



The Power of Volunteers

How North Shore Aero Club is thriving during a recession

Contributed by Trevor Dance from NSAC

IF YOU HAD attended the North Shore Aero Club AGM, on 13th July this year, you would never have imagined that there was a worldwide recession in progress. A bustling crowd of chatting members filled the room, and twice the required number of nominees pitched to try and get one of the few positions on the committee. In fact you would be forgiven for wondering if we were giving away gold bars, with huge salaries up for grabs. The reality is that those elected will not only give hundreds of hours for free this year, but also spend their own money to help the club. It's all about being a valued volunteer.

This past year the club has achieved what was thought to be impossible. New hangers have appeared, the Robin fleet was upgraded, over 2500 people attended our first big Open Day for nearly 10 years and by prudent governance we have improved the financials to enable adequate provision for aircraft depreciation and maintenance, thus ensuring our fleet stays in excellent condition. Sound impossible? Again it's about the value of volunteers.

So how do you keep the momentum with all the doom and gloom around? It is not just about saying thanks at a personal level which is important, but this year we made a special point of saying "Thank You" formally to the huge number of kind folk who make the club work at the AGM. Whether it is heaving, pushing and lifting to achieve the smooth operation of the "hanger door project" or providing free professional expertise with the viewing deck upgrade, giving talks to the local schools or making signs for the Open Day, we made sure we said thank you.

There were many more though and a good number of the people who helped out were not even club members. Our Open Day team was made up of Young Eagles, family members, the ATC and many generous fellow pilots. Over 125 kind folk gave time (and in some cases money) to make the 2011 free Open Day a reality. So for all those who played a part and did not

attend the NSAC AGM, we say A BIG THANK YOU to you as well - we know who you are!

Come and see if you or your aircraft is pictured on the wall of the club rooms; we now have quality block photos of cool

summer of 2013 and leading up to a major social event around the special day itself.

Between now and then, we have a full social calendar, plus a number of events in between. On 22nd to 25th Feb 2012 are the Nationals at NSAC, followed by an

Open Day focusing on Vintage and Classic aircraft on 3rd Mar 2012 (email: flyingopenday@gmail.com). Come along - you will be most welcome. We will be having fun in the air and on the ground. Check out our website for the upcoming events on the front page and in the calendar section - www.nzac.co.nz.

The facts are: there is no recession of goodwill, no rationing on willingness to help, and no shortage of free expertise. Kind folk are willing to help in abundance for the price of a sincere thank you. Volunteers will exceed your expectations in every way - you just have to ask. From our experience at North Shore this past year, we have people 'banging on the door' to work for free. You might wonder when or how this strange phenomenon happened. When I speak with some of our older members, it seems that the entire club was built this way. This spirit built the clubhouse, sealed the runways, laid the taxiways, built the first hangers and improved the club in so many ways over the years.

We've been thinking about what we can do to improve more in the future. One thing is to take more time to pay respect to the shoulders we are standing on today, so this year we will be writing about and promoting our club history. We should make flying more affordable for those who are finding funds tight and we plan to do this with our "Give someone a lift" initiative. For the future? Well, I for one look forward to the day when I

can recharge my aircraft for \$10 and slip silently into the sky for a couple of hours of electric flight... or perhaps I can get a big elastic band and ask some volunteers to wind it!

aircraft and folk enjoying themselves from the Open Day all over the clubhouse. This year we will be adding more as different events take place. So what is next with all this willing help? 2013 is our Golden Anniversary year - North Shore Aero Club will be 50 years old on 25th September. We plan a really big year, starting with another Open Day in the



Over 2500 people attended the Club's Open Day in February.

For more information

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