



From the President - December 2014.

It has been a busy couple months for me with the landing fee agreement with the Council taking up a bit of time. We now have thirty eight members who have committed to the plan. If you want to be in for much cheaper fees next year then register with me NOW.

At the November committee meeting we discussed the Christmas Party and we decided to go out for it this year. It was be a pay as you go but the club subsidized each person by \$10 .The dinner was held on the 7th December at Caesar's in Northwood , 548 Main North Road at 6.00pm.

Thanks to John for a great event.

There was a great turnout of 47 people. The fare was very good and the hospitality first class. I would recommend Caesar's as a great place for a better than the average meal and venue. Everyone seemed to have a great time with pre dinner drinks and a good choice of food. *[Editor's note: check out the photos at www.crac.co.nz/photo-galleries]*

The new hangar continues to be a saga of missed deadlines by the contractor and when it will happen is anyone's guess. Deane has been pulling his hair out and will be receiving a free toupee from the club!

The weather these last few months has been terrible. More like June-July than summer. It will come right soon.

The Pathfinder has had its 20hr check after fitting new heads to the VW motor. Wayne fitted SS valves as well. Climb out performance is much improved with closes on 1000 ft/min.

December Highlights

- Very successful Christmas Party at Caesar's Family Bar and Restaurant.
- New Hangar Construction commenced, framed up with completion possibly late Jan/Early Feb. See article on second-to-last page.
- Christchurch Tower visit by CRAC members
- Club owned Aircraft Landing Fee arrangement with Waimakariri District Council commenced.
- Club Members' Aircraft deal will start from next April, see the President's report for details
- **NO COMMITTEE MEETING IN JANUARY** as usual.
- Have a CRAC'er Christmas everyone!





I have also installed a new tail wheel leaf spring which snapped. Wayne did a tricky bit of welding close to the fabric and it is ready to go when the weather and my time allows.



The committee has had a couple of changes. Steve Amstad and Caroline Travella have resigned due to work and lack of free time. We welcome Graeme Main and Doug Anderson who are both so dedicated and enthusiastic about the club. Even when not on the committee they are always doing things for the club. Thanks to you both for your support of the club.

Things seem to be running well with our new tenants and I hear only good things. Thanks to everyone who has welcomed the Air NZ club to ours.

Mike's Pathfinder (top) is quite easy on the eye, but his new ride (shared with Graeme and Ken) isn't too foul either!

Presidential Pastimes

When I am not doing Presidential things, flying, being a carpenter, electrician or at work I sometimes find the energy to do a couple of things I have done all my life. That's making model plastic kits and flying radio controlled aircraft.

I would like to share some recent episodes with both of these.

Airfix 1/24 scale De Havilland Mosquito

A few years ago Airfix introduce this kit to much fanfare as it was the biggest most complex aircraft kit Airfix had



produced. I have built hundreds of Airfix kits over the years and they have always been 'alright' nothing to get too excited about. But they led the way for many years.

So when I saw this kit I was impressed by the undertaking of such a large kit and thought that being an Airfix it might not be that good. So now with Google I could find out. I read a few reviews and they all said what a great kit it was.

I found one in Christchurch at a huge price of \$350 and quickly lost interest. But I kept an eye on it and when it can down to \$250 I bought it. Great winter night's project.

With failing eyes for small detail I bought a magnifying glass as well and got started.

I was not disappointed in the kit. It was very accurate according to photos of the real thing with the attention to accuracy very impressive especially in the cockpit area.

I chose a different colour scheme and bought all the Tamiya paints. Work took nearly two years on and off (the Alpi took only two years as well).



Crew of two away for the next sortie



I have a few photos taken with a cell phone, they don't do it justice.

It was fun to build and research the colours and additional detail not in the kit. It makes a great dust collector now!



Merlin engine and Undercarriage detail

The other passion I have had over many years is **RC aircraft**, as do a lot of our club members.

Things have changes a lot over the years with the rapid advance of electric technology and better batteries. I bought a radio and had a look on the web for an easy plane to get back into flying. I chose a 2.2 m motor glider with normal 3 axis controls and flaps. I have had heaps of flights with this with no dramas.

I then progressed to a F15 ducted fan which was very underpowered and now is nailed to the wall in the garage after it nosedived after an aborted roll. No Power!!

Next was the 1.4M Stuka



Great model, flies really well and gets about 12minutes on a 2200ma/hr battery.

It has lights as well as good looks. Have had a lot of flights with little damage except a dog trying to chew the wing tip off!

But to really get my heart pumping I bought a 1.4m Mosquito.



This is an amazing unit. Two counter rotating props, tons of grunt, retractable undercarriage, flashing lights and amazing details. It makes the typical twin pulsating sound and just looks fantastic in the air. Only drawback is the very limited air time on the 2200mA/hr battery, only about 5 minutes. It can be a handful but what a buzz!!

Mike Sheffield

Editor's note: Since it seems to be a Mosquito themed issue, here are some photos from KA114's Airshow debut which I attended at Ardmore in September 2012, for your entertainment!

I can't help noticing that Mike's beautiful electric Mosquito has the bomber version's nose and the fighter version's flat armoured windscreen, the opposite of the Mosquitoes on the '633 Squadron' movie!





The Real Dangers of Lithium Ion Batteries

(as per an article in Recreational Flying – 21/10/14)

Graeme Main

There was a recent fatal accident in Australia (WA) caused directly by one of these batteries. The battery stored in the tail boom (it was a pusher) had overheated and ignited unknown to the pilot, softening the fibreglass resin which caused tail boom failure and a loss of control from 1500 ft. The pilot had already sensed control problems and had reduced power in preparation for a descent and landing in a suitable paddock. He didn't make it.



A local farmer who witnessed the accident drove rapidly through fences in his fire-fighting 1200 lit tanker truck to render assistance. After expending the whole water load on the burning aircraft he stated that the fire kept erupting and he couldn't extinguish it! They later found during investigation that the flame being ejected from the battery had contacted the nearby engine case and had melted a hole through the alloy case as if someone had used a cutting torch.

There was also an emergency landing in SE Qld after a battery overheated and filled the cockpit of a Zenith 601 with toxic white smoke. Fortunately the aircraft wasn't that high and there were suitable fields below.

A local highly-qualified electrical engineer commented as follows:

- Lithium-ion batteries are being sold across the counter as a replacement for lead-acid batteries – **which they are not.**
- They are not compatible with any engines utilising permanent magnet type charging systems (i.e. Rotax or Jabiru)
- If used with these types of charging systems the crucial time for an overheat is about 90 minutes.

- If the battery overheats and ignites it is virtually impossible to extinguish the fire with normal mediums such as water or foam. This is because they burn at an extremely high temperature and chemically create their own oxygen which continues to support rapid re-ignition.

So there you have it. I am certainly no expert, but the experiences noted above are enough for me – no way would I put one of those batteries in my plane!

Graeme Main

New Hangar under construction

As mentioned in the President's report, the new number one hangar is under construction. These photos were taken on 22/12/14. Completion may be late January/Early February. It is anticipated that the concrete aprons will be completed by CRAC members under the supervision of a suitably qualified person.



Deane's hard work finally coming to fruition!



Christchurch Tower Visit

Another very successful and enjoyable trip to the Christchurch Airport Control Tower was held in early December, thanks to **Buzz Harvey**.

No photography was allowed in the tower or the cab at the top, but what a view!

If you ever get a chance to get on one of these rare and over-subscribed events, take the opportunity.



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Upcoming Events

6th-8th February 2015 (Waitangi Weekend) there will be a **Fly-In and camping weekend at Oxford strip**, with a trip to Ashburton to visit the Sport Aircraft Great Plains Fly-In.

31 January 2015 - **Healthy Bastard's Bush Pilot Champs at Omaka**.

Easter 2015 – **Classic Fighters Omaka**

June **2015 Brass Monkey to Haast and Karamea**

Club Captain **Paul Godfrey** will organise some local flying events that will be run with short notice (weather dependent) so keep your eye on your club e-mails

Thanks to everybody who have contributed to the newsletter!

Next Newsletter

- Paul Godfrey's report on Flying the Rail Trail
- John McCaul on how to get your lawns mown
- And much more...

New Members 2014

Usually the club publishes the names of new members in each newsletter to welcome them on board. However this year has been a bit of a struggle for the Newsletter, so here's the omnibus edition! I've tried to go back through the list but please forgive me if I've missed anyone.

Welcome aboard to:

Mark Saunders
Benjamin Robinson
Peter Straw
Alex Mason
Roger Read
Dylan Wear
Robert Johnson
Byrge Sæther
Basil Buwalda
Hugo Handiside
Colin Ashby
James Lowerson
Volkmar Wollenweber