

1915: HAWKES BAY LINKED ACROSS THE WORLD TO FARNBOROUGH ENGLAND

During World War 1 a local Patriotic Committee in Hawkes Bay coordinated fundraising throughout the province for gifting Britain a warplane. This was seen as a practical means for citizens of our Province to play a part in helping the war effort. £1,500 was raised and remitted to the British War Department in August 1915. In acknowledgement the British military authorities agreed that the BE 2c military aircraft selected for the gift would wear the presentation name HAWKES BAY NEW ZEALAND on its fuselage. The sense of ownership and connection generated by the naming meant the aircraft could truly be regarded back here as "Hawkes Bay's Own". There was also a Hawkes Bay connection at the official naming ceremony held in September 1915 at Farnborough airfield in England. The aircraft was presented to the Royal Flying Corps by Lady Harriette Russell. Lady Harriette was the widow of the late Sir William Russell (soldier, farmer, NZ politician) from Flaxmere, Hastings. She was in London at the time and is shown here "christening" the aeroplane.



From Farnborough HAWKES BAY NEW ZEALAND went to war in France and, while on operations with the No 6 Squadron, Royal Flying Corps, is believed to have damaged an opponent in aerial combat. It was later struck off charge in April 1916 after being substantially damaged in a forced landing. Two subsequent presentation aeroplanes, although of different types, were later to carry the same name in World War 1.

2014: HISTORY RE-VISITED AT HAWKES BAY AIRPORT

Over 9 decades later an aircraft restoration and manufacturing company called The Vintage Aviator Limited ("TVAL") was established in Wellington. Their state of the art manufacturing facility makes both airworthy and static display aircraft. Almost uniquely in the aviation field, TVAL's primary aim "is to build World War 1 aircraft, engines and propellers to the same exacting standards they were originally made over 90 years ago." Modern technology is employed to reproduce the most accurate aircraft reproductions from a bygone era. Maintaining absolute authenticity with the original designs is central to TVAL's philosophy.

TVAL followed that guiding principle when they manufactured this airworthy BE 2c. It is made to those exacting standards by reverse-engineering and from original drawings. This particular BE 2c aeroplane is a slightly earlier version compared to the BE 2c in the photo. Notwithstanding this, the authenticity of its construction means it can truly be described as a 'late production model'. The ultimate evidence of TVAL's magic ability to turn back the clock will occur when, nearly 100 years after the original's first flight, the second HAWKES BAY NEW ZEALAND aeroplane graces the skies over Napier.

The generosity of TVAL in making the aircraft is greatly appreciated. Hawkes Bay Airport Limited as sponsor, and the Napier Aero Club, are both pleased to present "Hawkes Bay's Own" aeroplane as a centrepiece of this air

event to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Hawkes Bay Airport.

The 1915 Farnborough handing over ceremony at Farnborough will be re-enacted here at **1.30 pm on Saturday 22 February**. Playing 'Lady Harriette Russell' will be her great-granddaughter Mrs Rosemary Smyth. The part of 'Major Forsyth-Jones, Royal Flying Corps' will be re-enacted by Mr David Nash. Look for them both to arrive at the ceremony in some style.