

ARDMORE TOWER MAKEOVER

The Unicom tower has been undergoing a revamp aimed at making sure it remains a vital cog in Ardmore Airport's infrastructure for the foreseeable future.

For the past few weeks, building and painting contractors on scaffolding around the structure have repaired, replaced and painted ageing or damaged weatherboard cladding.

Duncan White, the airport's asset and compliance manager, said: "We need to ensure the tower's longevity. It's a vital part of the airport's infrastructure. Some earlier temporary repair work to waterproof the building will be made permanent."

And, since Ardmore Airport Ltd upgraded and refurbished the tower's beacon a few months back, feedback from airport users has been positive.

Allan Bostock, General Manager Unicom and Aviation Compliance said the beacon's green and white rotating light helped pilots to locate the airport. Viewable from about 10 miles out, the beacon provides a useful confirmation to a pilot that the airport lighting system has been activated successfully through use of the PAL (pilot activated lighting) system.

Other recent airport projects include the construction of Delta 2, a 20-metre wide taxiway strong enough to cope with jet aircraft. It links Sierra crossing with the main runway, Runway 03.

To satisfy airport user interest, AAL has designated and marked a sealed area adjacent to Oscar and Juliet and the aircraft runway for Runway 21 as a compass swing area.

Duncan said the site was ideal for helicopters and fixed wing aircraft pilots to check their compass settings against a known, calibrated north point. Regular checks would be made to ensure compass bearings at the site remained true.

As part of AAL's efforts to extend the life of the main runway and taxiways, the company arranged for contractors to seal cracks over nearly 6km of the airport's surface areas in recent weeks. --- **John Andrews**



Duncan White (left) with Zac Attwood, Unicom operator and airside supervisor. Preparations (below) for weatherboard repaint.



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GREETINGS FROM THE CEO

Total aircraft movements at Ardmore Airport for the 12 months to March 31 rose to more than 100,000. It's the first time they've topped that mark since 2020 when we recorded nearly 125,000 movements over the same period. So, after almost three years of relatively low numbers, I find it reassuring to see such growth.



Dave Marcellus

Our airport operations team has been busy recently completing the new concrete taxiway Delta 2, tower weather proofing and repainting, runway crack sealing, resealing and marking of the compass swing area and creating new surface markings on the runway and taxiway Juliet.

We are preparing for an extensive year of capital works projects across the airport. Projects include underground drainage, taxiway Sierra pavement, Corsair Lane widening, pavement repairs to taxiway Papa along with our routine maintenance programmes throughout the year.

Two new hangar slabs are being poured, so keep an eye out for Notam's relating to concrete pumps operating at height and starting in the early hours.

If you get a chance, I do recommend you check out our new history boards near the Hamlin Rd entrance. They highlight some of the milestones and events at Ardmore Airport over the years.

Kind regards
Dave Marcellus
CEO



New concrete taxiway Delta 2, view from Harvard Lane, more images page 3

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Delta 2 taxiway under construction



Ardmore Airport's new compass swing area



HISTORY TIMELINE FOR AIRPORT VISITORS

Ardmore Airport visitors can now gain an insight into the airport’s history by checking out a bank of pictorial boards erected near the airport’s main entrance.

Dave Marcellus, the airport’s chief executive, said that some of the photographs had been on display in AAL’s office and had generated plenty of discussion over the years. Using them along with others provided by history buffs, AAL’s Melanie Nelson stitched together information for the display boards, providing background information on how Ardmore Airport evolved, from an RNZAF training station, to a teachers’ training college and grand prix venue to ultimately what it has become today - New Zealand’s busiest general aviation airport.



The display boards are strategically erected at a special parking bay in Harvard Lane, just metres from Hamlin Rd, the aim being to let visitors know just what has been going on at Ardmore Airport over the past decades.



History boards

HELPING HAND IN ARDMORE UNICOM TOWER

Another keen aviator, Rob Fleet, has joined Unicom's ranks as an operator and airside safety officer working at Ardmore Airport.



Rob Fleet

Like his Unicom tower colleague, Zac Attwood, who featured in last November's issue of the *Ardmore Flyer*, flying has long been Rob's passion.

Born in Grimsby in the United Kingdom, Rob recalled how, as a child, he used to visit airbases around that country to watch Royal Air Force aircraft displays. His older brother joined the RAF and, after flying C130 aircraft for the Royal Australian Air Force, was transferred to Sydney.

Rob graduated from the University of Lincoln with a bachelor of law degree before emigrating to New Zealand with his family in 2005. Having spent a year at Auckland University to get his degree recognised, Rob took out a student loan to pursue his favourite pastime, flying.

After studying at Ardmore Flying School, qualified for his commercial pilot's licence before topping it off with an instrument rating.

"I began looking for jobs then took a break and began working for my father who trains fire fighters," said Rob. "I was in an administrative role in his consultancy."

Rob returned to the AFS in 2017 where he qualified as an instructor. Then came the Covid pandemic. In the consequent business downsizing, Rob lost his job, returned to work with his father's firm, applied for the Unicom job and got it.

Conscious of his vital role in Unicom, Rob said: "I know how busy the circuit can be".

Rob, whose interests include Formula 1 motor racing and football, said he enjoyed teaching people how to fly and hoped one day to reach the higher echelons of aviation instruction. --- **John Andrews**



Zac Attwood and Rob Fleet

SPECIAL FLIGHTS FOR AUCKLAND YOUNGSTERS

Twenty-two deserving children got a taste of flying recently when the Blue Light charity brought them to Ardmore Airport.

Using seven different aircraft, members of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association took the youngsters on 30 to 40-minute flights over Auckland, showing them over Auckland's CBD, Rangitoto and Waiheke Islands.

Blythe Biel, one of the AOPA pilots who helped out on the day, told the *Ardmore Flyer*: "It was a good cause and the kids loved it. The ones in my plane were enthralled. They were surprised at how small houses appeared from the air. And they were amazed at how many pools they saw."

Long standing AOPA member Steve Horne said such outings were regularly arranged for young people associated with the New Zealand Police-associated charity.

Ardmore Airport Ltd waived landing fees for the AOPA aircraft used to fly the young passengers over the city.

Those attending were able to use Dennis Thompson International's premises as their base for the day. Blue Light volunteers later hosted the children for a barbecue in Papakura.



Blythe Biel, AOPA pilot, flew some young guests over the city



SAFETY ALERT



Helicopter Rotor Downwash Hazard



A recent incident on runway 03 occurred when a light aircraft experienced a balloon in the flare followed by a heavy landing. No damage was sustained to the aircraft.

It has been determined that the balloon in the landing flare was due to rotor wash turbulence from a medium sized helicopter holding at the intersection of taxiway Bravo and Sierra. The helicopter was holding in a hover and was well clear of the runway. Wind conditions on the day were light and variable. At the time of the incident the AWIB Metdata indicated a wind of 054 degrees Mag. at 4.5 knots. As the wind was coming from behind the helicopter, we believe the rotor wash was blown onto the runway which represents an estimated drifting distance of 70 metres.

The helicopter operator is looking at ways to mitigate rotor downwash in similar situations.

Pilots of fixed wing aircraft need to be aware that the rotor downwash hazard from a 5-tonne helicopter is considerable and that wind direction and proximity are factors.

If in doubt, go around.

Other feedback from helicopter pilots that is unrelated to this incident but relevant are that pilots of taxiing fixed wing aircraft often taxi too close to helicopters and seem unaware of the potential risk. Please exercise caution and if necessary, stop and wait for the helicopter to clear the area.

Safest GA Airport in NZ"

Date: 24 Mar 2023

Ref. OOR 57

The YouTube link below provides an excellent explanation of Helicopter Rotor Downwash and the hazard implications of flight near helicopters.

Recommend passing it on to pilots and students.

<https://youtu.be/iHqN7PQraMs>



NZ Warbirds
AT ARDMORE
PRESENTS

WARBIRDS ON PARADE — ARDMORE NZ — 2023



FUJIFILM
Value from Innovation

SUNDAY JUNE 4th

www.nzwarbirds.org.nz





ARDMORE AIRPORT

New Zealand's busiest general aviation airport

Situated approximately 1 km from Papakura and a short 10 minute drive from the centre of Papakura business community, Ardmore Airport is a vital economic base for Papakura. Ardmore Airport was established in 1943 and became an airport for General Aviation in 1952. The majority of tenants are businesses such as flying schools and aviation related services with others including non-aviation business, private aviation enthusiasts and clubs. Ardmore Airport is primarily a training airfield and the majority of the pilots

are training for the purpose of gaining professional pilots licenses and a career in the airline industry.

In addition to pilot training, Ardmore Airport provides a home for kiwi aviation businesses on the world stage. More than 600 people are employed at the airport. Retailers and other businesses in and around Papakura benefit significantly through the employees and students being based at Ardmore. For more information visit www.ardmoreairport.co.nz

Ardmore Cafe

Situated on Harvard Lane is open 7 days with views to the main runway.

For opening times and bookings phone 09 298 4846

NZ Warbirds Association Inc.

Have a new visitor centre on Harvard Lane, visit their website <https://www.nzwarbirds.org.nz> or phone 09 298 9207 for more information.



511 Harvard Lane, Corner Harvard & McBride Lanes
Ardmore Airport, Auckland 2582
www.ardmoreairport.co.nz Phone: 09 298 9544



Ardmore Airport Limited
proudly supports
Northern Rescue Helicopters Ltd,
Kidney Kids, Burns Support Group,
and NZ Warbirds at Ardmore

Events

**NZ Warbirds at Ardmore—Airshow —Warbirds on Parade
—Sunday 4th June 2023
(reserve weather day Monday 5th June 2023)**



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