Final newsletter for 2017.

It’s a very long and wordy one with some good contributions. Some long term reading over the break.

It’s been a busy year.

We had two first solos a couple of weeks ago which was great for the people involved to end the year. Brittany Adamson and Josh Preddy both completed their first solos within a week of each other. Congratulations to both of you.

Terina Wardley has completed her exams and so will be ready to go straight into cross-countries once we complete some advanced dual in the new year.

Rueben Hansen has completed 2 of his exams and will be keen to complete the rest of them next year.

The November dinner night was well attended and ably catered by Tina and Rick.

The next will be the last Sunday in January.

We had a very enjoyable short notice BBQ at our beach a couple of Sundays ago. The water was absolutely freezing although a couple of hardy souls braved it briefly. We’ve been hearing that the waters around the country are warmer than usual for the time of year. Haven’t noticed it in our neck of the woods.

A note about beach landings. It’s all about picking a point and landing past and close to that point. Never before the point. Speed control is what it’s all about. Just because there’s 500 metres of clear nice sand to land on, still pick the point. Floating along thinking that it will touch eventually is not good enough. One day you may be required to land on a very much shorter stretch. That day is not the day to practice it. People ask me about getting clearance to take a club machine to the beach on their own. They need to prove that they have the skills beforehand. Read the accident reports. Very few reports will tell you that the landing accident was caused by too LOW a speed. Most will tell you that the speed was too high.

The following from president Rick Gunson;

*Seasons greetings fellow members.*

*With the mowing and painting around the place recently I think the drome is looking as smart as I have seen and is a pleasure to view, many thanks to all who have chipped in.*

*Unfortunately the tenders for BEF did not reach a satisfactory threshold upon closing so she is currently unsold but has been listed on trademe. Phil Gray has kindly taken on dealing with interested parties and has had some good inquiry to date, we look forward to some solid interest. Another very successful Christmas party was held on Sunday 17 with around 14 kids being very spoilt with some great presents from a very authentic Santa Claus. There were few moments of trepidation as Santa dismounted from the cockpit of his sleigh but all was well. One young lad was treated to some one on one with Santa even getting to see his special glasses which could tell who had been good by putting a rainbow around them, perhaps the cops should have a few pairs. There are some interesting trips planned for the New Year which Ross will detail so mark the dates and get along. The thing with Club trips*

*is they are always very memorable but the very special ones don’t*

*come around very often so don’t let them slip by. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas look forward to seeing everyone in the New Year.*

*Rick Gunson*

*President*

Thanks Rick. I concur about the xmas party. It was a very nice evening and the roast beef the nicest I’ve had for a very long time. Thanks to Dianne and Peter Harris for the organisation of the day and also a big thanks to Suzi and Josh Calder for supplying the transport for the big jolly fellow in the pink sleigh. Also to those who brought along salads and other treats.

The other close call we had on the day was that at the time that Santa was climbing down from his pink sleigh, a doppelganger in the local fire brigade’s vintage fire engine came driving down the drive. We had to head him off at the pass to avoid a confusing incident for the club kids.

As I write I am in Blenheim spending a few days catching up with family and will be back xmas eve. Apart from the stats, I’m about, right through until mid-January for anyone who wants to fly.

The flight across the ditch from Wellington in the Q300 had a notable First Officer up the front in the form of Erin Spencer. Erin, for those of you who don’t know, did the course at HBEC aero club academy and after instructing at Hastings for a few years got the break and now flies for Air NZ. She looks great and is living the dream. Unfortunately I didn’t realise she was up there until we were under way so missed the opportunity of observing the flight from the office. Next time.

You young people and also the not so young, make yourself known to the flight crew on domestic flights and you may well get to sit in the jump seat up front.

James Butler has completed his cross-countries and is now up to the brush up stage and a little terrain awareness to complete and then a flight test.

Tim Aitken has booked his law exam for early New year and then only needs a BFR to have his PPL current again.

A couple of weeks ago a memorial service was held at the airfield to remember the tragic accident which took the lives of Catherine Banks and Paul Zulver 20 years ago. A new plaque was attached to the memorial cairn at the main entrance at the same time.

There are some up and coming events which our Club Captain team have collated.

Peter Harris has put together some posters for these and I include them at the end of the newsletter.

Contact either Peter or myself if you are interested in any of these.

The first on the list is the new year’s day fly in to Koputuroa near Levin. This is the one that has been held at Betty and Athol Sowry’s strip at Woodville for the past 10 or so years. The 2019 fly in will be at Waipuk.

Flying can be hazardous. A human being is in control of a machine that is manoeuvring in 3 dimensions. It doesn’t come naturally to anyone. Experience and currency count for a lot but from time to time we may have an error of judgement. Mostly we get a fright, learn from the experience, vow for it to never happen again and move on. Some do not survive their mistake. Those that do survive may do so for several reasons. Good luck may be one reason or hopefully instinctive reactions that come from good training may play a part as well.

We all, regardless of experience, if we are honest with ourselves, go through periods where we think we have gained enough hours or experience to think we are invincible. You will hear people say, “They are getting cocky, they need a fright”. I think that the more experience we have or the number of hours accrued, we tend to realise that the day we stop flying is the day we stop learning. We never know it all. An accident is just waiting for a slight slip in concentration.

At the bottom of every newsletter and written on the top of the whiteboard in the briefing room is the line. “Take The Spoon Out of The Sink” some have worked it out, some have asked me what it means but many I think have too embarrassed to ask in case it makes them look silly.

I stole the line from a novel by Bryce Courtney titled “Four Fires”

Simply it means, think about the consequences of doing something before you do it.

If you turn on the tap while there is a spoon in the sink, you will get wet.

Flying is a lot like that. We need to constantly think about which way the wind is blowing and the effect it will have on us particularly if we are close to the ground. We need to think about the performance of the aircraft we are in, particularly if it is heavy or the density is high. We need to consider weather, passenger needs and comfort, our own health and fitness to fly, both physical and mental, fuel reserves, the need to get to our destination. The list can go on and on.

We have all heard about the most useless things to a pilot. Runway behind you, air in the fuel tanks, air above you but one of the most important and one that often gets left out of the list is,

“10 seconds ago”

I don’t have my duty pilot list with me so will send out separately when I get home.

Please note your date on the calendar and swap with someone if the date doesn’t suit. I was let down a bit towards the end of the year.

The following from CAA;

*The New Southern Sky team are back out on the road early in 2018 to visit participants in the Hawke's Bay.*

*Thanks to the team at Air Hawke's Bay, the New Southern Sky Roadshow is planning to visit Napier/Hastings in February 2018 to brief everyone in the region on the programme and what it might mean to them.*

*The Roadshow will kick off at 6PM and provide a comprehensive update on the New Southern Sky programme, with a briefing covering mainly surveillance and automatic dependent surveillance – broadcast (ADS-B) and what it might mean to flight training organisations, recreational flyers, regular public transport (RPT) operators, air traffic controllers, aviation operations managers and aviation engineering companies.*

*There will be an opportunity to ask questions about the proposed ADS-B mandates, the equipment required and the benefits and challenges. The proposed mandates will be relevant to everyone who flies in controlled airspace.*

*If you are flying IFR and using or planning to use Performance Based Navigation (PBN) there will also be information of interest to you. This will include the Ground Based Navigation Aid Review Panel recommendations.*

*In order that we can plan appropriately for the size of audience, please register here as soon as possible and no later than 15 February 2018.*

*Event Registration*

*To register your interest in this event please click here and we will be in touch.*

<https://www.emailmeform.com/builder/form/y8RIkmO1LPf1Qdf06a>

*Event Information*

*Air Hawke's Bay, Thursday 22nd February 2018 6:00pm - 8:00pm*

The following from Marc Bridgeman who is flying helicopters in Africa at the moment and has been for a number of years.

*Taking a Cessna 172 to high and hot airfields*

*Inspired by a May 2010 tour in Kenya*

*In May 2010 I organized a driving and flying safari with 8 people, two Suzuki Maruti Gypsy*

*off-road vehicles and one Cessna 172, which I piloted myself.*

*The route took us on a triangular journey from Nairobi Wilson up the Rift Valley to Baringo,*

*then out to Samburu in the east, and back past Mt. Kenya via Mweiga to Nairobi Wilson. We*

*refuelled twice at Nanyuki Civil.*

*All of the airfields are at least 3,000ft above sea level and usually considerably hotter than*

*the standard atmosphere would be at that altitude. Two of the airfields, Nanyuki Civil and*

*Mweiga, are between 6,250 and 6,300 ft high and posed the biggest problems. Nanyuki lies*

*next to Mt. Kenya on the western (usually lee) side. Mweiga is a sloped grass field where the*

*prevailing wind blows down the slope, so usually one has to take off uphill. A Cessna 206*

*crashed there a few years ago during a downhill, probably tailwind, takeoff.*

*So does it take courage to go to these fields with a Cessna 172 that is considered*

*underpowered by many pilots in Kenya? It sure does, but this does not mean taking an*

*unacceptable risk, as I will try to explain. More than courage it takes knowledge,*

*conscientiousness, and good preparation. Making a major mistake on these high and hot*

*airfields can mean crashing the aeroplane and killing your passengers and yourself. I will go*

*through the challenges and risks and analyse them one by one.*

*I will also mention some other procedures and specialties of these airfields and routes.*

*2. A look at the Cessna 172 manual.*

*General:*

*The Cessna 172 I used is an aeroplane with a four-cylinder, 160*

*hp engine and a fixed-pitch propeller. This is definitely not the preferred configuration for high and hot airfields. I would much rather use a Cessna 182 with a six-cylinder, 235hp engine and a variable-pitch propeller, ideally with a turbocharger. But sometimes you have to take what you can get, and so the question arises whether the Cessna 172 can do it or not.*

*If you cannot determine the wind direction and therefore have a risk of some slight tailwind,*

*use full flaps, approach short, and keep your approach speed a little lower than usual, like*

*65 kt instead of 70. Treat the approach like a short-field approach, in which you want to land*

*near the threshold. If there turns out to be some tailwind, you may not actually be able to*

*touch down near the threshold, but at least you will not use up too much of the runway before*

*touching down and will still have enough room for braking and stopping. If you feel that you*

*may have a tailwind and find yourself too fast to touch down short, consider abandoning the*

*landing and going round again.*

*Be prepared to brake strongly soon after touchdown, because you don't want to roll for long*

*at the higher speed to avoid undue wear on the gear and because you may not have as much*

*runway left in front of you as in a normal landing.*

*To be able to brake hard you first have to reduce wing lift. Immediately lift the landing flaps*

*after touchdown and gently push down the nose while at the same time increasing the brake*

*force. Pushing the nose down unfortunately creates two new risks—that of damaging the nosewheel when there are holes or ditches on the runway and that of wheelbarrowing, i.e. putting too much load on the nosewheel, so the main wheels lose firm contact with the ground.*

*So do things gently. Do not step on the brakes too hard while you still have no weight on*

*them. If you notice that your main wheels begin to block, release pressure on the brakes. You*

*do not want to lose your steering ability by swerving. A good compromise should enable you*

*to stop a Cessna 172 in 150 m on a paved runway and not too much more on a grass or gravel runway.*

*Slope:*

*Landing downhill poses the problem that you may land longer, i.e. further down the runway,*

*than desired. Again use full flaps, approach with a somewhat lower speed, and keep a higher*

*sink rate to make sure you can put the aeroplane down early.*

*Landing uphill is much easier, but it makes a go-around more difficult, as you have to climb*

*away from rising ground. See below for go-around procedures.*

*Obstacles in the glide path:*

*Make a decision whether you can land over the top, using a steep glideslope, whether you*

*prefer a curved approach past the side of the obstacle, or whether you cannot land from that*

*side at all.*

*An example is Samburu Oryx airfield, which has a hill near its northern end. My preferred*

*procedure is to land with a steep glideslope over the top of the hill, but I have to fly a careful*

*compromise between an overly steep approach and getting uncomfortably close to the trees*

*on the hilltop. But with a single-engine Cessna and full landing flaps it is possible to fly a*

*steep enough approach there. But if you are comfortable with a curved approach past the side of the hill, akin to flying a very tight circuit with a very short final, that is also a good choice, ​if you can control your more or less curved descent properly and arrive on the airfield at the right speed and angle.*

*Another example is Sasaab airfield with a hill near its eastern end. I have never landed there,*

*but from the ground the hill looks threatening and may be negotiable only with a curved*

*approach or takeoff.*

*Sasaab airstrip*

*Obstacles at the far end. Such obstacles pose no problem when you actually land, but they do become a problem when you have to go around (and later when you take off again in the same direction). Your only recourse, short of not using that direction in the first place, is to turn as early as possible after making the go-around decision. You should also try to make a go-around less likely by checking the airfield more thoroughly from the air before landing, by flying a particularly precise approach, and by aborting any imperfect approach early and going around before the obstacle becomes a threat. Go-around.*

*A high and hot go-around in a Cessna 172 is also difficult and has less margin for error than*

*in denser air. Make sure you are well prepared for a go-around and know exactly what to do,*

*because it is all too easy to make a deadly mistake. The major risk factors are the lack of any*

*climb performance with flaps and the large trim changes when retracting the flaps.*

*There is no simple rule of thumb, but in the most difficult situation, short final in an approach*

*to a hot and high airfield with full flaps, you have to apply full power, then retract the flaps as*

*quickly as possible, but without losing any speed or too much height because of the required*

*large trim changes.*

*This is not easy. All I can say is that you have to check the airspeed indicator every few*

*seconds, and I mean every really few seconds, to keep the speed between 60 and 70*

*kt with*

*the higher speed preferred, while at the same time retracting the flaps and retrimming the*

*elevator as quickly as you can without losing control of speed or height.*

*Retracting the flaps all in one go is dangerous, so do not try that unless you have very*

*successfully trained it before in the same type of aircraft. It is not considered a proper*

*procedure.*

*At 6,250 ft altitude this is a very high place, demanding good high-and-hot procedures. The*

*north-south runway is paved and 1.2 km long. The wind can be tricky next to the mountain,*

*so be ready to turn away from high ground if you experience downdrafts or shearwinds.*

*Final approach to Nanyuki Civil airfield. Photo: Silvia Ackermann*

*A private company on Nanyuki Civil had Avgas 100 LL in 2010. There seems to be a stable*

*supply, but it cannot hurt to call them when planning your refueling stops.*

*Nanyuki Civil lies inside the Laikipia Air Base control zone (Nanyuki Tower, 124.3 MHz as*

*of 2010) and has only two permitted access lanes. The southern one goes via Naro Moru*

*along the road. The northeastern one goes via Timau and requires an additional call to*

*Nanyuki Tower when overhead or abeam the Mt. Kenya Safari Club (which has a grass*

*airfield or two).*

*Nanyuki Tower is sometimes unmanned and does not answer. In that case transmit blind and*

*follow the same procedures.*

*I could not find out whether the required calls are only at the Mt. Kenya Safari Club and the*

*control zone boundary south of Naro Moru and east of Timau or whether you are also*

*expected to call overhead Naro Moru and Timau. I have also been told that the restrictions are*

*often relaxed and allow straight routing towards Nanyuki Civil from any direction, as long as*

*one keeps a distance of 5nm from Laikipia Air Base (which is not always quite possible near Nanyuki Civil).*

*Samburu Oryx*

*This is a long and wide gravel airfield inside the Samburu Game Reserve. Samburu Sopa Lodge is in walking distance, some 500m from the airfield (although I personally prefer to stay at Samburu Game Lodge down at the river).*

*There is a hill near the northern end of the runway. I have never had to take off towards it. I*

*usually land from the north though, approaching steeply and directly over the top of that hill.*

*​*

*An oblique or curved approach or a very tight circuit with a very short final is probably also a good choice.*

*The runway has a hump a bit south of the middle and appears to slope down on either side.*

*There is a little house on the northeastern edge of the runway with a small concrete water*

*crossing to make it easier to taxi off the runway towards the house in the rainy season. I have*

*always used that to taxi off the runway and park the aeroplane near the house, which is used*

*by rangers, who also let you pay the entrance fee for the nature reserve.*

*On the other, south side of the river in Buffalo Springs Game Reserve there is the partially*

*paved airfield Samburu South (HKSB), but since the bridge was destroyed in 2010, until it is*

*rebuilt this is not a choice when trying to access the other, northern side.*

*Samburu South airfield*

*Another airfield, Koitogo, which is nearer to the river and on the northern side, inside*

*Samburu Game Reserve, is apparently disused, but technically usable for aeroplanes like the*

*Cessna 172.*

*Mweiga*

*At nearly 6,300*

*ft above sea level this is one of the highest popular airfields in Kenya. Its*

*proximity to the Aberdare Country Club (a few kilometers, still in walking distance), which is*

*the base station for the famous forest night lodge The Ark, makes it attractive.*

*The grass runway is one kilometer long and 25 meters wide, but the grass is not always cut*

*across its full width, so stay near the middle. It slopes down towards the north, but the wind*

*usually favors an uphill takeoff towards the south.*

*The runway can be unusable for takeoffs when it is wet.*

Brilliant Mark Thanks. A lot of good stuff here.

*​*

I add my usual aviation version of “Night before Xmas”

*'Twas the night before Christmas, and out on the ramp,*

*Not an airplane was stirring, not even a Champ.*

*The aircraft were fastened to tie downs with care,*

*In hopes that come morning, they all would be there.*

*The fuel trucks were nestled, all snug in their spots,*

*With gusts from two-forty at 39 knots.*

*I slumped at the fuel desk, now finally caught up,*

*And settled down comfortably, resting my butt.*

*When the radio lit up with noise and with chatter,*

*I turned up the scanner to see what was the matter.*

*A voice clearly heard over static and snow,*

*Called for clearance to land at the airport below.*

*He barked his transmission so lively and quick,*

*I'd have sworn that the call sign he used was "St. Nick".*

*I ran to the panel to turn up the lights,*

*The better to welcome this magical flight.*

*He called his position, no room for denial,*

*"St. Nicholas One, turnin' left onto final."*

*And what to my wondering eyes should appear,*

*But a Rutan-built sleigh, with eight Rotax Reindeer!*

*With vectors to final, down the glideslope he came,*

*As he passed all fixes, he called them by name:*

*"Now Ringo! Now Tolga! Now Trini and Bacun!*

*On Comet! On Cupid!" What pills was he takin'?*

*While controllers were sittin', and scratchin' their head,*

*They phoned to my office, and I heard it with dread,*

*The message they left was both urgent and dour:*

*"When Santa pulls in, have him please call the tower."*

*He landed like silk, with the sled runners sparking,*

*Then I heard "Left at Charlie," and "Taxi to parking."*

*He slowed to a taxi, turned off of three-oh*

*And stopped on the ramp with a "Ho, ho-ho-ho..."*

*He stepped out of the sleigh, but before he could talk,*

*I ran out to meet him with my best set of chocks.*

*His red helmet and goggles were covered with frost*

*And his beard was all blackened from Reindeer exhaust.*

*His breath smelled like peppermint, gone slightly stale,*

*And he puffed on a pipe, but he didn't inhale.*

*His cheeks were all rosy and jiggled like jelly,*

*His boots were as black as a crop duster's belly.*

*He was chubby and plump, in his suit of bright red,*

*And he asked me to "fill it, with hundred low-lead."*

*He came dashing in from the snow-covered pump,*

*I knew he was anxious for drainin' the sump.*

*I spoke not a word, but went straight to my work,*

*And I filled up the sleigh, but I spilled like a jerk.*

*He came out of the restroom, and sighed in relief,*

*Then he picked up a phone for a Flight Service brief.*

*And I thought as he silently scribed in his log,*

*These reindeer could land in an eighth-mile fog.*

*He completed his pre-flight, from the front to the rear,*

*Then he put on his headset, and I heard him yell, "Clear!"*

*And laying a finger on his push-to-talk,*

*He called up the tower for clearance and squawk.*

*"Take taxiway Charlie, the southbound direction,*

*Turn right three-two-zero at pilot's discretion"*

*He sped down the runway, the best of the best,*

*"Your traffic's a Grumman, inbound from the west."*

*Then I heard him proclaim, as he climbed thru the night,*

*"Merry Christmas to all! I have traffic in sight!"*

Have a nice break with family and friends and we look forward to seeing you all in 2018.

Take The Spoon Out of The Sink.

Ross Macdonald.

