the level selected
- Think ahead in preflight and during flight; check data and programming
- Identify and use the appropriate level of automation
- Keep disciplined with active monitoring
- Take corrective action if things are not going as expected
- Know all the ways to quickly disconnect the automation
- Practise manual flying for currency, competence and confidence.

Autopilots are fantastic, and should be respected not feared. Safe flying. 🛩️

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So what matters to us in NZ?

IAOPA World Congress, Washington DC, USA

By Chris Hoffman



General Aviation leaders from around the globe gathered in Washington DC in May. Sue Kronfeld, President AOPA NZ, and Chris Hoffman, Advocacy Representative were in attendance.

Photos: IAOPA

The need for an international body to advocate for GA isn't obvious to many pilots and aircraft owners in New Zealand. AOPA NZ belongs to the International Council of AOPAs (IAOPA) which, since 1962, has had a presence at the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), where it has been able to ensure GA is not forgotten when the rules are being made that govern international aviation. Just about every rule change that we've seen in the last twenty years has had its roots in the Standards and Recommended Practices of ICAO.

The keynote opening address at the congress was given by FAA Administrator Michael Whittaker, who is a GA pilot himself. Mr Whittaker spoke of the momentum lost during the Covid years, as well as pressures from the loss of air traffic controllers and global issues, including runway incursions and manufacturing quality issues affecting the airline sector. He pointed to the success of FAA's engagement with AOPA, especially in ADS-B and ongoing effective work on the Eliminate Aviation Gasoline Lead (EAGLE), and Modernization of Special Airworthiness Certificates initiative (MOSAIC) programs.

Improving GA safety

The first area of successful engagement he mentioned is one we are familiar with in New Zealand, the ADS-B program. This was run through CAA NZ with a very generous rebate system to help GA aeroplane owners install both the ADS-B in and out capability. The installation of ADS-B has been promoted throughout the world and IAOPA has been actively involved. There are still issues with it here (areas of the country not served with ADS-B receivers, for instance) but the ability to be aware of traffic well before you can visibly see it should lead to improvements in safety.

Transitioning to unleaded aviation fuel

The second area Mr Whittaker spoke of is the problem of removing lead from aviation fuel. This goes back a decade and progress has been very slow. In New Zealand we are seemingly a long way from having unleaded fuel available to us. We heard from four key figures – Bruce DeCleene, Director of the office of senior technical experts at FAA, Curt Castagna, President NATA and industry co-chair of EAGLE, George Braly, Head of Engineering at General Aviation Modifications Inc (GAMI) and Chris D'Acosta, CEO at Swift Fuels.

Bruce DeCleene opened with FAA efforts to remove lead from Avgas, beginning with FAA's PAFI (Piston Aviation Fuel Initiative) Program, established in 2014 to support the testing and evaluation of UL Avgas. Its goal was to identify a drop-in replacement for 100 octane Low Lead Avgas (100LL), the current fuel. A target date of no later than the end of 2030 has been established for the widespread introduction of unleaded fuel.

Curt Castagna, NATA CEO, outlined the pressure airports are under to remove leaded fuels, particularly in California and Colorado.

The volume of Avgas needed in the USA is 180million gallons per year, which is a very small amount in the large gasoline market in the USA. It is also a small percentage of the amount of JetA1 fuel used. To be useful, the new fuel needs to be commercially available, match an accepted publicised standard, and have an acceptable risk profile to satisfy the insurance companies. It was noted that while there is a standard for 100LL, there is not for any of the 100 octane unleaded fuels.

George Braly from GAMI spoke of the very slow progress made by the petroleum industry to solve this problem. His

company tested their new fuel formula from 2002 through 2008 then in October 2009 filed a patent and began working with FAA for a Supplemental Type Certificate (STC). The GAMI 100UL was approved by FAA for use in September 2022 for every piston spark ignition engine in the fleet. Next step is for GAMI to work with OEMs and fuel distributors to market the fuel. Meanwhile, Robinson helicopters is testing it, and AOPA USA is testing the fuel in one engine of a Beech Baron which has two independent fuel systems and has burned nearly 200 hours of GAMI fuel, with equal or better results than 100LL. The engines will be inspected regularly and a report made available.

Chris D'Acosta outlined the position of Swift Fuels. Swift Fuels worked initially under the PAFI program and developed and released its UL94. They are now working with the EAGLE program to obtain approval for their 100 Octane Renewable (100R) fuel. They will take their fuel through a standards-setting process with ASTM International, an international standards organization that develops and publishes voluntary consensus technical international standards for a wide range of materials, products, systems and services, including Avgas. Questions about valve seat recession are being addressed.

It was clear that a degree of competitive tension prevails between Swift Fuels and GAMI.

Bruce DeCleene stated that while FAA will certify the use of the new fuels, it will not certify the fuels themselves. FAA will take a strong position on the safety of the transition and has stipulated that 100LL will continue to be available to the market during the transition

George Braly said that GAMI has manufactured 1.3million gallons of G100UL fuel but has been blocked from distributing it through the usual channels. One reason stated was the lack of insurance cover if a problem developed, but George Braly quoted a letter from Lloyds of London stating that they are happy to cover the risks associated with the fuels use, i.e. same cover as 100LL. He maintains that the liability issue is a red herring.

Lars Hjelmberg, AOPA Sweden's delegate, spoke from the floor about the 91/96 octane UL fuel, made to an ASTM standard, which his family-owned oil company in Sweden has been producing since 1991. A formula for 100UL has been developed, but will not be produced until an ASTM international standard is released. (<https://www.hjelmco.com/default.asp>)

The evolution of GA

Thirdly, Mr Whittaker discussed the MOSAIC proposal, which aims to expand the design and performance limits of new uncertified aircraft. The success of the Light Sports Aircraft designation and the rapid innovation and developments in avionics, modern composite structural materials and power plants has led to this further push for an expansion in these limits.

We heard from Brian Cable, from the policy and innovation division, FAA; Mark Giron, GA and commercial division, FAA; and Rian Johnson, Vice President and Chief Engineer of Van's Aircraft Inc.

Rian Johnson from Van's Aircraft reported on improvements in engine technology, including the Deltahawk diesel engine, and the increasing use of turbo charging to improve efficiency of engines. The Rotax range of engines continues to expand with



President Sue Kronfeld and advocacy representative Chris Hoffman represented AOPA NZ at the IAOPA conference in Washington DC.

the Rotax 916 diesel engine powering an aircraft to 245Kt. The liquid cooling used in these engines appears to bring good cylinder life outcomes.

The experimental amateur-built part of the market is becoming more structured with improved documentation, including pilot operating handbooks (POH) and manuals, as well as training requirements for owner maintenance by way of FAA Repairman Certificates.

Brian Cable and Mark Giron expanded on electric engine technology, where fast progress is being made in engine development and battery technology. Avionics development in the experimental world is set to reduce loss-of-control events, and angle-of-attack (AoA) devices are improving safety. Targeting biennial flight reviews to improve safety, especially around communications, was helping reduce accidents. This is in line with the NZ CAA 'Work together – Stay apart' initiative.

The push for changes in the MOSAIC proposal will expand the size and capability of new aircraft that can be flown by sports pilots (in USA on a BasicMed medical). It ditches the 600kg limit, replacing it with performance-based measures such as a maximum clean stall speed of 54Kt. This would allow inclusion of aircraft up to about 3000 lbs (1360kg). It will do away with the current top speed of 120Kt and allow controllable propellers and retractable undercarriages. It will be night and IFR capable, with four seats and a top speed of 250Kt. It will allow more than one power plant! This is open-ended due to the upcoming multi-engine electric VTOL aircraft. This is an exciting development being driven by rapid advances in technology, but wanting to keep connected to the huge legacy fleet of GA aircraft.

The proposed new MOSAIC rule will force the replacement of the current FAR 91.319, which has been outdated by rapidly changing cockpit technology and LSA performance. CAA NZ has been engaging with its Part 149 certificate holders to improve training for those flying sport aircraft in New Zealand, but with the proposed changes to the LSA definition in USA and IAOPA moves to introduce a comprehensive Class Medical Restricted licence to replace the USA BasicMed, and perhaps our own DL9 licence, there are exciting times ahead for the New Zealand GA community. More on this next time. 🇳🇿

AOPA NZ ADS-B feeders

By Peter Armstrong

It is now more than two years since the ADS-B grants scheme was introduced, and we've had time to experience the value of having ADS-B in the cockpit, either directly as ADS-B aircraft to aircraft or via the internet (where available).

With an internet connection there are a number of apps for smart phones, tablets or computers, which many of us use, for tracking ourselves and others. However, while ADS-B has become a valuable tool, we know that in many areas coverage is lacking. AOPA NZ, with the help of our members, wishes to address this by supplying and installing ADS-B feeders. If you have knowledge of where ADS-B flight following coverage is poor, we would like your suggestions.

AOPA NZ has allocated funds for the purpose of installation of a number of ADS-B flight feeders in strategic locations throughout New Zealand. We will install these feeders under the following terms and conditions:

1. Location approved by AOPA NZ
2. Equipment to be configured and performance checked by AOPA NZ and, where practical, to be physically installed by AOPA NZ
3. Site is to be online 7 days/24 hours unless agreed by AOPA
4. Site to be connected via a high-speed internet connection at location (your cost)
5. AOPA NZ will maintain access to the flight feeder hardware via a secure network that remains independent of the local network
6. Local access from the installed location data will be available from the respective feeder companies giving enhanced user access to those packages, eg, Business Connection for Flightradar24 and enhanced package from FlightAware
7. Where a member wishes to install a feeder at their own cost, AOPA NZ is able to provide the same turn-key equipment for approximately \$600 per site. For the sake of conformity, AOPA NZ prefers that such a site be operated as per sections 2-6 above.

A resilient, internet secure hardware and software package has been chosen,

supporting the two most popular internet web and app-based applications, Flightradar24 and FlightAware. There are others, however each time one supplies a feeder, additional data streams are required, increasing the location's data output.

If you are aware of a location where ADS-B coverage is poor, or are able to provide a location, meeting the criteria above, where our ADS-B feeders can be housed, please complete the online form on our website at www.aopa.nz.

For support purposes, AOPA NZ maintains a register of all flight feeder hardware, detailing locations, technical matters, connections and performance. We are working with Airways NZ to understand the accurate extent of their ADS-B coverage and what their linkage is with both FlightAware and Flightradar24.

Currently FlightAware feeders are in the New Zealand locations shown below:



As can be seen, there are significant gaps in areas of coverage where our members commonly fly.



AOPA NZ ADS-B flight feeder hardware.

Location requirements

The external aerial requires a good clear panoramic access to the sky. The lead must be within 50m of the computer. A hockey stick aerial mount for the hardware can be attached to a soft-fit or fascia. The computer is powered by 230V with a 12V power pack; a 12V battery supply is an alternative. Access to a reliable broadband-based ethernet internet data supply with Cat5e (blue cable) lead from an existing broadband router is ideal. Alternatively, wi-fi to the Odroid can be provided, however our preference is a wired (ethernet) connection.

Security

Security is always a concern, both to us as integrators and to those supplying their networks in providing the mechanism to supply the ADS-B data. To address this, ADS-B AOPA uses a product called tailscale for security. Tailscale securely connects users, services and devices between our network management system and your ADS-B AOPA feeder. Tailscale is end-to-end encrypted software. AOPA uses this type of connection only for the purpose of monitoring the ADS-B AOPA feeder. You will be supplied a logon and password giving you access to the business subscriptions of FlightRadar24 and FlightAware, allowing you to access the extended tracking features available. These credentials are to be treated like any fee-based subscription service; this privilege can be revoked by FlightRadar24 or FlightAware where abuse is detected. 🐛

Please make your application online via the form found at:
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Alexandra aerodrome

By Neil Sutherland



I've always enjoyed the weather and wide open (air)spaces of Central Otago, so when I and several others were banging our heads with Southland District Council over a development at Manapouri Airport, it proved easier to simply go where we were wanted. The positivity of Central Otago District Council was and continues to be refreshing.

Having built a house/hangar on Alexandra Aerodrome in 2017, I can't now imagine living anywhere else. There are two towns within 5km, some of the best weather in New Zealand, the ability to fly in a 360° circle up to 13,000ft, with top vineyards, fishing, cycling, hunting and more, as well as easy access to Queenstown, Dunedin, Wanaka, Gore and Invercargill.

We have a great wee Aero Club, the Central Otago Flying Club, with a C150 and a C172. A major plus in the last year has been the establishment of an Aircraft Maintenance facility, Tinshed Aviation, who will soon be in their brand new hangar on the commercial part of the airfield. Look them up online.

If you're interested in a 50 year lease section, contact CODC in Alexandra. There has been a hold up due to new water supply connections at the airfield, but Council should now have a timeframe on that. For more information on all that Alexandra Aerodrome has to offer, come and see us so we can show you around. For a history of the development, read on...



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Renaissance of an aerodrome

By Brian Taylor

My involvement with the Alexandra aerodrome began almost by chance. Semi-retired, I accepted an initially temporary position with Central Otago District Council (CODC) as a property officer, with a particular focus on bringing property records for Council-owned land up-to-date.

Coming from a professional background in land valuation, I'd acquired a useful knowledge of related disciplines such as land law, title, tenure, leases, easements and similar, and rapidly identified a range of matters that needed remedial action. The position was upgraded to permanent, and was to last more than ten years. Now a decade into retirement, I rely on memory in recalling details of the Alexandra aerodrome renaissance.

The aerodrome story was interesting from the very start. There were several files dating back to the time of its inception as an



aerodrome reserve. Like many others of that time, the records weren't particularly comprehensive but still made for an interesting account of the early days.

The land was originally acquired by way of a Crown Grant for aerodrome purposes and vested in favour of the (then) Alexandra Borough Council, even though it lay outside the borough and within the boundaries of Vincent County Council. Council was appointed as the administering body for its management, but only within the statutory limitations imposed by the Reserves Act(s). Being a grant of land subject to that Act, it could not be sold or disposed of, so in the event Council no longer required it, the land would have reverted back to the Crown.

The aerodrome had hosted some limited but relatively short-lived aviation activities since the 1960s. These included private flying, local flying club, and aerial topdressing. Interest in air freighting export cherries and apricots, I believe by Dakota or Bristol Freighter, saw pressure on Council to upgrade from grass to a sealed runway. Alexandra Borough engineering staff designed and costed the sealed runway at around \$500,000 but Council felt it too expensive. Specifications were redrawn and the contract re-tendered based on a lower standard of sub-strata foundation. The original 20m wide runway was widened to 30m and increased to its present length to accommodate Hawker Siddeley 748s used for ski season flights before Queenstown was usable. Lanterns had to be manually spaced along the runway each night to identify the strip edges for pilots landing after dark. The improved runway enabled Mount Cook Airlines to operate a scheduled four times daily service through Alexandra between Queenstown and Dunedin using Britten Islander aircraft.

After this burst of activity, the aerodrome languished unloved for several years, apart from some limited use by topdressing operators and a few private interests. The terminal building was permanently locked, frequented only by Mainland Air pilots while they waited for medical personnel from Clyde hospital to return to the aircraft for the flight back to Taieri.

Mainland was also exploring the opportunity of expanding business, and asked whether improvements could be made to

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the terminal building to make it more presentable to passengers.

The prompt from Mainland Air stirred an impetus to start a process of improvement of the terminal, which was looking decidedly shabby, as well as doing something about the ever-encroaching wilding pines rapidly taking possession. Vandals were also frequenting the aerodrome, on one occasion breaking thirteen windows by throwing rocks through them.

At the time, the aerodrome was under lease to a private operator, in contravention of the Airport Authorities Act. As the lease covenants had not been met regarding maintenance of facilities and rent was in arrears, notice was served and Council exercised its legal right to regain possession. That's when I became really committed to improving the aerodrome.

The terminal was the first improvement, closely followed by a start on felling the pine trees, a task undertaken by Brian Seymour and his small team who turned the interlopers into firewood for needy people. Next we received word that the existing underground fuel tanks were to be removed, which caused serious consternation, as without fuel what was the use of an aerodrome? Following some months of back and forth communication, Shell in Wellington decided to upgrade the fuel supply and duly installed a more accessible apron.

That really kick-started interest from potential aviation lessees. I presented a report to Council recommending that it allow a variation to the planning rules to enable residential use in conjunction with hangars. Despite some initial reluctance, the concept was approved. There was immediate interest in hangar

sites, but it was Nigel Forrester who set the ball rolling. He was so positive and helpful in so many ways during the early stage, and was the catalyst for all that followed. I owe him immensely.

From then on, it was all go. Enquiries kept flowing in for hangar sites from private and business operators, with serious attempts to establish associated activities such as pilot training, aircraft servicing and restoration, ballooning and skydiving. We had to redesign the site layout to better accommodate the demand.

Water supply was initially a limiting factor, based on a very inadequate supply from a bore below the aerodrome. Several options were considered, including putting a bigger bore on either the aerodrome or the flats where the water table was more secure. The mooted new water supply from Lake Dunstan for Alexandra/Clyde was ten years away, however when that scheme was completed earlier than forecast, the issue was overcome.

More recently the taxiways have been sealed, security upgraded to keep itinerants off the airfield area with gated entry to hangars and residential accommodation, and overall presentation hugely improved and made fit for purpose.

By this time age was catching up and it was time for me to step aside. Council Property Manager Mike Kerr assumed responsibility and, together with a more supportive Council, he really took development forward to where it is today. He was the real mover and shaker, while my contribution was simply the curtain raiser. Unfortunately, Mike died unexpectedly way before his time. RIP Mike. 🕊

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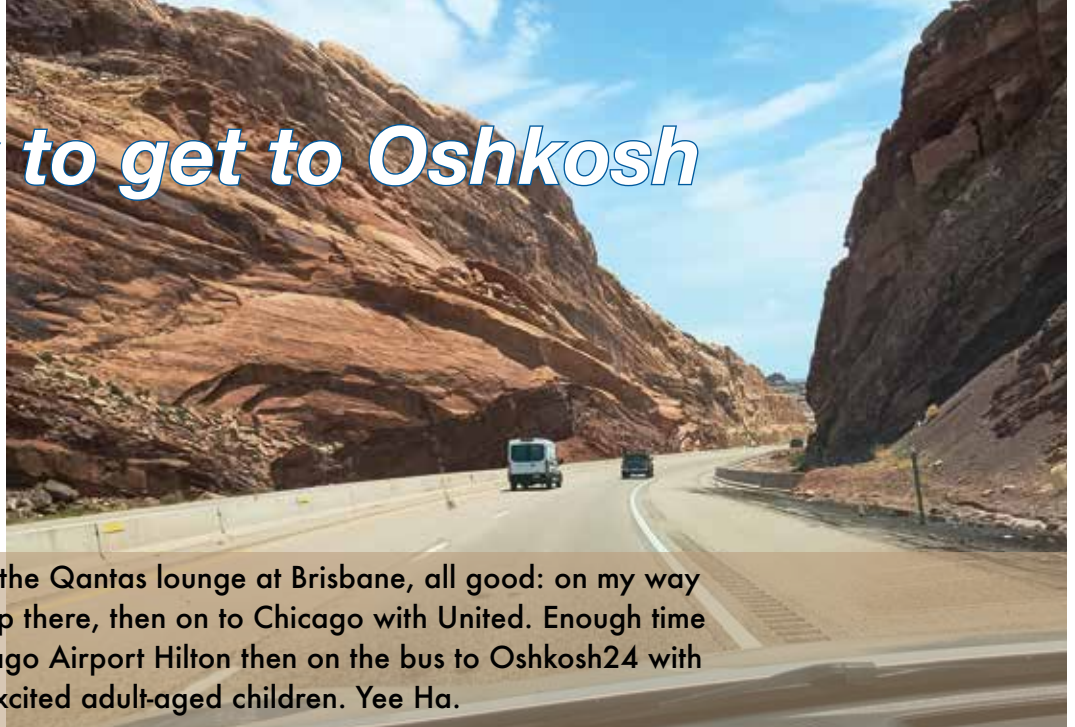
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One way to get to Oshkosh

By Ian Sinclair



Well, I thought, sitting in the Qantas lounge at Brisbane, all good: on my way to LA, a short lounge stop there, then on to Chicago with United. Enough time for a shower at the Chicago Airport Hilton then on the bus to Oshkosh24 with Gay and about twenty excited adult-aged children. Yee Ha.

It was my second attempt to get to Oshkosh24. That is a story for another day, but my point is that I'd had my little brush with lady luck; she'd had her pound of flesh and now, surely, it was all good between us. Certainly I had forgiven her for her previous twisted ways.

My phone goes berp berp and Mark Jones on our AOPA NZ OSH24 Whatsapp group says "Glad you made it with all the global IT disruption going on." Me: "Looks a bit disruptive, hope it's okay when I get to LAX". Ha ha ha ha ha ha plonk.

A faulty security software update resulted in the infamous Microsoft blue screen of death at boot, bringing a good chunk of the world airline industry IT to its knees, along with lots of other folks' IT. I never really warmed to Windows...

My expected 10.25pm 'Boarding' for to Chicago changed to 'Cancelled' at 10.15pm. No flights to anywhere before Sunday 11.05pm – yip, 48 hours.

So, 11.35pm, hatch a plan (note: no third party test for sanity here). At 11.55pm, book a car; at 01.30am drive out the door at SIXT LAX. Sometimes you really don't know how the day is going to end – or is that start?

Brief rationale for those with inquisitive minds. I had NOT gone to the USofA to spend time in LA. I like driving, I feel pretty comfortable with LH drive and I'd slept well on the plane. What could go wrong?

As I was travelling I took a few notes (voice memos, just like Taylor Swift does – when in America do as...).

My trusty android phone was recently upgraded to a fresh android phone with

more grunt, ram and storage, a newer OS and a few handy things like a conveniently placed fingerprint reader for phone unlock and a better camera. A real boon for no-look accessing the phone, especially to get that opportunistic no-look photo.

Google Maps/Navigate ran like a dream and did not lose navigation at any point of the trip. The car had a USB-C rapid charger. I opened an offline google doc and did a bit of voice to text as I went, and that was a useful use of time.

I set Navigation, trusted the process and followed the voice instructions. It seemed to work. It helped that traffic after 2am is lighter. Also, that more trucks were parked in rest, servo and on/off ramp areas than driving. I did wonder who picks up all the bits of rubber on the road from exploding truck tires.

I hit Vegas as the dawn people were heading to work and night owls were heading home. Vegas and LA are two peas in the same pod for me. Fill the tank and keep going...

The motorways in the US are amazing. They separate the three Americas that I think about: cities like LA and other mega urban nodes (which I have little desire to spend time in); motorways, which are the veins of the country, shifting unbelievable amounts of traffic 24 hours a day every day from everywhere to everywhere; and the places just off the motorway that provide gateways to places that feel like the real America to me.

Nowhere shows the relationship between land and landscaper more vividly than I15 between Vegas and Cedar City.

It's a powerful and beautiful landscape and man, they must have moved some rock to build those motorways. One day I'll come back and enjoy stopping.

Driving in daylight following the Colorado River was enjoyable, if slower as the road winds and snakes. More breathtaking road engineering – these guys are not shy when it comes to using concrete. I'm not sure I saw the real Denver, but the piece the motorway transited seemed baron and unloved.

The rest of Colorado, Nebraska, Iowa and Wisconsin pass my window. Daytime traffic is heavier and slower. When I get to Oshkosh my car reports that my average speed was 70mph. Driving on American multi-lane highways is incredibly safe. Most drivers are disciplined but drive faster than the speed limit. Trucks mostly obey the limits. A big arse RAM or other truck on steroids is a bit intimidating in the rear view mirror. This group of drivers may have elevated testosterone.

The investment that's been made in motorways in America must have paid itself back hundreds of times. Imagine if New Zealand committed to making state highways two or more lanes each way the entire length of the country. It would dramatically change how our country works.

Another upside of American motorways is that they are largely obstacle free and most of the power lines aren't nearby, making for fantastic places to land aeroplanes. Take a look at a few videos of American pilots performing emergency landings on a motorway. It seems to work out pretty well. 🐣



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