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New Zealand has a rich history of world class gliding, particularly due to the unique mountain wave conditions in the South Island. Some of the most famous and accomplished New Zealand glider pilots include:

1. Dick Georgeson: A pioneering figure in NZ gliding, he was a dominant force in the 1960s and 70s, winning the CWF Hamilton Trophy multiple times (1960, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1972, 1976 and 1978). Inaugurated in 1960, this trophy is Gliding New Zealand's oldest trophy. It is awarded each year to a New Zealander flying in New Zealand for the most meritorious flight which is a New Zealand gliding record. Georgeson was instrumental in exploring the North West Wave phenomenon. In a tale of preparation and persistence, on January 14th 1978, three kiwis, Bruce Drake, David Speight and Dick Georgeson achieved a world record distance to a goal flight of 1,254km. Taking off from David Speight's farm strip at Tower Peak Station near Lake Te Anau, they landed around 12 hours later at the Te Araroa Airstrip near the east cape of the North Island. All three pilots were flying Nimbus II gliders. This world record flight was first conceived of and planned for by Dick Georgeson. It took him 14 years and 27 attempts to achieve his goal!

2. Doug Yarrall: Achieved fame by setting a world gliding altitude record over Wairarapa in 1968, soaring to incredible heights in tough conditions. The German Schemp-Hirth glider he was flying was towed by a Tiger Moth biplane from Hood Aerodrome in Masterton up to a height of around 1,300 ft (396m) where Yarrall released himself and searched for the wave that would take him up. Yarrall's aircraft was under the guidance of the Ohakea Air Force base air controller at the time when it peaked at 37,288 feet (11,356 metres).

3. Ray Lynskey: Known for setting a remarkable 2,000km distance record in 1990. He was a world champion glider pilot known for both long-distance flights and aerobatics.

4. Terry Delore: One of New Zealand's most celebrated glider pilots, holding numerous world and national records. In 2009, he and John Kokshoorn set a world distance record of 2,499.2km, later broken by 12km in Argentina but still a monumental achievement.

5. Gavin Wills: A highly experienced pilot based at Omarama, well-known for his contribution to alpine soaring and mountain flying education, with over 10,000 hours in gliders.

6. Peter Lyons: was a local Gliding Hawkes Bay & Waipukurau member. He began gliding in 1968, logged well over 4,000 hours, completed the 3 FAI Diamond badges and a FAI 1,000km flight. He held a PPL for over 40 years with over 650 hours, was an 'A' Category gliding instructor, Gliding New Zealand test pilot, tow pilot and an approved examiner for tow ratings. He was four times NZ Standard Class champion, recorded a National Best Performance for 500km out and return glider flights in both a single seat glider and two seat glider and competed in two World Gliding Championships, Hobbs 1993 and Rieti 1985 and was NZ Team Manager at the 1995 World Gliding Championships held in France.

So what are you waiting for? Come and join us to learn more about gliding, the weather, the wave and the "air pockets" you fly through in powered aircraft and save fuel!

Further details about the club and learning to glide are on the gliding club website at http://www.glidinghbw.co.nz/