

Taking flight



In the small rural town of Te Kowhai, there lived a man with a dream and a farm destined for big things. With the application of Kiwi ingenuity, perseverance and raw talent, Max Clear's dream grew wings in the green pastures of Te Kowhai and a sky-high project was born.

Now celebrating 25 years of age, this project has grown up to be the most successful microlight aircraft manufacturing company in the southern hemisphere — Micro Aviation New Zealand.

Small planes, big ambitions

Micro, meaning small, and aviation, a flying vessel; the name of this business is seemingly deceptive. The aircraft being manufactured may be small, but there is certainly nothing small about what these aircraft represent, what they can do and the ambition that creates them.

Micro Aviation and its planes are a well travelled crew. To date, 95 percent of the 336 (soon to be 337) aircraft produced by the company have been exported to countries including Hawaii, Europe, Australia, South Africa and the United Kingdom. The business also has agents in Malaysia and Norfolk Island.

This glowing international portfolio is testament to the business' success, as is the longevity of its operation; but a return to a time when the company was in its infancy is necessary to appreciate just how far it's flown.



(FORMERLY AEROWARE)

Comprehensive stocks of aircraft AN, MS, NAS hardware

US Industrial Tooling

Skytec starters

Aircraft Spruce (NZ) distributor (weekly delivery from US)

Poly Fiber / Ceconite / Randolf Products

Contact: Lianne Bergin
Phone: 09 476 0984 Fax: 09 476 0985
PO Box 302-505, North Harbour
Email: sales@aparts.co.nz
www.aviationandperformance.co.nz



YOUR COMPLETE SIGNAGE CENTRE

Call us for the absolute best in business and vehicle signage solutions. Feel free to also enjoy our professional attitude, outstanding service and competitive pricing at no extra charge.

WELL DONE MAX!



COLOR CODE™ Signs

Phone 07 849 4880
Fax 07 849 4018

www.colorcode.co.nz
789 Te Rapa Road, Hamilton
Email: sales@colorcode.co.nz



Industrial Electrical and Electronic Supplies Warehouse
Euclid Ave, Te Rapa, Hamilton
Phone: 07 849 1763
Fax: 07 849 0386

Electric 1 Ltd are pleased to be associated with Micro Aviation

We are the sourcing specialists for industry in New Zealand

View our website for our products and services
www.electric1.co.nz

★★★★★

We are Proud to be part of Micro Aviation's Success!

We offer a full range of engraving services.

Contact us for a no obligation quote

★★★★★
GENERAL ENGRAVERS
Est. 1963

9a Princes St, Hamilton
Ph 07-838 2353 • Fax 07-834 0931
Email: info@engrave.co.nz



STAINLESS DESIGN™

stainlessdesign.co.nz



Stainless Design provides Micro Aviation Ltd. with state of the art technologies and a wide variety of 'value add' processes. It's an association of which we are very proud.



PROUD TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH MICRO AVIATION LTD

GOING FURTHER



Nine plus one equals B10

Micro Aviation's chief executive and founder, Max Clear, built his first aircraft in 1983 as a project with nine friends. The model was a single seater plane, with a Rotax 503 powered engine and was named the Bantam 10, in honour of the number of people who built it.

This plane marked the beginning of a future in flight for Clear and the journey was inspired by his desire to improve what was in the market at the time. "I thought I could do a lot better than what was being done, so I did and it worked. You can't really reinvent the wheel, but our planes have lots of little features that really stick out," he says.

When the Bantam 10 took to the skies, immediate requests for the aircraft followed. In 1985, as consumer curiosity continued to grow, Micro Aviation was born and the company set about building 20 B10s to satisfy demand. In 1986, the Bantam 22, featuring a Rotax 582 engine, was manufactured when requests came in for a plane with a two seater body.

The company now manufactures two models of Bantam 22; the B22S with a two-stroke, two cylinder engine, and the B22J with an Australian Jabiru 85hp four-stroke and four cylinder engine.

Clear's business partner, Maxine Sutton, explains customer preferences for the models. "The South Island customers prefer the two-stroke, two cylinder B22S which has a more powerful take-off performance that is perfect for mountain flying but is not so economical.

"The B22J is our more popular selling Bantam being four-stroke, four cylinder and is very economic. Depending on the conditions it would see up to just over a four hour trip using a full 50 litre tank of fuel. Also, this engine is a lot quieter."

The B22UL plane, being manufactured by Micro Aviation at present, should be available next year and people are already signing up to make it their own. Powered by a ULPower UL260i engine with Full Authority Digital Engine Control (FADEC), the engine produces 71kW (95hp). For those who do not speak aviation, this modern technology ensures consistent performance. The FADEC system in this aircraft also ensures efficiency and allows the manufacturer to program engine limitations and receive engine health and maintenance reports.

M&M

There are not many who can say they have a workshop, dispatch office, hangar and private 1000m airstrip in their backyard. But if you ask Max Clear and Maxine Sutton how it feels



"You can't really reinvent the wheel, but our planes have lots of little features that really stick out."

Max Clear, Micro Aviation New Zealand

to know Micro Aviation is at the forefront of microlight aircraft enterprises, they'll tell you they don't see it that way.

Clear and Sutton are grounded, ironically, when it comes to the perception of their success and like the beginning of this business, they're humble. For M&M, (as they are known to friends and family) they credit affordable flying as being their greatest achievement.

Humility aside, the businesses is a flying success, literally and as they work on the 337th microlight aircraft they have manufactured to date, Micro Aviation and its team of Max and Maxine, shows no sign of slowing down with projects on the go until the end of the year.

Sutton concedes that although her job is in sales, the need for advertising is minimal, because one test flight is generally all it takes. "I am always looking for new opportunities for new markets although to date we have not had to invest in a huge advertising bill. The planes sell themselves once someone has had a flight and can't stop smiling," she says.

Feature continues on next page >>

Do you want to learn to fly a helicopter?

Get in touch with Latitude 37 Helicopters, one of NZ's premier flight schools found in the heart of the Waikato.

Congratulating Micro Aviation on their 25 years of success

Te Kowhai Airfield, Limmer Road, Te Kowhai, Hamilton
 Ph: 0274 888431
 Email: info@l37helicopters.co.nz
 www.l37helicopters.co.nz

SHEPPARD INDUSTRIES ARE PROUD TO BE SUPPLIERS TO MICRO AVIATION AND CONGRATULATE THEM ON THEIR 25 YEARS OF FLIGHT

SHEPPARD INDUSTRIES
 WHEELS & CASTOR DIVISION

25 Levene Place, Mt Wellington
 AUCKLAND | ph: 09 915 5905



Although she looks after Bantam sales which involves exporting to seven countries, Maxine Sutton's commitment to the business is not limited to marketing. "A big part of my job is keeping track of every batch number of every part that leaves our factory or goes onto a new aircraft.

"A sale overseas where we don't have an agent means travelling to the customers and helping assemble and this has evolved into a more hands on role in the workshop where I help Max build," Sutton explains.

Whether there are lawns to be mowed on the airfield, cleaning tasks, maintenance, paperwork or travel; M&M work as a team.

A world of opportunity

At home or abroad, Micro Aviation's planes are revolutionising wildlife and farming industries while taking fun and leisure to new heights.

In Australia, Micro Aviation's aircraft are used for mustering cattle and Kruger-National Park has four Bantam microlight planes for animal surveillance. The police and wildlife game parks in South Africa use the planes for a range of duties, including checking fencing, animals and water dams and the planes have also been instrumental in reducing poaching numbers.

For people eager to take off in a Bantam, they require a pilot certification. It generally takes between four and ten hours training before

people can fly solo and all the training and paperwork for flight training is available on site at the Te Kowhai Airfield.

Clear says the Bantam is the perfect plane for training. "It has a dual throttle, flies hands off and can get into smaller strips. Its open cockpit allows for the adrenalin buzz of the adventure and to top it all off, it is the cheapest little plane on the market." Aside from training customers, the business takes pride in its interaction with the public, hosting groups and charities through the year. "We give a lot of people the opportunity to experience something unique and exhilarating," Sutton says.

What flies ahead?

Consistent sales are certainly testament to the business' success and Clear says it is the personal touch and durability of their product that appeals to consumers. "We stand beside every single Bantam for its lifetime. The plane is made robust and strong and is individualised by its colours. Customers can get parts immediately and advice at any time."

For the future, maximising the business through greater promotion of the product and increasing staff levels is a priority. "We have been working on a program to date, where we improve our systems and production lines to become as efficient as they can be. This means we have work stations and tools organised so if we got a big order we would be able to achieve it in record time," Sutton explains.

"We certainly want to push ahead," says Clear. "There's no such thing as levelling out and if sales are there we'll just keep expanding. You don't look a gift horse in the mouth."

Given the business' reputation and consistent commitment to supplying durable, innovative and highly sought after aircraft, there is no doubt there will be substantial business growth in the next 25 years for Micro Aviation.

The mind behind Micro Aviation

Success stories of today and eras gone by often have a common denominator; they are enriched with reminiscent tales of aspiration which relay childhood daydreams and a steadfast commitment to a project or profession from infancy.

But for Max Clear, founder and chief executive of Micro Aviation, his resilience and independence is the driving, or more aptly, the flying force behind his vision and furthermore, his success.

If you tell Max Clear he can't do something, he'll do it and in the process, exceed all expectations, maybe even his own. "I am fiercely independent and when someone says you cannot do something, I think 'watch this space — I know I can,'" he says.

An interest in aircraft was present at the age of 14 as Clear enjoyed watching topdressing aircraft around the Raglan hills. But if you ask him if he knew the aviation world was where he was meant to be, he'll tell you, "No, not at all."

An affiliation with construction and the dairy industry punctuated his early professional career and it was in his pursuit of fun with friends, that Clear unveiled a real passion for planes. What then followed, in quick succession, gave new meaning to the expression, the sky's the limit.

"It was all about having fun back then; no nonsense, just helping each other and having a laugh. Myself and the nine others made B10s just for us and didn't think of it ever going anywhere. From then on others wanted one and it become a little business," he reveals.

Some 337 planes later and celebrating 25 years in aviation, the business is not so little anymore and Clear is well and truly a pioneer in the microlight plane industry.

For others observing Clear's success, they would be hard pressed to isolate his greatest achievement to date. It could be his commendable reputation for manufacturing innovation with wings, or the fact that he runs an independent business with the help of only one other pair of hands that belong to colleague Maxine.

A humble man, Clear is not boastful about the title the business has so deservedly earned as the number one microlight aircraft enterprise in the southern hemisphere. He says the certification and acceptance of the Bantam is what gives him a real sense of pride. "There has been a lot of time and expense in getting the Bantam to BCAR Section S which is the UK standard," Clear says.

Celebrating a 25 year milestone, the company is a local icon with international accreditation. What's in the future for Micro Aviation will no doubt match or exceed the success it has experienced to date. But what are Clear's thoughts? "I think it will end up as more of the same for the rest of my life as I can think of many projects I want to get completed."

With his never give up attitude, there is no doubt Clear will complete those projects with the same energy and expert craftsmanship he has dedicated to his planes.

Micro Aviation New Zealand Limited
Limmer Road
Te Kowhai RD 8
Hamilton 3288
T (07) 829 7837
F (07) 829 7587
www.microaviation.co.nz — Advertising Feature

Waikato Bearings Ltd are pleased to be associated with Micro Aviation Ltd.



- Bearings
- Seals
- Lubrication
- Mechatronics
- Power Transmission
- Maintenance Tools
- Industrial Adhesives

Waikato Bearings Ltd
11 Northway Street
Te Rapa
Hamilton
Phone 07 850 6155

www.waikatobearings.co.nz

hobbs
global logistics solutions

Congratulations to Micro Aviation NZ Ltd on your 25th anniversary.

Hobbs Global Logistics is proud to be the global logistics service provider to Micro Aviation NZ Ltd

Tel: + 64 9 275-3199 • Fax: + 64 9 275-3054 • Email: info@hobbsglobal.co.nz