



NAAG

Northern Adventure Aviation Group

Volume 1 No.4

Norsewood Trip

On the 15th September eleven members of the **NAAG** set off for Waipukurau, including newcomer to the group, **Peter Karl** in his Jabiru. Our destination today would be the **Norsewood Pioneer Museum**. Several of us had taken the low level route down the Mohaka River to finally exit at Puketitiri. As mountainous as the terrain is in this area we have found it is possible to transit

Max Dean investigates the contents of the museum.

via the river at under 3,000 feet in complete safety. One of the first to arrive at Waipukurau Aerodrome, **Bill Sisley** discovered that the wind was a rather keen souwester and cautioned the rest of the flying party to be careful on landing as the wind was gusting and causing turbulence on the approach. Those of us now on the ground took delight at watching the elements test the skills of each of the pilots. With the last of the six aircraft safely on the ground we awaited the arrival of the arranged transport. I anticipated a problem now as I had been told there were only ten seat vans available. With eleven of us, plus

How times have changed.

the dog, I had visions of us having to squeeze in like sardines! To my surprise the manager of the vehicle hire company arrived in a twelve seat van, so we could now travel in comfort. With the paperwork completed we piled in and set off for the 35 kilometre journey to the





Norsewood museum.

Norsewood is located in the heart of what was once the dense and towering forest known as the Seventy Mile Bush. The town was

An early power saw, a forerunner to the chainsaw.

established in 1872, with the arrival of 372 Norwegians and 11 Swedes aboard the Norwegian ship Høvdning, at Napier on 15 September 1872. The same day, the English ship Ballarat also arrived at Napier, its passengers including around 70 Danes. Høvdning arrived again at Napier on 1 December 1873, this time with 369 Norwegians - bringing

An "OK" washing machine. I'm not sure today's wife would agree.

all together 752 immigrants on the two journeys. Most of these people became Norsewood's pioneer settlers. The remainder fulfilled the same role at the bush settlement of Dannevirke, some 22 kilometres to the south.

Norsewood's situation on State Highway 2 brought the town to predominance with the rise in use of the car. The re-alignment of the highway in 1966 divided Norsewood into the "Upper" and "Lower" halves. Now travellers only see signs and the bridge joining the two halves as they travel on the highway. More about Norsewood and its history can be found here. <http://www.norsewood.co.nz/asp/history.asp>

A gig made by a local coach builder.

The museum has a great cafe serving really good food. The proprietor was intrigued by the sudden influx of people, swelling the local population to nearly





double! He had originally come from Ngatea and said that moving to Norsewood was like stepping back in time 50 years. Norsewood is a place where you don't really have to look before crossing the street as there seems to be only one car movement every 5 minutes.

This "Party Line" exchange was in use until 1967!

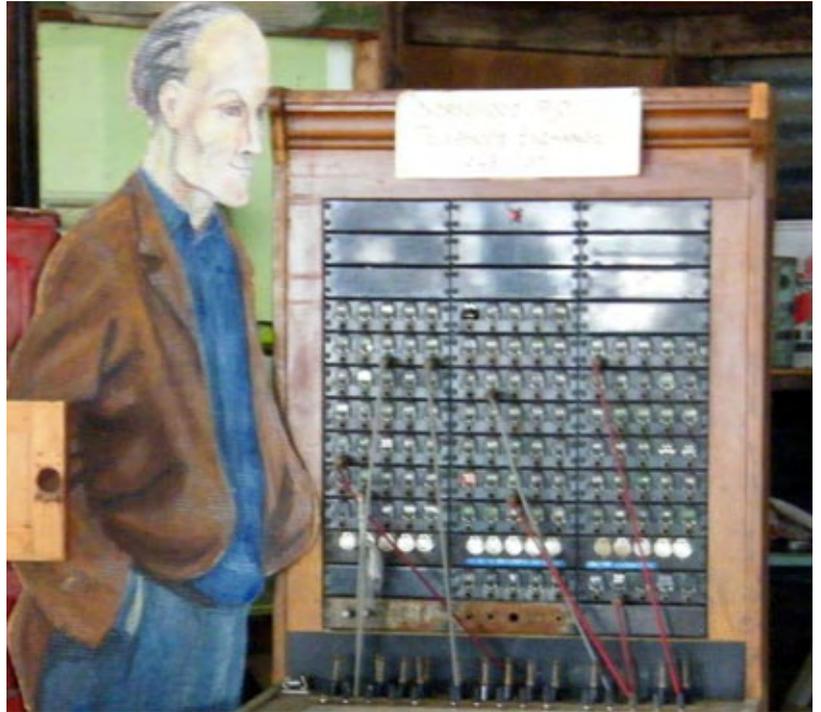
Needing to be back early for a meeting in Hamilton we had a hasty 15 minute visit to the Norsewear factory shop. Peter Karl managed to find some good quality socks. With us all back in the van we headed back to Waipukurau for the homeward leg of the journey. I dropped my passengers off at the airfield while I delivered the van back to the

While no longer in use, this shop is typical of some local buildings.

depot. Unfortunately I was held up for ten minutes by a train shunting across the main level crossing. I had visions of the others all being home by the time I got back to the plane. Fortunately, **Nooky Robinson** had waited for me and we flew in loose formation until Orakei Korako where I separated to fly home through Rotorua, Tauranga and Waihi Beach. A tail wind on the homeward legs had meant that even with the extra distance travelled the times

My passenger, Rob Clarke, seems hesitant to follow the others into the jail.

had been the same 1 hour 35 minutes each way. Approaching Thames I was surprised to find both Nooky and **Lindsay Brown** in close proximity. Within minutes of each other we were all back on the ground. Again we had enjoyed a





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great day out and already plans are being hatched for the next trip.

On the 19th I had decided to take part in a "Dawn Raid" being held at Taupo Airfield. The object was to try and get to the defended airfield undetected between 7 and 8 am. Aircraft were to be despatched during this time and their job was to try and photograph any intruding aircraft. Not wanting to sleep through my alarm, I had woken at 1:15 am and then again at 4 am!

Bill Sisley rounds up the troops for the short journey to the Norswear knitwear factory in Lower Norswood.

Unable to get back to sleep, I got up and headed off to Thames. With the plane prepared I was ready to fly just after 6 am. The sky was a full overcast and there were showers predicted for the day. I had smooth flying conditions but as I approached Tokoroa a light misty drizzle began to form on the windshield. With rising ground and a lowering cloud base I decided to flag it away and head back home. I later learned that no planes were able to make it in due to the weather so I had made the right decision. Oh well, it was a fun morning out.

Cliff McChesney




Cliff McChesney
Operations Director

NAAG Member
Northern Adventure Aviation Group

39 Parry Palm Avenue Waihi 3610 ZK-KFC 64 7 8637322 0274 805454 email: freedom4life@xtra.co.nz



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Enquiries
Office: (07) 829 5940
info@aerosport.co.nz
Anton: 021 289 5999
anton@aerosport.co.nz
www.aerosport.co.nz




Swell Cafe

On the Waihi Beach Airstrip
123 Emerton Rd. 07-863-4846
Costrano.Catering@xtra.co.nz