



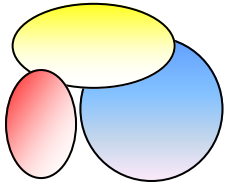
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# Brissle Strutter

Newsletter of the LAA Bristol Strut

June 2019



## Next Meeting — Flying Business Jets

This month's meeting will be on **Tuesday 4th June** and our speaker is **Paul Catanach**

Having got his flying career off to a grubby start in the Australian bush Paul Catanach returned to the UK at a time when the airlines were so desperate for pilots that if you were warm and vertical with a pulse (with two of those three



being negotiable) you could land a job. The CAA had other ideas though and by the time he had jumped through all their hoops to convert his Australian licence to a UK one the word had got around and suddenly the airlines were 'too busy' to talk to him.

To convince the dole office he was actively seeking work Paul applied for a first officer position with a business jet company and despite his best efforts (and possibly the worst interview in history) was offered a job. Almost two decades later he has come to realise that both he and the airlines had a close shave, that being referred to as 'Captain' usually means trouble and every city in the world has an Irish bar. He will also tell you, whether you want to hear it or not, how nice it is to not be locked behind a secure cockpit door for eleven hours a day and to have access to a decent coffee machine rather than buy water from your employer at £5 a bottle.

We start to gather at 7.30 and the meeting starts at 7.45.

## Last Month's Meeting

We had a presentation from Neil McDonald of Brize Norton ATC on their operations and how to make best use of their LARS and Zone services. He enthusiastically encouraged members to seek Zone transits, or to contact LARS if not actually needing a transit - they can handle their own traffic more efficiently with awareness of the intentions of nearby Class G traffic, since their own traffic needs to use Class G to access airways.

He also said that Brize welcomes visits from small groups of pilots - fly in (landing fee waived, Crown Indemnity required) and have a full day briefing on ATC and other Brize activities.

The Strut is in discussion with Neil about such a visit.

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## Picture Quiz

Last month's picture quiz: As well as the "heavy" stuff using Brize Norton, the aircraft shown operates from there. What is it and what is it used for?

**Answer:** Short SC7 Skyvan of Canadian firm Summit Air, used for parachute training.

*(The challenge was—can you answer it without referring to Google!?)*

Phil Mathews says: *It's a Short SC7 Skyvan. Used at Brize for parachute training. Saw one at Shobdon last week lifting SAS bods for paradrops. There's 2 at Brize, on the Canadian register I believe.*

And Nigel Phillips: *my best guess, and not Google's, is: it's a Short Skyvan used for general airlifting, medivac, and parachute training.*



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This month's picture quiz: Trevor has just sent this from the US:



"I came out of a supermarket near Renton yesterday just as this aircraft flew by. I realised what it was - can you identify it?"

The only flying survivor, I think."

Answers to the editor please.

## PLEASE NOTE

**Henstridge runway will be closed for 5 days - Monday 3rd June to Friday 7th June** to fixed wing aircraft. This is due to repair work being carried out on the dummy deck area etc.

## Where to go...

**Free Landings June 2019 in:**

**Flyer** - Audley End, Crosland Moor, Cumbernauld, Donegal, Earls Colne, Peterborough Sibson.

**Light Aviation** – Enstone (North Grass), Eshott, Headcorn, Skegness (*weekends only*)

### **BAC FLY-IN**

**Bristol Aero Club**, with whom we share our meetings, are holding their **25th Anniversary Fly In at Gloucester Airport THIS WEEKEND on Saturday 1st June.**

Free landings\* (for donation to Fly2Help) with BBQ, Drinks, Cakes and fun. *Featuring BBMF Spitfire Flypast.*

\*PPR mentioning Fly In on 01452 857700. Located at The Flying Shack. Drive in visitors welcome. Do get yourself there somehow to support our friends at BAC.

## BRICKS AND MORTAR by Graham Clark

*Continuing our series of articles from which we all hope to learn something useful. Many thanks to Graham for these thoughtful insights. They are reprinted with very kind permission from Flyer Magazine*

At age 43 and with 646-something hours in his logbook, Pilot X was pretty confident that he was still capable of higher things. So after he had reaped a juicy financial bonus, he decided that although his sedate 172 was pleasant enough, he could now afford another adrenalin boost. That was when he saw the ad for a Harvard 4M, an aeroplane that was the steppingstone between basic training and operational types during World War Two. Even today, it still fulfils this function for junior pilots advancing towards the historic warbird display circuit.

So Pilot X – a man who like many pilots had a large dose of 'can do' in his character – got down to business and full familiarisation with his new plaything, while continuing to fly the 172 'on the side'. Some time earlier, he had gained a basic aerobatic rating on a Pitts, so having been cleared by the club CFI to solo on the Harvard, he then started to explore the handling at altitude with simple manoeuvres such as stall turns, loops and rolls; all good stuff for his image back in the club. He then proceeded to practice in the Harvard what he had learned some years earlier, in a defined aerobatics box with a base of 1500 ft over an area of land about two miles away from his airfield.

Prior to the day in question, in the previous 90 days Pilot X had flown 24 hours on 44 flights, of which three hours and six aerobatic flights had been in the two-seat North American Harvard. The Harvard is no toy, being powered by a beefy Pratt & Whitney 600 hp radial driving a variable-pitch Hamilton Standard prop. This is an aeroplane designed to demand much of the student before moving on to the heavy metal. Fast it is not, but designed to show up life-threatening mistakes. Next step, maybe a Hurricane or a Spit.

However one looks at it, nine hours and twelve minutes is not a lot of logbook time in a Harvard, for a 172-pilot making the transition to a fully aerobatic type weighing 5,600 lb gross, with retractable gear and a wobbly prop. But 'can-do' Pilot X was clearly ambitious and used to overcoming 'challenges'. So with the grand total of three hours and six flights made on the Harvard during the previous 90 days, he set off to enjoy the cacophony of the snarling Pratt on this glorious summer evening.

In the early afternoon, Pilot X had flown an uneventful 20-minute local area flight with a rear seat passenger. Just after 8 pm, he took off again solo with sufficient Avgas on board to enjoy a few aerobatics in the local area. The surrounding airspace was very quiet, and he saw no reason to deny his mates on the ground the pleasure of seeing the Harvard manoeuvre in its element. No doubt there would be a few pictures taken, and they could have a jovial chat together in the bar after the Harvard was back in the hanger.

The weather was perfect for the task: sky cloudless with no precipitation in sight for 100 miles; the visibility better than 10 km, surface wind 060/3-5 kt and the temperature a very pleasant 22°C; a fine summer's evening and the sky to enjoy. It doesn't get much better.

X strapped in and started up, then warming the Pratt before rolling to Runway 09 for take-off at 2013. Pre-flight radio contact was standard 'loud and clear', but that was the last word. Take-off was normal and then up went the gear as the Harvard climbed away. About five minutes later, the Harvard was again seen at a height of about 400 to 600 ft straight and level and parallel to the runway 09.

Pilot X had made no mention of his intentions, but just after the Harvard was abeam the threshold to runway 09, witnesses saw the nose rise by about ten degrees as the aircraft began to roll left. When it reached the fully inverted position, the Harvard started to lose height very rapidly, came out of the roll to the right, and continued at low height, smashing almost straight and level into a house on the edge of a nearby settlement.

The impact, witnessed from the nearby airfield by club members, naturally split the fuel tanks and there was fire. They immediately called the local fire service, which extinguished the blaze a few minutes later. The Harvard was destroyed and Pilot X killed on impact. His body was removed from the wreck by the fire service. A woman and a baby girl had been in the house; the woman was seriously burned and sent to the next hospital burns unit, while the baby was sent to the children's hospital with suspected inhalation of noxious fumes.

Of course, an aircraft crash is always news and at the time this one attracted maximum media attention and a full investigation of the events leading to the crash. In the seconds before the impact, when in the right wing down knife-edge attitude, the pilot had in desperation and at low height heaved back on the stick in an attempt to avoid the house. Too low, too late.

### Questions:

- 1 *What was pilot X's first aircraft handling mistake?*
- 2 *What was Pilot X's second aircraft handling mistake?*
- 3 *What were Pilot X's pre-flight planning mistakes?*

### Answers

On the last page of this newsletter.

## Luciole Update

Following on from his talk to the Strut a few months ago here's an update from Chris Wright on his Luciole:

*I've flown 'her' 6 times now, the first 2 flights at Garston Farm, Thursday 16<sup>th</sup>, then 4 more this week. I had difficulty in finding a place to hangar it until this week - It's now at a strip 2 miles north of Usk in Wales, only 40 mins drive across the Severn. I flew across with Eddie to view it - it is shortish and has trees on 3 sides. I hope I get used to that, but even when coming in far too fast have stopped with 100m to spare.*

*General comments: straightforward to fly, as Eddie (test pilot) said it would be. It's been bumpy so difficult to trim out to stay steady for long - keeps wanting to climb! 70kts is an 'easy' cruise, 80kts - fine, 90kts at near max continuous and the engine is noisier. Stalls benign. Drops quickly with flap, landings variable!*

*Have done 8 landings at my new strip - several like a kangaroo due to being too fast or slow - I'll*



*Does anyone have photos of any unusual or interesting aircraft for others to identify?*

*Also any articles of interest to our readers would be much appreciated.*

*Come on readers— please help share the load of editing, I really could do with some new material to work with!!*

## CAA PUBLICATIONS

### Cost sharing flights

Information and guidance on the circumstances under which the direct costs of a private flight may be shared between up to six occupants (including the pilot) of an aircraft

The link to this article is here: <https://www.caa.co.uk/General-aviation/Aircraft-ownership-and-maintenance/Cost-sharing-flights/>

## PILOT X ANSWERS

1. On initiating the roll, he did not raise the nose high enough to gain sufficient altitude that would compensate for the ensuing loss of height during the recovery.
2. When the aircraft was in the right wing down knife-edge presentation, Pilot X pulled back on the stick.
3. He conducted an unplanned aerobatic manoeuvre below a safe altitude and outside the aerobatics practice box.