



NAAG



Northern Adventure Aviation Group

Volume 3 No.03

Waiheke Island Trip

The NAAG have been on a couple of outings over the past few weeks but our trip to Raglan on the 27th January was hardly a trip to write about since we have been there so many times before. What was significant was the fact that we had 27 for lunch who had arrived in 14 aircraft! It turned out to be so popular that I had to ring the Pub beforehand and tell them they should expect 25+ for lunch. The other event a few of us attended was a trip to the Jetsprints at Meremere. There being no place to

Awaiting the arrival of the last of the team at Raglan Airfield.

Spectacular rooster tails from jetsprint boats at Meremere.

land our planes meant a drive for those of us who went. Now this is an exciting motorsport to watch with 12'6" boats powered with anything from 500 – 1500 HP! The G forces through some of the turns must be phenomenal not to mention the acceleration forces. One boat managed to leave the course and flew, coming to rest against a fence 200 metres away from where it first launched out of the water!

With weather looking messy all week a planned trip to Waiheke Island had to be moved back to the next week. Finally, Tuesday March 1st was looking like the best day of a week of more unsettled weather. I sent out an email to the group on Monday morning knowing it was very short notice for anyone wanting to come who might have plans to change. We had 15 respond to say they would like to be a part of the day. I contacted both the rental Scooter Company

Lindsay Brown with his SportsCruiser.

and Bus Company with our proposed numbers and began finalising the last of some other small details. The Tuesday morning saw me fielding calls from those in the Waikato saying they were grounded by fog! This involved 5





people so I hoped it would clear quickly so I wouldn't have to amend numbers again. For the rest of us we were all in the air in good time and made our way around the Firth of Thames for the final few miles over water to Waiheke Island. The airstrip is well hidden on the island which makes it quite difficult to work out where to approach from. Of course we all have GPS, which is an invaluable tool, to simplify map reading while trying to get the aeroplane into a landing configuration but still can't find the airstrip! Being first to arrive, I stood on the end of the strip and took photos of each of the traffic arrivals. Despite the difficulty of an up sloping strip, no one had any problems with their landings.

Bill & Sue Sisley landing at Waiheke



With a bit of juggling we soon had all aircraft packed into the small parking area. With landing fees paid, hats and cameras tucked under our arm we boarded our waiting bus. There was just one slight problem. We were missing three of the team. Moments later I got a call from Trevor Barrett saying the fog had finally cleared and he was on his way. The bus driver agreed to collect him separately as he was still 40 minutes away. It is over 11 kilometres from the airfield to the Matiatia Ferry Terminal, where the rental car company is located, which took approximately 20 minutes travelling time. Processing all riders took another 40 minutes by the time all driver licenses were photo copied, signatures collected, helmet sizes chosen, a rider briefing and finally a short test ride on grass to make sure we could handle the bikes okay. During this time I received a text message from Trevor saying he was 10 minutes away from his arrival onto the island so I rang our bus driver, Rod and sent him up to the Reeve Airfield to collect Trevor and his wife.

The 'convoy' of unsettled teenagers.



Setting off in convoy we must have looked quite a site with many along the footpaths stopping to watch us go by. First port of call was the shopping centre in Oneroa, for coffee and to also allow time for Trevor to catch up. We were now 14 in number with Bill Izard the only one not able to make it due to the fog keeping him grounded at Kihikihi.



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We worked our way around the island in a clockwise fashion with a first stop at Palm Beach. Waiheke is privileged to have great beaches every few kilometres. Making our way to Onetangi we stopped for lunch at the Seafront Bar and Grill. It was quite amusing to be able to park 7 scooters and one motorbike into one car parking space. There was room for all of our scooters but the others had already parked elsewhere before they realised what I was trying to do.

The place was really busy but something that will stay etched in my mind was that during our time here the 2 minute silence for Christchurch was observed. At the appropriate time Trevor Barrett called

This sun, the air, the food and easy parking.

everyone to their feet to stand silent for the two minutes. It was quite moving to hear the otherwise noisy atmosphere of the cafe change to one of complete silence.

During the lunch break, I had someone come and massage my shoulders! I wondered if this was all part of the service but noticed that no one else was receiving the same treatment. Turning around I realised it was my 'Island' girlfriend, Pauline Rae! I had met Pauline several years earlier at a Mannatech event and discovering she worked for the Waiheke Rental Car Company I then got the idea of hiring scooters. Through Pauline we were able to get a discount on our scooter hire. It happened to be her day off but she had spotted all the bikes outside the cafe and realised it would be us. I asked what attractions we should



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Our collection of yellow and black Bumble Bees gather at Stony Bay.



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visit while on the island and one of the places she suggested was that we should go to the top of Trig Hill Road. We were not disappointed. Spectacular views in all directions right across to Auckland City with the Sky Tower clearly visible in the distance. We lined up all the bikes on the reserve and took our own series of photos. It was hard to get everyone on their bikes at the same time as each person ran back to take their own series of photos. The result was something similar to Anne Giddies work where she photographs babies in pots and other unusual positions.

The line up of yellow and black bikes was not something you would expect to see every day! Coupled with all riders wearing mushroom shaped helmets we made quite a picture! Bob Byal got many excellent shots of us riding along several of the roads with headlights blazing. All the bikes were closely matched in speed and power although the black bikes were ever so slightly faster which added to the fun when getting to the hills and finding oneself were slowly overtaken.

We had whiled away several hours of riding and so it was time to head back to base. We dropped the scooters back and wandered over to the Matiatia Ferry Terminal. The terminal has recently had a makeover and is now of a very high standard.

Our Jaguar Shuttles bus arrived at the terminal to take us back on the final part of the journey to the airfield. The planes sat forlornly in the semi circle as we had left them patiently waiting for their masters return. The 15 knot northerly blowing on our return necessitated an uphill take off. None of the aircraft had any difficulty getting airborne and within minutes we were skipping across the water back to our respective bases. We had such a blast and for those that missed it I am sure most of us would be happy to do it all again in the not too distant future. Maybe with petrol prices raising to \$4.00 per litre shortly we might all be riding scooters soon and the novelty worn off!? No that \$4.00 is not a mistake... sadly it's a fairly certain prediction!

Safe flying,

Cliff
McChesney



Cliff McChesney
Operations Director

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Curious Waiheke Island long necked sheep!



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More Photos of the N.A.A.G. Riders that Enjoyed Waiheke Island

