

# REC WINGS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CANTERBURY RECREATIONAL AIRCRAFT CLUB



- STAGGERING STAGGERWING AND DELIGHTFUL DOMINIE
- POOLBURN FLY-IN

JUNE 2018



## RECWINGS

is produced by a keen group of individuals within the **Canterbury Recreational Aircraft Club**.

To subscribe to the e-mailed edition please contact [editor@crac.co.nz](mailto:editor@crac.co.nz).

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Contributions for the next edition are due by **July 12th**. We invite contributions from all, with editorial discretion being final.

Brian Greenwood  
[editor@crac.co.nz](mailto:editor@crac.co.nz)

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*Cover, Cam and Tracey Hawley's Beech Staggerwing and Adam Butcher flying the DH.89 Dominie. Lachie Falconer flew the Fox Moth camera ship*  
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## THANK YOU TO ARCHIBALDS MOTORS LTD FOR SPONSORING THE PRINTING OF RECWINGS

A limited number of printed copies of RecWings are available at the club house, primarily for those few members not on e-mail.

Archibalds Motors Ltd have kindly covered the cost of printing these, and deserve our thanks and support.



## STAGGERING STAGGERWING AND THE DELIGHTFUL DOMINIE

BRIAN GREENWOOD

Prior to this year's Warbirds over Wanaka I got the opportunity (thanks to Gavin Conroy) to photograph the exquisite de Havilland DH.89 Dominie ZK-AKY. Also known as the Dragon Rapide, they were always known as the Dominie in New Zealand. I'm guessing that we used the military name because our examples were all ex-military.

The Dominie was a successor to the popular DH.84 Dragon, and is essentially a twin-engined, scaled down version of the DH.86 Express which served Union Airways in pre-war New Zealand. This example, ZK-AKY, was built for the RAF by the Brush Coachworks near Leicester and allocated the serial number HG654. After being transferred to the RNZAF it arrived at Hobsonville in October 1943 and serialised NZ525.

It was de-mobbed in September 1946 and sold to the New Zealand National Airways Corporation (a conglomeration of nationalised airlines including Union Airways). Named "Tui", it served the Northland area until 1962. In 1964 it was sold to Ritchie Air Services Ltd in Te Anau, which became a subsidiary of NZ Tourist Air Travel later the same year. It was bought by Mount Cook and Southern Lakes Tourist Co Ltd who used it until 1978. After that it passed through a series of owners including the NZ Sport and Vintage Aviation Society, finally ending up with Croydon Aircraft Co Ltd from 2001.

It was flown by **Adam Butcher**, and the camera-ship DH.83 Fox Moth ZK-ADI was flown by **Lachie Falconer**. It was a privilege to fly with these two, both as a cub reporter and a junior pilot! As a bonus, **Cam and Tracey Hawley** popped along during the pre-flight safety briefing and asked if they could join us. Nobody objected... this friendly couple own the gorgeous C-17B Beech Staggerwing VH-UXP.

The Staggerwing was built in Wichita, Kansas, in 1936 and shipped to Australia in 1937. It's worn the UXP registration ever since, apart from a decade in the RAAF from 1942 as A39-3. The Hawley's purchased it in 2005 and shipped it to Mandeville in New Zealand for a total rebuild in 2007. It's been domiciled here ever since.



I flew in both the Dominie and the Fox Moth, and was very impressed with the smoothness of the DH engines, especially the six-cylinder Gypsy Six engines in the Dominie. This aircraft strikes me as being a lot smoother and quieter than its spiritual successor, the Pilatus Britten-Norman Islander (which we also need a museum example of, by the way!).

Lachie Falconer had the job of flying the Fox Moth camera plane, which was the slowest of the trio. I'll write more about this historic aircraft in a later edition of RecWings.



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Wayne has just returned from his bi-annual, update course for Rotax Aircraft Engines at Bert Flood's facility in Australia. This keeps him factory current all the way to the beginning of 2018.



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## HISTORICAL WINGS - DH.89B DOMINIE ZK-AKS, CIRCA 1962



A very rare colour photo of Scenic Air Services' DH 89B Dominie ZK-AKS at Milford Sound in the late 1950's. This aircraft was operated by NZNAC up to September 1956. ZK-AKS crashed into a ridge on Mount Soho, near Arrowtown in June 1965. The pilot became disorientated in white-out conditions during a sheep-spotting flight. Amazingly there were no serious injuries amongst the five persons on board. Some parts have been recovered to start a rebuild at the Croydon Aircraft Company. Huge thanks to Mark Greenwood for permission to print this photo.

Photo from the Fred Watson Collection, © 2018 Mark Greenwood



**POSTCARDS FROM OZ**  
WAYNE WILSON



Club Member **Wayne Wilson** has been risking the perils of snakes, poisonous drop-bears, and strange accents to bring us some aviation-related images from Australia.

Wayne's comments on the first 4 photos: "The airfield is Darby in Queensland – very few microlights. Not much activity, only a crop duster dropping mouse bait. Thrush aircraft with an R1340 Harvard engine which can burn mogas. Cheaper than avgas which is needed for the bigger R1820. Everything dry and no grass."



"Chinchilla (*below*). Two GA aircraft in a hangar and two on the ramp. A gorgeous club house, but a worker said there is a little activity on the weekends, only the birds flying.



Mitchell Aerodrome (*below, three images*) - one broken down hangar, one scruffy club house, no aircraft on the line. Perfect for microlights.

Cattle and horses loose on the main highway. Used to keep vegetation down for fire risk.

Saw roos , possums, one hedgehog and a huge black Angus, all road kill. I counted 14 dead roos



in one km- I'd hate to see the vehicle that hit the bull. 1071 kms so far by day 4."



The Croydon Aircraft Company's beautiful de Havilland DH.89B Dominie ZK-AKY posing over the western arm of Lake Wanaka. Thanks to the pilot, **Adam Butcher**, and the camera plane pilot **Lachie Falconer**.

© 2018 Brian Greenwood



Photo: Paul Godfrey

## POOLBURN 2018

PHOTOS: AS ATTRIBUTED

In early June a group of flyers made their way to Poolburn, and overnighed at the airfield. This included a group of CRAC Aviators who posted these photos to the WhatsApp group, where I shamelessly stole them.

Thanks to **Scott James, Nigel Forrester, and Paul Godfrey** for unknowingly contributing photos to RecWings!



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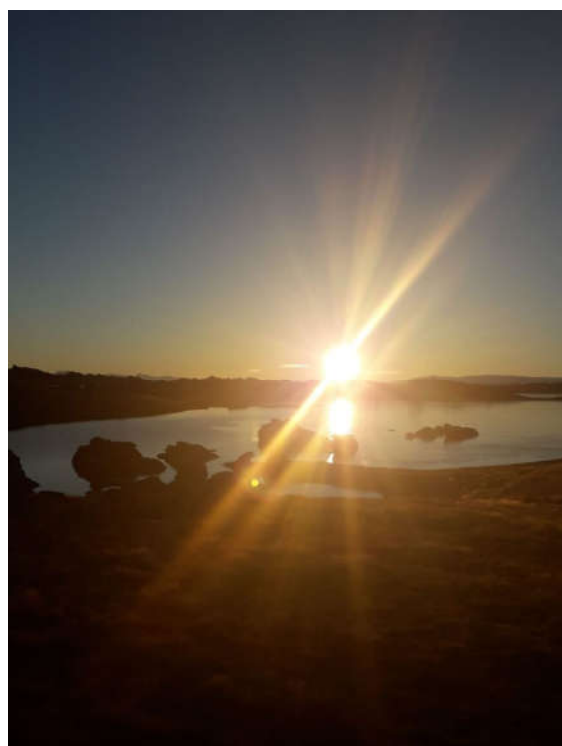


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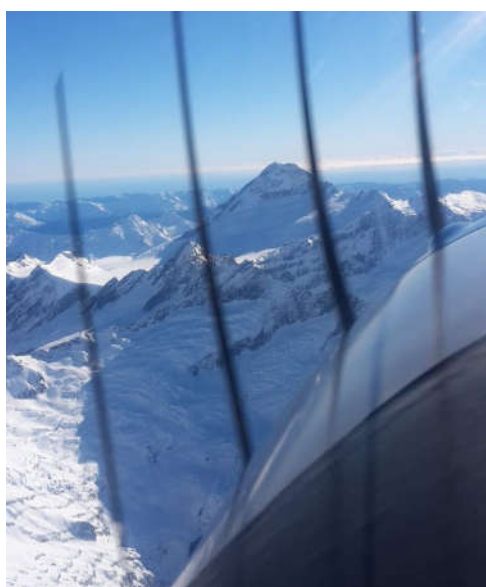


*Left, the intrepid travellers watch as a guinea pig tries the ice for thickness (Paul Godfrey)*

*Below and below left, two views of the hut and aircraft park (Scott James and Nigel Forrester respectively)*



*Above – sunset over the Poolburn Reservoir (Nigel Forrester)*



*Left, Mount Aspiring (Paul Godfrey)*

## FAMOUS KIWI FLYERS - ARTHUR CLOUSTON

BRIAN GREENWOOD



You may have heard the fuss on the news recently about the Kiwi pilot who was offered £1,000,000 to kill Hitler. I'm not sure why it rose to prominence as "revealed", it was first published in his book **The Dangerous Skies** in 1954!

I read this book in the 1970's and Clouston (along with a few other long-distance pilots) became one of my heroes.

Arthur Clouston was born near Motueka in 1908, the eldest of nine children. In his teenage years he established a business buying old cars, repairing them, and selling them on.

Arthur learned to fly at the Marlborough Aero Club at Omaka and, after a failed attempt to join the RNZAF, he moved to the UK in 1930. He joined the Fairey Aviation Company as a working student. His repeated attempts to join the RAF failed until it was discovered that his blood pressure was lower when flying than on the ground! He was accepted in late 1930 and by mid-1931 he was flying Hawker Fury biplanes as a pilot officer with No. 25 Squadron. In 1932 he was promoted to Flying Officer.

In 1935 he left the RAF and accepted a post of Civilian Test Pilot with the RAE at Farnborough. During his time at Farnborough he tested autogyros, various light aircraft including the Miles Hawks, and ice formation on

such aircraft as the Handley Page Heyford and the Northrop Gamma.

The tests that impressed me were the wire strike tests on the Miles Hawk and the Fairey P.4/34.

These tests were to assess the amount of damage done to an



aircraft by wire cables suspended from a balloon or parachute. The P.4/34 was a modern all-metal construction aircraft and was later developed into the Fairey Fulmar naval fighter, and the Miles Hawk was a civilian aircraft of wooden construction for comparison. Imagine deliberately flying into a suspended cable!

Arthur Clouston was asked to do the test flying for the Westland Whirlwind twin-engined fighter, including its first flight.



During this time, he developed a taste for long-distance record breaking flights and air racing. He had various attempts using such aircraft as a Miles Hawk Speed Six (**above**), Pou-du-Ciel, and his own Aeronca C3.

When he learned of the sale of the De Havilland DH.88 Comet G-ACSS (**left**) by a

scrap dealer he persuaded his friend Fred Tasker to purchase it for air racing. This aircraft was already famous, having won the 1934 McRobertson London to Melbourne Air Race. It had been damaged during subsequent testing by the Royal Air Force.

The Comet was repaired by Jack Cross (who also prepared Alex Henshaw's Mew Gull) and participated in the Istres to Damascus air race in August 1937. Clouston and co-pilot Flt Lt George Nelson came fourth behind the state sponsored Italian Savoia-Marchetti S.73's. Clouston and co-pilot Betty Kirby-Green then broke the England to Cape Town record previously held by Amy Johnson. 1937 was a busy year for him, he also married Elsie Turner in December. Elsie was the daughter of a colleague at the RAE.

In February 1938 an unsuccessful attempt was made on the UK to Darwin record, which was foiled by bad weather and a damaged undercarriage. The aircraft was repaired and was re-flown in March 1938. The co-pilot for these attempts was Victor Ricketts who was the Air Correspondent for the Daily Express.

This time the trip was successful. Although they failed to break the London to Darwin record, they unknowingly broke the London to Sydney record! After a quick night's sleep, they flew on to New Zealand and landed at Omaka (*right*) breaking several more records.

It was around this time that a "well-known" Jewish businessman asked him to modify and disguise the Comet, and bomb Hitler. Clouston decided, quite rightly, that it was outright murder as the countries were not at war at that stage.



On the outbreak of World War 2, Clouston re-joined the RAF and joined the Aerodynamics Flight of the RAE. He claimed a Heinkel 111 and a Messerschmitt Bf 110 during his time as a test pilot. Other responsibilities included work on the Turbinlite aerial searchlight in a Douglas Havoc night fighter, dropping coils of parachute-suspended cable in front of enemy bombers, and the development of the very successful Leigh Light for night-time anti-submarine work.

Later he was promoted to Wing Commander and given charge of a Liberator-equipped anti-submarine squadron, where he was awarded the DFC and then the DSO. He was then promoted to Group Captain and commanded two Beaufighter squadrons on anti-shiping duties at RAF Langham.

Post-war, Arthur Clouston was given a permanent commission with the rank of Squadron Leader and served in the British Forces of Occupation in Germany. He was given a two-year posting to the RNZAF as Commanding Officer of Ohakea Air Base in New Zealand from 1946.

Back in the UK he was appointed as Commandant of the Empire Test Pilot School at Farnborough in 1953, being promoted to Acting Air Commodore and posted as AOC Singapore. He was appointed as a Companion of the Order of the Bath in 1957, his final posting was as Commandant of the Aeroplane and Armament Experimental Establishment at Boscombe Down.

Arthur Clouston, CB, DSO, DFC, AFC & Bar, retired from the RAF to live in Cornwall in April 1960. He passed away on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1984.

All photos in this article from Wikipedia except this page which is courtesy of the Aircraft Enthusiasts' Group  
<http://www.a-e-g.org.uk/clouston-and-the-comet.html>



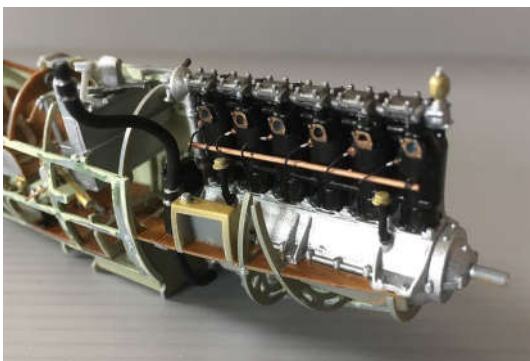
## WINGNUT WINGS 1/32 PFALZ D.IIIA

BRIAN GREENWOOD

Regular readers will know of my ~~fetish~~ like for this Kiwi brand's range of 1/32<sup>nd</sup> scale World War One aircraft. The Pfalz D.IIIa has to be one of the best looking aircraft from this period, this kit was released in late 2010 and has recently sold out.

Pfalz Flugzeugwerke GmbH initially built aircraft designed by other manufacturers. The D.III was designed by Pfalz using many of the techniques learned during this period, especially the elegant moulded plywood fuselage which they inherited from licence-building Roland designs. The D.IIIa variant had externally-mounted guns to allow easier clearance of blockages, and a wider-cord tailplane.

For some reason the Pfalz was never as popular as the Albatros series, despite being very maneuverable and strong. The Albatros aircraft suffered from a weakness in the lower wing which did cause fatalities. The Pfalz was powered by the redoubtable (if somewhat heavy) Daimler-Mercedes D.IIIa or DIIIau engine.

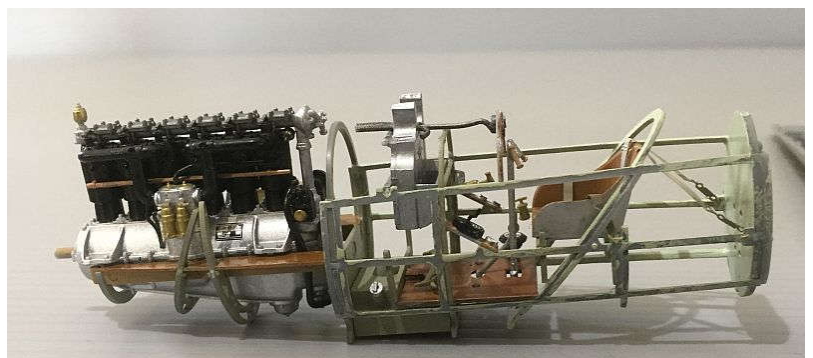


The WnW rendition of this engine is exquisite, I couldn't help but try my own ham-fisted attempt at super-detailing by adding spark plug leads and the plugs themselves. The photo (*left*) is bigger than real life.

It always takes me a while to close up the fuselage on these kits, as the detail is just beautiful. I'm guessing that the fineness is the maximum that can be moulded in plastics, to go finer would require a resin material.

The kit comes with etched brass seatbelts and cooling jackets for the guns. You can see the seatbelt mounts even include springs (*right*).

Once the fuselage is admired enough it can be closed up and the bottom wing mounted. I took the WnW-recommended



modification to drill the ailerons and wings to take some brass wire for reinforcing. At this stage I started to paint and varnish the sub-assemblies, once that was complete the decaling process began.

This is my first ever attempt to use decals for the German lozenge fabric. Wingnut Wings provides plenty in the kit, with the lighter colours being used on the underside. They even give you thin strips to use as the rib tapes.



I didn't get them as neat around the wingtip as I would have liked, but there's no pass or fail marks on this! Before the top wing went on I inserted some monofilament into the pre-formed holes in the top wing, and drilled the lower ones all the way through with a 0.5mm drill in preparation for the rigging. Sadly, around this point, the carpet monster ate the entire starboard upper cowling panel. I can't find it anywhere.



The colour scheme I chose is the most popular one for this model – Max Holtzem's Jasta 16b aircraft. He spent much of the war as a test pilot for Pfalz before being posted to Jasta 16b in early 1917. Post-war saw him barnstorming in Argentina before emigrating again to the USA. He became a test pilot for Anthony Fokker's Atlantic Aircraft Corporation which was eventually merged with North American Aviation. Eventually he was granted U.S. citizenship and was a flight inspector for P-51 production during WW2, finally retiring in 1957. He died in 1980. (source: WnW)

The Wingnut Wings instruction book is a work of art in itself. The company philosophy is to give enough references, original photos, and diagrams to complete the model. Wingnut Wings – always superb.





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## BOOK BOOK – READ IT, READ IT: "BORN TO FLY" BY BILL REID BRIAN GREENWOOD

Given the lousy flying weather lately (we've had slightly more sunshine hours than the depths of the Waitomo Caves this June) you might like to curl up with a good book.

Here's a great read – Bill Reid's autobiography, **Born to Fly**. Bill and his late wife Robyn are well-known Kiwis who completed the amazing restoration of the Avro Anson I.

The book is an excellent read and covers his life to date as a helicopter pilot, businessman, and all-round good guy.

I predict – you will really enjoy this book. Thanks to **Michael O'Brien** for the recommendation and loan.



## COMMITTEE NOTES JUNE 2018

- Weather Station installed and operational
- Honours Board prototype completed
- New draft hangar agreement completed
- Seat belt mods to both Tecnams completed
- RGB now has iPad, same as RGA
- Movie night very successful and enjoyable
- Monthly club events to be scheduled for the last Saturday of every month
- Possible CRAC open day 2019
- May Hours: RGA 56, RGB 44.
- Total Hours: RGA 1960, RGB 996
- Hangar 1 power project still a work in progress
- CRAC RAP e-mail to be two-weekly
- Web site booking system has been modified to include Destination/Intention field
- ATC Student pilot privileges to be formalised in writing
- A robust discussion on the MOGAS-on-the-field situation after the Southfuels method was foiled by the suppliers refusing to deliver to the field. Several ideas discussed and being followed up.
- Club membership documentation being updated to include the ATC membership deal.
- Tuck shop Manager thanked for various projects (see Rap for details)

## EXPIRED CLUB MEMBERSHIPS

It has been noted that there has been the odd example of ex-members still using club facilities. Please make sure that you have paid this year's subscription before using any the club rooms etc.

There has been no suggestion of non-club members using the aircraft, but please note that the unlawful use of club aircraft by lapsed or non- members would not be covered by club insurance – any damage would be entirely at the cost of the user.

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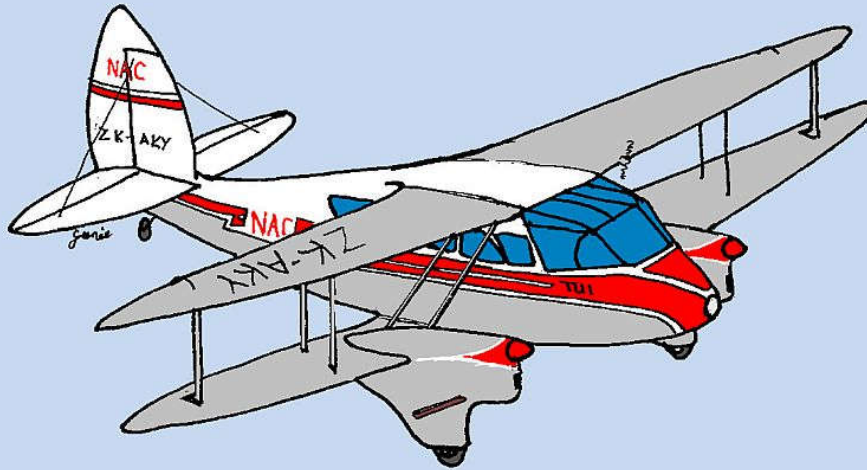
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costs, and joining forms. Membership  
enrols you for the magazine, too.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**June 30th** – Kaikoura Fly-in, lunch, and Whale  
Watch Flight. Hope you've booked! See the  
fortnightly CRAC Rap e-mail for details.

**July 6-8** Marlborough Aeroclub 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
fly-in.

**July 30<sup>th</sup>** – Club fly in to the Ashburton Aviation  
Museum

**Last Saturday in the Month:** Club events, BBQ's,  
fly-aways, etc.

Keep your eye out for the two-weekly club  
e-mail (CRAC Rap), join the **CRAC Drop Of  
The Hat** WhatsApp group for informal  
group fly-aways. Join **CRAC Revolutionary**  
for general chat and good humour.

## CONTRIBUTIONS AND ATTRIBUTIONS

Scott James, Nigel Forrester, Paul  
Godfrey.

**Archibalds Motors Ltd** for the printing  
services

RecWings logo by **Eric Lim**.

*Disclaimer: This Magazine is prepared by  
dedicated enthusiasts; the opinions expressed  
herein are not to be taken as official club policy  
unless approved by the committee.*

## NEW MEMBERS

Welcome aboard to:

**Kevin Hanno**  
**Jackson Hendry**

Please make our new friends feel  
welcome.

## PRINTED EDITIONS

A limited number of printed copies of  
RecWings are available at the clubhouse  
within a week of publication.

## NEXT NEWSLETTER

Contributions for the next edition are  
requested, publishing deadline July 12,  
2018 ("ish").

**Next publishing date approximately July  
18<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

Brian Greenwood, Editor  
([editor@crac.co.nz](mailto:editor@crac.co.nz))

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