



## AUCKLAND REGIONAL MICROLIGHT AIRCRAFT CLUB

[www.armac.info](http://www.armac.info)

APRIL 2006

**CLUB NIGHT:** 1930 hours Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2006

Preceded by Committee meeting 1830 hours

Visitors are most welcome - refreshments available

**VENUE:** Newmarket Club, 13 Teed Street

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Editor	Steve Williamson	<a href="mailto:steve.dale@clear.net.nz">steve.dale@clear.net.nz</a>	(09) 2590774

### **NOT-THE-PREZ SEZ:**

Steve has asked for a prez sez but since I have resigned as prez this is just a report from a humble committee member. Mind you I'm not sure how things have changed since resigning as president. Andrew should be writing this but he's doing his best to avoid the job.

The club would appear to be in good shape, we have at least 6 student pilots all keen and rearing to go, Chris and I have both been doing our bit in that regard.

The website seems to be working extremely well, in fact almost all of the new members have found the club through the website, I keep updating it as time provides.

Mercer is continuing to be very good for the non student members based there also, with pilots flying to Thames, Waihi and Raglan already. We must organise a club day to one of these destinations before winter gets a full grip. (Eh Andrew!)

We had a short working bee the other week which was just a quick clean up of the hanger, some rubbish was thrown out and the floor was swept by Brian and Iain (one of our new students) nothing like an initiation ceremony.

There is a lot of keenness to proceed with the new hanger unfortunately I have been unable to contact Jim although we have played phone tag. The first stage will be to form the pad but this will require two containers to be moved so contact with Jim is reasonably important. I have managed to tally up all the steel on site and measure up the existing building so now I can draw it up and get an engineers opinion.

Next meeting will be the presentation of certificates for the previous year and if time provides I'll give a talk on aerofoils and wings so please come along.

*Anton Lawrence  
Not the President.*

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**Letter FROM the Editor:**

Greetings. I have recently taken over from Martin Watson as the TARMAC editor and am still finding my feet.

If you have any articles that may be of interest to members, know of any upcoming events or would like to regale us with tales of memorable flights, please e-mail them to me for inclusion in the newsletter. All contributions gratefully accepted.

*Steve Williamson*

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**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION & RENEWAL FORMS**

These forms are now on the ARMAC website under "Pilot".

A copy is also attached at the back of this newsletter.

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**LOGANS FLY-IN PARAKAI : A WEEK OF ADVENTURE  
(Submitted by Bob)**

I fly NORDO, not by choice or costs involved, but simply that I cannot hear incoming calls in the B20. Probably the high speed 2 stroke is alive with static electricity and partly it could be that I do not have a trained ear for the incoming communication with high background noise.

Recently I have teamed up with a mate who has a more powerful machine, we fly together, my friend doing the radio work. It has been a new experience to fly through broadcast zones and has cut flying times in the northland area - all great fun.

Because of possible sensitivities raised in this yarn, we will call my mate George. It was our intention to attend Logan's fly-in at Parakai. Apart from the fact that my B20 had become sometimes a little hard to start, it was flying well, following its rebuild

The day before the fly-in, I went around the machine, oiled moving parts and gave it a good look over. I loaded up maximum 45 litres of fuel (first full load since its rebuild) and late in the day went for a test fly, a local beach patrol.

During the rebuild, I fitted a new Lexan windscreen. It might have been that the company had supplied lighter material, but the new one had a tendency in some circumstances to belly in. As a result I installed a top bracket. Side bellying still continued on lesser occasion, but the screen was well secured. On my beach patrol trial flight it was too late in the day to spot any pretty bikinis, but I noted as I turned, the screen came in slightly from prop wash.

A final check on my return I noted stress marks around the top fixture and decided to add additional brackets to secure the windscreen. As light was fading, planned to complete the job next morning prior to departure.

Saturday arrived and of course battery drill low in charge, wrong pop rivets etc. George arrives and my concerns rose.

Eventually job gets done, running a bit late, all set, but the bloody engine won't start. George instructs to "get rid of the air filter", he then hand primes it and the 447 bursts into life. "Never did like those air cleaners". A change of plan that we will fly to Dargaville for lunch first. The new route takes us directly over the Whangarei Harbour, a new experience for me.

The usual grand lunch and chatterbox at Dargaville. George instructs that I take off first and head for the coast. "What do we do at the Kaipara heads"? "Just fly over them" - "Wow!" "I will wait a while and catch you up down the coast" "See you at Logan's" I pick up the newspaper and note full tide at Poutu Point 11.05a.m. It will be in full flight out when we get there at 2.15 p.m.

Nearing the coast I experience a momentary surge in power. What the hell was that? I am not too worried there are paddocks below and the continuous beach a half-mile ahead. I raise the nose a shade and continue, everything seems normal. George and his passenger overtake me down the beach. As the Kaipara Heads appear, although my mate continues at 500 feet, I climb to 1600 and establish a more inner heads crossing. All this costs speed and George continues on his merry way. Only two fishing boats but some distance away. The view is spectacular, but I note the current and tend to look away from the huge rollers breaking on the sand bar further out. I realise I am clutching the control stick firmly. The minutes pass slowly but eventually I am on the other side - phew!

George continues his path through the forest, I follow, but the distance between us is considerable, All is well, I am sure he will do a U turn before we get to Parakai, but I wonder, for I realise how difficult it is to spot even accompanying aircraft. Eventually he fades from view. I approach Parakai and note other aircraft in the vicinity, but no George. I maintain 1650 feet, the airstrip comes into view. To my horror I can see parked planes lining most of the strip. I count seven planes in the circuit, three others outside and George taxiing on the ground. Gosh! I see a float plane in the circuit. He might be more my speed, but he has two behind him.

Very quickly I decide that flying nordo this is no place for me. For goodness sake relax my grip on the stick once again. I withdraw forthwith, heading north up the inner side of the Kaipara. "O.K. lets calm down and think things through." My first thought is to find a paddock, put down and wait until traffic on the field has subsided, then phone Brian the controller and ask him when I would arrive overhead? I view a couple of potential ones, then remember that while everything looks grand from above, reality of unseen drains, cattle hoof holes and other hidden obstacles sometimes exist. More over with other flying aircraft mooching about I want to maintain my extra height for a while. I remember, that in my research to find an alternative to Pikes Point, I had walked over a strip out in the boonies at Breach Point. It would be about 20 miles up the coast. The only thing is that with fuel as a consideration, it may preclude me from flying back to Parakai when traffic has subsided. I chew these options over but decide that safety is the paramount consideration to all else and head for Breach Point.

The strip is out the back of a large farm with the capacity to milk over 800 cows. Presently they are milking 450 and those were crammed into yards. Not wishing to upset them, I over flew at 1000 feet and make my high angle approach from 850 feet power right off. No problem, an engine out type approach, which is my current practice. At the round out I want some power to stabilise for a gentle touch down and the blessed 447 dies completely. The Bantam connects firmly. The undercarriage has taken heavy knocks previously. I disembark and have a look around, all is well. Only 12 litres of fuel. Could make it back - well maybe!

"Hello Brian its Bob, I have put down at Breach Point." "I am busy directing traffic; your reception is poor, what beach?" - dropped call!

"Hello Brian it is Bob, I am at Breach Point B-R-E-A-C-H." "Where on earth is that?" Just then there is a crunch behind me. I look around and Bantam is lying over - the bloody undercarriage leg has broken - a delayed reaction - for goodness sake. "Brian the @#%&?! undercarriage has collapsed!"

Dropped call

I am sure that if I was holding the control stick at that time, I wouldn't have been squeezing it, I would have broken the bloody thing off.

I slumped down on an embankment. How could this day I had looked forward to have gone so wrong? There were ongoing challenges of where to from here? I was mentally drained, disappointed and angry.

Two days later I had my short-term stress put into real perspective when a friend phoned to tell me that following her shoulder operation, his wife had a reaction to the anaesthetic and was in intensive care. She was to die three days later. That experience brought me back to earth with a jolt. My worries were indeed small.

I walked the long distance to the cow shed. I was so relieved when a commanding voice called off some challenging dogs. "Where have you come from?" "I'm Scott."

"Well it's a long story." I explained I had off loaded spanners for overnight sleeping gear etc. he wandered off. When he reappeared he had a selection of odd spanners in a tin box "Best we can do." "And use the Gator, it's a long way back to the strip" It took me a while to work out how to start it - out of gear - brake on.

I commenced taking the wings off. I wondered how I would get out of here, home was sure a long way and anyhow Ann didn't drive. I phoned daughters, no one home. I had no other phone numbers with me. More decisions, where do I sleep? Cowshed? Where was the farmhouse? I wasn't at all hungry but my mouth had been parched dry since arriving overhead at Parakai.

My mind was still going flat out sometime later, when I noted a station wagon approaching. I assumed it would be the farmer looking to see where the Gator was. It took me a moment to realise that the smiling face was Anton Lawrence. I can only describe the relief as being stuck in the middle of the Sahara Desert and a Lion Breweries tanker arriving alongside. Anton had interrupted picking up his family from the Parakai hot pools to come and get' me. My spirits soared through to 20,000 feet. We soon had the Bantam lashed down and Anton took me back to Parakai airfield. A call of concern from Chris Todd who has just landed back at Mercer was welcome.

Sipping cold beers with country and western band playing nearby, life took on a new meaning.

The next day Brian Millett re arranged his schedule and drove me all the way back to Whangarei Heads. Under his guidance we load a B22 undercarriage leg which although slightly damaged would stand the return trip O.K. We construct an X frame and return, working until nighttime overtakes us. Full moon looked great.

Day Three unknown to me Allan Jessop arranges a rescue sortie to Breach Point. Brian Millett and Grant Corlett arrive in Challengers from Warkworth. Plugs are checked, replaced and Allan discovers the idle adjustment almost closed, the likely cause of hard starting and certainly the cold stall on my approach at Breach Point. They report in that evening and I am blown away by their endeavour.

Day Four Predicted winds S.W. 25 knots gusting 35. We bring our intended trip to Auckland forward a day after a sleepless night, make an early morning trip. The airstrip is very

exposed and the B20 has lost its covers and rocking around on the tie-downs. We secure things firmly. Difficult in the high winds.

Day Five make my peace with farm owner Walter Thompson. He had seen the Bantam when he flew to Breach Point in his Aero Commander. Airstrip paddock closed to cows meantime - "Thanks".

Day Seven Saturday Allan Jessop arrives at our strip and flies me directly to Breach Point. A wonderful flight over the Bryderwyns, a grand vista, inspecting all the inlets and estuaries. We rendezvous with Brian Millett and Grant Corlett who fly in. Grant has a slight mishap when his wheel-spat finds a stone. A wonderful thermos flask brew on the strip before we depart for a celebratory lunch at Dargaville then fly home.

The Parakai fly-in turned into a week of adventure for me. It was an education in so many ways, many you would have picked up. Carrying tools probably more important than sleeping gear. Having a phone number list. Wearing adequate shoes, not to mention the many other things. In review though I was happy with the decisions made and if it happened again, I would change little. It added a huge feeling of gratitude and warmth to those mates who assisted me along that adventure. It underlined the value of our flying fraternity.

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Thought for the day:

Flying is not dangerous; *crashing* is dangerous.

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