



# NAAG



Northern Adventure Aviation Group

Volume 2 No.19

## Opotiki Fly-In 2-3 October



*Tolaga Bay with New Zealand's longest wharf at 660 meters in length.*

While this was not a NAAG organised event a number of our group planned to take part. The weather leading up to Saturday was not great but the weekend held promise of a more settled forecast. My passenger, Steve Bryan, who services my BMW had been asking for some time about the NAAG flying we do. Having read a number of our newsletters and realising we normally flew mid week was pleased to find he could join us on this weekend event. Nooky and I flew into Tauranga Airport where I had arranged to meet Steve. Now while Steve is not large, the Pulsar is quite small and I finally got him in with the help of a shoe horn! While I was busy paying the landing fee, Steve tried to make friends with my Border Collie, Ellie. She was not sure that he was meant to be in the plane and showed him her displeasure by bearing her teeth at him. She probably figured she had a captive audience and that he had better behave or she would take a chunk out of him! While Border Collies are not usually good watch dogs, she becomes very guarding if left in charge. The flight to Opotiki is only twenty five minutes from Tauranga so I had planned

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a small diversion to include a trip over Mt Tarawera. Unfortunately the wind was quite strong and for a first flight I didn't want to upset my passenger and make him sick! We did however, visit the Matahina Dam before tracking back through Awakeri, Ohiwa Harbour and then on to Opotiki. Arriving early, we were one of the first there and it was good to watch the aircraft trickling in over the next few hours. The offer of free sausages had brought aviators from many parts of the North Island. Word got out that I was planning a trip around the East Cape to Gisborne and return so someone appointed me as organiser of the flight. We ended up with twelve aircraft, three of which were gyrocopters.

*9 aircraft back track runway 27 for departure to Gisborne A bird's eye view of East Cape.*

*East Cape Lighthouse is the first lighthouse in the world to see the sun.*

The scenery around the Cape is spectacular with lots of secluded little bays. I think we made the controllers day at Gisborne as he would normally only see a handful of flights per day. We certainly kept him on his toes with a steady stream of arrivals over a twenty minute period. For me the flight had taken just on one and quarter hours. Even though the Gyros were much slower and had a 20 minute head start they were not too far behind us by the time we had landed. After every one was parked, we made our way to the airport cafeteria where once again we kept the staff busy. Returning to the aircraft, a number added fuel for the short leg back to Opotiki. There is some very inhospitable and high terrain on this fifty nautical mile leg and is often shrouded in low cloud. Today however, was a good day and allowed a direct route without having to revert to several of the



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usual valleys I am sometimes forced to follow. A number of the visiting pilots had elected to stay the night and enjoy a hangi provided by the Opotiki locals. I'm told it was superb and a great time was had by all.

*Anaura Bay coming into view.*

*Gable End is an impressive sight from the air. This land mark was named by Captain Cook in 1769.*

I must say a big thank you to all the guys at Opotiki that worked hard to put on such a great event. I know that if you hold it again our guys will be keen to return.

*Cliff McChesney*



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Cliff McChesney  
Operations Director

**NAAG Member**  
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