



REGULAR NEWS SHEET FROM THE MUSEUM OF THE
MUSEUM OF AVIATION (KAPITI) INCORPORATED

May 2025

Issue No. 163

Once again it is time for our Annual General Meeting. Please put 10 am on **Saturday 24 May 2025** into your calendar. Following the rules of our constitution, any formal motions must be in the hands of the Secretary at least 14 days prior to the meeting. Please also consider coming forward to join the Committee as we are getting a bit thin on the ground. We will gather for a cuppa at 9.30 prior to the meeting.

A reminder also that subscriptions are now due. Please make sure you are financial before the AGM. \$30 into the bank account or cash to the Secretary or Treasurer please.

Thanks to the grant received from the Kapiti Coast District Council's Museums and Heritage Development Fund, we have been able to develop a programme to upgrade our displays to a high-quality, professional standard. We have started with our Schneider Trophy Racers display.



Thanks also to Kim Wingate from Klear Graphics and Graphics Garage for printing the panel.

This team is currently working with us on upgrading the Paraparaumu Airport History panels in our East Room so more changes soon.

Paraparaumu (Kapiti Coast) Airport Meteorological Office

A Brief History, by Keith Mackersy

The New Zealand Meteorological Service (NZMS), set up a Meteorological Office (Met Office) at Paraparaumu Airport in 1947 in the building now occupied by the Kapiti Aviation Museum. This building and the old control tower alongside, are included in an Aviation Heritage zone on the Kapiti District Council's District Plan.



*Paraparaumu Meteorological Office alongside the ATC Tower (1947)
Photo: Whites Aviation, ex Alexander Turnbull Library*

The Met Office carried out regular surface weather observations (wind, visibility, precipitation, cloud, temperature and pressure) and, from 1950, balloons were launched to observe upper winds (direction and speed). The balloons were tracked visually using a theodolite until October 1984, when they were tracked using a mobile radar facility.

A forecast office was established in the Met Office from 1947 until December 1959 to supply aviation forecasts to National Airways Corporation (NAC), which had to transfer its flight operations from Rongotai to Paraparaumu while Rongotai was being upgraded to Wellington International Airport

In 1987, the Met Office moved to a new site located in Tahurangi Road on the western side of the Paraparaumu (Kapiti Coast) Airport, and it was named the Meteorological Observatory. This is the current location of the Observatory, which carries out regular weather observations including upper air soundings. The Observatory also includes a fully equipped Workshop to install, maintain and repair New Zealand's 200+ automatic weather stations, ten weather radars, a lightning detection network, an upper air network, and provides support for a growing network of weather infrastructure throughout the Pacific. In 2022/23, the Observatory building was refurbished and extended to provide for greater MetService resilience, including the facility to provide a backup forecasting service in the event the National Forecast Office in Wellington could not function for any reason.



In July 1992, Meteorological Service of New Zealand Ltd was established as a State Owned Enterprise, known simply as MetService, and is NZ's national meteorological service.

THE BROWN ARCHIVE: KAPITI DISTRICTS AERO CLUB TRIAL FLIGHT:

During the second week of April we were fortunate to host my daughter Mel, husband Danny and grandson Harry from Brisbane. On their last visit in 2023 I took Harry to “Steam Inc” at Paekakariki where he was given the opportunity to experience a cab ride in steam locomotive Ja1271 and to try his hand at fireman duties in shoveling coal into the firebox.

So what could I offer a 14 year old on this visit? Yes! A trial flight in a KDAC aircraft. No problems in booking a flight, just a phone call away. Secrecy was the name of the game and Harry was only told on the morning of the flight. We all rocked up at the Aero Club just before 2pm to be greeted by Flying Instructor Sam Andrews whose pleasant disposition soon put us all at ease.

First up, Sam ushered us into the lounge for an initial briefing. Using a model aircraft Sam explained the flight controls and the input effect of them on the attitude of the aircraft. A large picture of the aircraft’s instrument panel also added to the understanding. Harry commented that this introductory session made it so much easier when confronted with the actual aircraft situation.

Next it was life jackets on as we had opted for a flight around Kapiti Island, and then out onto the apron and across to the Piper Archer II ZK-MWM. Harry took the pilot’s left hand seat whilst Mel and self sat in the back. Again Sam gave us a briefing re the instruments and other flight controls . (Great to have a basic instrument panel and not a glass cockpit!) Next, start up, check, permission granted from the Control Tower, taxi onto the runway and up, up and away!



It was delightful to watch Sam give Harry further control instructions and then to give him hands on experience at the controls.

Meanwhile Mel and I enjoyed viewing the changing aspects of Paraparaumu and Wai-kanae before heading out to sea and across to Kapiti Island to enjoy the stunning views of the steep cliff faces of the seaward side of the island. Then over to the Pukerua Bay / Paekakariki area to commence let down for a smooth grass runway landing.

What a wonderful experience for Harry – he was so chuffed about the whole exercise.

Problem – what do I put in place for his next visit to Grandpa Stu?

FLASHBACK

Almost exactly 20 years ago Museum members organised a day trip to Ohakea Air Force Base and were shown through the hangars and other facilities. It was a wonderful day out, made even better as the Airtrainer aerobatic team did a rehearsal exercise overhead during our time there.



It must be time we made another visit to Ohakea!

Photo credits: Wilson Lattey

Planespotting

Unfortunately Cyclone Tam put paid to the biennial Omaka Easter Airshow this year, but Stu's planespotter niece, Aileen Hiley in Blenheim, managed to gather a few shots of early arrivals or local resident aircraft.



YAK 3Ua



Nanchung CJ-6A



Waco UOC. ZK-AEL
Based in Blenheim

Same aircraft in
1939, same pose,
same colour scheme,
(same venue?)

*From our archives,
Photographer unknown*



PLANESPOTTING. Pictures by Stu



Cessna U206F

*Owned by Westland Air Charter Ltd,
Picton*



Kawasaki BK117 B-2

*Owned by Search & Rescue Services
Ltd, Taupo*

Upcoming Meeting Programme

Tuesday 29 April	9.30 am	Open forum
Tuesday 6 May	9.30 am	Video, Opening of Mangere Airport
Tuesday 13 May	9.30 am	Ernie James, Agricultural Aviation Experiences
Tuesday 20 May	9.30 am	Open forum
Saturday 24 May	10.00 am	Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 27 May	9.30 am	Open forum

MUSEUM HOURS:

SUNDAYS 1pm to 4pm

PRIVATE AND GROUP VISITS BY ARRANGEMENT

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