

Central Aero skills cover the spectrum

Fabric, Metal, Welding, Fabrication, Electrical and more

FOUNDED IN 2006 by Norm Kensington and Paul Waterhouse, Central Aero Engineering at Hamilton Airport have kept a low profile that defies the breadth of service that the company offers. The business has quietly grown by way of quality of service and word of mouth, a good example being the current refurbishment of well known Pitts Special ZK-MAD. This job arrived courtesy of a visitor who happened to see the fabric work being undertaken on the recent Cub rebuild (see article at right). Central Aero's staff have a wealth of experience which enables the company to take on a great variety of work and operate as a true one-stop shop for regular aircraft and helicopter maintenance.

Scheduled Maintenance and Project Services

Traditional maintenance provision is offered for Cessna, Piper, Beechcraft, Robinson, Schweizer, MD, Bell, Eurocopter and more. Central Aero also provide maintenance controlling services for Air Transport Operators and others who do not wish to undertake the task themselves.

Robinson helicopter rebuilds can be undertaken and there is a 2200 hour R44 overhaul underway at the moment.

Major projects and repairs aren't a problem either, whether on fabric or metal

aircraft. Examples include the Cub rebuild, the Pitts refurbishment, a recent C172 firewall forward repair, a current Titan T-51 build, and more.

Other capabilities include computerised dynamic propeller balancing. Many satisfied owners have been amazed at the increased performance this simple task has yielded. Central Aero are also the installation agent for Tru Trak auto pilot systems.

Electrical Maintenance and Repairs

Maintenance for all GA electrics including Whelen strobe lights, magnetos, starters, generators, etc. can easily be

undertaken. A test bench will handle starter/generators up to 550A with a wide variety of adaptors to cope with most common turbine engines. A particular speciality is the repair of generator control units.

Test equipment is on hand to trouble shoot a variety of electronic black box control system problems. Repairs have often been made to what would otherwise have required a more expensive return to manufacture or replacement exercise.

Support for Home Builders

Central Aero are big supporters of sport aviation and welcome enquiries from sport pilots whether for routine maintenance, or for minor or major build assistance.

Maintenance support is offered to all owners of sport aircraft, many of whom are reluctant to meddle with their pride and joy, especially with the increases in technology within these aircraft.

It is the nature of home building that there are many owners with stalled projects

and problems that they can't find a way around. Central Aero offer a complete range of build consultancy and support services - and one call may be all that is needed to get a project going again.

To quote Paul, "We love the challenge of helping anyone with anything and can say yes at least nine out of ten times."

Operating mishaps can also be a source of confusion or rebuild despair for sport pilots. Central Aero can help with any accident investigation required as well as the process of getting back into the air again afterwards.

Enthusiasm, quality and experience

Central Aero's team of five have well over 100 years of aviation experience amongst them across a wide spectrum of helicopter, fixed wing, fabrication and welding, electrical, fabric, metal, and administrative disciplines. This

also includes two-cylinder engines to turbo props, microlights to pressurised twins, R22's to Bell 212's, and more.

The company prides itself on quality of service and it is this reputation for achieving perfection at a fair price that Paul and Norm see as the growth formula for the company - but only so long as the growth is not allowed to compromise their underlying principles of quality.

For more information

Contact Paul on 021 743 033, Norm on 021 418 677, visit www.centralaero.co.nz, or email: admin@centralaero.co.nz



The Central Aero Team in front of their recently completed PA18 Super Cub rebuild. From left; Norm, Paul, Martin, Kevin and Steve.



Steve Grainger at work on the wing of well known Pitts Special, ZK-MAD.



Paul Waterhouse making progress on a well advanced R44 2200 hour rebuild.

Fabrication Services

Fitting alongside the projects in progress are a broad mix of fabrication competencies, undertaken with serious quality by passionate craftsmen. *KiwiFlyer* visited to write this article and we were very impressed. Central Aero specialise in beautiful fabrication work and particularly light aluminium and stainless welding; "the lighter it is the more we enjoy doing it".

Central Aero also offer assistance for developmental work, a recent example being a camera mount for NZ Aerial Mapping, and can also readily fabricate engine mounts for sport aircraft.



1957 Piper PA18 Super Cub

Returned to as new condition

WHEN *KiwiFlyer* visited Central Aero Engineering in Hamilton to write the business profile at left, we could not help but be impressed by their just rebuilt Piper Super Cub which was due to fly the next day. BQY syndicate member Tim Dennis provided us with the following history of their much loved classic aircraft.

PA18-100 Super Cub ZK-BQY (formally ZK-CYU) arrived new in May 1957 imported through Airwork (NZ) Limited. She was sold to Northland Districts Aero Club and mostly based at Whangarei. She was later sold again a

couple of times, then in 1968 was damaged "beyond repair" following an engine failure and crash into a hedge near Ardmore.

Arthur Reville was flying at the time and as a result of this damage she came off the register. A rebuild was undertaken by Stuart and Alistair McLaughlan who were both working for Thames Aero Topdressing based in Dargaville, though the aircraft was later taken to Thames to be finished.

It was while this work was going on that Renton Foote bought her. Renton did a trial flight in the rebuilt aeroplane ZK-CYU in February 1971 and reputedly flew over 1,000 hours in the five years that

he owned it. Renton did some towing and also made many trips down the West Coast from his base in Thames. Haast, Mussel Point and Lake Alabaster are just some of the places he had been shooting deer and flying them out from the rough strips.

In December 1976 she was sold to Eugene Mak, however not much is recorded about this period. On 1st May 1990 the aircraft was bought by the ZK-CYU Syndicate for \$24,000. The syndicate comprised Eugene Mak, Colin Campbell, Mike Smith, Nelson McEwean, Grant Kurte, Great Barrier Airlines and Ed Malone. It seems there have been quite a number of people involved in the syndicate

over the years. Some of them are; Jeff Holloway, John Geary, Quentin Inston, (all in 1990), Mike Pickard, Wayne Scott, John Van Der Beek, (all in 1992), Graeme Reynolds, Ed Malone, Ron Simmons, Terry Jacobson, Paul Varcoe (1998), Neil Cooper, Wayne Scott, Eric Wiggins, and Tim Dennis (2000). The present syndicate consists of Tim Dennis, Quentin Inston and John Geary.

Nola McKenzie (later Pickard) was an approved pilot (1990) and later became the main partner in the syndicate - instructing, running the syndicate, and watching over

the aeroplane. It became Nola's baby until she was tragically killed with her husband Mike in a Tiger Moth accident in Taumarunui on 18 October 2003. BQY has Nola's name

Painted on her nose today.

In 2003 Andrew Phillpotts undertook a complete rebuild of the aeroplane taking nearly 2 years. Part of this included returning the paint scheme to her original 1957 livery (Piper had a different scheme

for each year of manufacture) and her original registration BQY.

In 2007 she suffered a landing accident at Ardmore where a ground loop damaged a wing, the tail and undercarriage. After

a lengthy delay where the repairers failed to even start the work, the job was given to Central Aero Engineering in Hamilton. Paul Waterhouse and his team got straight on to it. They were professional from start to finish, completing the job on time and on budget to an exceptional standard.

BQY is the syndicate's pride and joy and has been returned to service in exceptional condition and beautifully rigged. She is light on the controls and flies very straight. Her total time stands at 9550 with many more happy hours of flying to come.

If readers know any more of BQY's history, Tim would be delighted to hear from you. Email: tim@kiwis.co.nz or phone 021 744 638.



Renton Foote with the Cub at Lake Alabaster in 1976.



Tim Dennis and BQY at Ardmore in November 2008.



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