



# NAAG

Northern Adventure Aviation Group

Volume 2 No.11

## Kerikeri Adventure April 2010

Thursday 22 April saw several NAAG members assembled ready for a day's outing in Kerikeri. Getting airborne out of Thames along with Max and Bev Deane, Nooky Robinson and Murray Smith we tracked up the coast toward Auckland. During the flight I could hear Ron and Robyn Donaldson

*8 members of our group stranded at Waiheke Island Airfield awaiting better weather. Nooky is the last to land in closing wet weather.*

calling Whitianga Traffic! They had attempted to go via Coromandel but had been turned around by bad weather further north. Looking ahead we appeared to have good visibility, but only twenty miles further on we ran into the same low drizzly cloud that had turned Ron and Robyn back. Murray Smith, being slightly ahead of us in his Cessna 172, had made an early decision to divert to Waiheke Island. Those of us following along behind quickly decided it would be prudent to follow Murray's lead. Both Max Dean and Nooky Robinson had not been into Waiheke Island's airstrip. This can be a demanding strip at the best of times and I didn't want to panic either of them into thinking they would not be

*The light house on Tiritiri island.*

capable of making a landing there. Neither of them was able to find the airstrip in their GPS data bases so I informed Max to just follow me in. Nooky was still some distance behind the rest of us and took a





little time in finding our location on the island. I'm told Max made a perfect landing behind me and should be proud to say he has landed on Waiheke. The Visual Flight Guide states that you must have a briefing for landing here if you have not been there in the last six months. Well they sort of had

*Left to right: Dave Kilbourne, Bev and Max Deane, Murray Smith, Flo Crawford and Nooky Robinson enjoy the relaxed surroundings of the museum cafe.*



a briefing, all be it a "follow me" one! Safely parked up at the top of the strip Nooky finally located us having spotted another Cessna on another island airstrip. He was scratching his head as to why he couldn't see the other two aircraft parked next to Murray's Cessna until he finally figured he must be

*A 1968 NZ made Trekka.*



at the wrong strip. By the time he arrived overhead the conditions that had turned us back were now setting in at Waiheke too and at times we lost sight of Nooky as he made his approach to land. We pondered our options while we looked for a break in the weather. After fifty minutes on the ground and a few phone calls to those I knew who lived further north along our intended flight path, it finally cleared enough to allow a safe passage up the east coast past Auckland. Arriving an hour behind schedule, Dave Kilbourne and Harvey Lockie had been on the ground for some time and anxious

*The 1910 Sizaire & Roberto.*



to know if we were indeed still coming. Touching down just after eleven thirty we were met by Alan Morton, with whom I had arranged the day's events. Alan had kindly



offered to collect a rental van on our behalf and be our tour guide for the day. Alan owns and operates The Outdoor Shop in Kerikeri so we much appreciated his time away from his business.

*The main steam engine that powers the operation was built in 1956. Recovered from the Tokanui hospital in the Waikato and restored. The exhaust steam is used for timber drying.*



First stop was at Pete's Pioneer and Transport Museum. This has a lovely cafe as part of the complex and of course we needed to sample the fare before touring the rest of the museum. Here you will find a collection of some twenty cars, including a Sizaire Naudin. One of only two remaining examples worldwide, this 1910, four cylinder 1500cc French made car is in immaculate condition. The only other example is owned by the Sizaire family. I was also

*A steam engine that is hooked up to nothing, but is fascinating to watch.*



surprised to find a Trekka amongst the vehicles on display. Trekka's were the only vehicles designed and mass produced in New Zealand. With 2,500 built in the late 60's through to 1973 the Trekka had a steel body which was built onto a Skoda Octavia Combi

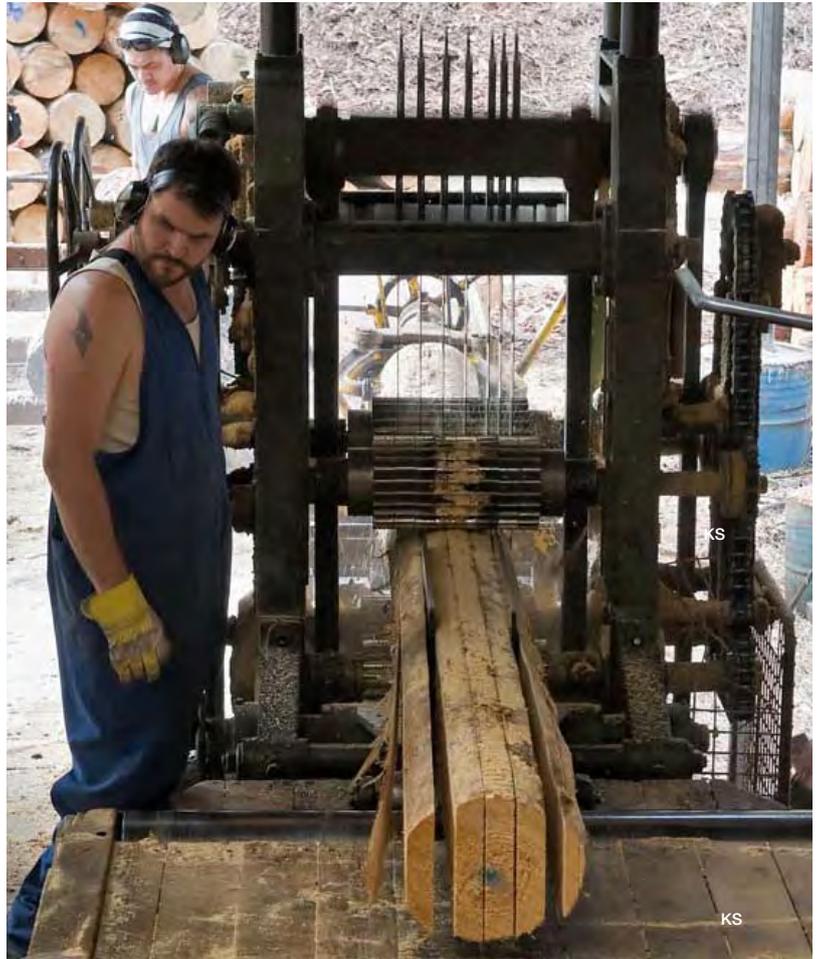
*The temperature in the main furnace is 1100 – 1200° C. It is fed by conveyor with waste wood.*



chassis. New Zealand, at the time, had a highly regulated import policy which meant new cars were scarce and expensive. Post offices around the country used these vehicles in large numbers. The museum has a number of vehicles under restoration.



*The GangSaw used to cut the Pinus Radiata. Sitting on 32m<sup>3</sup> of concrete to absorb the pounding. The sawn logs exit the GangSaw and the waste wood is cut into short lengths to feed the furnace.*



Following through the rest of the buildings brings you to an array of all things past. There are too many pictures to include here so you will just have to go and visit yourself. More about the museum can be found here. <http://www.petesmuseum.co.nz/>

Moving on we travelled by our rented transport to the Collins' Brothers Sawmill in Inlet Road. This is a commercial operation and not a museum and is able to operate as a viable business. I was not expecting this to be the primary draw card of the day but we were so fascinated with the mill process that we stayed for an hour spell bound by the scale of this entirely steam driven operation.

The photos don't do justice to

*Harvey tells me that this breed is particularly useful in hunting snakes. As proof of that he says they have never had any trouble with snakes in NZ!*



what we experienced here. The silent sound of steam engines and the smell of freshly cut wood all added to the experience. Sadly the mill has been sold and the steam is due to go. Up until now this was one of only a handful of steam powered commercial saw mills worldwide. More information about the future of the mill can be found here <http://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/northland/local-news/bay-chronicle/174308>



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With a need to be back at the airport by 3:30 pm we had just enough time left for a quick trip to the Stone Store. The road bridge across the river has been removed and a new footbridge added. It was a picturesque way to end the day wandering around this historic part of New Zealand.

Unfortunately Nooky and Flo

*Sorting the finished product from waste.*

*It's time to leave the Collins Brothers saw mill.*

missed the mill operation and final part of the day as they had left early to go to Kaitaia and collect a Golden Labrador pup. They arrived back at Kerikeri just as we were preparing for the flight home. I'm told the pup travelled really well with no "accidents."

We were all in the air just after 4 pm and my trip home to Thames was just on 1 hour 16 minutes. Sure beats the drive!

There are still more places to go and more things to see so until next time...take care.



KS



KS

*Cliff McChesney*

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*No visit to Kerikeri would be complete without a visit to the stone store.*



*A view of the Kerikeri River outlet from the new footbridge looking south.*



*Prepare for departure from Kerikeri.*

