

AGC Weekly News

17-18 September

Coming Events and AGM

Gerard Robertson

AGM - Saturday 24th September 2pm

**Working bee; This Saturday 17th September
9am till lunch; Event Leader, Russell Thorne**

Pre-season brief; 10am on 2nd October and is compulsory. Event Leader, Paul Gregory O'Neill

AGM documents

Please make time to read these before the AGM, being:

- President's annual report (follows below)
- CFI's annual report
- Treasurer's annual report
- Club Captain's annual report

A copy of the recent (July) questionnaire and the collated feedback should be included with this newsletter email, as this information may be relevant to discussions at the AGM.

Hall of Fame

Georgia Schofield has hit the big time, being interviewed for the Soaring the Sky podcast (<https://www.soaringthesky.com/>). Well done, Georgia. Tim Bromhead is the only other Kiwi I'm aware of who's been interviewed.

Working bee tasks suggested so far include:

- Prepare Caravan for season
- Trim foliage down steps to Hangar
- Weed spraying
- Repair/Replace Bridge to Sth Club Hangar
- Refill Potholes on Club road
- Re-establish Wing Runner drain access to runway
- Sweep out Club Hangars
- Complete Club Trailer wax
- Mow Glider trailer Park
- Tractor Roller/Mowing on Runway where applicable
- Complete removal of Dirt mounds if possible
- Assemble newly donated bar stools
- Re attach TV Monitor
- Install 3 Pin Powerpoint near TV corner
- Tidy Briefing Room
- Prepare Bedrooms for Summer Instructors
- Clean Toilet Block
- Clean BI's trailer
- Check all trailers to ensure that lights are working and no other defects

Remember, we are the club and what gets done is done by us all: there are no magic little people who come out at night to clean trailers, dig ditches etc. (though it would be nice).

President's Report 2021 – 2022

Gerard Robertson

This will be my first AGM as President. It's not a role I expected to find myself in, my sudden elevation resulting from Murray's decision to step down as President. And so, I start by thanking Murray and Diane for their efforts as President and Secretary.

I'd like to repeat something which I recall Maurie Honey saying at an AGM a few years ago. It was to the effect that there was not a committee and then a group of others: we are a club, and we are all club members, who contribute by taking on different roles. In that vein, there is no difference between someone sitting on the committee making decisions about the club and someone sitting on a tractor mowing the lawns. In fact,

taking Paul Schofield as an example, they may often be the same person. My message is "If you're not already doing any of the tasks that need to be done around the club (or you're not one of those who've already spent decades helping), please step up and take one on". If you're uncertain about what you might be able to do, please see me (or get in touch via president@glidingauckland.co.nz or just call me on 021 87 27 16).

The committee has three perspectives to consider:

- A strategic perspective, taking the long view over the next 5 to 20 years,

- a tactical perspective over say 3-5 years, and
- an operational perspective, looking at this year and the next.

It's very easy to focus on these three in the reverse order to that presented, with the risk of dealing with the urgent at the expense of the important. Equally, not all changes are within our control; some are forced on us. The threat of the Mill Road extensions is an example of the latter.

The two changes forced on us are the result of Covid-19 and creeping urbanisation. While Keith will talk about the financial effects of Covid, there are other effects. For example:

- we lost a handful of members over the stance taken on requiring vaccination. While I regret the choices made by those members, I think that the best decision possible in the circumstances was made by the Government and the club followed their advice. Covid has not disappeared, nor is it likely to for the next few years. We know that the health system is strained to bursting point, also that this club's demographic is (mostly) that of a group at risk. The Government's decision to remove the traffic light system and most of the restrictions has led to the Club revising its policy accordingly, while still urging caution and ensuring that instructors have the choice to fly with unvaccinated passengers / students.

- in engaging in life after lockdowns, it is not yet clear whether people will choose to spend their free time in pursuits like gliding or whether more family-based activities may dominate. From the survey, though, it is clear that we have to provide a more effective use of people's time. Given this lack of clarity, the committee has held back from coming to any firm conclusions on either a replacement tow plane or the glider fleet plan.

- urban sprawl is coming ever closer to the club and a move is inevitable, the only uncertainties being when and to where.

There are three possible responses to the urbanisation threat:

- we do nothing, the "head in the sand" approach
- we develop a plan for a move and put it on the shelf, to be taken down as the need arises
- we develop a plan and start to implement it in part, to make the transition from this site to another the most seamless possible.

The silver lining to this cloud is the value of our airfield. The Auckland Council has just doubled

our rateable value to \$9.2 million, the realistic market value is likely to be at least double that. The downside has been a commensurate increase in rates.

The committee has thus asked Hadleigh, who worked so effectively with Christian and Russell on the Mill Road project, to lead a group to develop options for the club's future location. Hadleigh may ask for help from members, so please be prepared to contribute. The committee will otherwise be saying little on this topic, as we don't want to push up market prices by giving advance notice of our interest.

There are also clouds in the prospect of any relocation of the club. On the one hand, we will be cash-rich, though likely to need about half of a sale price to buy and prepare an alternative site. On the other hand, some members may say that - given its potential location south of the Bombay Hills - they will leave the club; perhaps going to Whenuapai or giving up gliding, either of which would be a loss to the club. The Canterbury club experienced this when they moved out to Springfield, which is 65km from Christchurch, so we'll be in touch with them to learn from their experience.

As Keith will elaborate on in his Treasurer's report, this last year has been the worst in a very long time.

Given this and the uncertainty over future pandemics, the Committee is unwilling to make any major financial commitments. The practical effect of this is that, for the moment, neither the glider fleet plan nor the towplane replacement study will proceed to any firm decisions being made.

The committee has, however, made some smaller, low-cost, fleet decisions. Paul Scofield's offer to donate his PW-5, Sierra Bravo, to the club was accepted, with the concurrent decision being made to donate our little-used single Astir to the Youth Glide Charitable Trust. This provides for a more accessible progression from PW-6 to PW-5 for students as there'll now be two PW-5s available.

At the same time, the committee is considering the future of Oscar X-ray, which also sees little use but still incurs costs.

This takes care of the strategic view. The tactical and operational changes being considered are largely the results of the survey which was drafted

and distributed to members in June. The key points from the survey are:

- the training system has mixed reviews
- our recruitment systems are ineffective
- communications from the committee also have mixed reviews
- the idea of a system (such as Piako's) which permits members to pay a premium (\$1,000) to opt out of being duty pilot and other club duties. Some people are time-poor to the extent that they will (& can, obviously) pay to reduce their time commitment. Piako advises that only 3 or 4 members took up this option, with the financial contribution to the club winning over any concerns of damage to club culture.

The first two of these points are the hardest to get right. Here are some thoughts from the survey and elsewhere being considered by the committee: your views – whether at the meeting or by e-mail – are welcomed.

i. The committee had a Zoom call with Brian Sharpe of the Wellington Wairarapa Gliding Club (WWGC) to discuss recruitment. While WWGC has the advantage of Brian effectively working as the club manager, their system has features being considered by the committee viz. 4 students per instructor per day, with the goal of each student having 2 or 3 flights per day. The single flight trial flights (as distinct from the multi-flight package) would be limited to 2 per day or put on hold (noting the financial impact of this). WWGC runs a day experience programme, where potential

members spend the entire day at the club, from getting the gliders out to joining members in the bar at the end of the day. During the day, they get a broad view of the club, including for example winch driving.

ii. The introduction of a mentoring scheme. This had almost universal support in the survey and now needs only a volunteer to run this.

iii. The introduction of a role to make it easy for instructors to be aware of student progress, based on the survey feedback of “No continuity of instructors; time wasted due lack of visibility of progress”. This could be regarded as a manager of trainees' role, while the CFI is indisputably in charge of training.

iv. Better focus on post-solo training, particularly cross-country. Murray Wardell has committed to progress on this, but has unfortunately put in his apologies for the AGM. Also, with the likely presence of summer instructors from early January, I encourage you to do some cross-country flying with them.

Please bear in mind that this report is being distributed ahead of the AGM to give members time to read and reflect, deciding what their views are on the items mentioned and thinking of others which they think need to be aired. If possible, please share those in advance with the committee (committee@glidingauckland.co.nz) so that responses can be prepared, if possible. While some members are practised at thinking on their feet, others of us find it useful to have time to reflect.

Treasurers Report 2021-2022

Keith Macy

As with Gerard, our president, this is the first full year I have been in the position of Treasurer. It is a big role and I had to step into some very big shoes to take this on. We have seen a number of past treasurers burn themselves out with the huge amount of paperwork and reconciling required to match up the tow/ winch tickets with EFTPOS receipts to the bank statements and flight logging software. This was a near fulltime role in the height of summer and I struggle to see how my predecessors managed to also be instructors/ winch drivers/ pilots and have a life of their own. They performed magic as far as I am concerned and my hat goes off to the effort and hard work that went on behind the scene that is mostly unseen.

As most of you will know I am not an accountant and do not hold any accounting qualifications. We

have club accountants for the technical part of the job (I email them on occasions to ensure correct processes are being followed) and behind that we have an auditor. With both of these backstops, members can be assured that the funds are being managed effectively. While I complete the day-to-day transactions the accountants do have access to our financials (Xero) and can at any time check what is being done. I am happy to say that we get very few questions about the accounts.

As I mentioned above, one of the surprises to me when I took on the Treasurers role was the massive amount of paperwork for what is essentially a fairly basic process. My background is in Operations management and an area I tended to gravitate to was change and process improvement. I never did enjoy being a maintenance manager. Unless it was essentially

broken, I didn't want to be involved. I took on the role and immediately advised the committee that things needed to change or I was stepping down before I even got started. Areas that I saw that immediately needed to change, were.

- Logging of flights on paper sheets in the caravan and then treasurer having to decipher this and re-enter into gliding ops online system
- EFTPOS for every flight
- Tow tickets
- Some of the structure of the way Xero reported results
- Difficulty in identifying mid-week flying
- Reduction in our massive receivables

Coming from a technology background the first task was to get internet access to the caravan so that all flights could be logged live rather than on paper. This was relatively easy with the availability of long range WIFI. A re-purposed Chromebook was donated to the club and our processes were updated. A small amount of training so that duty pilots could log flights easily.

The next major change was to get agreement to drop the tow tickets and move away from EFTPOS and invoice every flight. This was a fairly major change in mindset but has proven to be extremely successful. As treasurer it takes me less than half an hour to process a days flying in Xero and send out invoices. Xero makes it very easy to see if the flights have been paid for. Any slow payers get reminders and we have the ability to stop flying privileges should a bill go unpaid. To date we have not had to do that. The workload has reduced by at least 5 – 10 hours per week with this system and our receivables have gone down to almost nothing.

Midweek flying was still difficult to identify and invoice. An initial trial of a tracker in our tow plane CEB allowed the treasurer visibility of every tow and also allowed me to verify the height of tows. A huge step forward. We have now progressed this to all club gliders having trackers. This allows me, the treasurer, to see all movements and make sure they are logged in Gliding OPS and invoice appropriately.

It would be nice to have the systems fully integrated but this is a huge task and one that is likely bigger than AGC on its own.

As Gerard has mentioned the last year has been one of the worst on record for AGC. Our revenue is the lowest, our costs are the highest, our actual launches are lowest and the flying hours are down. Almost every metric you want to look at is

bad. The light at the end of the tunnel is that most of these bad numbers are as a result of Covid and with the releasing of restrictions this last week, we expect to have an improved season. Attached is the "performance report" from our accountants. It is not the final report as the auditor has not finished yet. I am expecting the full audited report prior to the AGM.

The front of the report has notes from the accountant with a couple of questions

Aerotow revenue is down due to Covid. Avgas has increased in price a considerable amount and as a result we raised our tow charges. Of note is that although our prices are now \$16.50 per 500 ft, Piako have recently increased their tow charges to \$18.25 per 500ft. We are not expecting to raise ours again unless avgas goes up further. The price does seem to be stable and we are starting the season with a near full tank.

Trial flights are down but this is due to Covid restrictions.

Insurance last financial year was a good news story. Our insurers managed to get us a better deal. This is partly due to another underwriter but also due to our good behaviour and lack of claims. If you want to keep the insurance fees low then fly safe and keep the damage to a minimum.

The debt right off was a one-time one person. The committee allowed a situation to develop during the initial covid lockdowns. This will not happen again. Although this is a reasonable amount of money the actual costs to the club were recovered. This is a case of generosity being taken advantage of.

Finally, is the subject of the club's investments. We have a significant amount of money in term deposits. These are now sitting at around 4% return. Although this is a low return, the risk involved with using someone like Milford or Fisher seems not worth it. I like to think about as though it was my own money. Would I risk my own money for the possibility of a percent of two. I have been tracking both Milford and Fisher and essentially if we had money in their funds we would be going backwards. This is not a position I am comfortable with. Until we see some stability in the investment portfolios, I am very nervous about moving that money to an external provider.

The outlook for the coming season is good. Long range weather forecasts are that we will see another season like last year with long hot days. We have 2 summer instructors so hopefully the

club will be operating almost 7 days per week from January. We will be working hard to gain new members and new students as this is where most of the flying revenue comes from.

Gerard mentioned in his report, if you have questions relating to the financials then please send them to me prior to the AGM and I will make

sure I have answers. I will try answer questions raised on the day but facts may take more time than allowed at the AGM

Keith Macy
AGC Treasurer
treasurer@glidingauckland.co.nz

CFI report for 2021 – 2022

Russell Thorne

The last year has been marked by reduced flying activity primarily due to the restrictions of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the usual winter period of airfield closure due to excessive water. This included the absence of sustained mid-week flying usually supported by overseas instructors when the country's borders were closed during the summer period.

The July 2021 to July 2022 period accounted for a total of 1,227 hours of Gliding at Drury, considerably down on more normal annual figures.

There have been sporadic attempts to preserve recency of pilots while operating under the government health restrictions as best can be applied in two seater gliders or the groups waiting adjacent to the caravan. Initial attempts to sanitise aircraft controls were discarded as more public health information became available.

As far as I am aware, pilots engaged in flying operations were able to stay safe from contracting the virus while engaged in flying activities. Those that did contract the virus while away, advised club officials and observed isolation procedures, these actions were appreciated by other members.

We must record the fatal accident on 8th August 2021 of our dear friend and committed club member Christian Derold, killed while competing in a gliding competition at Borgorose, near Reiti in Italy. The accident report has subsequently been released by the Italian Civil Aviation agency and released to his immediate family back in Auckland. A memorial was held at Drury in his honour at the one year anniversary.

Between periods of the various mutations of the virus, the club held the Drury Task week in the first week of January 2022 which was also

highlighted by the visit of Terry and Abbey Delore enroute to Cape Reinga from the beginning at the bottom of the South Island, a truly momentous and long held aim. The transit across Auckland city by glider is a very rare event only possible by reduced commercial traffic. The popular event hosted by the club totalled a figure of 351 hours over 112 flights, greatly assisted by the use of two visiting GA200 tow aircraft which assisted in producing a fast launch window.

Late in January, the government announced the halting of the Mill Road Corridor roading project which signalled a reprieve for the cessation of gliding activities at Drury should that project have placed the club's future in doubt, while in close proximity to Auckland. The club continues to research its next long term future flying site.

The beginning of the winter signals the commencement of ground theory lectures delivered by club instructors to a large group of nine students, including two visiting pilots from the Aviation Sports Club at Whenuapai. The high standard of exam marks was achievable through an attentive group who fully participated in the Saturday sessions. The end of this commitment has meant our efforts are now into the evening Zoom lectures for a large group of new and returning instructors who have chosen to support the clubs training activities into the coming season. The participation of our well experienced instructor trainers is crucial to our ongoing efforts as indeed our rostered group of the wider instructor group.

With the record rainfall in July now seeming to coming to an end, we look forward to the coming season with anticipation, despite the ongoing public health pandemic showing no signs of abatement.

Russell Thorne CFI

Summer Instructors

Although not quite confirmed we have at this stage a high probability of having two Summer Instructors between Jan 23 and April 23. Most will know about this initiative but for those who don't – This program was started about 2013 when we asked a couple of young instructors from Hungary to visit our club and assist during the summer period. This is to take pressure off our current instructor panel as well as offer a 7-day service for our members and temporary (trial) flying members. This worked well and was extremely busy in terms of increasing the flying being achieved on our field. They ran courses and assisted those members who were wanting more "one on one" type instructing so they could navigate through the syllabus quicker and more efficiently. Over the years we have modified the program, and of course the last couple of years Covid stopped everything. However, this year it seems like we can get the program back on track. Essentially the visiting instructors become full members and can use our aircraft (when not booked) at a zero per hour rate when flying for personal flights. They get full access to the club vehicle (between the two of them) and get to stay in our clubrooms and use of all the facilities. In return they are asked to assist with running the club mid-week and often they assist in the weekends as well. It is not a strict arrangement as its voluntary and there is tolerance both sides, however in every situation, so far, we have made good friends who have taught us a lot and served well to increase our experiences at our club. If all goes to plan, I ask that our members get to know these folk and think of ways that they can help achieve their own expectations and objectives.

Bar and Social Activity.

Although our bar has been very quiet the last few years, we have still managed to upgrade the facility mostly with volunteer member labour. This aspect makes the satisfaction of mixing it with our members on a social level even more pleasing for me at least. Despite a recent threat of Covid a very good evening was held at our rooms and about 35 members enjoyed good food, company and even a look at a flight sim set up by Kevin, one of our newer but more enthusiastic members. Marion and David Moody, with the help of Anton Lawrence were essential ingredients in providing excellent food. I personally was extremely happy to meet with some newer members for the first time. It is sad how the pandemic has slowed down this type of activity, which I regard as an

essential part of "what we do" here at AGC. Let's keep the momentum as we enter summer.

Anyone that has not visited the club rooms for a few weeks will immediately notice the installation of a couple of bi-fold doors at the eastern wall of the bar room lounge. The extra light is immediately noticeable as is the view of our beautiful runway. This work is again a voluntary effort by a few members (Russell, Dion, Anton, Keith, and others) – not quite complete but a great effort and there is more planned.

Auckland Soaring Competition

This event has become a regular exercise for our club from early January from Sat 1st – Sat 8th Jan 23. This year it (unfortunately) starts New Year's Day as that is when the Saturday falls. The good news is that it is not a serious competition – well sort of. You can never get the competitiveness out of some pilots, but the idea is to challenge oneself, as much as to win against others. If previous events are any indication, there will be fantastic soaring over that week. This could also involve flying from Thames (in stronger westerlies) along the Kaimais or soaring along the west coast past Murewai and Port Waikato, the object is absolutely XC flying and doing distances that stretch our expectations for any given day. Sometimes weather doesn't allow flying at all, so we aim to find some enjoyment for everyone. This includes the supporters such as radio operators, wing runners, grid organisers. These people have always been so essential to having a rally as this, so we aim to provide as much fun and accolade to them as we can. If you are new to the AGC please come and get involved. Twin seat gliders will be about, maybe for those not ready, or just those wanting to experience XC flying, this could be a great fun opportunity. We have enlisted the help of Geoff Soper and with support of Quail Lodge <https://www.luxurylodge.nz/> we have been able to provide luxury accommodation so Geoff can be our Contest Director and enjoy his stay with us in Drury. Between Simon Gault (a huge supporter) and myself we have a bit of organising to do, but we will soon get moving and promote our event to the wider soaring community. Feel free to contact me for clarification if you wish.

Smeg

You may have noticed that the Smeg logos have been removed from our aircraft and trailers. Unfortunately, Smeg have decided to move in another direction as far as sponsorship is

concerned. This is a pity as we have enjoyed their support but in business especially nothing is forever and there is always change happening. I would like to thank them for their support. as we are a minority sport. I believe that the support these sponsors can give us can transform our sport, but there is a price, as we need to find ways of increasing our profile to give them some value. However, in doing that, we also present our sport to the majority who mostly know nothing of gliding or soaring.

Christian Derold

The celebration of Christian's life was held in his hangar at our club. As the event was not to be sad and look forward, it was a very hard thing to experience without sadness and loss. Christian had, in a very short time, had a huge effect on my life as it had for many club members and our club. He was gradually lining up to help in many ways and his professionalism and experience would have been invaluable to us. Those that knew him will miss him, not just as a friend but someone who had the abilities to propel our club into the future as a strong and well-prepared organisation. It's been over a year since this tragedy happened, but the gap is still huge. My thoughts are with his family, whose loss will be felt for ever.

Duo to South Island Tour

It was a pity to have to drop the tour last year, but the idea has been re-instated pretty much as previously planned. We have 13 members who will hopefully get their bums into our Duo over the

4-week period down south. Springfield has a XC flying course for a week followed by their version of competition like ours. Then DX moves to Omarama for a Mountain Flying course followed by the South Island Regionals. Thanks to those who want to come along and fly our glider at other sites. I think moving out of our local zone is really healthy (like attending the Christmas Camp at Matamata). Thanks also to those necessary instructors for DX as well because we need some skill to keep us (and our glider) as all in working order. This should be great fun, so keep looking at the flight tracks if you're unable to attend.

Summary

It is about 20 years since I joined the Auckland Club (previously a Piako member). The role of club captain has been mine for some time and has been really rewarding. It is hugely important to have the support of the committee and the members, and I think I have enjoyed that privilege, mostly at least. The current committee has been great to work with and I hope that support continues. Of course, our philosophies can clash but that is the way we get good results in the end, for the wide range of members and their objectives. That is - by positively working towards a common goal, which in this case is the promotion of our amazing sport - in our area - Auckland.

Ross Gaddes
Auckland Gliding Club
Club Captain

Retrofitting crashworthy cockpits



Once again, from Nordic Gliding, this is really fascinating stuff and worth a look at.

<https://nordicgliding-com.translate.google/crash-boom-bang-i-videnskabens->

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Members' Small Ads



PW5 KF for sale. Current Annual until Dec 2022. Ready to fly. Approx 800 hours flying. Radio, altimeter, airspeed indicator, electric and mechanicals varies. Includes open trailer. Also Includes free use of hangar space at Drury until 31 Oct, 2022, if required. Priced to sell at \$8,000. Ideal for single ownership or cheap syndicate. Reason for sale is that glider is surplus to requirements. Phone Murray on 0275 875 438

Drury hangar space wanted. Contact Peter Himmel on 0210768805 or himlp@xtra.co.nz

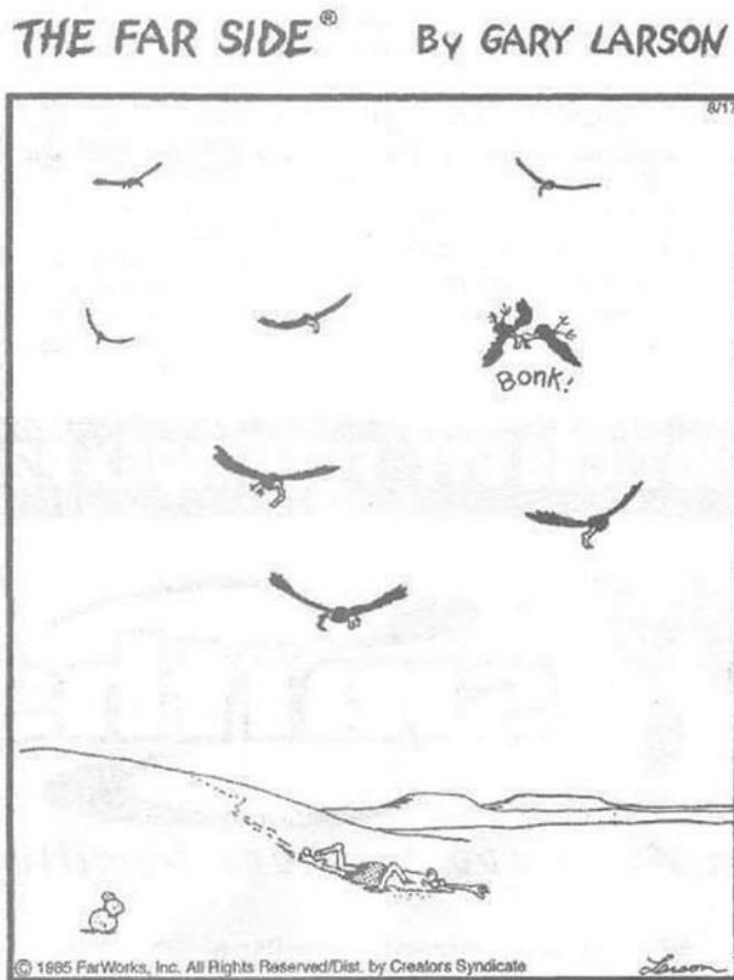


(file photo only)

One share for sale in Grob G109 (ZK-GOC). Touring type motor glider in excellent condition. Upgraded with Limbach L 2400, so has much better take off performance than the standard G109. Contact Russell Jones on 021 180 5544 or email russell.jones@orcon.net.nz

Drury Hangar for sale. Power, water, lockable. Contact Murray 0275 875 438

Newsletter compiled by Peter Wooley wooleypeter@gmail.com



The perils of improper circling