



THE NEW ZEALAND

CATALINA

** Comprising the New Zealand Catalina Preservation Society Inc*

NEWSLETTER OF THE NZ CATALINA PRESERVATION SOCIETY INC *

Winter 2020



CATALINA AGM TAUPO 2019

*Images from the 2019 AGM.
Photography Courtesy of "Catherine Thompson, Art and Photography,
Manawatu, New Zealand: Facebook – Catherine Thompson Art"
Left, second photo: Jim Rankin and Brett Emery*

Welcome to the Catalina Flyer Newsletter; please note the changes in contact details, you can now follow us on Facebook and check out our new website on all your devices www.nzcatalina.org.nz.



Catalina Group of New Zealand



PBY-5A OVER WHANGANUI



Jon Davison

The PBY-Catalina took flight over Whanganui during the Vintage weekend, January 18/19 2020 and made the front page of the Whanganui Chronicle. The Catalina attended the Whanganui Vintage weekend and although it was a quiet day on the Saturday we were able to achieve some crew training and attract attention by flying over the town. Sunday was a very busy day with flights and the opportunity for aerial photographs to be taken by retired aviation photographer Jon Davison.

Jon has been a photographer for over 25 years, specialising in aviation and defence under his company Eye in the Sky. He was born in New Zealand, lived in the UK for 17 years, and Australia for 20 years. He is an Australian citizen and holds an Australian Defence Security clearance. He and his wife Jude have lived in the southern French village of Cordes-sur-Ciel since 2016.

As a book developer and publisher, he has produced over 20 celebration type coffee table books on a diverse range of subjects, including submarines, police, aircraft, cities, guide books. Prior to his aviation work, he worked as a travel photographer where he illustrated over 100 books for publishers like Berlitz, AA Guides and Lonely Planet on an exclusive basis.

Jon is also a digital creation and restoration artist, commissioned to create scenarios of projects in development, or past or future environments. Jon is an

experienced trainer and as such has been running courses in digital media for 9 years.

Jon and his wife run photographic and cultural tours from their hilltop village home of Cordes, in the south of France. They spend six months each year in New Zealand.

Jon has been shooting air-to-air material for Pilatus Aircraft of Switzerland for over 10 years, mainly for their prestigious calendar and print and web presences. Jon brings a wealth of experience to any project he undertakes.

www.eyeinthesky.com.au



Jon Davison



View from the cockpit of the Catalina of the Cessna 180 B1X being flown by Dee Bond while Jon Davison was taking photos.



Brett Emeny at the controls of PBY over Whanganui.

CATALINA 2019-2020

As this goes to print we are in Alert Level 3 for Covid 19 and all hoping we can go to level 2 next week! This has brought new challenges for our group the main one being loss of income stream with Wanaka cancelled and goodness knows when we will be able to fly with Passengers again.

The aircraft is in New Plymouth, under ground risk insurance, and Brett and the team are doing a huge amount of work on it as we speak. A major corrosion repair has been completed on the top of the wing and now the guys are removing any small bits of corrosion and priming and repainting. They have also completed all the hull and repainted with Brett on the paint gun. The front nose gear is being replaced with a new one, the #1 engine oil tank has been cleaned out and oil replaced and all work for annual inspection is being carried out. As Brett said this is all deferred maintenance that we are catching up with since the 4 year refurbishment.

Brett, brother John, Fergus, Matt and new member Craig Sampson have all been putting time into this work.

So it has been an interesting few months since the AGM in October where we had good weather and were able to do some training and recurrency on the lake at Taupo. We set off for Kaitaia with nearly a full plane load of members, over the Waitangi Weekend and had a great time hosted by Paul Muller and the Kaitaia Aero Club. See article in the mag giving all the details.

So the next major event will be our AGM and we hope to be able to fly at that time. Meanwhile all keep safe, keep your social distancing and we may get back to normal by our AGM!

Cheers

*Chris Snelson
Manager-Catalina Group*

MERCHANDISE AVAILABLE

Caps: Black or Navy \$25
 Postage for one is \$ 7
 Polos: Navy, sizes M, L, XL & XX. \$45
 Tee shirts: Navy \$30
 P&P within NZ add \$7

Contact Marlene 06 929 6099



**Catalina Group
of New Zealand**



EXPERIENCE THE FAR NORTH

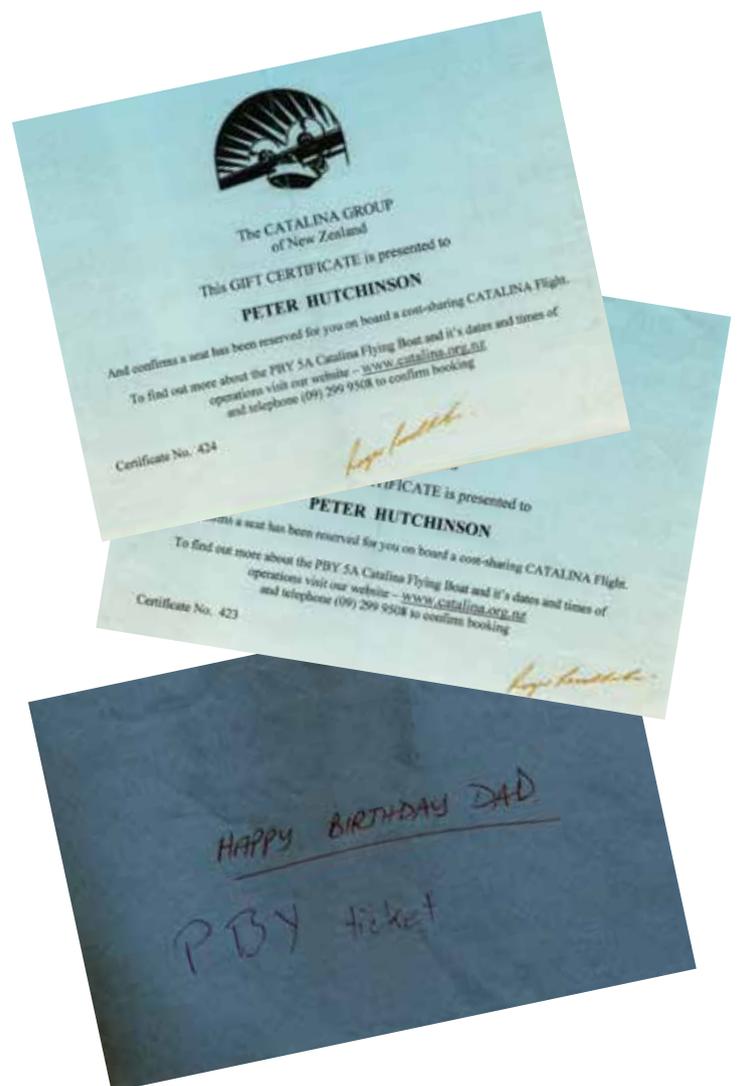
WAITANGI WEEKEND FEBRUARY 2020

The planned Odessey to Northland in 2019 was cancelled due to adverse weaher - the Catalina being the main attraction - contributing to a very seccessful weekend. Our group was blown away by the very warm welcome and generous hospitality. The weather played it's part this year, although Northland had the worst drought for many years, the conditions made for a great weekend of flying.

Early on the Saturday a very keen elderly gentleman arrived and he was carrying an envelope entitled "Happy Birthday Dad" - PBY ticket. In it were 2 tickets Peter was given for a birthday 17 years ago. What else could we do, Peter had his 2 flights and paid for 2 more - he was still there late Sunday afternoon, thank you Peter.

The weekend was organised by Paul Muller the for Kaitaia Aero Club Open Day. The Catalina Crew were able to take people up for several flights in Kaitaia, as well as flights in Whangarei on the way up and in Keri-Keri on the way home. Our crew were billeted out and transport was all arranged. On the Saturday evening we were treated to the very best of local fare and entertainment, even the Mayor of the Far North district Council gave a hand clearing up.

It was a fantastic weekend, impressive hospitality and an invaitaion for a return visit. It was clear from Paul's thank you email that the success of the event was due to the efforts of many in the community who contributed and enjoyed themselves. On behalf of the Catalina Group, thank you Paul, for making it such a successful event.



BEHIND THE SCENES



“Catalina being prepared for over wing work showing the work platform voluntarily re engineered by Alan Warner and the de-fuelling drums donated by Ross Graham Motors”

After the Lord Mayor’s procession comes... ...the dung cart as the old saying goes. To muddle this aphorism, after every flying event such as the memorable and very enjoyable NZCPS members excursion to Kaitaia over Waitangi weekend, comes the clean-up crew – the crew that keep our Catalina airworthy and available. In our case the New Plymouth maintenance team lead by our chief pilot Brett Emeny.

Immediately on the Cat’s return to NPL, Brett and his brother John, who make up the regular core of the NP maintenance team, swung into action to replace the fuel line which had caused some delay to progress at KeriKeri. A simple little job, right? Well no. This is aviation. CAA regulations and manufacturer authorised materials and procedures must be employed. This requires first, the involvement of a licensed engineer who must approve and be present to oversee the agreed work programme.

We are fortunate in New Plymouth to have licensed coverage from both Mike Jackson and Peter Bailey who work with our Kaitaia based Maintenance Controller, Paul Muller. These people all give up their time and skills free of charge to the NZCPS. Having settled on the work programme, they must source the correct material to replace the fuel line. Tubing from Repco or Supercheap Auto would probably do the job just fine but this is aviation and only tubing that has the correct aviation specification and paperwork to confirm it

can be used. Eventually, Brett with help from Gareth of Flightfix Taranaki, located the correct tubing. Gareth too, supplies his services free of charge to the Catalina.

The full responsibility of job organisation and procurement falls on Brett. The fuel line job has become time consuming...and Brett and John have yet to start the physical task of removing the awkwardly situated old line; forming up, flaring and refitting the new line and then pressure testing, securing and proving it. 15 manhours later the simple little job is complete and logbook entries can be made and signed off. That job done, the time has come to investigate the Catalina’s deteriorating brake performance.

After going through the same regulatory preamble as before, “it’s into the job proper”. Catalina jacked up, wheels removed both sides, brake hubs parted, disc packs separated and parts cleaned. Rotor discs individually inspected, measured and replaced as required. Ditto the steel stators that the discs rub against. The brake packs are then reassembled, measured, adjusted and refitted to the hubs. With the wheel hub bearings inspected and repacked with grease, the heavy wheels re fitted, the hydraulic brakes tediously bled and taxi tested, the paperwork can be entered and signed off.

Two more long days of voluntary work put in by Brett and John.

In a later edition I will describe the two weeks that Brett and John (with a much appreciated 4 solid days of help from Fergus) put into surface corrosion repairs to the hull and complex patching around the #2 fuel tank roof. We have had 5 years of “free ride” from the rebuild project and now small patches of light corrosion are beginning to form all over around the rivet zones. This repair work will be ongoing and if regularly kept up will prevent the need for another 4 years of shutdown rebuild.



“Wheel hub exposed with brake pack during removal”

NPL volunteer Matt Buchanan, a 60 hour per week long haul driver, gave up his two days off to completely scrub wash the Catalina from top to bottom - initially to ensure the Cat looked good for Wanaka but with subsequent extra

effort to ensure surface fidelity for the post corrosion treatment, paint job.

This is all just part of a Catalina “Continuing Care Programme” akin to that which Cessna and Piper promulgate to ensure continuing airworthiness of their aircraft but on a much larger scale. On top of our Continuing Care programme, we still must perform the mandatory CAA Annual Inspections in November plus a list of “Like to Do’s” – such as the landing lights, the shimmy damper, avionics and instrument issues.

The endless hours of New Plymouth voluntary work put in by Brett and John with the help of Matt, Athol Rowe, Graeme Jury, the Engineers, Alan Warner, Streety and Peter Budden is priceless. Without them the Catalina simply would not fly.

As I write this on ANZAC day it is not an overstatement for us to consider Churchill’s famous quote as it applies to our Catalina Preservation Society: “Never was so much owed by so many to so few” Lest we forget!

Peter Vause

Hull corrosion being dealt too before it becomes a major: BEFORE

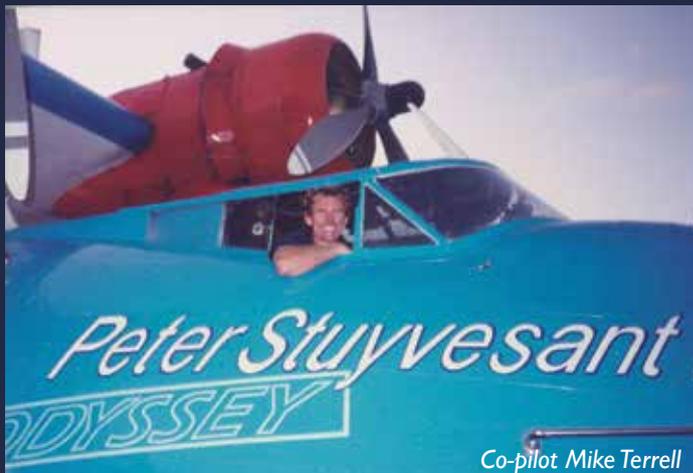


AFTER



A YEAR ON THE CATALINA

by Mike Terrell



Hi,
Thank you all for such a lovely time in New Zealand. I've posted a chapter from something I drafted in 2007. This episode is the year on the Catalina. It's a bit rough around the edges and full of my typing errors. Hope you like it.
Mike

PART 2

From Natal, we back-tracked 2 hours out to Isla de Fernando de Naronha for filming on this spectacular volcanic island. Two friends of Pierre, a lovely couple, Margi and Gerard Moss, accompanied us in their world-traveling Piper Saratoga. All of us coaxed the BM into doing some landings at the site of the old Latecoere harbour. The adventure was complete with sundowners in the WW2 barracks. We curved through the ITCZ thunderstorms back to Natal the next day.

The most amazing dune fields lie along the coast between Natal and Belem, 'Bethlehem'. It's as if huge portions of the Sahara were dropped between the jungle and the ocean. We motored along peacefully listening to Brazilian singing on the ADF radio. I hitched along with the film crew for some river excursions from Belem, the mouth of the Amazon. On the riverfront, boats bore hundreds of clay amphoras on deck. Harry, Pierre and I did the 100-hour maintenance inspection in the pouring rain while the film crew got their footage in the colourful marketplace. After salt water landings, it's important to jack the landing gear and clean all wheel bearings and brakes. Catalina brakes are 17 sets of rotors and stators while corrode easily. The plane has no steering other than brakes. Differential engine power is not particularly effective because the engines are closer to centre line than most twin engine planes. Leaving Belem, flying up the Amazon, our ONC charts had sections marked in white, meaning

uncharted in 1993. The river was in flood. The north/south road through Manaus had not been built.

It was wild and grand. We flew 7 hours to a water landing in front of a jungle lodge at 3 degrees south, 61 west. Seen from the air, the Rio Negro is dramatically black, and the waters don't mix for some distance after joining the Amazon. This idyllic lodge had a treetop tower, macaus, caipurinha drinks and a gorgeous tropical sky.

I suggested the idea of looking for Angel Falls after refuelling and customs in Manaus en route to Tabago. I got the coordinates and loaded them in my GPS. The ITCZ was there, as well. We were snaking our way along the towering red sandstone mesas that rise out of this jungle and dodging heavy clouds. The falls are world's

Harry in the pouring rain.



Sunset on
the Amazon



highest and probably the world's hardest to reach. They were only discovered by the West in 1936 by air. We got within a ten miles, but clouds blocked the last canyon and we had to abandon the effort. I gave BM our direct course to Tobago. By now, he had learned to read the groundspeed display on the GPS. The heading to Tobago was 45 degrees off his previous heading to the falls and now into the wind. He refused my heading because the groundspeed was lower! Being a copilot is the hardest job in aviation.

One night in Tobago cured me of wanting to go back there. Surly people can be found much cheaper close at hand. The northbound flight up the Leeward Islands was breath-taking, however. Rugged volcanic islands gave way to smoother, farming islands with reefs. We slept on a huge catamaran in the British Virgin Islands where they use US dollars for currency instead of British pounds. US Customs in Puerto Rico was it's usual agonising experience. We wanted to make a fuel stop on the island in transit between the BVI and Cayman Islands. A foreign registered aircraft has to declare every stop in the US. Our US clearances only began in New Orleans, so I called ahead to Puerto Rico the day before to secure permission. Customs in Borinquen went berserk when I landed to refuel.

Though the passengers never left the plane, immigration wanted to fine us for bringing them into the US. For enlightenment on how the world perceives the US government, I invite every American to try entering the 'land of the free' with a foreign passport. Customs in Cayman and Chetumal, Mexico couldn't have been nicer. They want tourists and business. We feed the tame rays in

the lagoon in Cayman and filmed the Mayan ruins in Mexico. Since Angel Falls didn't pan out, I proposed a flyby of the Mayan ruins on the Yucatan. I loaded the sites from off a National Geographic map into the GPS and it worked like a charm. The shots of Tulum were used in the opening credits to the film. US customs and immigration in New Orleans was no surprise. All our passengers were Dutch and French. Recent changes in US visa requirements made them exempt...we thought. The exemption only applies if they arrive by a major airline. Each was fined.

The film crew taped jazz at Preservation Hall and white Appalachian music in my home state, Georgia. It's not often a Zimbabwe plane comes to Toccoa, Georgia. The rains fried our transponder, but we got permission to film flying low level past the Washington monument in D.C. Such things were possible in the salad days before September 11, 2001. Our destination was Teterboro, NJ to film the landing of a Catalina before the Statue of Liberty. At dawn Sunday morning, the Odyssey producer had secured a one hour window to land in New York harbour. The Coast Guard stationed boats, forming a rectangle for us and kept the traffic clear. Helicopters stood by to film the amazing event. It rained like a racehorse pissing on a flat rock. It rained so hard my video camera was ruined from the water running past the overhead hatch on me. We could hardly see the Statue of Liberty, but we got the landing and returned to Teterboro. Our weather luck was better in the afternoon. We flew the low level corridor up the Hudson River past the Statue with camera planes filming a second time. We had a day off in Lebanon, VT and took a flight back to Albany for radio repairs. US Customs hammered us for



Passing the Statue of Liberty and landing in on New York Harbour

an undeclared stop, but we needed radioes to cross the Atlantic and took their harangue.

Deer Lake, Newfoundland is a home to the cod fisheries and a firebomber base. The Canadians use water-scooping Catalinas, called Canso's, to fight forest fires. Pierre did not miss the opportunity to line up a Canadian captain, George Furey, to replace the Bowel Movement after the Canadian fire season. Eight hours got us overhead our next destination Julianhaab, Greenland, covered by cloud. There was no airport. There was no published approach. Julianhaab does sit in a fjord and

Pierre Jaunet at Julianhaab, Greenland

I had a topographical chart of the area. I saw a broken cloud layer some distance inland and, with the GPS position, convinced the BM this was the same fjord. We landed though a hole in the cloud and taxied back to Julianhaab for a couple miles through the icebergs. We found shallow water in front of the Eskimo village to anchor. The shallow water would keep the larger icebergs from denting our fragile plane on the tides. For the smaller icebergs, Pierre and I used a motorboat and pole to push them off our tail. We got a couple iceberg dents under the tail. We carried a portable generator to power the electric bilge pumps which now had to run all the time sitting on the water. The open sea landings were taking a toll of our hull rivets. When on land,



there are drain plugs for dumping the water from the three compartments separated by bulkheads above the water line. If the wingtip floats take on water, you're in trouble. Floats have only drain plugs and will sink below the water level if leaking. Our floats were always dry, thankfully. The Eskimo lads gave us a demonstration of their kayak rolls in the freezing water. These were authentic skin-covered kayaks and their skill wasn't honed for the tourists. We hopped a half hour to Narssarsuaq to refuel then 8 hours at arctic



Iceberg at Julianhaab Greenland



Cylinder, blown on landing, hanging on intake pipes

latitudes in an unheated Catalina to Iceland. Luggage space being a premium, we had no heavy coats. Icelandic customs and immigration were excellent. At an iceberg-filled lake near Hofn, we got some dramatic footage on the step doing touch and go landings.

Next we landed at the Shetland Islands where the Brits had a Catalina base in WW2. The last leg would be Sumburgh in the Shetlands to Holland. We only made it halfway. Over the North Sea, we blew the left engine. One would think it safe in a seaplane over the ocean, but the North Sea had enormous waves. We could not land the Catalina on this water safely. After feathering the prop, we diverted to Aberdeen. Z-CAT had a homemade fuel dump system we activated to lighten the load. RAF and oil rig helicopters escorted us. BM, to his credit, flew the optimum single-engine airspeed spot on for we were very heavy and had drifted down quite low. I steered us in by GPS but had no charts for the airfield. I got the landing runway from the tower, but had to ask if there were any hills between us and the airfield. There was no chance of climbing any in altitude. Aberdeen airport is thankfully flat and we landed safely. The local press carried pictures of us prepared for the worst in life jackets. Our Dutch friends flew on to Holland and left us to change the engine. For two cold, rainy weeks, in what passes for summer in Aberdeen, Harry and I hung the new engine. We found a cylinder skirt broken on the old engine. The weather was a 200' ceiling and a half mile visibility when we did a test hop, but we were eager to reach Amsterdam. We finished the film with landings in the Ijselmeer. (Holland dammed the old salt water Zuider Zee. It is now a huge fresh water lake, Ijselmeer.) It had been a fantastic two months with a wonderful

film crew. We were like family after all the horseplay and hard work together. Now it was time to go back to Africa and the tourist season. Z-CAT left Amsterdam for Harare on 17JUL93. Paris ATC gave us permission to buzz the Eiffel Tower, then we got heat when someone complained apparently. In Turin, Italy we gave some joyrides to family friends. We picked up the pace, afterwards, to Harare through Corfu and Luxor to Nairobi in 32 flying hours over a period of three days. Leaving Nairobi for Harare, I noticed oil coming from the right engine. Lots of oil. Then the engine started banging. We pulled power back till the banging stopped. When the banging stops below atmospheric pressure, it's a sign of a blown jug(cylinder). We nursed it back to Nairobi at low power. After landing, we could have shutdown and towed the plane to parking, but BM (The Bowel Movement) wanted to bring the power back up. He blew the jug right through the cowling. In fact, the jug was hanging outside the engine by the bent intake pipe. Now, we had to rig a tow somehow. The nose axle is hollow. I ran a pipe through the axle and tied a clove hitch to each end to make a bridle to a tractor. We towed to parking for a month to change another engine.

The good news was we replaced the BM. At the farewell dinner, we didn't kiss and make up. (I hoped I'd seen the last of him, but our paths crossed in Papua New Guinea a year later. He refused to shake my hand in Mt. Hagen and threaten to expose me as a fraud to the local DCA. The DCA happened to be giving me a check ride that very day and I brought the authorities to him. I challenged him on a level playing field, not as his copilot anymore, to make his charges. The bully cowered. It was sweet revenge....

to be continued

DITCHING IN THE PACIFIC

Kristi Holland, designed the current nose art. Her Grandfather Ron Bennett, was a fighter pilot and flew Corsairs over the Pacific in the second World War. This is Kristi's account of Ron's ditching in the Pacific and his rescue by a Catalina.



My Granddad, Ron Bennett, was a fighter pilot. He flew Corsairs over the Pacific in the second World War, in three tours between August 1944 and July 1945.

What a yahoo he must have been. A young man just out of his teen's, behind the controls of one of the fastest, most effective fighter-bombers of the day. With a mechanically supercharged Pratt & Whitney R-2800 Double Wasp engine driving an over-sized three bladed propeller, the F4U Vought Corsairs were formidable. But for all their speed and manoeuvrability, it was the Corsair that nearly ended my Granddad. Instead, I have a PB4Y-4 Catalina to thank for my very existence.

The Catalina had become indispensable in the Pacific during WWII. With a massive, wing-based fuel tank, it had greater flight endurance than other prop planes. Cat crews spotted and shadowed enemy ships, escorted cruisers and laid depth charges in anti-submarine runs. The air-sea rescue craft were nicknamed 'Dumbo's' and saved many lives.

Unfortunately, their unique body shape - the streamlined hull, the single pylon holding up the huge wing and the large, upturned tail - made them highly recognisable in the air. They were also catastrophically slow, which made them easy pickings for the likes of the Japanese Zeros. Cats were therefore escorted between islands by fighter planes, to keep them safe on mission. Dozens of PB4Y rescue stories returned from the Pacific during WWII, carried by very fortunate men. This is one of those stories.

On January 29th, 1945, Ron Bennett flew the Corsair F4U 5436 as wingman to Pilot Officer Reid. His No. 22 Squadron had the mission of 'Dumbo Escort', as he put it in his flight log. This was a PB4Y-4 piloted by LT Horn. 200 miles out from base at Emirau Island and with no land in sight, Ron heard a loud report from his engine. Losing power and with the engine running very rough, he checked over his gauges. The fuel pressure was good, and he had plenty. He ran the fuel pump in any case, but it didn't help. Switching the fuel mix up to full rich only made things worse.

The cylinder temperature fell fast. The fuel and oil pressure were fine, but the power steadily dwindled away to nothing as the carb-air light came on. When the engine began cutting out, he knew he would have to ditch. He informed P/O Reid with a mayday call. The squadron thought he was having them on until he disappeared from formation, dropping towards the Pacific Ocean. P/O Reid quickly informed LT Horn in the Dumbo.

Ron tried to jettison the canopy of the Corsair, but despite many attempts it wouldn't come clear. Dropping swiftly towards the water, he had to settle for locking it open. At 2300 ft, only four minutes after the initial engine noise, Ron tightened his straps. He released the belly tank with his extra fuel and trimmed the Corsair into a glide at 110 knots. At 500 ft he dropped back to 90 knots and prepared for impact. He didn't hit hard, but the force still threw him into his harness. An up-flung arm protected him from being knocked out on the gun sight. The impact also slammed the canopy shut, despite Ron having taken pains to lock it open. So much spray flew up, he thought he might be going under.

The Corsair settled nose down. Ron climbed out and stood on the side of the cockpit with his parachute and dingy at the ready. The plane floated for all of 30 seconds. Ron pulled the CO2 lever on his Mae West life jacket. At this point his report simply says: 'Thought it had inflated'. He jumped clear of the plane, but had to release the dingy to untangle himself from the leg straps on his parachute. The buoyancy pads of the Mae West became water logged, and not being able to swim, Ron struggled to stay afloat. He tried to manually inflate the vest, but exhaustion had set in and he failed. A last-ditch yank on the CO2 lever brought great relief as the Mae West finally inflated fully. A few moments later, the Dumbo made its more purposeful touch down. The crew negotiated their way to Ron and his downed Corsair with no trouble. All in all, he was in the water less than ten minutes.

Reading his log book, it is all too clear how that day could have ended. Over his three tours in the

Pacific, Granddad Ron noted many ditchings, followed by many drownings. The Pacific Ocean is enormous, the islands tiny, hard to find and, in 1945, often occupied by the Japanese. Pilots got lost, left to wander the clouds or the night until they ran out of fuel. Mechanical failures were all too common: 'Returned with engine trouble' is noted throughout Ron's flight log. His ditching report points to possible carburettor icing as the cause of his trouble that day, not unheard of in the humid airs of the Pacific.

Once in the water, few men had the opportunity to swim to any kind of shore. In any other circumstance, Ron's No. 22 Squadron could have done little more than circle in the air above and hope a boat or Dumbo could return later and perhaps find him in his dinghy. Along-side his log entry about the ditching, which says only 'Ditched aircraft 10 miles North of Tavui Pt, New Britain,' Ron pasted a picture of a Dumbo. A very grateful young man, I think!

Years later, my Nana Colleen, Ron's wife, joined the Catalina Group, inspired by the story of Ron's rescue. The group was preserving an old PBY-5A and Colleen was always there on club days with the car boot full of scones and tea. Seeing the now 72-year-old plane still in service must have felt like something of a tribute to the PBY-4 Dumbo that scooped Ron out of the Pacific all those years before.

It was Fergus King, a long-time family friend who knew my Nana, who linked me back to the Catalina. The club's Cat was undergoing a rebuild, and Fergus wanted to update the nose art. Bob Dyke, a Canadian pilot, had Marilyn Monroe riding a Canadian goose painted on the nose of his Cat. The glove was down, and Fergus came to me with an idea for an update to the Witch-on-a-broomstick that was currently gracing The Wandering Witch, the Catalina Clubs plane.

Fergus's concept saw the namesake Witch astride a Pouakai, or Haast's Eagle. This monstrous avian predator stalked Moa in New Zealand's recent past, and seemed an appropriate steed for the Witch. The Pouakai also features in the crest of the New Zealand Royal Air Force, and in the New Zealand Warbirds logo, nicely linking the PBY-5A back to the WWII Pacific days. Knowing my Granddad's ditching story and that I wouldn't exist without the actions of the Dumbo that day, I gladly set pen to paper. Many hours work was eventually converted into two giant stickers for the sides of the plane.

One stunning morning in October 2019, Fergus en-

couraged my husband and I to come down to Taupo, to see the artwork in action. I was more than honoured to have my third-generation link to the Catalina emblazoned on the sides of The Wandering Witch. To cap it off, the crew invited us to tag along on that morning's flight.

What a buzz! The twin propellers started up with terrific thunder, almost too loud to shout over. No wonder all the old Cat pilots were deaf as posts. Thoroughly welcomed and settled in by the enthusiastic crew, we cruised the runway and lifted gently into the air. Lake Taupo spread out sparkling below us. The inside of The Witch reminded me of a classic old yacht; immaculate white metal and timber finishing.

We circled in above the suburbs, low over the water. Then lower still. The lake surface whipped by alarmingly fast. Too close for comfort for a plane, but bread and butter for this flying boat. With a feather touch, we skimmed the surface at precisely 73 knots. Spray erupted past the windows, rising to hide the view, then settled as the propellers geared up and lifted us airborne again. The 'wwwoooaaow - wwwoooaaow' from the props vibrated through my legs.

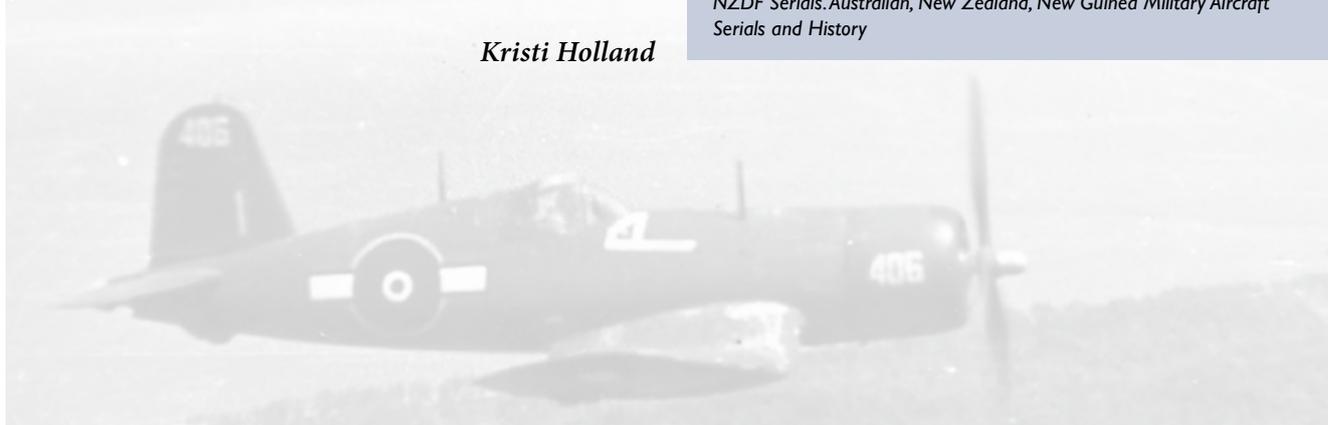
Around we went again. Taupo and the mountains swung across the windows as The Wandering Witch curved back over the suburb. We moved to the blister seats, and I stuck my head into the Perspex bubble. What a view down the side of the plane! This time we came in more slowly. Impossibly slowly, considering how big and heavy the Catalina is. We inched toward the water, lower and lower. Again, the spray leapt up, splattering the blister. Then the hull dug in and we all slid forward as the brakes came on hard. The plane dipped and rose like a boat losing speed. The floats on the wingtips were down, and we rode the water like the world's strangest scenic cruise boat. Little cracks and pops echoed through the hull as the water slapped at the outside.

Manoeuvring a vessel as big as The Witch must be difficult, with no keel or rudder and with only the props right at the front for steerage. What must it have been like trying to sidle up to my Granddad on the open ocean, with the swell and the wind? Today was calm, but we still zigzagged back to the start of our 'runway' to take off. The suck of the water surface against the hull was enormous. The Witch gained speed, the 'wwwoooaaow - wwwoooaaow' from the props rising to a scream. But we stayed on the water, spray shooting out behind us. Faster and faster, the water slapping at the plane from beneath. Then, by inches, she rose, skimming along at 65 knots. The noise from the water faded as we cleared the surface, powering up into the cool morning air. Just fantastic.

Back at the airfield, I admired The Wandering Witch, still buzzing from the flight. The dedicated crew cleaned her up, ready for another flight later in the morning. Keeping The Wandering Witch in the air is no mean feat, and without the support of many, this craft would find herself high and dry.

I thought about all the lucky people who once rejoiced to see the oddball Catalina shape lumbering overhead. So many people, my Granddad included, were plucked from the Pacific during WWII by these magnificent machines. I exist as a result of them. Looking at The Wandering Witch, still grinning ear to ear from the once-in-a-life-time experience I'd just had, I felt very glad to be a part of its history.

Kristi Holland



NZ5436 6023 F4U-ID 57200

Shipped from USA on 24 July 1944 aboard "USS Winnebago".
Assembled in Espiritu Santo and BOC Unit 60 on 12 August 1944.
At Espiritu Santo August 1944.
Coded "36".
To No.24 Squadron by early November 1944.
To No.19 Squadron on 20 November 1944.
To No.22 Squadron by January 1945.
Ditched in sea north of Tawui Point after engine failure while on escort duty on 29 January 1945.
Flight Sergeant R. Bennett rescued uninjured.
Aircraft written off books at Emirau.

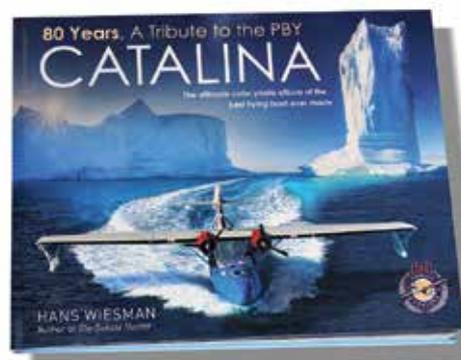
SOURCE:
NZDF Serials. Australian, New Zealand, New Guinea Military Aircraft Serials and History

If you are enjoying Mike Terrell's article "A year on the Catalina" and would like to read more then a reminder that Hans Weisman's book would be a great addition to your collection. By far the best part of this tribute to the Catalina is the attention given to the Catalina Odysseys'. Hans Weisman was the initiator, organiser and a participant.

80 Years, A tribute to the PBY CATALINA

Hans Weisman

The full career of the PBY Catalina / Canso in a magnificent XL Photo Album with 400 photos, many never published before. From 1937 to 2017, the Cat's seven lives are described, from the Wartime on to its Post-War period as a cargo/ fire fighter/ Coast Guard plane. Ending with the survivors of the New Age, they are all there in this fully illustrated Lounge Table book with Pilot's reports and visits to Faraway islands.



For sale at Amazon and or at www.catalinabook.com for a special 20 % -Off Price. Read on their Order-page the 22 Customer Reviews and see the 15 random pages from my book.

You can also see a Video of my book and order via www.dc3dakotahunter.com

20% OFF

way back when....

One of the Odysseys, this photo was on the front page of the Autumn 1998 Catalina Flyer



From Left to Right: Bob Dyck, Dave Jenkins, Chris Snelson, Tom Neave, Marlene Gray, Robert Lindsay, David Lindsay, Terry Beaumont, Richard Moody, Rebecca Clews (in white) Tina Moody, David Clews, Chris Curry, Mike Hodgkinson, Alex Field, Ken Wallace.

The original Gang of 30, to bring the Cat down under.

...we acknowledge the current active members in bold type.

Ben Sinnock, Ross Macpherson, **Marlene Gray**, **Dee Bond**, **Chris Curry**, Pete Smillie, Lew Valiant, Tom Neave, Lawrie Scwabe, Murray MacDonald, **Niol Lockington**, Eric Fontein, Ron Ward, Mike Davies, Gerrard Rae, Don Ryder, Bob Torr **Lawrence Acket**, **Brett Emeny**, **Chris Snelson**, **Gordon Habgood**, Tony Butcher, Hec Neville, Jon Currie, David Corrick, Wim Bergers, **Tom Ford**, **Barry Moran**, **Robert Lindsay**, **Charmaine Lindsay**.

Tasman Empire Airways Limited (TEAL)

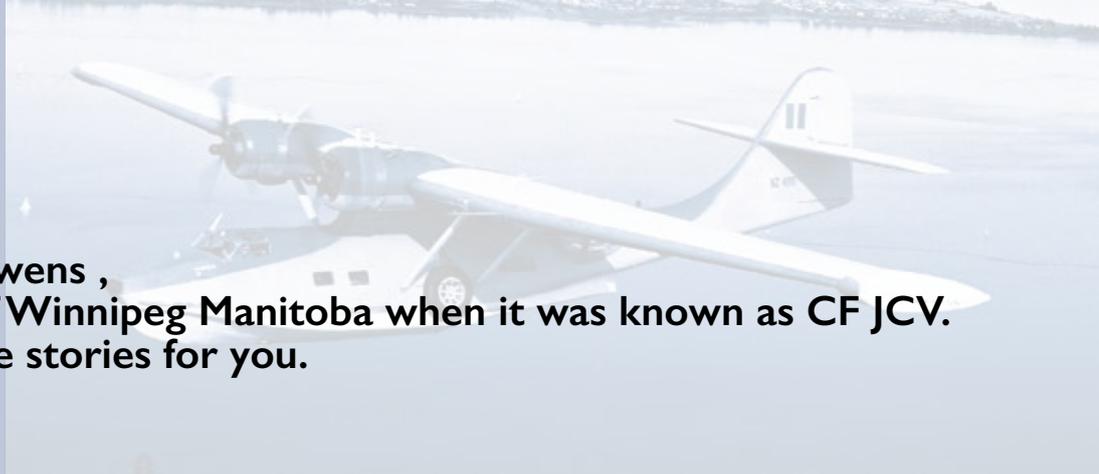
was the forerunner of Air New Zealand.



Photos via Marcus Bridle Peter Lewis Collection

CONSOLIDATED BOEING PB2B-1 CATALINA

TEAL flew two Boeing-built Consolidated PB2B-1 Catalinas from 1947 until 1949. They were loaned from the RNZAF and used as training and survey aircraft. They were registered on the civil aviation list as ZK-AMI and -AMP Maroro (Flying Fish - TEAL's emblem), -AMI was never named.



**My name is Ron Owens ,
I flew ZCAT out of Winnipeg Manitoba when it was known as CF JCV.
Three gentle stories for you.**

THE (Almost) KILLER FLOAT

Be careful around the left float of ZCAT. It almost became an instrument of murder.

Artery Lake looks like an H with one short upright. The small lodge was centred in the crosspiece of the H . At the entrance to the crosspiece a rock shelf narrowed out and into the water. I landed and in a moment of hellery, decided to make the 90 degree left turn into the channel on the step. Speed was correct , left throttle back , right throttle forward, right float in the water, quick check to confirm the left float was out of the water to clear the rock shelf. All good -NO !

A Yankee was standing on rock to take a picture of the PBV coming in. The left float missed him by ten feet.

ALMOST A SUBMARINE

One summer we had a young gay flight attendant. He was very excited about beginning his new career.

On a beautiful day we were unloading fishermen and supplies at Molson Lake, east of the top of Lake Winnipeg. The lake is famous for its large Northern Pike.

Last to be unloaded were bags of potatoes from the center section of the plane. As the last bags were removed, a geyser of water shot up three feet tall.

“Who was to check the plugs ?” I asked, and looked at the very frightened flight attendant. “Where is the plug?”

A now sobbing little man took the plug from his pocket and asked “ What is going to happen now? “

“ Unless you put the plug in , we are going to be a submarine.”

“ Oh, no “ he cried, “ the water is dark and cold, and I cannot swim.”

“ Would you like me to do it?”

“ yes, yes, I will forever be thankful “

I bent over and put the plug in.

Two days later, on an empty leg, and for the co-pilot's ego, I left the cockpit and retreated to the tower position to read a book. Happily into the story, I was startled by a hand on my inner thigh. Looking down between my legs, I saw a happy face.

“Captain, can I get you.....anything.....?”

Struggling to keep my voice manly, I croaked out “ No thanks, I am just fine , thank you.”

THE BAG

We had come out of Dogskin Lake Lodge (180 mi NE Winnipeg) on a hot bumpy afternoon. The American fishermen had been fed a lunch of pickled fish, baked beans and beer.

Knowing full well what was about to happen , I headed due west for the less bumpy air over Lake Winnipeg.

Seeing the flight attendant busy gathering up full sick bags, I went through the cabin to tell the passengers we would have better air in twenty minutes. Under the tower, I met the steward (Yes, that steward!)

He said he was running out of places to store the full sick bags. I asked if he knew how to exit a bag. He said no. I was facing aft, he facing forward. I opened the window in the tower, put my left hand out to block the wind, and went to exit the barf bag with my right. Unfortunately we hit a bump, I lost control of the bag , which ripped in half. The inside half hit the little steward square in the face, causing a dance of horror !

The outside half expanded on it's way to smack the front of the bubble. A passenger in the bubble yelled “ FLACK” .

And eight WWII vets hit the rear floor in a dog pile!



“A US Navy, P8 Poseidon Aircraft recently visited Ohakea. The RNZAF will be replacing its Venerable P3 Orions with the P8 in 2023. While at Ohakea an opportunity was taken to photograph three generations of maritime patrol aircraft. Interestingly the United States Navy Squadron that the P8 came from also used to fly the Catalina.”

MERCHANDISE

Caps: Black or Navy	\$25
Postage for one is	\$ 7
Polos: Navy, sizes M, L, XL & XX.	\$45
Tee shirts: Navy	\$30

P&P within NZ add \$7

Contact Marlene 06 929 6099



Preserving New Zealand's aviation heritage for future generations

Over time we have all come into contact with people that have had some experience associated with a Catalina, I would like to ask and encourage you to contact me to share your experience of the Catalina in whatever capacity. The contribution you make helps us to keep old memories alive and make new ones that we can pass onto future generations.

A reminder to you that the Friends' group has been disestablished but you can become an Associate of the Catalina Preservation Society for \$50 per year,

contact Anne Logan Ph 022 421 0300 and email Anne.busa@hotmail.com. Could you please advise Anne of any change of email address or contact details. See our our website www.nzcatalina.org.nz for more information.

The new website has been updated and can be seen on all mobile devices making it easier for those who are digital natives to keep in touch and pass on your memories. We are on Facebook just look for “Catalina Group of New Zealand”
until the next time....Adele



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blackpony
PUBLISHING

25 Oriwa Crescent, Otaki 5512, New Zealand
Ph +64 6 364 7326 Mob: +64 21 701705 Email: adele@adelesousterart.co.nz