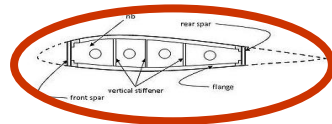


The Spare Rib News



*The monthly newsletter of the
Kapiti Aeromodellers Club*

February 2024

www.kapitiaeromodellersclub.org.nz



Kapiti Aeromodellers Club group

Notes from the Scribler



Scribe in training

I only just got used to not having to do a newsletter for a month, and around it comes again. I'm into my 5th year as scribe. It's a task that I mostly enjoy, although at rare times it seems a burden. I took it on when Don was mumbling about resigning from the committee and club captain, so I thought taking the newsletter off him might get him to stay on for another year. It did.

I marvel at the young scribe in the photo with pen and ink. It didn't do me much good as my handwriting is still terrible. Welcome to the new year. We can't complain about the weather of late, although the wind has been a challenge at times. I hope you all had a great Xmas. I stepped well out of my comfort zone and headed to the Nats. As mentioned in The December newsletter, Andrew sort of talked me into it. I entered. I went. See separate article. One of the things I have found, even though we have had some great weather, that if it isn't a flying day and I'm up to date with my chores, I've been getting a lot of hangar time. It's just great to get out there when it's not freezing cold! Mind you, I have needed a lot of hangar time of late for multiple reasons.

Just prior to Christmas we lost long time life member Jim Hamill. Jim was widely known throughout our modelling world. I visited Jim in his final few days and had a great chat. A man who contributed much. Brian and Beryl Hoult have written a fitting tribute.

I hope all of your New Year resolutions include a lot more flying!

Have a great month.

Steve

Presidential thoughts

I will be away for the first club night of the year. Wayne Elley will be opening the clubrooms. However, I will be back for the rally on 16/17 March. Matters are well in train for the rally, so please make an effort and bring something you feel comfortable flying to the event. The newsletter contains the outcome of a meeting on fire risk between Steve Hutchison, myself and the GWRC parks rangers last month.

The Club Committee met in January. Among many matters discussed was good management and storage of LIPO's and NiMH receiver batteries. The general point is they don't last forever, so consider replacing them when they show signs of deterioration.

Fly safe!

John Pfahlert
0211509763

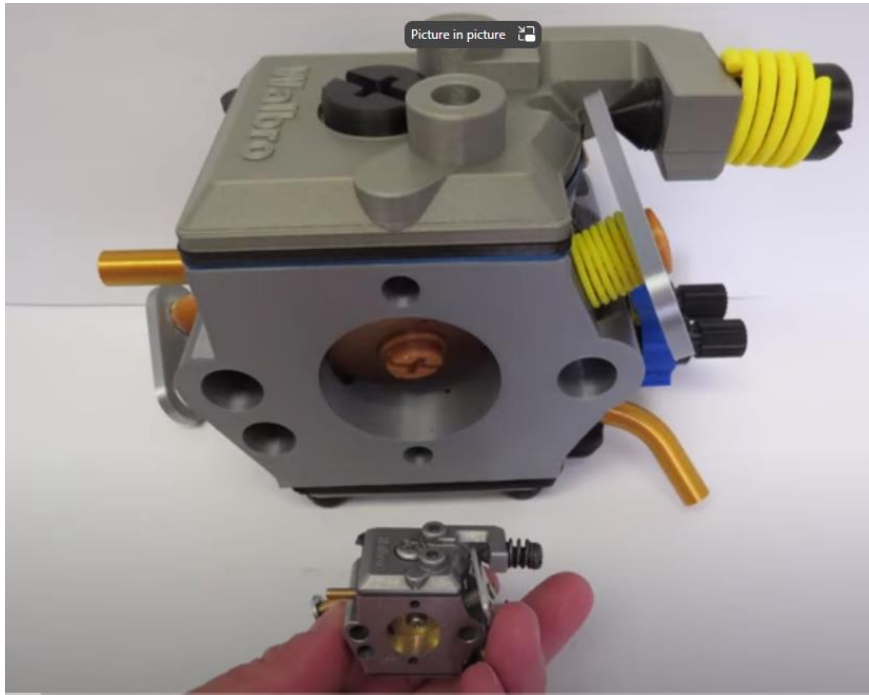
So just how does that gas carb work?

If you've had problems with a gas engine with the typical Walbro carb fitted and think you might have a carb issue, then this may help.

This guy 3D printed an entire carb so he can explain it all very simply.

Take a look.

<https://youtu.be/HcwINS-wFkg?si=3rSOQsRYv0eEBK7I>



Jim Hamill - RIP

Arthur John Alexander (Jim) Hamill
20/3/1942 - 8/12/2023

A tribute by Brian and Beryl Hoult



I first met Jim when I was learning to fly under the instruction of Phil Patterson. Phil introduced me to Jim as co-instructor when Phil was not available. Little did I know that it was a friendship that would last until the very end of his life.

Jim's great passion was model flying and the club.

Pam Inc, the forerunner to KAMCI, called a special AGM to change the membership rights of the flying division, strip the voting rights of any member that lived south of Pukerua Bay and to deny anyone from south of there to join the club. This was a fight we had to win and win we did. It was a bitter fight and some of us had to cope with some offensive abuse. The battle was won, and Kapiti Aeromodellers Club Inc was formed and has grown to what it is today.





Jim gave his all to see that the club progressed. He was a very good committee member and sometimes trod on a few corns, but he always had what he thought was best for the club at heart. Jim was club captain for years and he, like Ron Nicols, spent countless hours at the strip mowing, fixing the electric fences and doing all the little odd jobs that cropped up. Too many things to mention. The club recognised this service and awarded both Jim and Ron life memberships.

In the early days of the club a group from the club used to attend a lot of flying rallies at other clubs. We called ourselves the A team and became well known round the other clubs. The A team put our club on the rally map and Jim played a big part in that. Jim was always quick to help man the barbecue or to help erect the gazebos. We made a lot of friends in the flying fraternity.

In the late nineties the club decided to start running rallies at our strip. This was mainly to repay the hospitality that the other clubs had given us and Jim got great pleasure by inviting all these flyers, who had travelled long distances, to a pre rally barbecue at his home. They were great get-togethers and Jim supplied everything. He, Ron and myself (to a far lesser degree) donated all the prizes that were handed out at the end of the rally.

There is so much I could say about Jim, but I will sum him up with a few things that really stick in my mind:

- The first one is about the time I ended up in hospital when I whacked my thumb with a propeller. They had to operate and when I was coming out of the effects of the anaesthetic who was at the end of the bed. Jim and Beryl. Paul had exactly the same experience when he did the same thing.
- The second one relates to Ernie Thompson. I was down at the field one day and Ernie came up to me and said, Brian I don't know how to take your mate Jim. I said to Ernie that you have to look past the gruff attitude that Jim sometimes had (he was in the police force all his working life) and get to know Jim and you will have a good friend. Well, that's how it turned out. Jim instructed Ernie to the point of being able to fly solo. They ended up great mates and Ernie came to me one day down at the field and thanked me for my advice. A really nice guy.

Jim was involved in the larger scene of aero modelling. He was on the committee of the Miniature Aircraft New Zealand (MANZ) later renamed Large Model Aircraft New Zealand (LMANZ) until two years ago. He used his big Pawnee to tow gliders at gliding events as far away as Murapara. All this was done at Jim's expense and I have no doubt he would have supplied a cooked breakfast for a lot of the flyers, like he did in our early days when the A team attended many rallies.

Time and space doesn't allow me to record all the things I would like to record. Beryl and myself were with Jim and his family on the last two days of his life and we spent a lot of time reminiscing on the great times we had, especially in the early days when active in the rally scene. There was a lot of hijinks in the motels after a day's flying, and Jim was in the thick of it. On one of the rallies Beryl and Jenny went out and bought a wooden spoon and presented it to Jim as he was the chief stirrer. That was over thirty years ago and Jim returned it to Beryl just before he died.

Lastly, on one of our rallies either Colin or Kenchie lost a wheel off their trailer. In typical fashion Jim told them that they should do their maintenance and make sure it was road-worthy. Jim went on about this over the next few rallies, asking them if they had any trouble with their trailer and were the wheels okay? Now here is the crunch. We were heading to a rally at Napier with Jim in the car and towing Jim's trailer. Guess what. Travelling just past

Carterton a wheel came off Jim's trailer and passed the car. He hadn't tightened the wheel nuts. I said to Jim "the boys are going to love this when I tell them after all the ribbing he had given them". His reply was to swear me to secrecy, and to tell them at his funeral. I kept my promise to Jim.



Beryl, myself and numerous others have lost a good friend who we met through aeromodelling. We will remember all the good times we had together.



Kapiti Aeromodellers' Rally

Sat 16th and Sun 17th March 2024

Queen Elizabeth Park
Mackay's Crossing
Paekakariki

No landing fees
MFNZ wings badge required

Come fly with us

[www. Kapitiaeromodellersclub.org.nz](http://www.Kapitiaeromodellersclub.org.nz)



Rally 2024

16/17 March 2024.
Put it in your diary now!!

This date avoids clashes with other rally's and the Tokoroa jet met.

February Club night

Club nights start again on Tuesday, 20th Feb.
The night will be shared between Sew Cox and Gordon McArthur.
Stew will talk about his Pink Pig build (see separate article) and Gordon is going to cover battery maintenance. Charging, storage, disposal etc.

Club Vintage day

Our monthly fun events continued at the beginning of December with a Vintage competition. The weather was fine but a bit windy. However, it didn't deter a number of hardy souls from participating. By its very nature, this was a competitive event with a timed motor run and then an endeavour to land 'on the spot' at a specific elapsed time.

Noel Fisher didn't have much success with his Bizzard Bombshell, crashing on take-off on his first flight.

John Miller insisted I take part and loaned me an 88" Tomboy.

It was a lot of fun.

I'm not sure what was in the water that day, but John P and I came 1st and 2nd against those who compete regularly!

First	John Pht	484 points
2nd	Steve H	446
3rd	Terry B.	443
4th	Stew Cox	442
5th	John Miller	431
6th	Ian Cosy	427

(No Score for Noel Fisher due to damage on take- off.)



Upcoming Vintage and glider events to be held at Levin.

Put in your diaries now!

Next Levin Glider Fun Fly
Saturday 9 March (Sunday 10 March wind date)

Vintage fliers - please add the following dates to your calendars for this year's Levin Vintage events:

Gareth Newton Memorial
Saturday 2 March (Sunday 3 March wind date)

Bob Burling Memorial
Saturday 11 May (18 May wind date)

John Selby Memorial
Saturday 14 September (28 September wind date)

Tokoroa - a jet meet paradise.

*Jet meets are held at Tokoroa every month during the summer months.
3 of our erstwhile members ventured forth last October for an incredible experience.*

A group of approximately twenty-five highly dedicated jet fliers met at Tokoroa on the 28th of October last year for an informal meeting. In terms of complexity and cost the models they bought along arguably represent the very apex of our highly diverse aero-modelling activities. Not only were there conventional turbine powered model jets, there was also an exquisite blue coloured turbo-prop powered Pilatus belonging to Craig Abbott. The 29 Kg aircraft featured a TP 100 turbine, and a 1:3.5 scale Vario propellor. To hear the turbine begin to wind up while the five bladed scale-like propeller start to turn, the realism was certainly remarkable.

Craig also bought along his composite ARF quarter scale Mig-17. It is powered by a 235 Newton, King Tech turbine (divide the Newton figure by 10 to get the thrust in Kgs). The weight of the model is 29 kgs, hence a respectable thrust to weight figure of 0.8:1. It also incorporated Powerbox Core radio. It was the model's maiden flight that day and it performed admirably in the capable hands of Craig.

Another interesting model was Colin Austen's Panther, this being a very popular model of the 1950's jet fighter aircraft. It took Colin 2 1/2 years to build and features a turbine of 210 Newtons. It was built from an enlarged Nick Ziroli plan resulting in a model that is slightly larger than quarter scale. It is quite a few years old, this showing in its paint. It initially seemed to be suitably weathered however Colin said that the paint is actually showing its age.



Colin Austin's Panther



Craig Abbott's Pilatus

bladed impellers. Take-off runs were often agonizing long and the models often bit the dust simply because they did not have the thrust in critical flight situations.

Our very own jet kings Paul Buckrell & Peter Brown both put on a show with their jets. Steve "Cowboy" from Firebrand turned up with two impressive jets, the green jet (hadn't maiden yet – waiting for paperwork), is a Pilot FCI 3D with a Kingtech K260G4.

Unfortunately, the day saw an impressive sports jet 'go in', this being an event that has just been recounted very candidly by the pilot concerned in the latest Flier's World.



Paul Buckrell's sport jet

to fly or indeed drive. Our models are often large and highly powered and they need us to be in optimum mental form when we fly them. Rene's article is arguably one of the most informative and important that has been written for quite a while; it is a highly recommended read.

The event was worth the travel time & we would highly recommend if you get the opportunity to go, and then do so.

Colin Nankivell, Ross Monk & Ian (Mac) McMillan

Talking of jets, members will be interested to know that Paulo Buckrell's F22 was successfully maiden at the December jet meet at Tokoroa.

Stuart Irvine bought along his Saab J-29. This is another older model which has been built up from multiple sections of carefully shaped foam plastic that came in kit form. It was originally an IC ducted fan model that was eventually upgraded to turbine power. As older modellers will remember it was often a struggle to get suitable/safe thrust from the early IC ducted fan models. The engines used tended to be specialized high revving units that turned relatively small multi-



Craig Abbott's MIG 17

Rene said that the crash was a straightforward result of pilot error. Apparently, he was not up to scratch mentally that particular day and in hindsight he determined that he should not have flown. Fatigue arising from activities in the previous 24 hours was the main culprit. When we are generally feeling a little under the weather we are sometimes not in the best position to determine our suitability



Rene Redmond and Pete Brown checking out Rene's CARF Rebel Pro

Review of club operating rules

As is best practice, the committee have started a review of our operating rules.

The rules as they are now have served us well over the last few years since being updated.

As a club, we must always be mindful of the constant change which occurs within the park.

There is no doubt the park is busier now than a few years ago and the walking and cycling track at the northern end, especially so.

As a club, we have been very mindful of the role of the observer and the use of observers has served us well. We are especially re-evaluating how we best use observers.

It is expected that the new rules, along with a covering explanation, will be sent to members during the February month.

Andrew Farrow – Club Captain

The Nats - a new experience

As I mentioned in the December newsletter, I decided to enter the Nats this year. This intention had been bubbling along for a few years and with some encouragement from Andrew and James, I took the plunge. The initial plan was to only enter scale with the Smith Miniplane. Reading the rules, it seemed I needed to enter the intermediate class because of the size and weight of the model. I was quite comfortable with that as I know the plane well and the manoeuvres chosen have been, mostly, flown many times.

If I was going to give that a crack and turn up, then perhaps I should enter basic IMAC as well.

So having entered, I decided to camp at the show grounds at Clareville. Never been there before and haven't camped for ages. For once I was borrowing gear off my sons. Andrew and James were using an Airbnb this year so I was on my lonesome, but Terry Beaumont



tipped up in his caravan, although parked at the other end of the grounds. I took a spot near the kitchen and facilities and settled in. There were plenty of campers around, many showing signs of going there often. A good friendly bunch. The first night opening was a BBQ and it was good to catch up with some folk from Auckland, James and Andrew of course, Terry, Neil Schraeder and others. After that first night, there was too much on to worry about anything.

The scale experience. Neil Schraeder got in touch as soon as I entered. He had seen the entry go through and was full of encouragement and advice. In scale, there are only 4

compulsory manoeuvres. Take-off, landing, figure of 8 and descending 360. The rest you choose yourself, knowing your model, its capabilities as well as your capabilities. I adopted most of Neils' manoeuvres, substituting a couple that suited me better. The strip for scale was the back of a farm off Gladstone Rd. The strip itself was quite small and very rough. One of the problems the organisers have had in recent times is getting suitable fields. With sheep not being as profitable as they once were, many farms in the Wairarapa have gone cropping or cattle. Both of these are pretty hard on the land and simply

being able to mow a paddock and have a nice field isn't as easy as a few years ago. I'm not sure of the dimensions, but it seemed about 50metres by 50 metres. The border one side was a fence with a few metres of long grass on the inside and the other end was very long grass. Whilst the square enables a setup for any direction, the wind we faced both days was on the first day coming over the long grass and the next day, from across the fence. Andrew and James were competing with the Foke-Wulf, the Corsair having developed a leaking fuel tank just prior to departure. As it turned out, the rough terrain worried Andrew quite a bit with



the Fock-Wulf and he was rightfully concerned about his retracts. As it turned out, they couldn't get the model started and I think Andrew breathed a sigh of relief and put it away. I had issues with the Smith throttle. Not idling well and no top end. A problem with servo linkages. Now fixed but caused a few problems for me. This meant that a manoeuvre such as a stall turn didn't go well. This combined with nerves and the odd brain fade meant I didn't do as well as I had hoped. I did fare better than some others though. The runway was so short that you really needed to drop onto it just over the threshold. Difficult when crossing a fence. Landing marks are given for landing in a straight line and coming to a stop. This meant I had to cut the engine once down to stop running into the long grass. Neil Schraeder didn't fare so well with his P47 when he dropped it into the long grass just prior to the runway, bending the undercarriage and damaging a wing. Gwyn Avenell also had damage from a hard landing, breaking his fuse. He still went on to win as he got his flights in and came out on top in statis judging.

And so, not scoring well but having a ball, it was onto IMAC.



The IMAC experience. James had given me a copy of the sequences and point me in the direction of some YouTube clips. Great. Problem is, such clips are on a simulator and its hard to gauge distances. Because of the weather leading up to the event, I hadn't been able to practice with either James or Andrew and my concept of where to fly was totally wrong. Thus the practicing of routines with Alastair Haussmann calling for me, whilst good practice, were rushed as I didn't know what sky I had available. Three days before the Nats, it all turned to custard.

Trying to practice at the strip, control rates wrong, fingers and thumbs not working well, the dunes rose up to meet the Edge. Knackered. Well, I thought, that's it. No IMAC. It was bitterly disappointing as I had spent a few bob making the plane lighter, better balanced and more responsive. In fact I had managed to shed over 200 grams in weight and the model was flying better than ever. Arriving home after this disaster and thinking it was all over, I spied the Velox hanging on

the wall. It hadn't flown in over a year, was dreadfully undersized and underpowered for the task in hand, but I would give it a go.

I would like to mention at this point that Andrew offered me his Laser, Rosco offered me his Edge and Don one of his Extras. I am really appreciative of those offers.

It took me 2 days to get the Velox running.

Whilst the strip for Imac. was also a bit rough, it was much more open than Scale and they were able to operate 2 flightlines. My first flight was over before it really started. Took off and no power.

Landed. Frazer Briggs who was organising rescheduled me and gave me time to get the motor up and running again. James was calling for me and the wind was howling. James was great and once I understood where to fly, it was much easier. Such a small plane, though, got blown about a fair bit, making it really hard to complete some manoeuvres. You get 3 flights and each flight you fly the sequence twice. Came to my 3rd flight and part way through the first sequence I suffered a dead stick on a vertical. Landed OK, but there was no getting it back going this time. I've had it running since, but not well. Turns out the engine has ingested something like a piece of plastic. No much damage that a new piston and ring won't fix. Looking at the results, I didn't do too bad given my gear and problems. With the Edge I would have been much more competitive.

It was a great experience and I'm sure to give it another crack next year. Overall, it was a fantastic experience. Andrew and James both flew Imac with James also flying Pattern and Classic pattern. James was on the podium a few times. Terry Beaumont competed in Vintage over a few days, Ryan Groves drove up a couple of days to compete in Pylon and Stew Cox was ever present in the Vintage events. Jaime Lafrentz popped up and Rosco, Ian McMillan and Colin Nankerville came over for a few days. It was great to have that support.



So what else happened? To somebody who hadn't been before, there was some interesting things happening. Heard of Aggy? I had. Did I know what it was? No. The most entertaining, chaotic, event you could ever see or participate in. Models that are basically a free flight, often looking like a Tomboy. Powered by a small diesel such as Mills .75. the Aggy stands for aggregate. An aggregate of minutes in the air over a 30 minute period. A max runtime is set by the adjudicator. A model is started and launched. At the end of the run period the motor stops on a timer. The model lands somewhere. The pilot rushes to get it and return to his place in the line. Start again and launch. He has a timing person who times each flight. It was windy. Some models landed 2 paddocks away. They wear crash helmets! It was chaotic and entertaining.
Mass Radian launch, indoor flying. A lot to take in.
Will I go again?

Yes.

Steve

QEP Park, fire hazard and our responsibilities

All members will be fully aware that fires within park spaces have already occurred this summer with the fire at Whitirea in Titahi Bay particular meaningful due to its proximity to us.

GWRC have developed a fire danger warning system which will soon be seen within the park.

John Pfahlert and I met with the Parks' rangers recently to discuss control of fire hazards within the Park.

As a park licenced user, we have been given some exemptions to enable us to continue to operate.

There are 6 'risk' levels.

Green, Blue, Yellow, Orange, Red and Purple.

The danger level for the park is monitored through a series of tests, each week, and the level of danger assessed and, when necessary, adjusted.

Signs showing the level of fire risk will be erected in the park, so we will all know what the risk is.

If the danger level is high enough, the park will be closed to all users.

We can continue to operate under 'Yellow' and 'Orange' levels with an exemption we have been granted.

The exemption is written as follows: -

Exemption applies for the aero modellers operation to remain open beyond normal code level triggers under the following parameters.

Model aircraft operate from a mown grass strip at the eastern edge of the coastal dunes.

The area is mown regularly including the carpark. Access is off Whareroa Road along a gravelled vehicle track. Grass mowing must follow the Heat/Spark Hazardous activity controls and grass must be kept short including the access track.

The access track should be mown wide enough for vehicles to pass in opposite directions or have turnout areas mown.

GWRC wildfire activity control guideline WB QEP Whiti Draft operable v0.4.docx Page 14 of Motor vehicles are to park on short mown grass areas and operations (mowing) to be undertaken in the morning during high-risk times.

Aircraft flight paths to avoid heavy scrub covered areas and overfly less steep terrain such as terraced and flat areas and the coastal edge.

If an aircraft is lost, immediately undertake a visual assessment of location for signs of fire and call emergency 111 if smoke or fire is sighted. First aid firefighting equipment to be at



the airstrip to include 1 x shovel, 1 x 20l backpack sprayer full of water and 1 x 20L water refill, and 1 x 9kg dry powder fire extinguisher (or 2 x 4.5kg extinguishers).

Note there is a requirement to not overfly heavy scrub covered areas. We should therefore limit our Northern flight line and try and stay away from the Northern scrub covered hills during the periods of risk

We are actively pursuing providing the balance of equipment required.

Shovel – a shovel is available in the clubhouse.

Extinguishers. We have the water hand pump extinguisher, on a trolley. THIS IS NOW STORED IN THE TOILET WHERE IT IS EASIER TO ACCESS. A 20-litre pail of water for refill is under the South end of the clubhouse deck.

Extinguishers. There is 1 x 4.5kg in the clubhouse and smaller extinguishers. A 2nd 4.5 is being purchased.

IT IS DEEMED PRUDENT THAT DURING THESE SUMMER MONTHS AN EXTINGUISHER SHOULD BE TAKEN TO THE FLIGHTLINE WHEN WE ARE OPERATING.

We re-iterate. These facilities are aimed at controlling something minimal. If fire is established, we should dial 111 and vacate, leaving gates open for emergency services.

Steve Hutchison and John Pfahlert

“And Pigs Might Fly.....Yeah Right” By Stew Cox

As there was a lot of interest in the model I flew in Aggy at the Nats, I thought I'd share a bit of the background and in the process, throw out a challenge to others. For those that weren't there, I flew a Pink Pig in Aggy this year which certainly added to the fun for me and hopefully for others too. Free Flight Aggregate or Aggy as it is known is a fun event where you try to record as much flying time in the 30 minute window as you can. Motor size is limited to under 1.5cc and everyone flies in the same 30 minute window. At the start of the event there are models buzzing in all directions with mid-air's and lots of fun and excitement – a great spectator sport. The catch is that there is a maximum time per flight, beyond which you don't score points, and you have to retrieve your own model from downwind and relaunch from back at the start line. This year the max time per flight was sensibly set at 1 minute due to the proximity of a road and some inquisitive cattle.



My wife Helena has for many years used the saying “...and pigs might fly.....yeah right”, most often when I've reiterated my undertaking to do a task she requested many moons before. At least 15 years ago having heard Helena say this once too often, I decided it would be fun to get a pig flying at the Nats Aggy event. Back about that time we were having a BBQ with then neighbour and aeromodelling friend John Henson and his wife Meg and I put the idea to John asking him to do a concept drawing of a flying pig for me to progress

the idea. John, a very clever Graphic Artist, came up with a suitable drawing but then the idea stalled with me although just before each subsequent Nats, Helena would ask “Am I going to see the pig fly in Aggy this year.....”.

Just before this last Nats, Helena again asked the question and I decided that this was the year. So I grabbed some EPP I had lying around, cut out a body similar to what John had drawn, added anhedral rear legs for the tailplane (again John's idea), crafted some wings Jedelsky style with thin EPP bent over exposed ribs, added some wing incidence, bearers and snout reinforcement and sprayed the lot with the most shocking pink paint I could find.

For those of you who know my "build as you fly" approach at the Nats which often results in me taking more models home than I arrived with, the model was duly finished about an hour before the Nats Aggy event was due to start. I had time for one quick test glide in the garden where we were staying which suggested more wing incidence was required and the next flight was during the event itself. Given the Pink Pig had not flown and I would be trimming during the event, my expectations weren't high and I was hoping just to at least record one time which meant exceeding the 20 second no-flight time.

To my surprise and I suspect everyone else's, once I finally got the motor to run and launched the Pink Pig, it flew straight off the building board! I ended up not having to change anything and managed to get in quite a lot of good flights finishing twelfth out of 26 who recorded times. Had the engine not been such a pig and started more easily, I could have ended up even further up the placings. But that wasn't important, having fun was what it was all about!



So, my motive for this article is to challenge others out there to build a fun model for Aggy next year. Sorry, the Pink Pig idea is taken but there are lots of other possibilities,,,,,flying fish, flying saucer, toilet seat, Snoopy's Dog House, Pterodactyl, Witch on a Broomstick (last seen flown by WMAC's Norm Dalziel), etc. So there's my challenge to all attendees of next year's Nats. It's all about participating and having fun and you can walk after your plane in the event, it doesn't need to be a fitness contest. And if you're not attending the Nats, build a fun model to raise a smile at your club field. Give it a go!

Levin Glider Fun Fly – 9 December 2023

Event report by Stew Cox

Photos by Ross Gray



Following on from the success of the first Levin Glider Fun Fly last summer, the club was keen to host two Glider Fun Fly's this summer. The first was planned for Saturday 9 December and the intention was to promote a day when Levin Club members and visitors dusted off gliders that in some cases hadn't seen the light of day for a considerable time to fly along with those with more modern soarers. The goal was to get as many people as we could having fun flying gliders together.

While the weather forecast for Levin that day was for flyable conditions, the forecast for the top of the South Island and lower North Island was ugly with rain and strong winds forecast. The writer woke early Saturday morning and pulled back the curtains of his Waikanae Beach home to see clear blue sky and light winds although in the distance to the Norwest there was what appeared to be very low cloud or sea fog, a very unusual weather phenomenon for this area. Within an hour, that airmass had engulfed the Horowhenua and Kapiti Coast with low cloud and it was blowing like stink in Kapiti and further south. And yet, the Levin Club weather station was still showing light winds and a higher cloud base than further south.



On arrival at the Levin field, conditions were exactly as the weather station had indicated and very flyable. While cloudy for most of the day, the cloud base at Levin remained high. Numbers started to build and it was clear the turnout would be good. Unfortunately, a few couldn't make it given the busy time of the year and the poor weather to the south put off a few Wellington fliers who were otherwise keen.

We ended up with 21 fliers, many of whom had multiple models with them. There were probably more than 50 gliders brought along and the sky was soon busy with soarers of all shapes and sizes. One of the great things about the Levin site is there is a lot of airspace available and there was plenty of room for everyone. Of the 21 fliers, 14 were Levin Club members and four other clubs were represented being Wellington, Kapiti, Ashhurst and Palmerston North Aeroneers. It was pleasing to see five new faces who weren't at the first glider fun fly in February. The Kapiti Club was well represented with attendees including Pierre Daigneault, Ross Monk, Roger Balfour, Ian Crosland, John Miller, John Ellison, and Terry Beaumont,

Despite the cloud cover, the sky was quite active most of the day with large thermals often occupied by multiple models at a time. It was rare that there were less than half a dozen models in the air at a time and on occasions there was twice that number airborne. Some long flights were had by some.

The range of models on display was extensive. It was hard to keep up with all of the models being flown. Of the Kapiti boys, Roscoe was seen flying a nice ASW 28, Pierre a Phoenix and Bird of Time, John Ellison a modified Paragon, John Miller a Bixler, Roger Balfour an electrified Spirit and a nice Mini Challenger, Terry Beaumont a Maribu and Ian Crosland a typically nicely built tissue covered glider with an electric power pod.



A particular highlight was a Modelair Seeker belonging to Paul Robertson of the Levin club. This model had been built from the Modelair kit way back in the seventies by Paul and his good friend Graham Pauling when they were with the Airforce based at Wigram. The model was dusted off for the Levin event and Graham travelled some distance especially to help Paul fly the model again after it having been in storage for over 40 years. I remember way back seeing the Seeker's designer Angus McDonald fly his prototype Seeker and thought at the time the wing joiners on this elegant model flexed significantly on launch. I was reminded of this feature when seeing Paul's Seeker exhibit the same characteristics on the bungee launch.

Another highlight of the day was the Christmas Lunch put on by Linda Lambess and her team of helpers from the Levin Club. The glider fliers were joined by other Levin members and their families along with Karl and Max Lutz who farm the land and kindly let us fly there.



The Christmas Lunch was exceptionally good. It was hard to believe we were enjoying such fine food in a cow paddock! Well done to all involved! Overall, another successful Levin Glider Fun Fly to see off 2023.

The second Glider Fun Fly at Levin for this summer is scheduled for Saturday 9 March with the wind date being Sunday 10 March. All glider fliers welcome - plan on being there!

Other events coming up.

Russ Johnson memorial Fly in.

Palmerston North Aeroneers.
Colyton.
March 23rd and 24th.



JET MEET Tokoroa
16/17/18 February.

And that's it from me.
As Don would say, 'Fly hard, land soft'.

Steve

PS. The EDGE is being repaired.