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November - December 2016 Newsletter

Taxiways for the eight new hangars:



Taxiway 'Z' being concreted

Taxiway 'Z' being laid above, gives access to the north facing hangars. Taxiway 'B' to the right is being concreted to join this to the existing system.

The new hangars are almost fully booked, but a few spaces are left for specific aircraft sizes and configurations (high wing / low wing etc)... contact the Airport Manager Simon Lockie ph 021 354 458 or simon@westaucklandairport.co.nz, to see if one of the remaining spaces would take a particular aircraft.

Once all hangars are full, we'll start planning the next block which is likely to be individually owned 'T' hangars to hold one aircraft each, like the 'T' hangars at Te Kowhai NZTE.

Pilot Lounge: The building near the office has been restored to its original function as a Pilot Lounge, for use of those based on the airport, their guests and visiting aviators. The key is in the keysafe by the door on the deck... the combination should be obvious to any visiting pilot, giving 24/7 access. Help yourself to tea/coffee, wash your cup ('coz your mother doesn't work here), and lock up if you are the last to leave.

When you take someone up for a flight and have other guests waiting their turn, it is a good idea to have them wait in the Pilot lounge... it's comfortable with a good view of the activity, has the refreshments, toilets and easy access to the carpark. It's safer for non-aviators than waiting airside in a hangar.



Pilot Lounge to the right with shade sail on the deck, and a nice view of the activity.

Looking down: The photo below by a skydiver, shows the new hangars. Simultaneous skydiving and aircraft movements are permitted, following the safety rules which are similar to those at Taupo (where there are Air NZ movements simultaneously with Skydiving)... aircraft to join downwind, base or final (not overhead), fly a wide circuit, and stay below 500ft while over the runway. Skydivers not to cross the runway as less than 1000ft (they have wrist altimeters). This has worked well for several years.



December 2016, hangars done and their taxiways being installed (Skydive Auckland. Photo)

Flight to Whangarei and Back: YouTube video of a flight in ZK-PPL up north: West Auckland Parakai NZPI - with landings at Ruawai NZRU - Dargaville NZDA - Whangarei NZWR and back to NZPI. Lots of scenery on route.



Late final 07 at West Auckland.

ZK-PPL's flight <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFfDLUXinYg>

Bill's new 'Titanium' Model Gyro: Recently arrived is Bill's new Gyro fresh from the factory, seen here immediately after it was pulled out of its container, with the wheels being attached and the shipping clamp still in place on the masthead.



Bill's new 'Titanium' Gyro with its six bladed prop

West Auckland Airport Parakai is becoming 'Gyro Central': with several more arriving recently. Modern Gyros are proving to be good aircraft for many recreational flyers, hence the growth in numbers. Since the aerodynamics were sorted out by computers, they are inherently stable in the air and have a good safety record.

The ability to pre-rotate to almost flying revs before starting the takeoff roll, gives them the ability to take off from very short runways. The landing can be even shorter, with the energy stored in the disk allowing a touch down with almost no airspeed, which would make a precautionary landing easy. Whole-aircraft parachutes are now available for Gyros too... see Bryn at Leading Edge.

Because the rotors and associated controls are less complicated than on a helicopter, the running costs are lower, being similar to the cost of running a fixed wing plane. The small physical size means that they take up little space in a hangar... the Gyro hangar at West Auckland holds six of them with space to walk around and all lined up across the entrance to be pulled straight out.

Gyro Instructor Steve Pegg has spent many hours as pilot-in-command of all three types of heavier-than-air aircraft... planes, helicopters and gyros... so is well placed to compare the advantages and disadvantages of each type, and train pilots for type conversions.

Oskar, Leo and Steve are all experienced Gyro pilots, you will usually find one of them in the gyro hangar, to talk to them for more info on Gyros.



Elephant Cove looking West

Scenery: Elephant Cove on the eastern side of Coromandel is always a notable sight from the air, on one of many islands on this piece of coastline. Most of them don't have much

shelter for boats, but Elephant Cove looks to have been designed specifically to provide anchorage for 6 to 8 boats.

Skydive Plane looking pretty: The flock of Skydiving PAC 750XL aircraft rotates through Taupo, West Auckland and Kerikeri depending on maintenance requirements and pressure of work. The nicely decorated ZK-SDT is seen here relieving the usual ZK-SDF which was off for maintenance at Hamilton.



PAC 750XL ... ZK-SDT

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