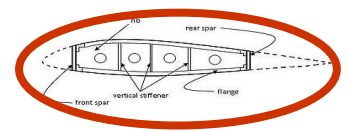


# The Spare Rib News



**The monthly newsletter of the  
Kapiti Aeromodellers Club**

**June 2025**

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



Kapiti Aeromodellers Club group

## Notes from the Presidential Scribe



So we are into the new committee year, and a lot is happening.

One of the drawbacks of filling the role of both President and newsletter Editor, is I don't get a separate Presidents report, so we are immediately down in content.

From a new committee viewpoint, we have held our first meeting, and all committee are keen to contribute to the

success of the club.

I'm pleased to report that our new constitution and re-registration of the club have passed through the powers that be. So all good. That was Wayne's last job as retiring secretary. Thanks Wayne

As with the committee, I challenge members to contribute to the newsletter. There are a few stalwarts who do come through and I would be remiss in not acknowledging the contributions from Stew Cox with his Vintage reports. There are some club members like Crozy who always manage to burst into print on a semi-regular basis. Brent attends many of the Jet meetings at Tokoroa as do a number of our members and has offered to take photos and put together a report when he's up there.

So, think about what you might contribute. You don't have to be a good scribbler. A few photos of your work bench perhaps and a bit of context and I can put the rest together.

Over the summer period, the committee also agreed to hold the 'casual' competition days which have become so popular these past few years. Dates yet to be determined.

At the AGM it was also discussed about having committee members visible and contactable. A committee page has been added at the end of this newsletter.

We are a model flying club and I'm pleased to report there have been quite a few good days lately. Some would say this is one of the better times of the year, so I'm writing this on a windy Saturday and hoping for not much wind tomorrow. We shall see and I'm ever hopeful.

See you all at the strip sometime soon.

Steve

## From the Past

I was busy googling for a new avatar and plugged in 'presidential scribe'.

Lots of things popped up including this photo from the newsletter of December 2021 when a group of us travelled to Fielding to help the Palmerston North Aeroneers

Celebrate their 75<sup>th</sup> birthday.



Paul, James and Jamie putting the world to rights.

## *From John Pfahlert's building bench*

### THE PFAHLERT MONOPLANE

At a recent club committee meeting our new President Steve Hutchinson asked the committee to think about how we might get more content for the monthly newsletter.

Written the day I depart for holiday I hope this brief article might encourage other club members to write about plane builds they are doing.

The idea for a monoplane started in 2020 during Covid. I had a stack of old balsa, a new house in Paraparaumu, and a workshop that needed to see some action in it.

A monoplane seemed like a straightforward project, but I didn't want to just follow a known plan, I wanted to have a go at a self-designed model. My thinking was something that looked roughly like a Fokker Eindecker.

### FUSELAGE CONSTRUCTION



But what size? I had just completed the Leprechaun II kit from Denmark at 103", so that seemed like about the right size. I didn't want to have to buy a larger car!

The above photos show the layup of the main fuselage, with 1/4" square spruce runners and balsa stick. Light ply gussets were added to the frame for strength. Lite ply was used to sheet the front sides and bottom at the front. This holds the wing tube and provides strength for the undercarriage.

The tailplane caused some drama. I started with a rotating elevator, but it seemed to have too much flex. So the one shown is what I went with.

The arched vertical stabiliser and rudder were built up from several thin pieces of spruce laminated together. Robart hinges were used to mount the elevator and rudder.





## WINGS

The choice of rib design was totally random. I own a Majestic Major with under-cambered wings, so I simply enlarged the ribs to twice the size and used that. I wanted a plane that flew slowly and had plenty of wing area. These photos show the sleeve of the 1meter 25mm diameter carbon spar installed and the



fitting of one wing to the frame.

I cut out the ribs by hand, 2 to a sheet. They were then clamped together and sanded to shape on the belt sander, both wing-sets together to ensure they were all the same size. I placed the holes for the wing tube about 1/3rd back from the leading edge and cut slots for the spars about where I thought they should go. (Yes, I hear the genuine club designers cringing!). The photo above shows a 1m steel ruler for scale. The ribs are set at about 3" apart.

The bottom spar is a stick of 12mm by 6mm spruce laminated to a piece of hard balsa of the same dimension. The top and rearward spars are 12 by 12mm hard balsa. The front of the wing is sheeted with 1.5mm sheet.

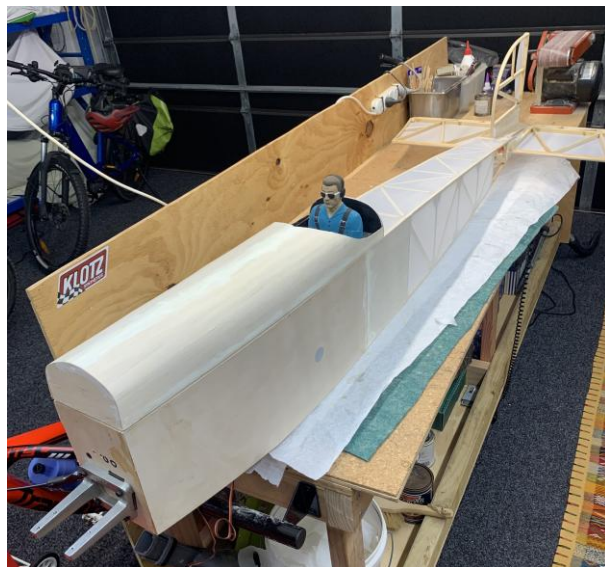


There is 2mm webbing between the top and bottom sets of spars both front and rear. There is a light ply rib glued to the inside end of the wing to hold the spar.

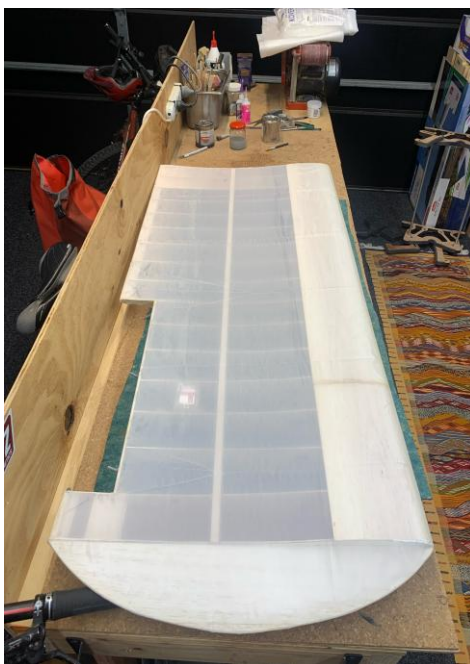
Is it set too low? In hindsight yes, but that's what off the cuff design gives you....

## COVERING THE AIRFRAME

In keeping with trying new things, I decided to cover the airframe with SIG Coverall, a heat shrink polyester fabric. This is done by putting two coats of dope over the whole airframe, sanding between coats. I then laid the fabric over the frame and soaked it on by applying dope through the fabric. Once dry the fabric was heat shrunk.



It comes tight very easily and adds significant strength to the airframe. It's a very easy material to work with.



I made up a cowl for the front out of balsa and covered that as well.

## PAINTING THE AIRFRAME

I have no gear to paint planes and no ability in that area so asked Mike Brider from the club to do so for me. The colours chosen for the fuselage and wing are supposed to resemble a WW1 paint scheme. The main colour is Antique yellow copied off a Solartex colour. The burgundy colour is copied from a WWI Albatross. The blue is intended to look cool....

In an ideal world I'd have bought genuine German manufactured camouflage heat shrink polygon covering as shown in this picture. This is actually a piece of cotton fabric that comes from Spoonflower in the USA. I'm using it for the wing bags to transport the wings.





On a future build I will use the real fabric, a heat shrink Polyester available in scale sizes and various colours from Germany.

## ENGINE

The plane would ideally have a 120 Saito 4 stroke, but the one I own has the exhaust port at the rear and I found the muffler hit the fuselage. Perhaps if I'd designed the plane properly this would have been evident before I started. I have an exhaust which has been made up for me by Mike Bridger, but I broke it during engine run in because I failed to mount it properly. (Sigh)

So, in the meantime the plane has an OS120 2 stroke fitted because this motor is run in and the exhaust has this useful 90-degree adapter which avoids the fuselage. See the photo below for the first install of wings and engine.



## SUMMARY

So the plane came out at around 105" wingspan and weighs in at approximately 6.7kg . That's before fuel and balancing. I suspect the plane will need some nose weight.

In the next instalment of this article, I'll report on fitting the undercarriage, balancing and test flying.

See you all later in June.

John Pfahlert

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## May Club night

I was really appreciative of the turnout for our May club night.

As mentioned in my spiel last month, the park is our home and being integrated into its fabric is important.

We had nearly 30 members on the night. Given that a number of regulars couldn't make it, it was a fantastic turnout!

The night began with Andrew showing the pieces of his jet turbine which had an 'unplanned disassembly' whilst flying recently. We would never normally have the opportunity to see the internals for a jet turbine, but he gave a fascinating breakdown of what happened and how the bits fit together and



how a turbine works. In short, a sized bearing seems to have been the culprit.

John Tesoriero, the Park Ranger, and mobile ranger and our point of contact, Jordan Clear, gave us a talk on the park and their roles in its upkeep.

What was evident from their chat was their passion for the park, its future and that some of the challenges they face are not easily overcome.

Budget constraints are a big thing, and I guess not having an income from farming leases affects this.

Some of the work either underway or coming is the re-alignment of tracks such as the coastal walkway which has suffered from erosion in recent years, the drive to eradicate or control pests in the park (I notice a warning sign about feral animals being hunted in the park) and much more.

The carpark that was to be built outside the building has been simplified in design and is hoped not to be far away.

Rumble strips have been (generously) placed along the road to slow down the idiots. There is work being done to stop dogs being exercised by running loose beside a driven car and much more.

Next year the plan is to bring back public plantings with a much better management structure around preparing and maintaining newly planted areas. Plans for this year were thwarted by the nursery they use having a watering system failure over summer and the loss of many natives destined for the park.

John grew up in Paekakariki and the park was his playground. He's had a varied working life covering supermarkets, dairy farming, working for KCDC in the outdoor space and now at the park. I'm sure his contribution will not be small. They are planning a seasonal newsletter, and we have been invited to contribute.

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## *Future club nights*

Going forward we have the following club nights planned to date.

### **June Club Night**

You don't want to miss this. Neil Schraeder, one of New Zealand's foremost scale modelers, will present and talk about the scale Mosquito he is currently building. This model has been a longtime coming, but Neil has put in a real spurt lately. The engine nacelles are longer than the wingspan of some of our models.

This model has been a bit of a challenge for Neil, and a larger car has been required to transport it.

### **July Club Night**

For July we'll be showing another video from the Classic Cockpits series. In the past we've seen the one on the PBY Cataline and the Vampire.

This one is 'Flying the Avro Lancaster'.

### **August Club Night**

At this stage we will be talking about model inspections and possibly also large model inspections. Details are still being put together.

### **September Club Night**

Stew Cox is going to talk to us about weather forecasting, getting better information, how to interpret it etc.

Still looking for ideas for October and November.

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## *Another photo from the past.*

Andrews popped this one along.

I'm not sure when and if it was the maiden or not, but it was obviously Covid times as the QR code on the fence post is present. And, of course, it's a southerly.



So, I'm not sure if that's a smile of delight on Neil's face or a grimace of anxiety. Still going well this model.

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## *Trip to Peter Randerson for Laser cutting demonstration*

When we know a date, when John P is back, we will let you know.

Steve

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## *Strip changes*

Last month we mentioned some planned changes at the strip and the imminence of earthworks.

The strip to the south has now been levelled with Clayton from Rapid Earthworks doing the job this past week.

The work goes back to the fence, but that is not the planned extension. That was to get enough material to fill the hollows.



We now need this work to settle and the rain we have had since and over the next month or so, will settle the work down. It will then be harrowed to level it. Then it will be rolled.

Following the statements made in last months newsletter, a number of questions have been asked. Firstly, we spoke about not mowing as far north as we currently do, and could it be left as it is. Short answer is yes. Its only mowing. That will be assessed once other work has been done like moving the pilot's box a

little further south and changing the safety fence.

I would also like to point out that a number of pilots have flown a variety of small, big and large aircraft, from around where we expect the pilots box to go. This has been done in both wind directions and no problems experience.

*Steve Hutchison*

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## *Scouts visit*

It's always good to be part of the community. The local area Scout Area Zone Leader reached out to the club earlier in the year to see if we could host scouts as part of a Zone wide activity.

Groups of Scouts, Keas, Cubs accessed the park by walking in from either the Raumati or Paekakariki ends of the park, meeting up at the tram museum.

From then on, throughout the day, we had small and large groups pay us a visit to have a look and ask questions.

I would like to thank all club members who came down to take part or just be part of the action without flying. We had a great turnout of



members. It says a lot for the strength of the club. We had many groups through who all seemed to enjoy themselves, although some of the younger ones seemed to get bored quite easily.

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## *New Weather station*

Members will be aware that we have to upgrade our weather station because of the imminent turning off of the 2G and 3G networks.

This has necessitated a thorough review of what we have, what we want and how to get there.

The simple solution of just upgrading Holfuy is only partly available to us as Holfuy no longer supply stations with camera images. We researched alternative stations and means of supplying much as we currently have. That is, a meaningful weather station and images of the field. We decided what we had was what we wanted. So, we had a chat with Holfuy. They could supply an upgrade to our weather station to maintain what we currently have but minus photos. Further discussion disclosed that if we could supply photos from a separate source, they would, for a modest annual fee, merge with the weather data and display just as we have now.

The work here is providing a separate camera, a wireless router to work on the 4g network, connecting the weather station to the router as well as the camera.

This has also necessitated putting in a solar charging solution large enough to power things even on the dullest days.

The project team of Andrew Farrow, Alistair Haussmann and myself, also decided we would do the job once and do it properly, buying good kit from the start. The upshot is perhaps over-pecd but will operate handsomely. Alistair and Andrew have also done a lot of testing which has proved successful.

At the clubhouse, the old solar systems which were in use many years ago for the electric fence and an ancient weather station have been removed. Nearly all of the new kit has been received and installation will be done in the near future.

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## *Rally 2026*

At the recent committee meeting we discussed the place the rally holds within the club, the successes of previous years and the desire to keep holding it. There was certainly no desire to abandon it.

The decision was taken to once again host a 2-day event, in March.

The realisation that in previous years the growth and busyness of the food tent and the fact Brendan had been plying his trade for nearly 30

years, gave thought to the fact this workload needs to be reduced and the purpose of it examined. Although this last year's rally was cancelled due to inclement weather, a search had been done to try and have a food truck fill this space. This was unsuccessful. Conflicts with much larger events and our size meant it wasn't going to happen.

Going forward, we are planning on doing a sausage sizzle only, just over the lunch period with a roster of volunteers. John Pfahlert has put up his hand to manage this and Stephen Southee will help. So, if you would be available to help for a period, we'll gather some names in the new year. The date has yet to be confirmed, as we are waiting some other dates such as the jet meeting at Tokoroa so we do not conflict.

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## **Levin Vintage - Bob Burling Memorial Vintage Event - Saturday 24 May 2025** **Report by Stew Cox, Photos by Ross Gray**

After postponement from the very rough weekend before, the event was treated to a stunning Levin day. It was sunny with barely a cloud in the sky and the wind was as forecast being under 10 km/hr all day.

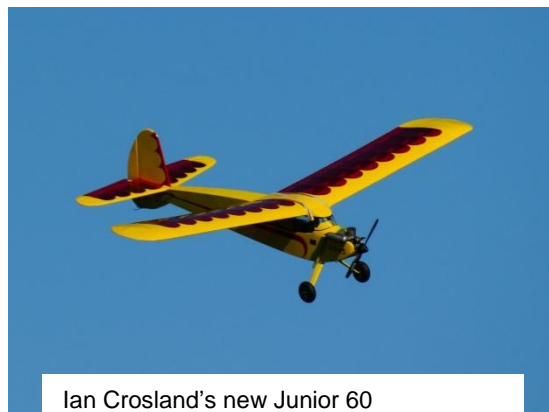
With seven regulars away or unable to attend on the wind date, there was some concern as to how many fliers we would have at the event. We needn't have worried as cars slowly but surely arrived. In the end we had nine fliers with eight recording scores and one sport flying. Even more encouraging was the attendance of a number of spectators including four from

different lower North Island clubs who are keen to get into vintage RC flying. The easiest way into vintage flying is to pick up a second-hand model and these seem to come up quite often at reasonable prices. Ask around and you will likely locate something suitable. Also feel free to contact the writer at [Flierstew@gmail.com](mailto:Flierstew@gmail.com) as I often become aware of vintage RC models looking for a new home.

The event started with Levin President Des Richards welcoming attendees. The Levin Club had located a trophy originally donated by Bob Burling. Des provided some background on Bob and announced that the trophy was being repurposed to be awarded to the winner of Vintage RC Precision at this event each year.

We also spent a few moments of reflection to remember master modeller and popular flier John Ellison from the Kapiti club who passed away in May. John was a regular flier at the Levin vintage events and had flown at Levin as recently as the previous vintage event in February. John will be missed by us all. Many of John's exquisite models have found new homes and will be flown at future Levin events providing a lasting memory of John.

Flying soon got underway from the freshly cut strip and while there was initially a crosswind, it was so light that it had little effect on the flying. Eventually the sea breeze won and there was a light drift down the strip for the rest of the day.



Ian Crosland's new Junior 60



Stew Cox, John Miller and Ian Crosland

Kapiti's Ian Crosland flew a new model which was a very nicely constructed OS25 powered Junior 60. The model looked great and flew very well.

Vintage Precision was again popular with seven competitors. Joe Bradbury of Levin flew his 1940 Viking well to make a perfect score and also record a fly-off time. John Miller from Kapiti and Kevin Daly from Levin came second equal with their Buzzard Bombshells, both making all their times but missing one spot landing. Greg Findon of

Palmerston North Aeroneers flew very well with his 1950 electric Tomboy coming fourth despite this design not qualifying for any age bonus points. Stu Hubbard from Ashhurst also flew well to make the spot on all three flights of his electric Junior 60 but was light on time on one of his flights. The writer landed a bit fast on his second flight damaging the wing mount enough to curtail flying his New Ruler for the rest of the day.

It was decided to trial a variation on Vintage Duration to encourage participation by those fliers whose engines were less powerful. After some discussion with fliers at the pilot briefing, it was decided to reduce the IC and E Duration maxes by a minute to make the class more attractive to those with models that have a limited climb. This was successful in that it did encourage two fliers to have a go at IC Duration that hadn't participated in the past. Despite there being very little evidence of thermal activity in the cloudless sky, John Miller did find helpful air on two of his flights and found the spot on all three flights to produce a perfect score with his 1941 Kerswap with the revised format. Stu Hubbard also flew very well in E Duration making the spot on all three flights and only dropping one flight with his very nice 1936 Miss America.

Ian Munro from Wellington recorded scores in A Texaco and Open Texaco using diesel powered aircraft in each class. In A Texaco, Ian's Mills 1.3 powered 1940 Simplex flew consistently well but the lack of thermal activity limited his flights to around the 8 minute mark. In Open Texaco Ian used his TD Coupe now powered by a vintage ETA 5 diesel engine which has a very interesting pedigree. The side port 5cc ETA diesel was designed and produced by Charles Bedford and his oldest son Eric in Watford in the late 1940's.





Ian Crosland and John Miller hard at work

Charle's younger son Ken left the family engineering business in the early 1950's and was responsible for designing and producing the famous ETA 29 glo engines and equally well known ETA 15 diesels. Unfortunately on this occasion the ETA 5 diesel didn't want to run for extended periods and Ian's Open Texaco times weren't up to his normal level. Between Ian's and Paul Robertson's models, it was great to have the whiff of diesel fuel wafting around the pits and adding to the atmosphere. We had a break in the flying around the middle of the day and enjoyed the sausage sizzle prepared by Des, Paul and Joe along with some excellent baking provided by Des's wife Stephanie. This added to the relaxed nature of the day and all seemed to enjoy a sit and a chat in the sunshine.

Overall the participation and standard of flying at the Levin Vintage events continues to be good. It was notable that over 60% of the flights recorded made the spot and a number of the missed spots were close.



Stew Cox' New Ruler doing its thing



Ian Crosland and John Miller. The terrible twins

The last of the three annual vintage events at

Levin is the John Selby Memorial on Saturday 23 August. We look forward to a good turnout at that event with more of our regulars hopefully able to attend and ideally a few newcomers to join in the fun and have a go.

## Results

### Vintage Precision

1.	Joe Bradbury	Viking	600 + 169
2=	John Miller	Buzzard Bombshell	580
2=	Kevin Daly	Buzzard Bombshell	580
4	Greg Findon	Tomboy	572
5	Stu Hubbard	Junior 60	559
6	Ian Crosland	Junior 60	532
7	Stew Cox	New Ruler	400

### Vintage IC Duration (3 minute max)

1.	John Miller	Kerswap	600
2.	Kevin Daly	Buzzard Bombshell	516
3.	Ian Crosland	Junior 60	327
4.	Joe Bradbury	Viking	239

### Vintage E Duration (4 minute max)

1.	Stu Hubbard	Miss America	774
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### Vintage A Texaco

1.	Ian Munro	Simplex	1455
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### Open Texaco

1.	Ian Munro	TD Coupe	498
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Kapiti Aeromodellers' Club Committee 2025/2026 year.

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