

Manawatu Microlight Club Newsletter - May 2006.

Editor: Barry Nolan Ph 06 326 8907

Hi Folks,

Quite a lot of content in this edition. How many of you know that our club has its own web site? I suspect that this isn't generally known. For those wishing to access the site, here's the address. <http://www.manawatumicrolightclub.org.nz/>

Paid your membership fee?

Just a reminder that the membership renewal fees are now overdue. The fees are:

- Full (flying) membership \$40.
- Associate membership \$20.

You can not vote at the AGM unless your membership is current and you will not receive further copies of this newsletter until your fees are paid (what a loss!) You can mail your cheque to PO Box 203 Feilding or pop it into the money box in the club room. **DO IT NOW!**

Apologies to our lady members

What are they talking about?



Topics discussed at the last committee meeting included:

A proposal has been submitted to the Airfield Committee that the runway fence be moved to increase the width of the grass verge. This is an attempt to reduce the amount of sheep manure which is deposited on the seal and, consequently, on any aircraft which uses the runway thereafter.

The Drifter wings are currently being re-covered with new sails and a new 530 motor has been ordered for the aircraft. The committee apologises for failing to offer the

old motor to club members. This has now been remedied.

The flying rates for all the club aircraft will be increased in the near future due to the ever escalating cost of fuel. **It's likely that this will result in hourly rate rises of \$4.00 and \$5.00 per hour depending on the type of aircraft.**

And, about the Sonerai!

Mark Dean's Sonerai building project is still alive but creaking slowly along. Mark reports that cowling's nearly finished and this will be followed by completing the aileron tips and attaching them to the wings Then there's the balancing and the canopy to mould then fit. Sounds like a lot of work!

Incidentally, congratulations to Mark for passing his Advanced Pilot's licence!

Rex's Autobiography

I've now finished reading Rex Thompson's autobiography, Flying High and recommend the book. It details Rex's incredibly hard childhood on a farm which his family cleared from the bush, through his wartime stint as a rear gunner to the present day. In my opinion, it's well worth the \$24.95 price tag.

Rex tells me that because the book details the life of a New Zealander a copy will be archived in the Alexander Turnbull Library for perpetuity.

A trip to the White House.

We were planning to fly to Dannevirke, but Bill Steel noticed the cloud building over the Ruahines and phoned Athol Sowry for an on the spot weather report. Athol confirmed Bill's fears; low cloud and a fresh Southerly, so we went for plan 'B,' a trip to Neil Colliver's place at Bulls. The Xair was sitting doing nothing, so Frank Vanderhurst and JJ decided to make the trip and set off ahead of Bill and I who had the luxury of the Sky Arrow. Before we took off, I'd made Bill swear an oath that he'd refrain from 'auctioneering' from the back seat. This refers to his habit of giving me a constant stream of advice and warning messages whether I want this or not. It was a beautiful, windless day on this side of the hills, so we enjoyed the short hop to Bulls with Bill as PIC and soon had Neil's house identified. It's almost completely white from roof to floor, (and a very grand structure) so was very easy to spot.

I won't mention the landing. Suffice to say that we eventually stopped and were treated to a royal welcome by Sarah and Neil, followed by a barbecue and some delicious cake. It made me wonder why I hadn't been to his strip earlier and prompted a mental note to do so again before too long. Upon leaving, Neil's strip seemed ridiculously short when viewed from the front seat of the Arrow and I must confess to some anxiety as the pine tree at the far end of his 'runway' loomed large whilst we were still on terra firma. I needn't have worried as we eventually got airborne and were soon back at home base.

Bill and I declared a draw and vowed that he wouldn't mention any lapses in my piloting technique and I'd keep mum about his landing and a few other peccadilloes, including not responding to Ohakea Control and reading back an incorrect squawk code to the controller. I won't mention his landing though!

Who is it?

Yes, the profile which appeared in the last edition was our very own Ed Evenbly. See if you can guess the identity of this month's mystery man.

I was born the 4th of 6 children in a Northern England industrial town at the start of WW2 and my first involvement with aviation came early in life, courtesy of the

Luftwaffe. They had the irritating habit of bombing my home town and, as they were appalling marksmen, frequently dropped their load on the houses of the hard working townspeople. I vividly remember the sound of air raid sirens - the sound of the NZ volunteer Fire Brigade sirens still sends a chill through me because of this association - and being rushed into the reinforced concrete air raid shelters which the government had built in the middle of our street. These were crammed with local residents who seemed to be either praying or getting drunk depending on their personal philosophy on life, but the atmosphere was anything but subdued. According to the norms of the time, anybody who went into hysterics received a smart smack across the face and the sound of the bombs was often interspersed with the noise of screams, followed by a slapping sound against a background of tuneless, drunken singing. Activity outside the shelter depended on the quality of the aircrew that Hitler sent our way. If these were 'good shots' we'd hear the thump of bombs raining down on the factories and rail sidings which were less than a kilometre away from our house. However, the arrival overhead of short sighted Jerry was greeted by the sound of anti - aircraft guns blazing away at the intruders. Some of these were mounted on the back of a truck which, in an attempt to fool the Nazis into thinking that we were well defended, would shoot off a clip of 5 rounds, then race off to another location (within earshot) and repeat the exercise. The hope was that this would lead the Hun into thinking that the area was bristling with AA defence. Alas, our boys were also dismal shots and only one Heinkel bomber was downed by the local AA crews. The bodies of the aircrew were interned in a local cemetery and were regarded as enemies, even in death. Their graves were located in a remote corner of the cemetery, far away from the graves of honest, civilised, English folk. Strangely, some courageous person used to put flowers on the tombs which served to incense the local populace who vowed to find out who the 'traitor' was and to mete out some retribution. Thankfully, I don't think this ever happened!

Towards the end of the war the Luftwaffe scored a direct hit on a house in the next street. The houses were configured in Coronation Street fashion and although the bombed house was totally destroyed, those on either side were relatively unscathed. Our house was less than 50 metres away from the blitzed dwelling and the shock wave created ripples in our living room floor which thereafter resembled a relief map of the Ruahine Ranges. It made fully opening the doors extremely difficult and tripping on the uneven floor surface a distinct possibility. Because the war had been going 'our way' at the time, the inhabitants had become blasé about going to air raid shelters and I was lying in bed being cared for by my 3 elder siblings when the blast came. My elder sister reports that the four of us were thrown vertically and hit the ceiling before mercifully trampolining back onto the bed. Perhaps that's where my troubles started!

I left school on my 15th birthday and still rank this day as the happiest in my life. I hated school because of the rigid discipline which was enforced by daily slaps, punches, insults, liberal applications of the cane and the unremitting teaching of the Catholic doctrine. I didn't really object to the religious *message*; it was just very boring and certainly not designed to excite the interest of a young lad. Because I lacked formal qualifications, I took a job on British Railways as an Engine Cleaner which involved polishing the steam locomotives which still ruled the rails in those days. After a year at this, I was promoted to Fireman (or stoker) and after another 8 years was elevated once again to the position of Trainee Driver. I really enjoyed my time on the rails. It was every boys dream to be on the footplate although it did have drawbacks in the form of shift work which involved starting and finishing work at really unsociable times. The

payback was controlling a huge engine, often at the head of an express train, although this was really hard physical work. Because the Railways were run along military lines, there were awful consequences if the crew were responsible for causing any delay to the timetable (suspension, demotion, dismissal, etc) This meant that maintaining steam pressure was critical and this involved shovelling tons of coal into the greedy fire whilst trying to keep one's footing on the bucking, rolling, footplate.

My next aviation milestone came when I was 18 and flew in a DC3 to Jersey in the Channel Islands. One of my friends was also on his first flight and was extremely nervous about this. Unfortunately, he was given a window seat over the wing and the sight of the wing flexing in flight sent him into a kicking, screaming panic. We tried slapping him across the face several times to no avail. Whilst we were laughing at his plight (in a caring kind of way) a beautiful air hostess relocated him to an empty seat and held his hand for the rest of the flight whilst making soothing noises in his ear. We quickly realised the benefits of adopting a flying phobia and feigned our own versions of air terror but the other hostesses saw through our crude subterfuge and ignored us.

I came to NZ in the mid '70s and settled in Palmerston North where I struck up an acquaintance with a MMC club member. At that point, I still believed in the 'flying lawnmower' myth and thought the fellow quite mad to trust his welfare to Masport. However, he repeatedly invited me for a trial flight and I eventually relented and fronted up for my first microlight experience. My maiden flight was taken in the front seat of the Drifter and shortly after take off, I bitterly regretted my foolhardiness in agreeing to it as I was convinced that the MMC was going to accomplish what the Luftwaffe failed to do. My inattention during religious studies at school came back to mock me as I vainly tried to remember some of the 'begging prayers' I'd been taught. Soon, though, I started to enjoy the experience and by the end of the flight was looking forward to my next session. The rest is history. I've been a member for more than 12 years and have had some wonderful experiences and enjoyed some excellent company as a result.

Red Susmilch Memorial Trophy.

Last year, Helen Susmilch donated a trophy to the club as a tribute to our mate Red. The trophy will be awarded to the person who, *in the opinion of the club members* has contributed his or her time, services, etc: to the club 'above and beyond the call of duty.' The intention is to award this to a person other than a committee member or club official who has done a lot for the club. The recipient will hold the trophy for one year. So, if you have somebody who meets the criteria, please complete the nomination form at the end of this newsletter and bring it with you to the AGM on 21st May.

Events Calendar.

The Club's Annual General Meeting will be held at 11.00am on Sunday (21st May) Please make every effort to attend and have a think about becoming a committee member. We need you! The AGM will be followed by the monthly barbecue.

Waipukurau Dawn Raid.

At Waipukurau Airfield 28th May

AIRCRAFT (and other things) FOR SALE

Part Share

A share in the Feilding based Hovey Hawk. This is a delightful, extremely well built Bi-Plane, which is a delight to fly. It is a low hour machine, and in excellent condition.

Please contact Shorty on 021-682151

Radio

As new, Icom Navcom V H F Airband transceiver IC - A22 fitted with rechargeable nickel metal hydride batteries, together with an operation manual. I paid \$600-00 for it and will sell for \$500-00. Contact Rex Thompson. rex.thomo@inspire.net.nz

House Bus

John James (JJ) is hoping to sell his House Bus to raise funds to buy his own microlight. It's a well appointed, ex school bus which has been converted into a home - from - home. JJ would like offers 'around \$20,000 for the vehicle.

Flying Suits

The widow of a former MMC member has a couple of flying suits for sale. These are American made - shower proof and very warm. One is a medium and the other large. She is open to offers. Her contact details - Mr's White Ph: 323 3558.

Rans S-6ES Coyote II, tricycle undercarriage, Rotax 503DI, DC electric start, 430hrs. Roomy comfortable & good visibility, 4+hr endurance, surprising performance for 52hp engine. \$37,500 Contact Peter Kernohan 021 804 733
kernohan@actrix.co.nz

CGS Hawk.

I am selling this aeroplane because I am not able to fly it as often as I would like. The aeroplane was built in 1999 and has two owners, one of them being me. It has flown 310 Hrs (airframe and engine). The tail feathers, ailerons & flaps all have been recovered and painted and the wing sails are in good condition. The fuselage is fibreglass and in good condition. The engine is a Rotax 503 with dual ignition and has just been overhauled (300 hrs). It is fitted with a ground adjustable Ivoprop. Asking \$15,000 but offers considered. For any information call Roger on 06 363 5175 021 433 477
rogerchris@clear.net.nz

Club Officers

President / Treasurer	Stan Hyde	323 9072	rshyde@extra.co.nz
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Club's web site: <http://www.manawatumicrolightclub.org.nz/>