



Swanning around in a Cygnet

Dave Evans



It's been a long time in the making, but the Cygnet has finally turned into a flying bird. Mel Jones has finished the construction work with help from professional welder Mike, and invaluable advice and technical expertise from Mark Norgate. Brian Taylor has finished the test flying schedule, and now the sky is the limit. But there is a tale to tell about CYG...

Mel first crossed paths with what became CYG many years ago, when a Cygnet kitset was up for sale. A 747 pilot and his mate imported the plans and materials from the USA. Sadly the friend passed away. An Australian gentleman then outbid Mel to buy the bits and pieces. Skip forward a decade or two and the kitset is up for sale again - that Australian had moved to Dargaville, wanted to build a house and needed to sell. This time Mel was the high bidder and took the kitset away to start the build in his double garage. A large polyhouse in Hikurangi came to the rescue when the team found the wings wouldn't fit in the garage.

In between then and now lie four years of solid work. Mel has a background in boat building, which gave him a skill set that came in really useful during the construction. Over the years a number of people seem to have pitched into building a Cygnet only to run into issues with the complexity of the

geodetic wing design. Others seem to have stumbled at welding together the fuselage from a pile of chrome-moly steel tubes. But around the world something like 100 examples have been completed and flown.

In New Zealand, Mel's is the second example to be flying. The first one (LXB) lives in Dunedin where it began its flying life in 1988.

The design dates back to the early 1970s. The designer was Bert Sisler, a former airline pilot and test pilot. At the Oshkosh airshow in 1973 Bert was awarded the prize for "Outstanding New Design". One feature of his design is a forward sweep on the wings to help place the centre of gravity in the best position for the pilot and visibility.

Power in Mel's plane comes from a HAPI conversion of a Volkswagen engine. HAPI was the happy abbreviation of Homebuilt Aircraft

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Products Inc., who unhappily went out of business in 1988, with their assets passing to Mosler. Mosler in turn became Total Engine Concepts (TEC) who are still in business in Florida where they are a successful constructor of engines for race cars – but they dropped the VW aero conversions fifteen years ago. VW engines are such a widely-used motor for all sorts

of applications that support and parts are readily available.

One issue that needed solving in Mel's aircraft was getting enough cooling air to pass over the cylinders in flight. This was achieved with a lightweight duct under the cowl that forces the incoming air down and past the cylinders. All is now well in that department.

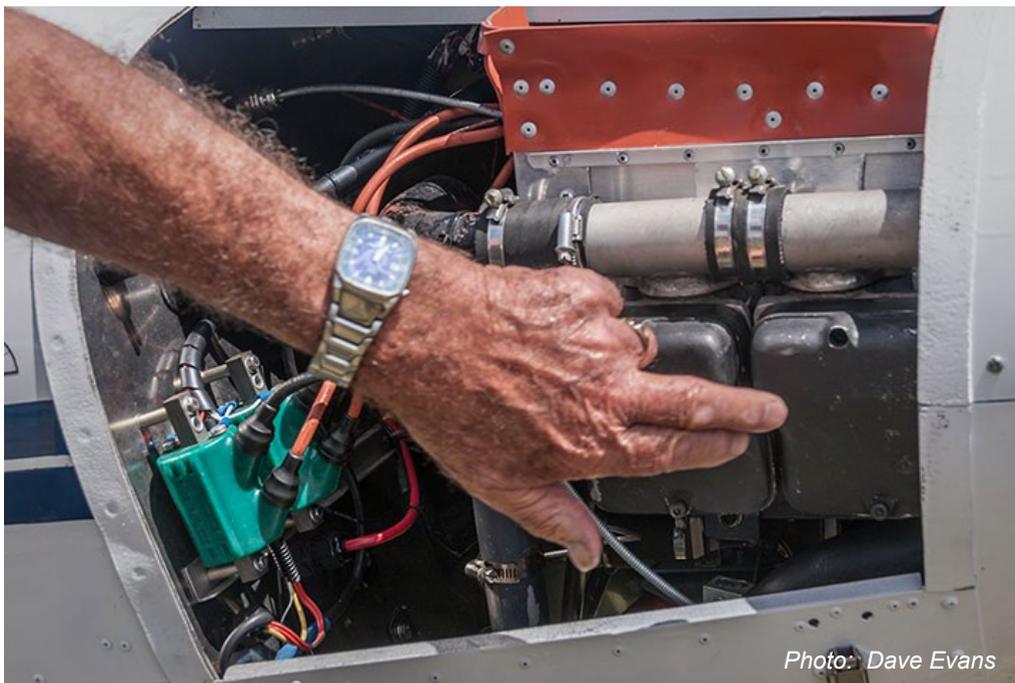


Photo: Dave Evans

Mel is not a newcomer to aviation. He has had a Cessna 150 in the past, and is now looking forward to refreshing his pilot skills. Mel has registered his Cygnet in the microlight category. By the way, Mel was over 80 when he began the build – he is an inspiration to us all!



Photo: Dave Evans

Above: Mel Jones' newly-completed Cygnet stands next to Steve Moor's Taylor Monoplane, one of NZ's earliest completed home-built aircraft (Windssock Christmas 2011). Magnificent pairing!



Photo: Dave Evans



Photo: John Wegg

The new Texan Club



Photo: Dave Evans

President Peter writes...

Peter Randall

Another successful year has flown by. This is the first Windssock since the AGM which, I can report, went off very quietly with no changes of officers but we did welcome on to the committee Jan Bailey, who replaces Tahi Morton who has moved to Australia. We now have 3 married couples on the executive committee.

The new Texan Club is proving very popular and the hours are rapidly going up. Pilots however have had to come to grips with the new start up procedure as this Texan has a fuel injected Rotax engine.

Unfortunately our Storch JES had an engine out and ended up extensively damaged and has had to be written off by the insurance company. We were very fortunate that the two occupants were able to walk away with only bruising. We are fairly confident that carb icing was the problem and we are putting in an heated manifold on JES's replacement.

The replacement is being built at the moment at Fly Synthesis in Italy and should be packed in a container to be shipped before the manufacturers close down for the Christmas holidays.

The new Z Energy Avgas facility is up and running. The club was however left with a rather awkward area between the hangar apron and the refuelling pad. This area has now been concreted and new drainage put in. This has really tidied up the whole area. A big thank you to all those who helped on the project.

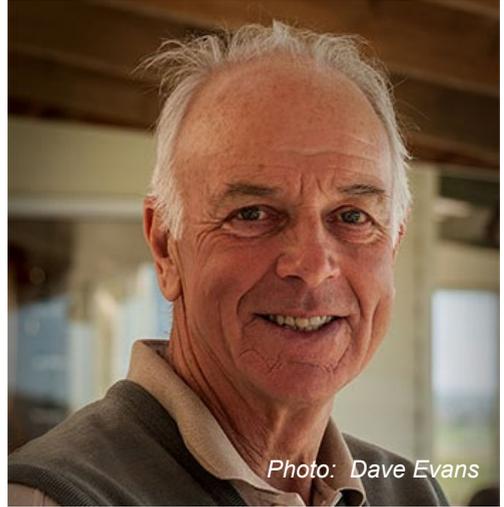


Photo: Dave Evans

We are however having a slight problem from the stone chips to props. This is because Z Energy used too fine metal around the concrete refuelling pad. The club hopes to remedy this in the not too distant future.

The silage has come off so we would encourage pilots to use the grass runway on the northern side and taxi on the grass on the southern side of the limestone strip.

A few of us managed to fly down to Raglan for the Blacksands Flyin. Unfortunately the weather wasn't very good on the Saturday afternoon and the beach landing had to be cancelled. Nevertheless there was plenty of plane talk to be had. In the evening we adjourned to the local pub for a good meal. On the Sunday morning a couple of us flew over to Te Kowhai for fuel and ended

up having a good nosey around the hangars. It was very interesting looking at the wide assortment of planes that we found tucked away in the hangars.

Saturday lunches continue to be well supported, effectively giving us a flyin every Saturday. The annual Christmas party for members' children and grandchildren will take place on Saturday December 7 with Santa flying in at approximately 2pm. Jelly and icecream to follow!

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all the members and their families a very happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year. Fly safe!

A healthy response

Neville Gleeson's story (Windsock Winter 2013) drew a couple of responses:

Alan Murgatroyd

You won't know me – I'll come to that – but the reason I'm writing is because of the article about Neville, whom I've never met, and his quintuple by-pass – I'll come to that too.

After a career in the airline business, and having vowed never to touch another aeroplane ever again, I got sucked back into aviation after a ride in the Bay of Islands Aero Club Cessna 172 to Ardmore, and shortly after persuaded the NZ CAA to issue me a NZ licence based on my still valid but rusty British ATPL, they instituted their now infamous "5% Rule", in which a pilot had to persuade them that they had a better than 5% chance of not having a heart attack in the next 5 years, or as it was construed, a 1% chance in any 1 year. I bet nobody walking around alive can claim that, but many Pilots of a Certain Age felt that their chances of passing their next medical were now seriously in doubt!

This coincided with Bert Gregory, then CFI of the Northern Waiaroa Aero Club, taking his Bantam up to Kaikohe one weekend to try and attract more microlight pilots to the sport.

I rode my motor-bike over to Kaikohe, and Bert, upon seeing it, said "that's my bike!" I'd purchased the bike only recently from Shaw Motorcycles in Whangarei, with whom Bert had deposited the bike to sell on his behalf. I know aviation is a small world – but motor-bikes?

Anyhow, Bert introduced me to the Bantam and I joined your club, subsequently also flying the Bantam out of Bert's strip over on the East Coast near Whangaruru a couple of times – I was hooked.

This was in 1999, and shortly afterwards Bert persuaded the club to purchase one of the new breed of microlights, whose max. weight had recently been increased to



544kg, allowing European manufacturers such as Tecnam, to import their products into New Zealand. The club purchased one of, if not actually the first, Tecnam ECHO to arrive in New Zealand, registered ZK-EKO, and he allowed me to "borrow" EKO one day for us to demonstrate to the BoIAC members, and as a result they purchased a Tecnam GOLF, which they fly to this day, having now notched up some 2700 hrs. and highly successful it has been.

Meanwhile, Bert had appointed me as a club instructor, though I confess that I did very little work for the NWFC. One of the stalwarts of the club, Bruce Lambess, had contracted a terminal illness and suggested that I buy his VW powered single seat Turbulent, the better to travel from Kerikeri in 30 minutes instead of a 2 hour drive. I still have CQC, though sadly it hasn't flown for 2 years now due to too many calls on my time, and also being a part owner of an ALPI Pioneer-300

I kept a CPL valid until age 75, and although having successfully passed another 6 monthly medical, which included an acceptable ECG, the Campaign Against Aviation insisted on an extra Stress ECG purely due to my age, and just like Neville this threw up an 'anomaly' which resulted in an Angiogram, but in my case only to the extent of requiring the insertion of a couple of arterial Stents, not a bypass.

This has of course curtailed my aviation aspirations, no longer being able to hold even a Class 2 without jumping through too many hoops each year, so I'm now restricted to an RPL and a microlight certificate.

I've got to admit that the CAA probably saved my life, but I do wonder how many of those drivers hurtling towards me at a closing speed of 200 kph on the local roads have ever been near a doctor, and how many of them would show the same 'anomaly' in their cardio-vascular system if they were to subject themselves to the same tests that Neville and I were required to complete, only because we needed a pilot licence?

An acquaintance in Kerikeri died at the wheel not too long ago, but fortunately his car swerved left off the road, and not the other way which might have put him straight into the front of a school bus! Keeping a flying medical current might have some Community safety aspects!

Ironically, before I was required to undergo the stress ECG, I was still legally entitled to fly the Boeing 747 – had anyone been daft enough to give me one – with a medical problem, but the problem was identified, it was fixed, and now I'm fitter than I was when I last held my CPL, but I can't even have a PPL! The Law is an Ass, but I guess I have to be thankful for small mercies.

I regret that with advancing years I decided to withdraw from some of the aviation related clubs and organisations that I have previously been a member of, which included the Dargaville Club, but I asked to be kept on the Windsock e-mail list, thank you, and of course I will still fly down for a Saturday lunch from time to time, hopefully before too long - I'll be back in NZ for the Spring.

Murmurings from the infirmary

Peter Fisher

Until a couple of years ago I knew little about hospitals. They were just places where I went to get wounds stitched up. The last stitch applied, the dressing on, then out the door and on your way home. One night I had to walk all the way to Springs Flat as I had no money and anyway taxis, no matter how you try to hail them, will not stop at night for someone who is staggering. Never mind, I recovered.

Since then I have become acquainted with X-ray machines and chemo-therapy equipment. While sitting in the chemo-therapy department, hooked up to the pumps, I began to consider the early parts of my life when I was a horrible little boy.

My parents sent me to Sunday School on Sunday mornings. Weather permitting, I would ride the three and a half miles on my battered bicycle. There we would be taught to sing songs like 'Onward Christian Soldiers'. Then in another part of the proceedings we were given illustrated story books

to read. These had many pictures representing Bible heroes – Moses, Elijah and such persons. There were also several paintings of angels. We were told these were "God's messengers". They looked like young women, with long flowing hair, flowing white robes and strangely bare feet. I wondered about this. The feathery wings on their backs were slightly bigger than those of an albatross and surely would not generate enough lift for them to fly, so they must have walked a lot. Was God too mean to give his messengers a pair of shoes?

Years later it dawned on me that those creatures were not real, they were the product of someone's imagination. Something that they saw on the way back from a bad drug trip.

But there are real angels – Public Hospital Nurses. Over-worked and under-paid, they give loving care to all their patients.

Think on this – Peter Fisher.



The DAC DFC *

Peter Randall

Peter Randall has been the club's president for five years, although that position has not altered his affability and approachability. He claims that Murray Foster and others take care of the day-to-day running of the club, while he chairs the monthly meetings of the committee. Rarely, he says, is there not consensus on proposals.

Asked if he finds the responsibility onerous, he shakes his head. "Not at all, we have a good team. If I mention something needs to be done, there are always plenty of willing volunteers."

For example, recently the hangar door was sticking and making it difficult to open and close for anyone not possessing the physical condition of an All Black. At a Saturday lunch, a club member who happens to be a builder was promptly on the scene to help Peter and the job was done without fuss.

Peter himself is no mean construction man, skills which he attributes, with typical modesty, to simply "a farmer has to do everything."

Somerset-born Peter arrived in New Zealand in 1968 as a '£20 Pom' (the immigrant assisted passage scheme). Through hard work and considerable enterprise, he is today a very successful dairy farmer, working 700 acres on the Poutou Peninsular, 20km from town, with his wife Annette and son Andrew.

Since learning to fly at Dargaville, Peter has amassed some 400 hours on his immaculate Alpi, ZK-LPI. This he keeps at his farm, where in 2013 he completed a second strip of 430m (07/25), more convenient to his present house.

For his well-kept property and organizational style, his farmer neighbours have nicknamed him 'Perfect Peter'. That's a moniker endorsed by a grateful DAC.

Story by John Wegg

* Dargaville Aero Club, Distinguished Flying Characters





Photo: John Wegg

Peter Randall in his Alpi 200



Photo: Dave Evans

Happy birthday to...



Photo: Cliff McChesney



Photo: Cliff McChesney

Around the 5th of October three birthdays coincided, so what could be a better opportunity to blow out candles, eat cake, reminisce and generally have a good time. The lucky three were Murray Foster, Jan Bailey and Bob Syron.

Murray had already celebrated his birthday with family in Melbourne but could not pass up the chance of another celebration. Jan and Bob also joined in the candle-blowing and wish-making ceremony, with Bob also taking on the duty of speech-maker and rabble-rouser.

It's not clear how many stories that were told during the day are true, but at least one of them must be. Murray claims to have a birth certificate proving his age, but... who knows? What we do know is that Murray's admirers are never far away from him. Thanks to Rusty for providing the evidence.

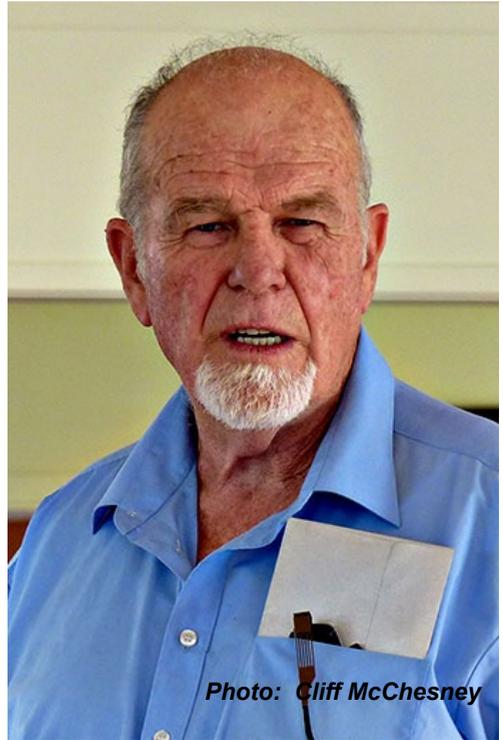


Photo: Cliff McChesney

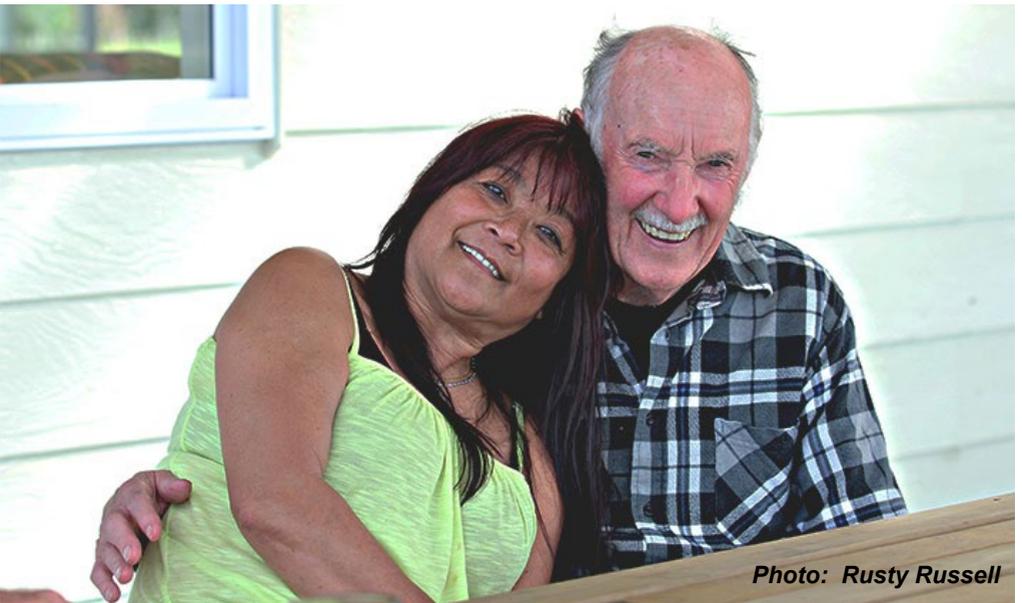


Photo: Rusty Russell

Seen at Dargaville 1





Photo: John Wegg

Page 14, top: Carsten from Kerikeri has been a regular visitor to DA while undertaking his flight training in his beer-fuelled Robinson R44 Raven II ZK-IPA.

This page: Avgas is once again available at DA following the installation of the new tank, which is proving very popular. Christina, Mac's Mooney co-pilot, gets to work while the 'neutered' Das Kapitan drinks coffee and tells lies in the clubhouse. (Anyone needing help with this caption, please see John Wegg. Ed.)

Page 14, bottom: Herman 'the German' Adhrens dropped in, figuratively speaking, for a cuppa and thaw out after flying on a bright, but fresh, late July day from his base at Whangarei with his AirBorne Windsports Redback 503 ZK-XAA. Named after the Australian native spider, the two-seat Redback is one of several ultralight trikes produced in the Land of Oz.



Photo: Paul Shaw

Rusty Russell took visitor Rick Watson for a taste of gyro-flying. Rick usually has his camera handy - as does Rusty's mate Paul Shaw. Paul is just out of Rick's shot, to the left; but Rick is bang in the centre of Paul's shot. Neat shooting match, aye?



Photo: Rick Watson

Out and about



Photo: Rusty Russell

Another of Rusty's outings took him to Uretiti Beach, with a pair of Bantams.

Brian Taylor's Jodel enjoys the shade at the Raglan Black Sands fly-in. De Havilland seem to be back in business making wheel covers these days!



Photo: Dave Evans

A good landing

Rusty Russell

Metaphorically speaking, of course. In my life I've experienced a mixed bag of 'em, some shockingly bad, others smooth, but one was remarkable, so I'll tell you about it.

Fate and old age altered the direction my life was taking, especially in the recreational department. For the past 38 years I had been a hunter-gatherer, a scuba diver and fisherman. Diving in lakes, coasts and blue water, deep dives, local and overseas.

You can't spend that much time on the water without having the odd brush with death and yes, I did look the grim reaper in the eye on more than one occasion! Lots of stories to tell, however the long and the short of it was that I knew I was pushing my luck. The once-strong body could no longer keep up with the still adventurous spirit! The aches and pains took longer to fade, more sleep was required, stamina had gone. Getting old - hard to accept, but it was time to hang up the flippers so I did! I wasn't ready for bowls, golf or bird watching, I still needed a buzz, the type of buzz you only get when it's your skills that keep you alive.

Being of the blue-collar brigade, with limited funds, my choices were limited. Selection criteria were: affordable and doable (could I do it with my limited amount of grey matter).

The next consideration was that if I spent the results of my lifetime of graft,

I would want to be able to use or do it whenever I had a day off. Anything that required a lot of sweat and effort was ruled out coz I was buggered, I'd gone hard for too many years!

Abseiling, hang-gliding, para-sailing, para-penting, car racing - what else could I do?

A friend Steven suggested a visit to the flying club at Dargaville, talk to one of the old fellas over there and have a yarn, get a feel, pick up a vibe.

The vibe was as a good one. Relaxed, laid back and friendly, not an ego in the place. Within an hour or so, Muzz the instructor had me up in one of the club's planes, hands on, doing it, scooting all over the west coast, up the beach, around the clouds and over the mountains. I was hooked.

Muzz gave me a quick rundown on how we avoid running into other planes, maintain separation, so simple, common sense. That part didn't scare me any more!

He and the other instructors there have the most cool way of instructing, keeping it fun and interesting, encouraging. A quick demo followed by amateurish copy, just wicked! If things didn't go too well there was advice, encouragement, a joke or two to keep the mood light and more attempts. Never once was I belittled, afraid,



intimidated, swamped with too much information or made to feel dumb. Just brought along at my own pace.

In my years in the army, I'd never seen this style of instruction. The boys here could teach the military a thing or two about how to get the best from people, even old dogs like me. I learned lots of new tricks!

We flew, laughed, landed and listened and talked more over the next few weekends. Then Muzz let me go solo, a buzz indeed, similar to my first intimate romantic act, or my first dive with an orca - never to be forgotten!

To be a pilot, not only must you be able to fly, you must learn the rules and pass tests on Navigation, Weather, Radio work, the Principles of Flight and Law. I have to admit I had to apply myself (not easy when you haven't studied for years) and without the patience and guidance from lots of people, I'm sure I wouldn't have passed, but pass I did. I'll take this opportunity to again thank them all!

Before taking passengers you have to get an "advanced" rating, so I flew all over the place. There isn't much of the north I haven't seen from above and before long I had that endorsement as well. Now it was time to take all my friends and family for flights. That was so cool! I was quite pleased with the way things had worked out.

As a kid I had read about Benson gyrocopters, had seen advertisements for kitsets in "Boys Own" and "Popular

Mechanics" magazines and had thought they were weird, quirky and a big bit scary - interesting.

I decided to have a go at this so I bought a gyro, and learnt how to fly it. Yes, it had just the right amount of associated adrenalin...

After bending it, I bought a modern, factory built machine, a MT03 Auto gyro and have been flying it regularly around the north. What a fun machine - strong and forgiving, agile and nippy. It ticks all my boxes and is cheaper to run than the boat! I've impressed the hundreds of others I have taken for rides in the past two years. One in particular is my mate Mary, who finds it a magic photography platform. And my wife Penny, who was at first sh*t scared of it, but now is always in the back seat and is encouraging me to get my instructors rating so I can teach her to fly. That will be a test of a relationship I reckon, but I will suggest she goes to Dargaville and does what I did: Learn the Muzz way, the way I hope to emulate.

I would have thought that the club was an out of the way place, quiet and dead, an eccentric local or two maybe? But the opposite is true, the place has an attraction. No, not just Muzz! It's a warm, friendly, relaxed place with a genuine down to earth lot of accepting folks that enjoy life!

Planes drop in from all over, all kinds of folks from all kinds of places, of all races and all walks of life, and now they have us! It was good landing in Dargaville.



Training report

Murray Foster

Hi all members, pilots and students. Christmas is here and the year has gone very quickly, things have happened so fast. This year has been very good when we have had the planes to fly. And after we had sold the Texan but were waiting for the new one to arrive I had to do a forced landing in the Storch due to engine failure (carb icing) and that left us without an aircraft for about six weeks.

We have now got our new Texan with a fuel injected motor so we won't have to worry about carb icing any more. It has been kept very busy with all the students and new pilots getting back into the air again. A new Storch should be here early in the New Year, which brings our training aircraft up to date. Membership is as usual going very strong. This month we have welcomed new flying members Bruce Waterworth and Alex McClennan who have had their first trial flights and are now waiting on confirmation from the petticoat government that they have all the right boxes ticked to continue training. Congratulations to Bill Chai, Mike Massey, Gavin Bickers and Chris Coombe who have already been passed by the ones who have to be obeyed and are well on their way to their training.

Congratulations also to:

- Bob Syron, who has now got his low performance licence – good on you Bob, you have made it

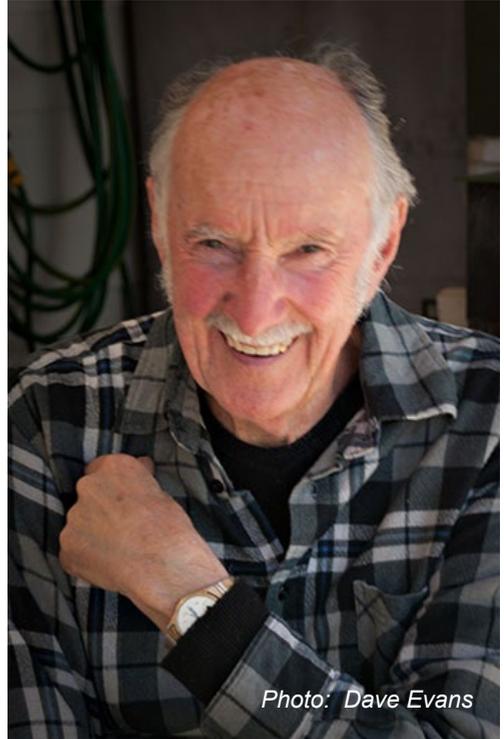


Photo: Dave Evans

- Steven Jeffery and Murray Parkinson for their biennial flight reviews
- Murray Hargraves for his instructor renewal
- Luke Gillingham and George Garrett, who are both waiting to do two cross-countries to complete their training for their final flight test
- Peter Robinson is ready to start his gyro training in Tauranga

That's all happened in the last month!

The runways and taxiways are in excellent condition and we keep the grass areas mown short so they look in pristine condition. Our Saturday lunches are as popular as ever with new faces every week. In the last twelve weeks we have done 480 lunches, and 80 aircraft have visited on those Saturdays. And we'll be operating right through the Xmas holidays. Be sure to book in over the holidays so you can make sure there is an aircraft available for you.

Ring my number (027 478 4308) if you are in the area. Make sure you call in and have a coffee and a good chat. You are all a great bunch of people and it's good to see you when you come.

Merry Xmas and safe flying.

PS If you've got a training manual you're not using, please get it back to Murray as new students are waiting to use them.

Jill's message

Hi everybody from the GA section. We have a new student, Dale Broughton. Dale is doing very well and has progressed quickly, well done. Congratulations to Rebecca for passing another exam, she has done three – three more to go.

It is great to see good use of JBA, especially Joel and Zac who are building their hours for their Commercial Pilot Licences. Congratulations also to Blake on being accepted into the Nelson Aviation College for his commercial training.

We have a new Avgas fuel tank which is operational, very flash with extra concrete adjoining the original apron in front of the hangars.

Merry Christmas and safe flying.

Jill Mortensen



Photo: Murray Foster

Heli's Bells - it's Santa

A Little Helper



Saturday 7th December, the sun is shining, and the exodus from the North Pole has begun. Dargaville Aero Club's personal Santa arrived by air as usual, on the way swapping his reindeer for a Robinson R44 which is better suited to our summer weather.

The children met Santa, had their presents and enjoyed the traditional Christmas meal of jelly and ice cream.

Such fun!





Photo: Murray Foster



Photo: Murray Foster

Seen at Dargaville II

Cliff McChesney's Pulsar leaving for home



Photo: Paul Shaw

Whangarei Flying Club's Tecnam P92



Photo: John Wegg

Nookie Robinson's Tecnam Sierra RG leaving for home



Photo: Paul Shaw

Paul Shaw taking it easy on Uretiti Beach



Photo: Rusty Russell

President's report to the AGM

Peter Randall

It is with great satisfaction that I present my annual report for the Dargaville Aero Club.

The club is in a very sound financial position, as you will see from the annual accounts prepared by Phil Trappitt and his team at "My Accountants". This cannot be said for many of the Aero Clubs around the country. The club is also in good heart and spirit which is evident from the time so many club members are prepared to put into voluntary work for the club.

As always a special mention must go to Murray Foster and his team of instructors namely Brian Taylor, Dennis Williams and Greg van der Hulst. They voluntarily give their time to instructing new members and providing trial flights to prospective members.

The hours our planes fly, especially the microlights are nothing short of phenomenal. JBA our Cesna is being reasonably well used with Jill Mortensen coming from Kerikeri most Sundays and Wednesdays, weather permitting, for PPL lessons and BFR's and with Quantum Aviation closing, Jill may well get more students from Whangarei.

The decision was made during the year to replace the Texan (TTX). We took the opportunity when the New Zealand dollar was very high to purchase the majority of Euros required and combined with

the very good deal that Fly Synthesis offered us the new plane has come in at a very acceptable cost to the club. I am pleased to say that our new Texan is in a container and on its way with arrival in Auckland expected late September. My thanks to Allan Jessop for all the negotiating and arrangements he has made in seeing this project become a reality. I can also tell you that TTX has been sold to Baden Bickers and therefore it will be staying in the district.

The committee decided during the year that the runway was in need of repair. This was held over until May because of very dry conditions. In May/June Harrison Contracting spread 600 tons of limestone which was rolled and graded. However it now needs another grade and roll and hopefully we will get onto this shortly.

In November 2012 the club hosted the Northern Regional Flying Competitions. In spite of the poor weather conditions it was a very successful and enjoyable weekend. The highlight for the club was the long overdue recognition by Flying New Zealand of Murray Foster for all his work he has done over many years of instructing and promoting aviation.

This next year the club will be hosting the Women in Aviation Annual Rally on Queens Birthday weekend. The club also held an excellent weekend fly-



in for the Singer Trophy. A big thank you to Graeme Walker and his team of organisers.

The Windsock has become a must read for all members and for many keen aviators throughout the country. Dave Evans does a great job in getting the Windsock to print but is very dependent on receiving your stories and photos in order to be able to compile such an interesting newsletter. So please keep them coming in.

It is good to see the new Avgas tank in place. It certainly shows that Z Energy has made a commitment to keep Dargaville Airfield as an Avgas site for the foreseeable future.

The Saturday lunches just keep on going from strength to strength with 40 plus people and twenty plus planes appearing to be the norm on most fine days. This

means that our club is virtually holding a fly-in every Saturday with a wide variety of visitors calling into enjoy the company of other people interested in aviation. My grateful thanks to all those Saturday cooks for the excellent meals they voluntarily provide.

I would also like to thank the committee and all the club members who work so tirelessly for the club. It certainly makes my job so much easier knowing that there will always be somebody who will willingly and often without prompting just get on and get the job done.

To those members of our club who have suffered bereavement during the year, on behalf of the club, I would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere condolences.

Best wishes to all members and their families.

In there somewhere is Ruawai's runway



Photo: John Wegg

Really?

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION OVERHEARD AT THE CLUBROOMS:

Hello, Dargaville Aero Club

(Broad South African Accent) Hello, do you have any afghans?

Sorry, this is the Dargaville Aero Club, I think you must have the wrong number

No, I was wanting to know if you sell afghans?

Maybe you want the ATC, they may be selling afghan biscuits.

No I want the afghans, for the racing car....

Oh, you mean AVGAS!!!!

Yes the stuff you put in planes!

Okay yes, we have plenty of that!!

There's a rumour going round that it really is possible to take off from the roadway by the club house, cross the runways, clear the rice grass and not land in the river. But the take off run must start right by the cattle stop. There has to be a fair bit of wind blowing the right way. And the pilot must have nerves of steel. I'm not sure why the rumour has reached me.... Ed.



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