

Aero Club showcases *Tecnams at open day*

A crowd of around 400 people took the chance to learn more about the Nelson Aero Club during its open weekend on 13 and 14 May 2006.

Chief Flying Officer Marc Brogan said the open weekend drew a very interested and enthusiastic response and a number of new students had signed up for pilot training as a result of it.

The event was also an opportunity to publicly launch the club's new Tecnam P2002JF aircraft, which have been added to its training fleet.

The new certified Tecnam P2002JF is making its mark on the flight training industry in New Zealand. The plane's updated technology, robust reliability, economy of operation and general performance capabilities are getting the thumbs up from both students and instructors.

"These are the kinds of planes people expect to be learning to fly in," Marc said.

"They're modern aircraft featuring all the latest technology. We are extremely pleased with them. Teaching students is easier with the improved control responsiveness and the increased safety provided by the Tecnams was



proved by the very impressive glide range and control effectiveness at slow speeds," Marc noted.

Climb rates of upwards of 1,000fpm have been recorded in the Tecnams and time to gain altitude for manoeuvres is much reduced. Marc said the cruising airspeed was noticeably faster than in older types of training aircraft.

For more details on learning to fly or just to get a closer look at the new Tecnams you are welcome to call the Nelson Aero Club on 547 9643 or drop in to the club rooms on Trent Drive.

Nelson Airport Users Meeting
4.30pm, Wednesday 27 September 2006
Nelson Aero Club

Give it a Whirl in a gyrocopter!

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Well it's a bit of cross between the two – at least in terms of size. The gyrocopter is to rotary wing flying what the microlight is to fixed wing flying. These mini helicopters are not a common sight in this region. There are only three in the top of the South Island.

However, the gyrocopter has captured the imagination of local man Lloyd Heslop, who can regularly be found at the controls of the only gyrocopter based in Nelson.

Lloyd says he first saw the aircraft in action in Australia about seven years ago and thought it was a great way to get involved in flying as a hobby on a more affordable scale.

Much of training needed to fly a gyrocopter is the same as with other aircraft, especially in terms of navigation and radio training, but actually getting behind the controls is quite a different ball game according to Lloyd, who is a qualified pilot.

His background as a mechanic and experience working on trucks and machinery means that Lloyd is able to carry out all the maintenance and modifications to the aircraft himself. His current gyrocopter was purchased in bits from a fellow enthusiast in the North Island and about six months of work went into getting it ready for take off once it arrived in Nelson.



The innovations Lloyd has made to the machine include the recent addition of a new exhaust system that has reduced engine noise considerably.

“I’m really pleased with how the new exhaust has turned out. People now reckon they can hear the noise of the rotors before the engine.” Lloyd said.

He plans further modifications that could reduce the noise from the rotors and propeller as well.

Those that have been lucky enough to experience a gyrocopter flight say it’s an awesome experience and understand why it’s a hobby that easily gets you hooked. Keep an eye on the skies for a glimpse of this amazing machine in action.

Some interesting snippets about gyrocopters

- Gyrocopters (also known as gyroplanes and autogiro) have been around since the 1920s. They were popular for a couple of decades, but had virtually disappeared by the 1960s, largely due to the military’s preference for the helicopter.
- A helicopter uses engine power to turn its main rotor, like an electric fan. The blades function as the craft’s wings, providing lift by moving through the air and forcing it downward. In contrast, the gyroplane’s engine drives a prop that propels the craft forward. The overhead rotor is freewheeling, like a windmill. Lift is generated by air moving up through the aft-tilted blades, not down.
- Gyrocopters can neither stall nor spin. If forward airspeed slows too much, below 15 mph in a typical design, the aircraft descends gently.
- No matter at what speed a gyroplane is moving, either forward motion or gravity continues to force air pressure against the bottom of the rotors making them very stable.
- The only cause for concern with gyrocopters would be to get into a flight attitude where the plane of rotation becomes more vertical than horizontal. A pilot must force this situation to happen and still might be able to recover if the gyroplane has enough altitude.



Kaye McNabb

From the General Manager

The focus for this issue of Flight Path is General Aviation, usually referred to obscurely as ‘GA’ by those in the aviation industry. It encompasses just about everything on the airport that isn’t a commercial passenger service or a helicopter operation and makes up a large part of the business on and around the airport.

The majority of the GA business is centred on McLaren Drive and the expanding GA sector has been the catalyst for the planned extension of this road to the north and west.

As you can see by the articles in this issue the GA group provides considerable variation, which in turn

requires a considerable effort in working together to ensure the area is safe for all operators, on the ground, taking to the air and working in and around the hangars. They are generally viewed as the support, creche and retirement sections of aviation, a pretty fair representation when you look around Nelson Airport.

To ensure any problems are brought to light, an Airport Users Group meets regularly to discuss issues, changing circumstances and regulations, highlight any problems, and to generally share information. They also help build community ties at the airport and make it a nicer place to work – and we all like a nice place to work!

And when you’ve finished work sit back and enjoy the smells, sounds and sunshine of spring – it’s here already.



Yak bound for Nelson from its home in the Baltic

A small group of classic aviation enthusiasts in Nelson has got together to buy an aeroplane, currently on its way to New Zealand from the Baltic state of Lithuania.

The sturdy looking, aerobatic capable Yak 18T, used by Russian airline Aeroflot to train its pilots, will soon be droning across Nelson skies.

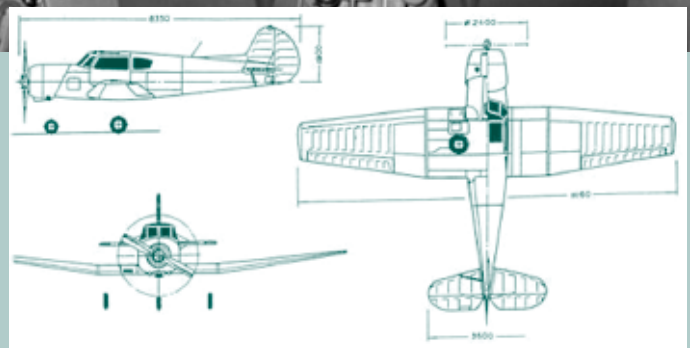
The four-seater aircraft is found throughout the Eastern Bloc countries as a trainer, transport, air-ambulance, aerial photography plane, and pipeline patroller.

For the technocrats, the 18T is a classic bird, with an M-14P radial up front, a large airframe, fabric covered outer wing panels and control surfaces and a big cabin with four, sometimes five seats.

It can fly at a top speed of 160 knots (300kph), with a cruise speed of 133 knots (246kph).

The 18T is said to be a tough, well proven aircraft, and wonderful to fly. It is well within the capabilities of most private pilots and can perform all the basic aerobatic manoeuvres.

The Yak bound for Nelson has been dismantled and loaded on to a ship for the two-month journey south. Because it is “zero rated”, it will need Civil Aviation certification before it can stretch its wings here.



Local aviator is flying high

Jeanette Lusty from Nelson Helicopters is still flying high after taking out top honours at a national aerobatic flying competition.

The competition was held in Kaikoura at Queens Birthday Weekend as part of the annual New Zealand Airwomen's Association rally. Ranges of flying competitions were held but it was the Aerobatic Trophy that Jeanette brought home.

The trophy has been contested since 1965 and this is the first time that it has come to Nelson.

Jeanette said she was delighted with the win and looks forward to the challenge of defending it next year.

While she has been a qualified pilot for more than 30 years, aerobatic flying is a new interest for Jeanette. She tried it very briefly many years ago but only got seriously into it again last October.

To take out the trophy Jeanette had to execute a loop, a left and right barrel roll, a left and right stall turn, and a manoeuvre of her choice – in this instance an aileron roll.

Jeanette said she had relished the challenge of learning aerobatic flying. She travels to Blenheim once or twice a week when time permits to train in the special aerobatic aircraft at the Omaka airfield.

"I'm very much at the beginning stages. I still have a great deal more to learn about this style of flying and you do give yourself frequent scares, but it's great when you finally pull off a manoeuvre," Jeanette said.

She believes aerobatic flying also sharpens your piloting skills – learning to manage the controls while upside down really focuses the mind.

While excited with what she's achieved so far, Jeanette knows the



pressure will be on to perform again next year. She aims to get fitter for the competition next time as all the g-forces are tough on the body and she'll also be continuing to hone her aerobatic skills in the skies over Blenheim.

With her dedication and enthusiasm it's likely we'll see the Aerobatic Trophy extending its stay in Nelson for some time yet.

Rowley Aviation continues a long tradition

Rowley Aviation's topdressing planes have been a familiar sight at Nelson Airport for more than half a century. Originally founded by Peter Rowley in 1954, Terry Nuttall bought the firm in 1991 and continues to provide this essential service to farmers all over the Nelson Tasman region.

Terry lands his Pacific Aerospace Fletcher 400 aircraft at 125 different private airstrips located as far afield as Murchison in the south, Kahurangi Lighthouse in the west, Tophouse in the east and Rai Valley and D'Urville Island in the north.

Topdressing is an important part of agriculture in New Zealand. Eighty percent of Terry's work is carried out for meat, wool, and dairy farmers. The other 20 percent is for forestry companies and pest control.

"Topdressing is a year-round business but our busiest times are spring and autumn – from February to May and August to October. In between the fertilising work we do spraying in the forestry blocks and quite a bit of pre-feeding of possums for pest control. Helicopters come in afterwards to drop the poisonous baits for the possums," Terry said.

New Zealand has been at the forefront of development



This Pacific Aerospace Fletcher 400 was purpose-built in Hamilton in 1974.

in the area of solid fertiliser topdressing. Terry's plane was purpose-built for the job in Hamilton in 1974.

"The solid fertiliser side of topdressing has been pioneered in New Zealand to a large degree. In other countries, planes are more likely to be used for spraying," Terry noted.

Rowley Aviation is the only topdressing firm based in Nelson. The importance of the agricultural sector in the area means the company is highly likely to be around for another 50 years.