

Severn Valley Microlight Club

Airscrew

September 2014

This month's meeting

Due to the poor weather in August and the large number of fly-ins that had to be cancelled, we have decided to extend our fly-in schedule into September this year, and will start our winter events in October

Quote of the Month

"The airplane is just a bunch of sticks and wires and cloth, a tool for learning about the sky and about what kind of person I am, when I fly. An airplane stands for freedom, for joy, for the power to understand, and to demonstrate that understanding. Those things aren't destructable." — Richard Bach

Fun flying in Florida by Trevor Jackson

If you are planning a holiday in Florida this year and with the demise of 'Fantasy of Flight', you could do a lot worse than visiting the Valiant Air Command Museum in Titusville, due east of Orlando (6600 Tico Road Titusville FL 32780). In fact if you drive that way, you may as well take in the Kennedy Space Centre at Cape Canaveral, only a half hour drive further on. Being 'empty nesters' and with the patience of a saint, my wife eventually accepts that we just have to visit yet another aviation museum. We got to the Valiant Air command Museum around mid - morning and were offered a free guided tour, which we willingly accepted. Our guide 'Dick' was a retired USAF pilot who flew mostly heavy transport aircraft during his service career but also served a tour in Vietnam flying Buffaloes into 'tight spots'.

The museum exhibits are many and varied and Dick had an encyclopaedic knowledge of each one, its place and date of manufacture, where it served and in what capacity, right through to how it ended up in this museum.



I was surprised to see an ex Royal Navy Canberra Target Tug, which I was pleased to say was the only aircraft I knew more about than Dick (I had maintained them during my service career).



However, there is only one activity that I enjoy more than wandering around aeroplanes, and that is flying them! I have always nursed a nagging ambition to fly a Piper Cub. I can't remember when it started, maybe when I did a project as a schoolboy on Aeroplanes in which the Piper Cub featured. Those rugged practical lines and, of course, in that distinctive 'Lockhaven yellow' paint scheme -wonderful. With this in mind I had contacted a flight training school based at Winterhaven Municipal Airport about a month before our holiday. Their name is Preston Aviation and is run by Tim and Peggy Preston. Tim trains on their own Boeing Stearman biplane and also their 1946 Piper J3 Cub. I e-mailed Peggy, who runs the business side, and asked if I could fly the Cub for just one hour, from the front seat. The reply was prompt, 'Yes of course, we look forward to seeing you'. The days before I was scheduled to fly ticked by, visiting friends who live at St Augustine in north east Florida and (incidentally the first City to be built in the United States - by the Spanish!) also doing the usual touristy things, until the day dawned when we drove down to Winterhaven.

We arrived early and met Peggy, who advised us that Tim was running a tad late, doing a lesson in the Stearman. Sitting outside in a shady spot, I got the impression that Winterhaven was run in a very relaxed manner (like almost everything else in Florida!). As an 'uncontrolled' airport, pilots just announced their position and intention.....and everything just happens like clockwork! Eventually the Stearman landed and taxied across to the shade of the maintenance hangar, after which the Cub appeared and started the long taxi to the admin side, where we waited. When Tim climbed out of the Cub, Peggy was on hand to do the introductions. I found Tim to be a quiet yet engaging person who had a wealth of aviation knowledge and experience. In the office Tim checked my flying pedigree from my log book, interspersed with humorous stories of similar aircraft we have flown. I had surprised myself when I discovered it had been 20 years since I had last flown a taildragger light aircraft! However I had owned and flown a Thruster TST microlight since then and they say that if you can land a Thruster you can land any taildragger!

Soon we were outside ready to go flying. Tim was casually pointing out some of the peculiarities of the Piper Cub before I realised we were actually doing a pre flight inspection! Here was a skilled and seasoned flight instructor and I was entirely at ease. After a short cockpit brief, I became familiar with all the instruments (rev counter going counter-clockwise), location of magneto switches and carb heat etc. When I was strapped into the front cockpit, Peggy reached in and fitted the GoPro movie camera to the top of my baseball cap. It was "show-time". With the carb heat off, throttle just 'cracked' and stick fully back, I heard Tim (who was doing the hand swinging) call "contact" and I switched both mags to on. The engine coughed into life on the second hand-swing, and Tim ambled around the strut and climbed into the rear cockpit. Soon the Ts and Ps were within the green arcs and we were ready to taxi, one small problem - there was a bloody great nose in the way. Now I could appreciate why Tim had taken so long in taxiing around from the maintenance hangar

With Tim announcing our intentions on the radio, I eased the throttle forward and we started our zigzag route to the active runway "5". Not "05" as we have in the UK, they don't bother with the zero in the States and why should they? By now I was sticky with sweat, even though the fan up front was chucking the wind aft.



Checks complete, I carefully lined up on the piano keys of runway 5 and smoothly opened the throttle. With the side view of the runway as a reference, we accelerated and with a little forward pressure on the control stick, the forward view over the nose came into being. Now it was just a matter of keeping it lined up with constant

footwork and, after a gentle back-pressure on the control stick, we were off.



With only 65 horses under the bonnet, our ascent was "leisurely" but so relaxed. When we got to a safe height, I throttled back to cruise RPM of 2050 and began to appreciate the wonderful views of Polk County, Florida. There can be no better way of seeing Florida than from the air. Tim kept up a flow of interesting facts on the surrounding countryside, Florida being dotted with Army Air Force training bases from World War II. The primary training bases were stocked with Stearman biplanes and others with P51 Mustangs, for advanced navigation and gunnery etc. Also, he pointed out a private community, complete with security gates and fencing, the obligatory private lake and golf course, all owned by the big earners of Florida and beyond.

On our return leg, Tim pointed out a grass strip and asked me if I wanted to do a landing on it, you bet! Joining down-wind, carb heat on, throttle back to 1500 RPM, I did a classic box pattern, setting up idle RPM for a glide approach after turning final. Crossing the threshold, the nose came up with back-pressure on the stick and attention was focused on the view sideways, then fully back on the stick and thud - we were down, a beautiful 3-pointer, my first in 20 years! Taxiing back to the end of the strip, zigzagging and alternating views around the nose, we stopped and carried out the minimal pre-takeoff checks. Then line-up, open the taps and we were off - tail up and keep straight - slight back-pressure and we were airborne.

On reaching 1000 feet AGL, I carried out 360 degree turns to the left and then to the right, no major dramas in either direction. Climbing to a safer height, we carried out a stall, which

occurs at 36 knots indicated and with no vices i.e. no wing drop. Now we had Winter Haven in sight and Tim asked me to join the pattern and demonstrate a "wheeler" followed by a go-around. No problem, I heard an RV declare final 5 and then visually acquired him. Carb heat on - throttle back to 1500 - a nice curved approach then back to idle RPM after turning final and a lovely approach to the runway. Check height sideways and wait for the main wheels to kiss, while keeping the nose level and then when they do - check slightly forward and balance on the main wheels. Applying power on the go around command, I performed a smooth climb-out. Same procedure on the subsequent downwind leg, with Tim doing the radio work, I'm not sure how the other pilots in the circuit would have handled my plummy English accent on the radio (!). This landing was to be a three-pointer and was not perfect but respectable considering my level of currency.

Taxiing back to the apron, I became acutely aware of the increase in ambient temperature and was soaked with sweat by the time I had shut down the engine. Peggy and my wife, Kate, were ready to greet us, both busy snapping off photographs of this "flight of a lifetime experience".



Back in the office, Tim and I got busy with the de-brief and log-book entries, while Peggy downloaded the GoPro footage onto an SD card. Later that day we received a dozen pictures of the flight by e-mail, kindly sent by Peggy and which are included in this article. So, if you are over in Florida on holiday, organise a day pass with the

family and get on down to Preston Aviation see flybiplane@aol.com and www.PrestonAviation.net (Tel 863-956-2526) at Winter Haven Municipal Airport for the flight of a lifetime. If not, get it on your bucket list of things to do before you die.
(Trev Jackson - normal steed : Skyranger Swift G-CCSX)

Fly-in Reports

Windrush 20th August by Andy Virgoe

After two weeks when fly-ins were cancelled due to unsuitable weather, the forecasts whilst not being good, were not too bad, so it was declared on !

We were Guests of Roy Limbrick and Myron volunteered to help Andy with the BBQ which was set up in front of the tower.

As the windsock had long since disintegrated a temporary one was attached to Roy's teleporter mast as soon as we were able and a T put out indicating 03 as the runway in use. Only one aircraft was seen to get the circuit wrong !

Of some 23 aircraft which made it, two deserve mention, Dave Hineson in his Quantum who I think was the only flexwing to brave the 10 knot crosswind and member Rod Griffin in his Currie Wot biplane. It was Rod's first SVMC Fly-In, so welcome! His aircraft attracted a good bit of attention among those who hadn't seen it before. A photo opportunity was taken with OXCOT member Tony King's Jeep.

A total of £120.00 was in the bins at the end of the evening – thank you everyone who contributed.

As the plaque has now been returned and after discussion with Roy it has been decided that the money will be used to provide a new windsock which I hope meets with the approval of everyone who donated.

20th August - Windrush by Dave Hineson

It was a breezy Wednesday afternoon when I arrived at my home airfield to carry out my pre-flight inspection with a view to joining the fly-in to former RAF Windrush. I had heard about this Airfield earlier in the year at the SVMC meetings but I thought it was a bit too far for me and my trusty Pegasus Q.

However, as I have been attending as many fly ins as possible (by car if not by plane) my confidence in my aircraft and myself has steadily grown. But this would be a bit of a challenge for **me** as it was over 30 NM!

The wind at Colerne was breezing a steady 9 MPH and I phoned Andy Virgoe for an up to date weather check at the destination before setting off for the flight.

This flight gave me another first. I have mentioned previously that I have a radio licence but had rarely used it and, although I am now a regular user on Bristol Radar, I have never attempted a zone crossing. Today was the perfect opportunity. I called Brize Zone and asked for a zone transit. This was granted and, although it probably only saved me about 5 mins journey time, it was still good to know I had followed correct procedure and achieved something new.

On arrival at Windrush I discovered that I was the first one there. I was actually over the field but could not see any aircraft nor a windsock (I didn't know it is not home to a flying Club) This had me questioning myself if I was in the right place. I was just about to give up when I did spot the **T** which Andy had placed on the ground and I made my descent.

Once on the ground I quickly set about my usual role at the BBQ – cooking the onions! However, Andy and Myron were more than capable and already had everything under control so I soon found myself relegated to setting out chairs.

Bill King arrived and we had a great discussion about the history of the field and he even took the time to show me around the immediate area including the original "Wind direction sleeve" mast (windsock pole to me). I found this so interesting that I am hoping to go back with an RAF Sqn Ldr for a closer look at the whole area.

I mentioned to Andy that I had been looking for a windsock from the air when overhead and the lack of one had me questioning where the actual strip was. Andy then came up with a cunning plan to put one up for the rest of the SVMC flyers to see. I have attached a picture of his solution here.



Around 22 Aircraft attended and apparently I was the only Flexwing to make it that evening. (I was first to leave for home and at least 3 aircraft were in the circuit) I'm not sure how much was raised for the purchase of a new plaque to remember Sgt Bruce Hancock but I think everyone knows how generous SVMC can be.

Sadly my trip did have a sting in the tail. I had parked my aircraft on the ploughed field and (foolishly) had started my engine and taxied along the edge of the field awaiting other aircraft to land. On arrival back at Colerne and final inspection I realised I had had quite a prop strike from a large stone. Fortunately the steel prop tape absorbed most of the damage but a minor repair is still required to the IVO blade. Another lesson learned!!!

For me, this year has been my best yet for flying - both in terms of knowledge and experience. I put this down to SVMC and the fly ins and I even hope to make it to Spamfield in September.

Panshangar Fly-out Report by Myron Burak Consider the word aerodrome. To me it evokes aviation romance and links to a bygone era of adventure and elegance. A couple of years ago I read that one of the large English Dictionary printers was dropping it from their latest publication. Since then I have endeavoured to use it whenever I can. If ever there is an airfield worthy of the title aerodrome, it is Panshangar. I am very happy to tell you that the Club's visit there on Saturday the 23rd of August was a great success. This was the first fly out that I have organised in the new role of Fly-out Co-ordinator. It came highly recommended by a

couple of Club members and it's a sad fact that Panshangar will close in mid September. The Council wants to build houses on it.

After some scratching around, 10 crews had committed to going. The weather forecast looked favourable and this proved correct on the day. Stephen and I set off in Juliet Tango, arriving after quite an eventful flight. We had tried to fly above the clouds but were defeated, not by the unexpectedly high tops at around 8000 feet, but by the fact that the gaps below became non-existent. Just as well really, because the visibility was stunning and the turbulence mostly tolerable. We did get a good view of Brize from around 5 or 6 thousand feet. From a lower level we saw Blenheim Palace and then a whole series of interesting sights unfolded in the beautiful clear air. Next was Oxford where the river Thames, the canal, the station, and Cowley motor works all stood out. I could go on but we were overhead Panshangar about 12 o'clock. A quick overhead join and circuit found us in the company of several others who had also just arrived.

Panshangar, has a great history of which they are very proud and which is in evidence everywhere. In the war it was a satellite to the De Havilland factory at nearby Hatfield and had a dummy factory built on it. It was also a training base, having Tiger Moths and such like. It is also one of the most vibrant aerodromes I've ever visited. The place was buzzing, giving every impression of a well run modern business. Of particular interest to all of us in this respect was the quite unusual name Out of the Box Café, where we soon began to congregate. Eastbach was well represented by Bruce Morgan and Wendy, Bernie with his daughter Sarah, who is becoming a regular at our events, and Ray with Graham. Bumble took the opportunity to come from Long Marston to see his daughter Maxine with partner Ren and new granddaughter Hebe, who was a hit with everyone. Steve Slade came from Chase Farm and brought a mate of his, Martin. Unfortunately Paddy texted to say that the conditions from Broadmeadow were proving very difficult and he had to turn back.

The café had laid out a large table for us and we began to sample the excellent menu on offer. No complaints were heard.



As lunch progressed we were joined by Bruce Drake and Cath from Over, then John Davis with son Harry (who has just done his qualifying XC in his flex) from their field at Hawling and finally Les and Ann from Redlands, who managed to make up the 10 aircraft expected from the Club by dragging along Neil Braund, who had the honour of representing the flex wing contingent on this jaunt. In the hour or so after lunch you could see groups of our people mingling, mostly sitting outside in the sunshine and chatting about whatever - just enjoying the ambience. As we started to amble back to our aeroplanes, Bruce and Cath headed off to visit Bruce's Auntie, making this a real family occasion.



Most of the group were rounded up for the ritual of the group photo to the usual calls of 'have you got a film in it' or 'you've got the lens cap on'. We then began to disperse to our various destinations. The trip back for us was again quite eventful. There was a reasonable head wind but of more concern was the number of good sized showers that had bubbled up. These were expected but made us

think about what we were doing. In the event they were well behaved and stayed more or less to the side of our intended course. A safe landing at Over completed a day that was certainly one for the scrap book.

I hope everyone else got back without incident and thanks to all for coming.

BMAA Shop from John Hamer

The BMAA Shop has moved into the BMAA web site. The new show is simpler to use which helps the customer, and has a better back end which helps the processes at the BMAA.

As well as being able to pay for membership, airworthiness fees, flight vouchers, NPPL and other fees customers have access to BMAA publications and collectables.

http://www.bmaa.org/catalogue_main.php

Rotax fuel pump Exchange extended from John Hamer

ROTAX announces an extension of the exchange program for eligible fuel pumps covered under Service Bulletin SB-912-063 R1 and SB-912-063UL R2. (These are the older-style mechanical fuel pumps with the "AC" stamp on top.)

If you have not yet replaced your affected fuel pump, now is the time to do so! See the bulletin for details.

SB-912-063 R1

SB-912-063UL R2

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STOP PRESS

Jon Ingram has volunteered to take on the Winter Events Organiser role.

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