



## ‘Aviation Tales’ Newsletter: August 2025

### The month of August has been:

Goodness, we certainly have had a mix of “fronts” moving over us here on the Kapiti Coast from the Tasman Sea, that have resulted in a mix of sunny days and quite cold nights.

I am sure looking forward to a more settled ‘Spring’.



Bell 206 ZK-HDU (Araminta) of Beck Helicopters.

This well-equipped helicopter was ‘captured’ recently during a visit to Paraparaumu airport.

Thanks Stu.



An important business decision was made recently for the ‘*Aviation History Hub*’ to participate in next years ‘Warbirds over Wanaka’ and yes advanced travel bookings have been made!

## Recent Aviation Events:

### News from the team at “Bring our Birds Home”.

“We've been wanting to announce this for a while now, but we had to line up all the ducks first. All going well we envisage the dismantling and removal from Manaus Airport of DC-8 ZK-NZC hopefully inside the next few months.

The plan is to store NZC for a period in Manaus then ocean ship her back to NZ before the end of 2025, but that could easily run in to 2026.

There are still potential left field issues that may arise, and they could be challenging but we are confident enough now to say that the recovery of NZC is in motion.

Special love and thanks to our Brazil based representatives for their tireless work on this project. Donations and positive thoughts are welcome”.



Their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/bringourbirdshome>



## Aircraft Restoration News:

### What is going to fill the new building at the Ashburton Aviation Museum?

“It’s already rated one of the best in the country but plans for a big hangar extension will cement Ashburton Aviation Museum’s place as one of the best in Australasia.

A build committee has been formed to guide and co-ordinate the 1880 square metre hangar project which will house aircraft and cabinet displays.

A shop and reception area will add another 160 square metres to the build and will link the new building to the current round hangar to create a huge aviation display complex”.



The new display hangar build as of late June this year.

I have it on good authority that two general aviation aircraft are already being restored for display in this amazing new museum space.

The two projects that are being worked on are:

- ✓ A rebuild of a Cessna Agwagon in the museum workshop.
- ✓ A 400 Fletcher currently stored in a container.
  - There are other aircraft that have been promised as well. 😊

## Strange but true aircraft that graced our skies in years gone by:



The Scaled Composites Model 281 'Proteus'.

To start off this 'series' of "Strange but true aircraft" I always thought this aircraft above one of the strangest of recent times.

Burt Rutan certainly was a champion of '*Avant-Garde*' composite aircraft structures.

(check out the VariViggen of 1972)

To initiate this unusual aircraft requirement, Burt Rutan of the USA designed the tandem-wing Scaled Composites Model 281 'Proteus', first flown in the late 1990s, to investigate the use of aircraft, primarily as high-altitude telecommunications relay station.

Thanks to its efficient design, this aircraft type was able to 'loiter' for up to 18 hours at altitude. The development of unmanned aircraft however meant that flying a piloted aircraft for this kind of long-endurance missions became unnecessary.

Powered by a pair of Williams International FJ44-2E turbofan engines the 'Proteus' was a high-altitude, multi-mission aircraft that was designed to carry payloads in the just under 1,000 Kg class, flying at altitudes above 50,000 ft.

Heavier payloads however could be carried for shorter missions with the design allowing for both piloted and UAV missions.

These missions for "Proteus" included telecommunications, reconnaissance, atmospheric research, commercial imaging, and space vehicle launch.

This aircraft was designed with long wings and a low wing loading as required for efficient high-altitude flight and excels in stability and low noise.

## Tail Piece:



‘Proteus’ being prepared for another mission.

- **Do you have any interesting aviation topics you would like to have researched for a future newsletter edition?**
- **Do any of the articles you have read in this newsletter edition require further explanation?**

**Please get in touch.**

**This month’s motivational statement:**

“There is no such thing as a routine flight”

Chesley B Sullenberger.

**The ‘Aviation Tales’ newsletter is produced monthly.**

**For further information, or my other services.**

**Please contact:**

[Johnskene66@gmail.com](mailto:Johnskene66@gmail.com)

and / or

[www.aviation-tales.com](http://www.aviation-tales.com)