

Sharing our Passion for Aviation at the Walsh Memorial Scout Flying School

Now in its 47th year and held annually at Matamata in January, the Walsh Memorial Scout Flying School offers ab-initio flight training to Scouts, Guides, and other young people. The School has achieved in excess of 1350 first solos since its inception in 1967. The outstanding success and longevity of the School is due in large part to a small army of volunteers, supporters and sponsors who combine their resources and talents with a common love for aviation and a

DESPITE some quite challenging weather, another Walsh Memorial Scout Flying School has been successfully completed.

Almost all of the Ab-Initio students achieved their first solo flight and the Returned students (those who have been in previous years) flew their target hours and expanded their knowledge and skill.

But all of this success could not have been achieved without the widespread support of individuals, local businesses and aviation industry organisations and corporations. The two main corporate supporters of the Walsh are Air New Zealand and Airways Corporation.

Air New Zealand's support is facilitated by Captain David Morgan (Chief Flight Operations & Safety Officer) and includes a range of prizes, financial and supply assistance, and helping with the availability of flying instructors.

Bringing together an instructing team of very experienced aviators is a vitally important aspect of being able to run the school efficiently and safely. Instructors and most other staff offer their time, experience and skill on a voluntary basis.

Captain Chris Fraser, Captain Mal Morters, Captain Wayne Coupland, Second Officer Simon Nicholson (Flight Commander), Second Officer Simon Davies and myself are from the Air New Zealand jet fleet. Captain Rod Milne (747 Retired) also attended. Captain Steve Scott (Deputy CFI), Captain Roy West, Captain Gary Parata (Flight Commander) and First Officer Nick Rowe (Flight Commander) are from Air Nelson. Captain Aaron Silcock and First Officer Nicola Evans are from Eagle Airways (well Nicola is nearly with Eagle - she starts in a few weeks!).

Other instructors come from all over the world. Jeff Walton comes from his day job as an Air Traffic Controller in Ennis,

desire to share that with new generations of would-be pilots. Typical of those who contribute to causes such as this, these people don't seek public recognition of their efforts, rather taking satisfaction in a job well done and in the obvious delight of those who are learning to fly at the School. With the giving of some public recognition in mind, KiwiFlyer asked Walsh CFI Mark Woodhouse to pen an article describing some of the School's primary people and supporters.

Ireland and Jack Holworthy (Flight Commander) comes from Hong Kong where he is an avionics engineer with Northrop Grumman.

Carlton Campbell is the Training Standards Development Officer with NZCAA (and what fun we have debating the finer points of flying!). Dean Beverley and Glen Sycamore are Airbus Captains with Cathay Pacific. Penny Mackay and Sue Mealing are recently (semi) retired and enthusiastically continue to make a very valuable contribution to flight training. And from aero clubs, flying schools and elsewhere come Glenn Drower, Amanda Meates, Murray Miskelly, Janelle Rouse, Andrew and Michael Sims, Charlotte Day and Rob Weavers.

Airways Corporation's support is facilitated by Andrew Crawford (Regional Manager - Standards and Safety) and includes the mobile control tower and a team of controllers, many of whom live on site for the duration of the school. The Airways team at the Walsh is led by James Pengelly from Tauranga and Phil Craig from Wellington.

This year the controllers were Melissa Robinson and Megan Thomas from Hamilton, Jason Robson from Ohakea, Robert Shanks from Palmerston North and Kate Lindsey from Dunedin. Jason and Rob are both Walshies who became interested in controlling while students at the school.

Without the contribution of air traffic control we simply would not be able to safely operate the school at our current level. We enjoy a very close working relationship and for that I am particularly grateful. The students, instructors and staff enjoy working closely with the air trafficers, often visiting the tower to observe them weave their magic.

MetService also makes a very valuable contribution by rostering



The 2013 Walsh Memorial Scout Flying School group photo.



A highlight of the Walsh this year was the arrival of Jerry Yagen's Mosquito. Pictured are some of the large group of people who volunteer their time to the School.

three aviation meteorologists to support the Walsh. This year they were Brooke Lockhart, Arno Dyason and Frances Russell. Having direct and immediate access to the latest reports and forecasts allows me to manage the programme to maximise the use of the available flying weather.

The RNZAF have been strong supporters of the Walsh since the first schools back in the '60s. They task three Fire Officers and a crash fire vehicle to attend the school. This year the team was led by Corporal Mike Shepherd and included Leading Aircraftsman Damien Ettema and Aircraftsman Ben Ryan.

This year, for the first time, Massey University's School of Aviation provided a Diamond DA40, their Garman 1000 desktop trainer and three instructors for a week. Their team was led by Paul Kearney and included Bernie McGuire (Walshie) and Kiran Parbhu. All of the returned students and many instructors were introduced to glass cockpit technology, and as the DA40 is a four seater many Ab-initio students were able to ride along too.

Chris Fraser's role is organising the provision of sixteen two seat (usually C152 and PA38) and one four seat (C172) aircraft for the school. These aircraft come from training organisations such as BayFlight, Ardmore Flying School, Auckland Aeroclub, Whenuapai Aviation Sports Club, Nelson Aviation College, Nico Matsis and other private owners.

The local authority, Matamata Piako District Council, own and manage Matamata airfield at Waharoa, and have been stalwart in their support of the school since the beginning. Without exception both vectors of the airfield and the associated facilities are prepared in pristine condition for our arrival - if only they could control the crosswinds! The local users at Matamata are very understanding of our invasion of their 'patch' and as much as we try to respect their home and be good guests, with up to 1200 movements on busy days, we tend to be less than discrete!

One of the aspects of Matamata which makes the airfield such a suitable base for our school are the facilities available. We are very fortunate to be able to use the Soaring Centre, Gliding Club bunkrooms and the Matamata aero club to support our operations and recreation.

Other local and national companies and organisations that contribute to the Walsh include the Civil Aviation Authority, Aviation Services Limited, Flight Test NZ, and various Rotary clubs. There simply isn't enough space in this article to name them all. However they are important and should know that their contribution to the growth of so many fine young New Zealanders is appreciated.

Finally, the de Havilland Mosquito's appearance for the Wings Parade on the last day was a memorable, humbling privilege. Its pilot, Keith Skilling (the Wings Presenter) had organised for the Mosquito to join us.

I would like to close by thanking the Mosquito's owner Mr Jerry Yagen of the United States. Jerry, you allowed an enormous amount of awe, inspiration and appreciation to be experienced by many, many kiwis over the last few months, and for that we thank you most sincerely.

What a way to end another great Walsh!

Second Officer Mark Woodhouse
CFI, Walsh Memorial Scout Flying School

(Mark of course neglected to mention his own considerable contribution to the school over 16 years as CFI which was also cited in his international award from the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators 'for contributions to flight instruction' in 2011. Ed.)



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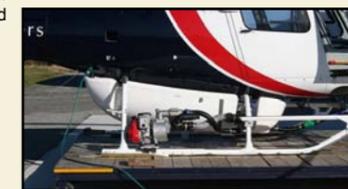
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