

November 2003

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Last meeting AGM – 9th October

This was a very well attended optimistic meeting, the interesting points being: Alan and Gordon are willing to continue in their respective roles; we continue to have a healthy balance, therefore membership subscriptions for the following year have been set at £5 per member; also it was suggested that we, as a Strut, celebrate The Centenary of Flight on 17th December with an Old Buzzards Day. That is, all go over to Kemble from our respective bases, then flying members to get the non-flying members (Old Buzzards) airborne. Alan intends to be at Kemble from around 11 am with a Cherokee and suggests anyone else interested in joining him, with or without a plane, let him know at the November Meeting. A brief resume of the minutes of the AGM was attached to the back of the newsletter sent out to Strut members.

This month – 13th November

We look forward to meeting John Lewis, test pilot for the Shuttleworth Collection, who has agreed to come along and talk about the rare and fascinating aircraft that they operate, and specifically the 1930 Granger Archaeopteryx. Two brothers in Nottingham, R F T and R J T Granger built the aircraft, after they had seen the Westland-Hill Pterodactyl. The brothers flew the aircraft many times near Nottingham and once ventured as far as Hatfield; G-ABXL was the only specimen built and was flown between 1930 and 1936. It was stored for thirty years before being handed to the Collection, and it flew again in 1971. Now maintained in airworthy condition but not currently permitted to fly.



Where to go in November

*Free landings in November with -
Pilot Magazine: Andrewsfield, Eaglescott, Lashenden (Headcorn),
Sandtoft, Le Touquet, Weston (nr. Dublin, Eire)*

And in Today's Pilot, Free Landings with lunch voucher: Sleep, Perth, Sandtoft, Wickenby, Popham, Pembrey.

Also in this newsletter

Last month we mentioned that some strut members had been off to interesting places during the summer months and maybe we would hear about their adventures. Ron & Lyn flew their Smaragd to the Piel Fly-In in July and Lyn has sent us a report of their week-end in France.

Dave Hall took his camera to the last Meeting of the BBMF this summer and has recounted his day out for us together with lots of photos.

Nigel Nitchman has been busy as our National Council Representative and forwarded to us two articles: A copy of the Consultation paper regarding Dunsfold Aerodrome, which we have condensed overleaf; also included is his report of the NC meeting.

PFA Education strut

EC member Stewart Luck is concerned about introducing youngsters to the freedom of flight concept.

As the PFA EC member representing PFA Education, and Young Eagles, he thinks it would be nice if all those interested came together with a common aim and has proposed forming a Strut called THE PFA EDUCATION STRUT to organise and help with events in the future. The first meeting to explore this idea was set for Sat 8th Nov at Windrush and we will forward details of the outcome when available.

Dunsfold Aerodrome is currently the topic of a consultation and Nigel Hitchman has forwarded to us an article documenting the arguments for and against development. The full version can be made available to any of our readers who might like to prepare a letter of support, but we include here a brief overview of the discussion.

DUNSFOLD AERODROME, SURREY - What is this consultation about?

Since January this year Waverley has been looking at the future of Dunsfold Aerodrome with a view to preparing a framework for determining planning applications in the future. As part of this work, the Council has drawn up some aims and objectives as a basis for the study and suggests four alternative options for the future of the Aerodrome.

We would like your views on these aims and objectives and on the various options. This will help the Council to work out the preferred option. A further consultation will take place next year, after your views have been considered.

- Option 1: Do nothing
- Option 2: Recreation / Light Aviation
- Option 3: Business/ Recreation/ Light Aviation
- Option 4: Non-aviation based development

Please return to the: Planning Policy Section, Waverley Borough Council, The Burys, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1HR
by FRIDAY 25th NOVEMBER 2003. If you have any queries, please phone 01483 523291 or 01483 523297

PFA NC Meeting Report – from Nigel Hitchman.

Here are the highlights of what was discussed at the NC meeting mid Oct. I have left out things that appeared in the latest magazine.

PFA Policy is that all owners of PFA permit aircraft are to be PFA members. (At present only one owner needs to be a member). It is being reviewed how this will be enforced; one suggestion is a statement on the permit saying that the permit is only valid if all registered owners are PFA members.

The new Chairman is Cliff Mort, long time PFA member, North West Strut NC member and former co-ordinator. Cliff is also the former Association Secretary. Cliff wants to move the PFA forward, with a "can do" attitude and to enhance the associations' reputation in the aviation world. The management review is still ongoing, stalled at present due to difficulties in the company that were conducting the review! A new "Head of Engineering" is being recruited who's main brief will be EASA and putting forward PFA's case, together with other policy and management functions, as well as dealing with the CAA. This will leave Francis and John to concentrate on the real engineering issues, such as approval of new designs and modifications. Works on this has suffered of late due to the increasing amount of work taken up with EASA. 39 applications were received of which 13 were interviewed by a recruitment firm; the 4 final candidates will have been interviewed by PFA by the time you read this. The new association secretary is Stewart Jackson, with vice Chairman Nigel Ramsey and Cliff Piper. Tim Goodwin resigned from the EC shortly after the AGM, so there are now only 11 EC members. They need more EC members; maybe someone from the strut would like to put their name forward.

The move to Turweston is covered in the magazine, with the office closed from 14 Nov, re-opening 1 Dec. PFA has a 3 year lease on the current building and a 3 year option to buy 1/2 acre at Turweston on which to construct the new building. Design of the new building is progressing. 3 new members of staff have been recruited two for engineering admin, both of whom have already started and received training at Shoreham. A receptionist starts 1 Dec. Dave Dale will take over the accounts from Carol Yeend, who is leaving, to remain in the Shoreham area. The meeting expressed their thanks for the hard work done by those leaving, Carol, Phil Boydon, Pat Ghost and Jaqui Booty.

The membership rates are going up, by inflation over the last two year, as approved at the AGM, details in the magazine. Engineering rates are also increasing, again covered in the magazine. These are inflationary, plus the need to raise more money to cover the increasing work done on EASA and policy by the new Head of Engineering. The charge for mods is particularly relevant as it has been found that almost

The date of March 2007 may be significant, as on that date some of the vintage aircraft currently on PFA permits may fall outside what is granted for PFA approval. However PFA have applied to have these and more aircraft included in their approval. An application for approval of parts manufacture has also been made.

The magazine is going from strength to strength and there is still a desire to see it go monthly. Advertising revenue is increasing to the level that can support this, but it is likely that no decision will be made until things have settled down at Turweston. Brian Hope would like more technical articles if anyone would like to write them.

The Rally was a great success, but despite the record turnout, made a loss. Some of this was due to one off expenses due to the move of location, particularly with respect to the Air Traffic control radios and recording equipment that were required by the CAA, as we could no longer make use of Cranfield's sophisticated equipment. A review has identified that the exhibitors are being charged far too little, not covering our costs to provide all of the infrastructure required for them. It is also interesting to note that the exhibition charge at the Rally are only about 1/3 of that charged at North Weald Aerofair and we bring them a far greater audience of people who are going to buy their goods. Public entry fees will also go up to cover the costs. This year's fee of £15 per day or £25 for the weekend really was a bargain when you look at the cost of getting into other aviation events, let alone the cost of a football match or the British Grand Prix! For anyone who hasn't heard yet, next year's rally dates are July 9,10,11.

The PFA will continue to do Young Eagles in some form, whatever the EAA decide to do. We are looking at other initiatives too. Scout groups are keen to have more links, struts may be approached by Scout groups with a request for someone to go and talk to them, followed by a possible visit to an airfield or airstrip. There is a large model flying competition at Cosford on Nov 15 for anyone interested.

The PFA road show will be at the BMAA/BHPA Telford Exhibition Dec 6/7. Next year's road shows will be at Earls Court April 16-18 in conjunction with the "London Air Show", Popham May 1/2 in conjunction with the microlight trade fair, Perth second May bank holiday in conjunction with the Scottish struts fly-in, and again at Telford. Less events than this year as the people manning the stand wanted some time to do their own thing and fly their own aircraft.

The Join a friend scheme is still going, only 20 people

half of John and Francis's engineering time is taken up with modifications.

The start of EASA during Sept passed without any changes, as so far there is only a Chairman. However a lot of work is being done on the ground rules and to ensure we protect our corner, or benefit from some of the advantages that EASA may bring.

have entered so far, so if you join a friend you have a very good opportunity to win a free trip to Oshkosh.

Next NC meeting is Dec 13 either at Turweston or Sywell TBD. I don't know yet if I'm working or not.

Cheers, Nigel

Resemblance d'avions Piel 2003



Ron had learnt of the Piel flyin at St Andree de l'Eure from the Kyriz website. This German website was discovered after a previous trip to Germany. (See July 2003 Strutter, Ed).

St Andree was between Rouen and Paris and looked like just a nice distance for a weekend trip in early July with its long evenings. The forecast for the weekend was good so Ron telephoned Heathrow with our flight plan details as soon as he finished work at lunchtime on the 4th July. We took off from the Mendips at 3.30pm having activated our flight plan. The grass in the field was rather long, but we were traveling light - just a change of clothes, sleeping bag, small tent and some Chelsea buns and lemonade. After take off I had a look round and to my surprise saw a stick sticking up through the flap, a foot or so out from the fuselage. I told Ron, "There is a stick through the wing!" "A thistle?" asked Ron? (There were a lot of tall thistles in the field) "No, a stick about three feet long". He couldn't see it so I took a photo with the digital camera and showed him. It was caught on a knot and was quite securely fixed. There was no effect on the handling so we decided to press on to Le Touquet.



Our request to transit overhead the SAM VOR was refused so we took the coastal route via Stoneycross and the Beaulieu river. The flight along the coast was uneventful but the visibility deteriorated a little as we approached Lydd. We therefore took the shorter route via Folkestone to Cap Griz Nez. Then having made the French coast continued south to join downwind right hand for runway 32 at Le Touquet. This was my first visit to Le Touquet and as I had heard, all the aircraft on the tarmac were British. After landing, Ron removed the stick and taped over the small hole in the fabric. A Chelsea bun later we left for St Andree flying across miles and miles of sparsely populated countryside as we headed south in the evening sunshine. I could find some landmarks as we went along such as the Somme estuary. It is nice to keep a finger on the map despite the GPS. We crossed the Seine and 10 minutes later at 8.30 pm after 1 hour 25 mins in the air, we landed at St Andree on 1100 metres of the smoothest grass runway I had ever seen. The airfield was deserted! There were several large hangars on one side and some smaller ones on the other. We spotted a car near the smaller hangars and taxied over.

The driver spoke virtually no English and was unaware of any fly in. However he was quite happy for us to put our tent up in the shelter of the hangars. After another bun we set off to town a couple of miles away, a pied. By 10.30 pm we were sat in the town square with a freshly made pizza au jambon et champignons.

The morning dawned sunny and blue - still no people. We walked to a café on the main road - only open for lunch. We returned and ate more buns. We then had a walk around the nearby village. When we returned people had arrived and were getting planes out. No one spoke much English but we discovered that we were at the Aero Club d'Evreux, and that the St Andree club was on the other side of the field. However the Evreux club made us very welcome with croissants and coffee before we packed our tent into the plane and taxied across to the resemblance d'avions Piel. We had another friendly welcome, if somewhat puzzled as to how we had taxied in without landing. The baguettes were crisp and the beer and coke was on ice. Again little English was spoken. We found only two people that weekend who spoke more English than we did French, but a common interest and pointing at various bits of plane plus our improving French as the weekend went on helped and we got on fine. We turned out to be the only foreigners and became "Les Anglais". Hubert from Kyriz (Germany) had booked in advance, but didn't make it. Neither did a plane from Italy who had to turn back due to poor weather in the south of France.

There were many different types designed by Monsieur Piel. Most we had never heard of and certainly never seen. They ranged from the diminutive single seat CP70 to the four seat retractable 180 HP constant speed prop Sapphire. There was also an intruder in our midst.



A local Pou de Ciel (flying flea) dropped in to visit. One of Ron's favourite types!

We didn't win the longest flight award. France is a big country! We did however win a set of pottery lighthouses to celebrate our channel crossing. We debated whether to stay until Sunday, but with a barbeque in the hangar promised we stayed. The chef was professionally dressed in white uniform and the meat was cooked beautifully. Entrée, meat and salad, fresh baguette, desert, cheese wine and good company. We asked why so few pilots visit England and it seemed the paramount reason was unease with talking on the radio. They don't go to Le Touquet either - it is too expensive £14!



On Sunday we awoke to dull damp hazy weather. Those who had stayed overnight were washing in water, which seemed clean enough but was coming out of something that looked suspiciously like a slurry tanker. Breakfast in the hangar was fresh baguettes, croissants, beurre, confiture and coffee. They had some tea bags for us but the only milk had been warmed up in a saucepan.



No one seemed to have heard a forecast and we were advised to walk over to the flying school next door. There a chap tried to find us some weather on the Minitel. Locally it seemed it would improve slightly but we couldn't get a forecast for further north.

We waited a couple of hours spending the time looking up possible diversions en route and programming them in to the GPS. The weather became a little better and local flyers reported reasonable visibility although there were no newcomers to the flyin. It was much hazier than the previous two days and as we picked our way north landmark by landmark we wondered what awaited us at the coast. Wonderfully as we approached Abbeville the haze cleared and our blue skies returned.

Back in Le Touquet there was a strong crosswind with a Miles taking the into wind runway toward the trees. No problem for a Smaragd! We decided to try the famous restaurant – watch out for the glass doors, which are very clean. In shorts and T-shirt with Ron rubbing his forehead we sat outside and enjoyed omelette au jambon et oranginas. The visibility was better for this channel crossing and we routed direct from Le Touquet towards Lydd. Volmet south mentioned thunderstorms inland so we followed the coast west. Whilst doing so we thought of our friends in St Andree

as we heard an air traffic controller at a well-known south coast airfield berating a very apologetic French pilot who had inadvertently strayed over the dotted line at a hold point. Conditions didn't seem so bad, Bournemouth were reporting good weather so we made our way inland from Beaulieu to Compton Abbas for a cup of tea. A short flight brought us back to base with our souvenirs, three lighthouses and a stick!

Lyn Crabb G-BSVE



The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight

Recounted by Dave Hall

The final flying display of the 2003 season for the BBMF was the Lincolnshire Lancaster Association Members' Day at RAF Coningsby on Sunday 5th October. The flight has been temporarily based at Barkston Heath while the main runway at Coningsby was being re-laid ready for the new Eurofighters. Although not yet handed over as completed, special arrangements were made for the BBMF to fly their fleet back there for the winter maintenance.

The day was clear and bright with a fairly strong NW breeze, so the planned schedule for the return of the aircraft at intervals during the day had to be abandoned as the cross-wind was beyond the operating limits imposed on these precious tail-draggers. Several hundred members of the Lincolnshire Lancaster Association, the support organisation of the BBMF, spent much of the day in the massive hangar looking at the Chipmunk, used to gain tail-dragger experience, and a lone Hurricane, or looking round the well-stocked visitor centre, shop and cafe. The small museum is filled with wartime memorabilia and even an R1155 as fitted to the Lanc. that you can tune in and enjoy the international flavour of the HF bands or try to receive SSB or morse with the help of the BFO. For some reason it didn't seem able to receive the Light programme on 200kc/s, though.

Finally, the message was spread that the flight would return at about 4pm and put on a display, to be followed by landing if conditions were suitable.

We weren't disappointed by the magnificent sight and sound of the Dakota, Lancaster, Hurricane and 3 Spitfires flying in formation, doing a number of low passes, then the Dakota split away and the British aircraft did their stuff, the fighters flew over in formation, and finally the Lancaster did a solo turn, bomb doors open. The sound of so many Merlin engines together was particularly memorable. As each aircraft landed, they taxied to the hangar to be greeted by applause from the members.



While many visitors to Airdays may see one or more of the BBMF aircraft, it's a rare privilege to see them all together, and particularly poignant for me at the moment as the Lancaster is in 61-Squadron markings, the squadron my father started operations with, on Hampdens and where he ended up as S/L on Lancasters, before moving into training aircrews.

If you want to join the support group, it's only £8 a year and you get two substantial colour A4 booklets with details of the crews and planes, and articles about wartime operations and memories, schedules for the planned displays of the BBMF, and a range of special items to purchase. To join, contact The Lincolnshire Lancaster Association Ltd, PO Box 474, Lincoln LN5 9ES.

If you want to visit, the Visitor Centre (free admission) is open Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm. Last tour of the hangar begins at 3.30pm (3pm Nov-Feb). Please phone first to check specific aircraft will be there, and that tours are possible, 01526-344041. A small charge is made for the tour.

Some more of Dave's photos taken on the day are available for viewing on his website. Click on the following link to see them:

www.hallw.clara.net/flying/BBMF/BBMF.htm