



Severn Valley  
Microlight Club

January 2000

## Club Newsletter

### Christmas Party

The annual Christmas Party at the Gloucestershire Club was attended by 20 members who brought along 12 guests - where were the rest of you? It is known that some people were unable to come but those who did had a very pleasant evening. Winners of the quiz were John and Ann Cafful and the Club Poets Laureate for this year were Chris Payne and Sandra. The photo competition winners were:- a) Photo taken from the air - Andrew John b) Photo of an aerial subject - Robbie Keene and c) captioned photo - Bill Austin. The winning caption for the cartoon (see inset) was provided by Sue Keene - "Those 'deer' propellers certainly perform blooming well". The raffle rounded off the evening and many people went home with extra Christmas presents. Thanks are due to Ges Hatchett who organised the food and the bar and to the management of the Gloucestershire Club for providing it. We already have some ideas for next year so don't think that it will be a repeat of this year!

### The winning poem

by Chris Payne and  
Sandra

Ignition on and chocks  
away,  
I'm off to Over Farm  
today.

Weather's closing -  
rain ahead,  
Hope I miss that  
goddam shed!

Other worthy efforts will  
be published in the  
coming months.

### AGM

The January meeting  
will be the Club Annual  
General Meeting. The Chairman will give his usual  
review of the past year and the Treasurer will  
present the accounts for your approval. Although the

accounts show an operating loss over the year the  
Committee do not propose to increase the annual  
subscriptions for the next year as the balances are  
large enough to bear such a small amount. (A copy  
of the annual accounts appears on the last page of  
this newsletter). The most important part of the  
meeting will be the views of you, the members. Your  
comments are important if the Club is to provide the  
speakers, topics and activities that you would like. In  
addition the Club's trophies - the Spitfire Trophy and  
the Poser Award will be presented.

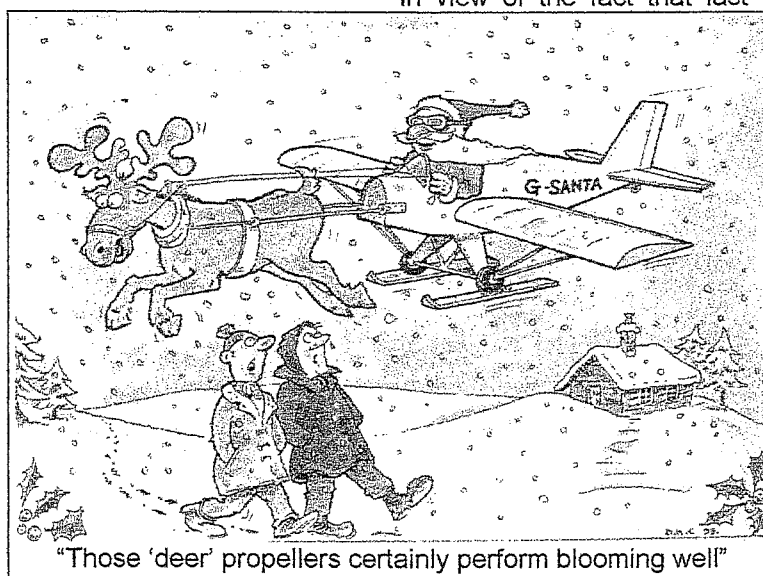
The agenda will be as follows:-

1. Chairman's Report
2. Treasurer's Report
3. Training and Safety Officer's Report
4. Election of Officers
5. Club subscriptions for 2000
6. Any other business
7. Presentation of trophies

### Open Evening

In view of the fact that last year's Open Evening

produced no new  
recruits and the  
audience  
contained hardly  
anyone who was  
not already  
involved in  
microlighting, the  
Committee has  
decided not to  
hold the event this  
year. However, if  
new members do  
join the Club  
during the year  
and require tuition  
for the ground  
examinations or  
there are existing



members in training who find that they need to re-  
take particular exams, the Training Officer will be  
willing to run a course at a mutually convenient time.

### Radio Course

In anticipation of there being no Groundschool, it would be a convenient time to run a Radio Course if there are any members interested. There are two people already on the list and there is room for at least two more. The course would be on a Monday or a Thursday evening and would run for eight weeks (or less if the participants progress quickly!). If you are proposing to buy a radio for use in your aircraft make sure that it covers the correct frequency range i.e. 118.0 to 136.975. A radio available for what appears to be a bargain price may not be what it seems. Also remember that you need a licence for both the radio and for yourself as the operator - big brother (the Radiocommunications Agency) is watching you!

### Use of unleaded fuel

Notification of the new procedures to be adopted by all microlight pilots following the withdrawal of leaded fuel on 1st January 2000 has been received from the Chief Technical Officer of the BMAA and has appeared in the latest issue of Microlight Flying. No apology is made for reproducing it again in this newsletter.

The CAA originally had reservations about fuel not obtained from an approved aviation source and proposed that when using unleaded fuel in aircraft the source had to be recorded. This provided a problem where the fuel was obtained from the local filling station and was further complicated in the case of a microlight which landed away from base and obtained fuel from another pilot at that distant field. A compromise has been reached with the CAA and the following procedure must now be adhered to:-

1. Write in both engine and airframe logbooks "With effect from (insert date), this (aircraft/engine) may be run on unleaded petrol to BS(EN)228 in accordance with Airworthiness Notice AN98b"
2. Each time you buy unleaded fuel for your aircraft put the receipt or Visa slip into a substantial envelope on which is written your aircraft registration and the year.
3. If you land away from your home field and have to obtain fuel from someone at another airfield make a note of where, when and from whom you bought the fuel and put that in the envelope too.
4. Each year's records are to be kept for two years
5. That is all there is to the new procedure."

Members may be aware that "Lead Replacement Petroleum" (LRP) is being sold. It is not yet known whether this is safe to use in microlights because of the additives which have been used to replace the original lead. Avgas is the only option available now if your engine has to run on leaded fuel. If you have

any questions on this please contact the Safety Officer, Bill Austin, and he will do his best to sort it out.

### Carrying of passengers

With effect from 1st January 2000 a new requirement has been placed on all pilots including microlight pilots. If you have not flown in the previous 90 days and you wish to take a passenger flying before doing so you must carry out three take offs and landings. This, in effect, amounts to three circuits of the airfield landing each time before your passenger boards the aircraft.

### New type of licence?

UK AOPA, the UK Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, is proposing to the CAA that a new National Private Pilots Licence should be introduced for the UK. Details are currently being worked out, but the suggested syllabus calls for a minimum of 30 hours flight training and ground training and exams which exclude items specifically related to European requirements. The licence is intended for use as a VFR-only qualification for use in UK airspace.

The proposal comes about as a reaction to the cost and complications of the new European regulations. Overall, this will lead to a marked reduction in GA activity. The new UK syllabus is intended for those who wish to fly purely for pleasure or private business, but could also serve as a first stepping stone for anyone who wishes to take up flying as a career. The UK PPL is an AOPA initiative with the backing of many other UK aviation organisations including the Popular Flying Association, the Guild of Air Pilots and Navigators and the British Airline Pilots Association.

### Quote of the Month

"The only time you have too much fuel is when you are on fire!"

### Internet

Did the dreaded Y2K bug get at your computer on the first day of the month? If it did here is something found just prior to Christmas to raise a smile:-

#### THE INSPECTION:

Santa Claus, like all pilots, gets regular visits from the Federal Aviation Administration, and it was shortly before Christmas when the FAA examiner arrived. In preparation, Santa had the elves wash the sled and bathe all the reindeer. Santa got his logbook out and made sure all his paperwork was in order.

The examiner walked slowly around the sled. He checked the reindeer harnesses, the landing gear, and Rudolf's nose. He painstakingly reviewed Santa's weight and balance calculations for the sled's enormous payload. Finally, they were ready

for the checkride. Santa got in, fastened his seatbelt and shoulder harness, and checked the compass. Then the examiner hopped in carrying, to Santa's surprise, a shotgun. "What's that for?" asked Santa incredulously. The examiner winked and said, "I'm not supposed to tell you this, but you're gonna lose an engine on takeoff."

Bearing in mind that there are an increasing number of 582 engines being used at the present time, particularly in the Xair, you might like to look at <[www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/7373/582Tips/582tips.html](http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/7373/582Tips/582tips.html)> where the author has been public spirited enough to record his own experiences with the engine. It is not an official Rotax site but it is sometimes useful to know that a problem exists and what can be done about it in layman's language. (This is not, by any stretch of the imagination, a replacement for our own JH's encyclopaedic knowledge!).

Those of you still thirsting after knowledge may fancy reading the articles on aerodynamics (with graphics) at <[www.diam.unige.it/~irro/lecture\\_e.html](http://www.diam.unige.it/~irro/lecture_e.html)>. The graphics are particularly good in explaining the flow of air over the wing. Those members with lots of time and a real thirst for knowledge should look at <[www.monmouth.com/~jsd/how/htm](http://www.monmouth.com/~jsd/how/htm)> which is a whole treatise on line covering all the aspects of the theory of flight - the first four chapters cover 75 pages!

The Y2K bug seems to have been a bit of a damp squib but its not over yet. Problems could still occur on 29th February if computers have not been programmed to recognise the year as a Leap Year - another excuse for spending millions of pounds of taxpayers' money, no doubt!

### Long distance flight

Eight months may seem a long time to spend at the controls of a microlight, but Mike Blythe and Olivier Aubert have recently arrived in South Africa after flying 43,000km over the course of eight months. Their mammoth flight started in Buenos Aires and took them north through South and then North America, across the top of the Atlantic via Iceland and Greenland, through Britain and Europe, finally dropping down through Africa to Cape Town and Johannesburg. The pair were flying an Aerotrike Cobra 912S (Mike Blythe's mount) and a DTA Voyager 912S (Olivier's aircraft) and were unsupported by ground crews.

### Christmas cheer for Rochester

Rochester Airfield has won a reprieve for at least three years. Terms of a deal between Rochester Airport Plc and Medway Council have been agreed. The terms allow for up to three years operation

under licence with the possibility of extension of this period if the Council are not ready to develop the site as an industrial park. It is interesting to note that the ultimate objective is to close the airfield in favour of an industrial park but, in the meantime, rather than leave the site vacant it can continue to be used for flying activities. Let's hope that, in three year's time there will be enough evidence and support for the continued use of the site as an airfield.

### Dates for your diary - Year 2000

Sun 'n Fun, Florida 9th -15th April  
PFA Rally, Cranfield 23 - 25 June  
Round Britain Rally 12 -15th July

### Wanted

Second hand Airband transceiver Icom A2 or A3 if possible. Also wanted Rotax 462 complete with all ancillaries for weight shift trike - less than 300 hour unit preferred.

Available as part exchange or for sale separately a Robin 440 engine complete and running with two sets of exhausts. Contact Ed Wells (01452 830951) or Pete Smith (01594 562545) evenings

### For Sale

Thruster - G-MTKA Permit to end July -£4,000 Chris Payne 01905 28826 or 0589 006369

Chaser 508 G-MYMY - 4 stroke - 300 hours - Round Britain Winner & National Champion offers around £5k- Rob Keene - 01452 414975 or 0831237 353

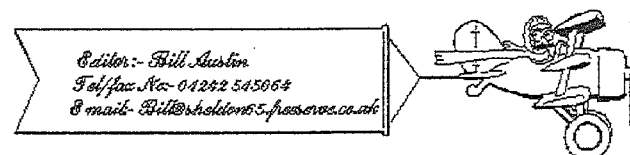
Mainair Alpha -G-MTPA 462 LC - 250hrs approx - £3600 - Jim Taylor - 01989 563866/ 0976818566

New Trelleborg ribbed 4 ply 4.00 - 8 tyre £5.  
Rear steering for Flash 2A (without pod cross-member) £35.  
Telephone John Miller 01451 860 456.

Hangerage available at Redlands Airfield & Microlight Club for semi- rigged and de-rigged flex-wing microlight aircraft. Facilities include two grass runways and clubhouse with provision for refreshments and changing etc. Please contact Sarah Smith on 01793 791014.

Hangerage available at Sandhurst, nr Gloucester  
250 yrd strip - low fees  
Contact Paul Bedford 01684 290423

Castrol TTS two stroke oil - 25 litre drums at £145 i.e. £5.80 per litre when normally over £8.00 per litre - ring Adrian Lloyd 01885 482504



Editor:- Bill Austin  
Tel/fax No:- 01252 545064  
E mail:- Bill@shelton55.fsnet.co.uk

# Severn Valley Microlight Club 1999 Accounts



## Income

	(1999)	(1998)	(1997)	(1996)
Subscriptions	£ 875.00	£ 920.00	£ 1,130.00	£ 1,135.00
Raffle Profits	£ 182.77	£ 188.01	£ 213.12	£ 320.37
G School Subs	£	£ 75.00	£ 100.00	£ 125.00
G School Fees	£	£ -	£ 380.00	£ 310.00
B/Soc interest	£ 66.48	£ 53.96	£ 42.18	£ 66.84
BMAA Members	£	£ 6.00	£ 6.00	£ 3.00
Radio Course	£	£ -	£ 66.50	£ -
Sundry	£	£ 10.00	£	£ 118.50
Excess Expenditure	£ 62.84	£ 147.56		
	£ 1,187.09	£ 1,400.53	£ 1,937.80	£ 2,078.71

## Expenditure

	(1999)	(1998)	(1997)	(1996)
G/School Exps	£	£ 103.08	£ 290.50	£ 305.75
G/School Wings	£	£ -	£ 36.00	
Aircrew Costs	£ 350.81	£ 415.24	£ 326.75	£ 212.16
Speakers Costs	£ 15.00	£ 10.00	£ 5.00	£ 54.90
Meeting Hall Hire	£ 423.00	£ 411.25	£ 317.25	£ 293.75
Equip. Repair	£	£ -	£ 25.00	£ 79.90
BBQ Exps	£ 91.20	£ 75.00	£ 190.00	£ 90.64
Euro Champs	£	£ -	£ 250.00	£ 200.00
Christmas Party	£ 250.00	£ 300.00	£ 325.00	£ 280.00
Donations	£	£ 50.00	£ 100.00	£ -
Sundry	£ 57.08	£ 35.96	£	£ 60.00
Excess Income	£	£ -	£ 72.30	£ 501.61
	£ 1,187.09	£ 1,400.53	£ 1,937.80	£ 2,078.71

## Current Holdings

Building Soc	£ 3,040.74	£ 3,126.26	£ 3,116.70	£ 1,837.27	Bal carried fwd	£ 3,166.26	£ 3,313.82	£ 1,907.27	£ 1,405.66
Petty Cash	£ 62.68	£ 40.00	£ 197.12	£ 70.00	B/Soc Shares	£	£ 1,334.25		
	£ 3,103.42	£ 3,166.26	£ 3,313.82	£ 1,907.27	Excess Inc/Exp	-£ 62.84	-£ 147.56	£ 72.30	£ 501.61
						£ 3,103.42	£ 3,166.26	£ 3,313.82	£ 1,907.27



**Severn Valley  
Microlight Club**

**February 2000**

## **Club Newsletter**

### **Club Awards**

Robbie Keene is again awarded the Spitfire Trophy for his outstanding contribution to Microlight flying within our Club. The Poser Trophy this year has been awarded to someone whose dogged determination over ten years has resulted in his gaining his licence and is now enjoying the freedom of flying unsupervised. Well done John Miller.

### **Annual General Meeting**

At the General Meeting of the Club various officers of the Club gave reports as follows:-

### **Chairman's Report - Andrew John**

There could be fewer better ways of shortening the long winter months than by flying (Air 2000!) to Portugal for a conversion course with Gerry Breen in the Algarve. Thoroughly satisfied I returned to find that an epidemic of Xair-itis had broken out in the UK microlight world. Encouraged by the BMAA's new home built facility some forty kits had already been sold to an enthusiastic number of builders including our own members:- John Bowditch, John Davidson, Chris Payne and Barbara Austin! The other matter of whether or not the CAA would finally clear the 450 kg MAUW for Microlights was still not resolved, giving manufacturers a serious pain, but of little concern to our members.

Sadly, we had no response to our recruiting evening last February, in fact only one existing member enrolled in Bill Austin's Ground School. Maybe a sign of the times when compared with our own dwindling membership numbers as we are now down to 55 for 1999.

Bill Austin's Radio and John Hamer's Rotax engine courses have been popular and very valuable.

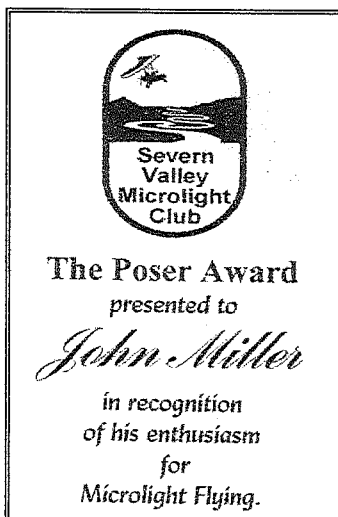


**The Spitfire Award**

presented to

*Robbie Keene*

in recognition  
of  
his outstanding contribution  
to the Club



**The Poser Award**

presented to

*John Miller*

in recognition  
of his enthusiasm  
for  
Microlight Flying.

Use of the Internet and communicating via E-mail is becoming more frequent, though some, myself included, still find the 'old fashioned' quill pen more reliable for getting the message across! We have lost our registration prefix 'M' which perhaps is a shame but the CAA now considers there is no reason why a Blade should not be registered alongside the latest Boeing 747.

Popham means Spring is here and several pilots battled the elements to get there on the Saturday giving exciting experiences to some and an early return to base for others.

The Avon Team event proved as popular as ever and we did our best by coming third, the Wye Valley Fliers taking the Trophy this year, well done Graham and Judy and their team.

We have been repeatedly advised that the biggest hurdle to our continued survival is NOISE, and we ignore this at our peril. We must ensure that we fly higher and away from human habitation as much as possible, which in fact makes for safer flying for ourselves.

Penny and Laura Hamer have at last persuaded John to take them flying, which deserves much admiration for all parties. However, Penny is unlikely to repeat the experience and Laura is tossing up between fun on a pony or flights in a trike.

Exporting is the name of the game, or so we are led to believe, so when Bill and Barbara advertised their Flash 2 Alpha and received a firm offer from Cyprus they wasted no time in securing the funds and despatching an immaculate aircraft. Sadly, within a matter of weeks, the wing was back in the UK being repaired through misuse, but the deal had been done and an Xair was on order!

Around mid summer the CAA finally sanctioned the new 450kg specification for Section S but, and there is always a 'BUT', a new category was spawned with

the name of "Small Light Aircraft" (SLA) to cover the increase in MAUW for the time being, this muddle will be sorted in due course.

In August we were given a glimpse of Ges' "Tubes" - the wing of his Huntwing, very slim and shiny but naked. He needs to get them covered quickly!

The Eclipse was much hyped by the media, but undaunted and in pursuit of the real thing, Robbie Keene and myself flew to South Devon and Brian Finch and Bruce Drake flew to France to savour Totality. We all returned completely satisfied that we had witnessed the event of a lifetime.

Xairs were back in the news again as delays in processing their various documents within the BMAA began to cause considerable frustration amongst those who were building the 3 Axis aircraft of the moment. Explanations were forthcoming plus promised improvements but the result is that the BMAA has sadly lost some credibility in its ability to provide an efficient alternative route to the PFA for microlight homebuilders. This was emphasised at the AGM at Telford when the subject was raised, discussed but not satisfactorily resolved. Time will tell whether the BMAA is capable of providing the support and service that the members require.

Log books will be recording lower than average flying hours this year due to the grim and unpredictable weather we have had, but seasoned flyers are used to this. Unfortunately this is a disincentive to those who might want to take up microlight flying as reflected, perhaps, in our membership numbers.

#### *Training*

Despite a lack of recruits Bill Austin has kept us up to the mark and passed on much valuable information in his capacity of combined Training and Safety officer. Thankyou, Bill.

#### *Finance*

Basically, reduced income from fewer members has resulted in a small loss. Our reserves are able to sustain this position. Ges has done a great job with the accounts, running the raffle each month and organising the Christmas Party. Many thanks.

#### *Social*

Our two functions, the Over Summer event and the Christmas Party, were much enjoyed by those who attended. Our thanks go to Robbie and Sue Keene for the Treasure Hunt and BBQ and all those who helped to make the Christmas party such a success.

#### *Airscrew*

Bill Austin has now taken over the Editorship from John Hamer (he still inserts the photos though!) and the Monthly Newsletter has a new flavour. Without this monthly update on all matters concerning us as flyers, we would be ill equipped. Thank you, Bill, again!

#### *Monthly meetings*

As usual we had a wide range of subjects which were much enjoyed by those who could attend.

January :- AGM

February :- Recruiting evening

March :- The Silk Road – Barbara Austin

April :- Himalayas or Bust – Dennis Beale

May :- Staverton Flying School – Jenny Lyon

June :- VC-10 Tankers – Steve Lushington

:- Over BBQ and Treasure Hunt

July :- Spanish Training School – Graham

Slater

August :- Annual Quiz – Bill Austin

September :- Instruments – Robin Morton

October :- Tiger Moth to Australia

November :- Cotswold Wartime Airfields – Graham

Pitchfork

December :- Christmas Party

Many thanks to John Davis for putting together a very entertaining selection of speakers including his 'brother in law'!

#### *Safety*

Fortunately, other than bruised ribs and pride, no serious accidents or incidents to elaborate upon.

#### *Flying and outs*

Many were planned and many were cancelled, but of particular note were those hosted by Chris Ball, Roger Davies, Bob Hinds, and John Davis, whose efforts were much appreciated.

#### *Competitions*

Gaining third place at Long Marston in the Avon Club Team Event was commendable as the competition was 'hot' and despite a soaking at the end we all enjoyed the experience greatly.

Robbie again took the National Solo Champion Trophy together with the John Hudson Trophy for the best organised Round of the Nationals at Shobdon – congratulations! The Over Treasure Hunt was won by John Davis and Bill Austin after an enjoyable evening in the air and on the ground.

#### *Committee*

My thanks to the committee for their continued support. John Hamer as Secretary and as a Senior Inspector has proved again the value of being well informed on all matters aeronautical. Bill Austin has an amazing capacity to encourage fledgling pilots and Ges an ability to conjure up finances where none seemed possible and John Davis a knack for providing speakers at a moment's notice. Robbie, Richard and Norman have each been a great asset, so to you all, my thanks. It has been yet another thoroughly enjoyable year.

#### *Training and Safety Officer's Report Bill Austin*

The Training and Safety Officer commented on the fact that the Open Evening in February had not produced any new members and that interest in microlighting appeared to be on the decline. One

Club member did take and pass the ground exams. Only one Radio Course was run in the year and this was for a group of flyers from Redlands. Further Engine Courses had been run by John Hamer and these seem to have achieved their objective in making people more knowledgeable about the internal workings of the Rotax engine. The year produced one new pilot - John Miller - who completed his training with Graham Slater in Spain. Congratulations John!

As far as safety was concerned the Club had had another year without any serious accidents or incidents. It was pointed out that running out of fuel was a frequent occurrence for some members who should be aware that it was an offence for which a they could be prosecuted. Most of these "forced landings" were as a result of not switching tanks early enough and were therefore totally avoidable. In the year 26 log books had signed. The opportunity was also taken to outline the current GA requirements for the Certificate of Experience and the requirements for maintaining currency of the Declaration of Fitness.

#### ***Treasurer's Report Ges Hatchett***

The accounts published in last month's newsletter. It was explained that although there was a small loss over the year, this was insignificant when compared to the reserves the Club had. It was recommended that there should be no change to subscriptions for 2000.

#### ***The Committee***

Andrew John was unanimously elected Chairman again and in a non democratic manner proceeded to have the existing committee was re-elected en bloc. There appeared no choice in the matter nor, it should added was there any objection!

#### **Club membership subscriptions 2000**

A reminder to all members that your annual subscription became due on 1st January. The AGM agreed that fees for the year 2000 would remain the same as last year, i.e. £15 per member (new members £20) and £20 for family membership. Please make every effort to pay promptly as it eases the load on the Treasurer. If you have not paid your subscription by the end of March you will no longer receive Airscrew and, if you decide to re-join at a later date you will have to pay £20 as a new member.

#### **The Round Britain Rally**

This year's Round Britain Rally regulations have just been published. It will be held over four days instead of the usual three and will take place between 12th to 15th July. As usual the rally will start at Barton (Manchester) but this year

competitors will have to opt to fly either north for two days, visiting various controls, or south. On the second night they will have to stay overnight at either Leicester or Sandtoft. They will then fly in the other half of the country over the following two days before ending up at the finish at Ince Blundell (Formby). The competition is open to flexwings, three axis microlights (& SLAs) and FLPHGs flown either singly or dual. Competitors only need a minimum of 100 hours P1 to enter. There is a team event this year for the first time and the SVMC plans to enter a team in this section of the event. With this in mind, anyone remotely interested in what is involved in the event is asked to contact JH in the first place. A meeting is planned shortly to outline the rules and what competitors can expect in this year's rally.

Our Chairman, Andrew John, hopes to be entering for the first time with Ges Hatchett in the back seat and already several other club members have expressed an interest in participating. Even if you haven't got an aircraft, don't forfeit the idea of taking part, spare crew places are usually available - it could be some of the best flying you have ever done.

#### **Local appearance by Brian Milton**

The Wye Valley Fliers have invited the SVMC to go "Around the World with Brian Milton" at Shobdon Airfield on Saturday March 4th at 7.30pm. There will be a charge of £5 which includes a buffet. This will, no doubt be a very entertaining evening and one not to be missed. Make a note in your diary now.

#### **My First Solo by Graham Howley**

Tuesday 21st September 1999

Work as usual the misty, dirty rain mingles among the customers outside my butcher's shop. As I look outside all my hopes of flying today have faded away. With all flying put out of my mind I carry on with my job expecting my flying lessons will probably be cancelled.

1030am glorious sunshine (maybe there is a God!)

One phone call later and I am on my way to Clench Common. By early afternoon the pre-flight checks on my Pegasus XL are all done and, with instructor Graham Slater in the back seat, we're airborne. Rather a bumpy ride with a strong crosswind. I am assured by Graham that wrestling with the bar is good for upper body and character building! Needless to say, I am relieved after 60 minutes of circuits and bumpy landings to sit down with a strong cup of tea at de-briefing.

5.30pm - we're airborne again, Graham Slater in the back seat, tackling circuits with vengeance. Guess what....no wind! Thirty minutes later, after a string of good landings, a voice comes through the headset "I think you are ready for solo!"



6.15pm - ballast bag in the back seat, fully briefed, pre-flight checks done, I'm sitting in my XL looking up the runway. A feeling of isolation comes over me, totally alone and just a moment to reflect. I know what to do, I've done it dozens of times before. Away I go. Full power (six thousand plus revs) achieved - and that's just my heart rate - bar forward and up we go. Heading straight for Mars she climbs like a rocket, look right, look left, OK and around we go. We are up to 500 feet already. Levelling off everything feels OK; look around to check the fuel, that's OK too. A quick glance back at the "twirly thing" - still turning - that's a relief. Usual checks completed, long final all clear and around we go.

I was told I could do two circuits and then land (I'm really enjoying this). The engine is purring nicely and I think even my heart rate has dropped. Two circuits complete and I am on final. Attitudes set, power off and down we come. Speed OK, the runway's lined up, the bar's right back - that's better - and down she comes. Whoops, that's a bit fast! No time to think, just remember Graham's words "*Don't stop flying until she's down*". Twenty feet round out, everything is in slow motion but the ground's rushing up. The nose is up too much, I'm ballooning it but it's checked and I'm OK. Look up the runway, let her settle, bar forward and down she comes. Speed all gone, bar out to the front strut. Beautiful landing - it's a shame I'm still two feet off the ground! Thump, I'm down now - whoops and again! Oh well, practice makes perfect!

### Xair News

Congratulations go to Chris Payne whose aircraft is now up and flying. The aircraft was test flown by JH down at Taunton during last month and the paperwork is now back with the BMAA for the issue of the Permit to Fly. Further encouraging news is that John Davidson's paperwork has been processed and a Certificate to Test has been issued just three weeks after submission of the documentation. It would appear that the BMAA Chief Executive's promised improved paperwork turnaround has actually materialised. Let us hope that this is not just a flash in the pan and that it sets the standard for the future.

Also worthy of mention is the third Xair being built by Barbara Austin. She has got to the stage of being able to sit in it and admire her work. The next stage we understand is to fit the engine - then she can drive round and admire her work!

We also ought to mention that although January has a reputation for poor flying weather, JH has actually managed to test fly three Xairs and his MiniMax is getting well known flying back and forth along the M5 to Somerset! Interestingly he takes half the time and uses less fuel than if he goes by car - mind you

the MiniMax is economically battling along at a genuine 70 mph on under 10 litres an hour.

### Safety

"A B757 crew experienced resistance to control column movement in the flare. A metal plate, part of the thigh support on the Captain's seat had slid forward". This sort of thing is not limited to the "big boys". In microlights we have many things in the cockpit which, if not secured, could cause the same problem. Make sure your pre-flight checks include "Check cockpit for loose items" as well as the usual "full and free movement of controls".

### Internet

Have you taken a look at the new BMAA site at <[www.avnet.co.uk/bmaa](http://www.avnet.co.uk/bmaa)>? It is still under development but is worth a visit. As a result of looking at it, a new weather site came to light. Have a look at <<http://halo.hi.is/fcst>>. It is possible to see an animation of the weather for a 6 hour period as well as see what is going to happen in the next three days. Anyone mystified by revs and manifold pressure and their relationship might go to <[www.avnet.com/articles/pelperch/pelp0018.html](http://www.avnet.com/articles/pelperch/pelp0018.html)> and <[www.avnet.com/articles/oversq.html](http://www.avnet.com/articles/oversq.html)>. I know that this does not affect us as microlighters but those of you that read the aviation magazines will be familiar with phraseology relating to percentage power and manifold pressure/revs and may not know exactly what it means.

It is reported that another virus has been detected called "Wobbler" and is said to be more powerful than "Melissa" was. It comes via e-mail under the title "How to give a cat a colonic". Do not open it as it will chew up everything in your computer. If you really want to know "How to...." call your local vet! I know it sounds like a "wind-up" but can you afford to take the chance?

Editor:- Bill Austin  
Tel/fax No:- 01242 545064  
E mail:- [Bill@sheldon65.freemove.co.uk](mailto:Bill@sheldon65.freemove.co.uk)







AIR  SCREWS

Severn Valley  
Microlight Club

March 2000

## Club Newsletter

### Another Xair Flies

Congratulations go to John Davidson whose Xair flew for the time in the hands of JH on Sunday 19th February at Hawling International. A story about that flight is related elsewhere in the newsletter.

In the meantime Chris Payne has also got his Permit to Fly, however the aircraft remains in Somerset as the weather hasn't been conducive enough to ferry it to Defford. The other Xair, belonging to Barbara Austin is progressing slowly, perhaps more slowly than envisaged as she is preparing to sell her house - anyone want to buy a house?

### This Month's Meeting

This month's speaker is Alan Maguire, the instructor of Excellent Paragliders, who operate just half a mile up the road from John Davis' field at Hawling. Next month the speaker will be Simon Baker who has taken over as CFI of Avon Microlights at Long Marston and who is a regular member of the British Team.

### Training

Another of our members emigrated to Spain for a week last month. Graham Howley joined Graham Slater in Antequera with the object of completing his training. He succeeded in completing the syllabus, except for the two solo cross-countries, but was eventually defeated by the weather which turned very windy for three days and necessitated using the Quantum 582 rather than the XL. Graham is now hoping for one fine slot to return to Clench Common and complete his licence.

### Xair - First Flight

by John Hamer

From the start of John Davidson's project, I had found all sorts of things to comment upon and reasons why his project should stay earth bound. There was always this bolt to tighten, that item to adjust, this thing to check. Gradually the list of outstanding jobs got shorter and shorter, despite the fact that on each visit to Hawling I would endeavour to add to the list. However, by Sunday 19th Feb, the list had got very very short indeed. Even the 'official' paperwork now seemed in order - G<sup>2</sup> (Guy Gratton)



John Davidson & JH after the first flight

had even given his approval. So it was on to taxi trials - rush it up and down the field to see what fell off - then give it back to John to fix was the plan - but nothing fell off, and even all the clocks, dials and indicators appeared to give the right numbers. What's more, even the reciprocating device driving the windmill up front sounded right. Reasons for returning it to the

shed were fast running out. More interestingly a crowd seemed to be gathering on the field complete with cameras, obviously they thought that something interesting might be about to happen.

With no excuses left, it was time to point it into wind on Hawling's multi directional runway complex and ease the throttle forward. The aircraft picked up speed as anticipated, so it was back on the stick to take the weight off the nosewheel. Still plenty enough room to chop the throttle and stop in the distance left - but everything felt and sounded still OK. The aircraft kept accelerating and then the magic moment - it became airborne. A quick check

of the pitch and the aircraft climbed out effortlessly. Instantly it was felt that this aircraft was a 'good' one. The controls were responsive but stable and there was no marked yaw to the right often found with Rotax powered aircraft. The aircraft basically flew itself.

It was then climb to height before turning back to the field and throttling back. All so far so good, so it was time to check that the aircraft went round corners correctly. It did. This was followed by slow speed flight to check the aircraft's approach characteristics. Still all OK - so there was nothing more to do at this stage than to get it back on the ground without 'kit forming' it again. A gentle swing onto long finals followed by a low powered approach ensured a smooth arrival in front of the crowd and a delighted owner. My congratulations go to John for building such a delightful aircraft.

I was then able to take John up to demonstrate to him what he had built - I think he enjoyed it but that's another story - for next month's *Aircrew*?

*(Ed note :- This was JH's seventh 'first' flight in an Xair - I think he might just be getting the hang of it!)*

### ***"-and touched the face of God"***

by Penny Hamer

Don't drop this copy of *Aircrew* as if it is red hot just because 'Her Indoors' has written the article. Many of you will remember my sortie into the microlight world last summer after years of avoiding it like the plague. You may also remember that I was studying microlighting, its people and events etc. as part of a project for the West of England Ministerial Training Course where I am in training (nearly finished) ultimately to be ordained as a priest. Those of you who came to one of John's fly-ins last year will recall being asked to complete a questionnaire setting out what you got out of your sport. Bill Austin thought that some feedback would be appreciated.

The events I attended included Club Meetings, an Inter Club Competition (the Team Trophy at Long Marston), a visit to Old Sarum, on going happenings at Catsbury(!) my first and second (and last!) flights and Fly Ins.

I wrote up my experiences in diary form. My brief was to describe aspects of God, - or however you may wish to describe the indescribable that some call God - which I had encountered during my time with you.

At all the Club events I attended I found that I was accepted and welcomed even though I had been an 'anti' in the past. I was struck by the shared enthusiasm (en'theos'iasm - full of God), the care shown for each other whether it be flying or interest in other people's current projects, or recent flying exploits. People were united by this enthusiasm which made them look outwards to the good of the

whole group rather than inwards towards self interest. Many enjoyed the added aspect of creativity, of building and/or maintaining their aircraft. I was also struck by the inclusiveness of all I met in the Microlight world. People were accepted for who they were; all were of value. This, linked to the enthusiasm of the group, transcended social, economic and educational differences

The above attributes were borne out on my visit to the Shadow Flight Centre at Old Sarum where the Trust ATP, (Aviation for Tetraplegics and Paraplegics), had its base. I spent a fascinating couple of hours with Fiona Luckhurst, who was inspirational in her caring and her involvement with fliers who were not able bodied. I realised that flying was totally inclusive, whether one was able bodied or not. The important thing was the flying.

And what of my flying experiences - first with John and then with Andrew. I feel really bad about having to admit that I found it terrifying! Nothing to do with pilot skill but totally attributable to vertigo! However I did manage to open one eye sufficiently to grasp the wonder of creation spread under me. Places I knew well from one dimension appeared quite different when viewed from another. This made me realise that things exist even if we cannot always perceive them. I gained sufficient confidence in the safety of the microlight to let John take Laura, our daughter, for her first flight. As I watched the little dot which contained my entire family disappear from view I understood that loving often means letting go, letting the individual have freedom to experience life and to grow.

Other fascinating glimpses of what I might call God, were revealed in the act of flying, revealed in the science of flight, revealed in creation including meteorology and geology and revealed through the pilots themselves, - their skill, motivation, their interaction and their en'theos'iasm.

I finished my final report with P/O John Gillespie Magee's classic "High Flight" which ends:

".....while with silent, lifting mind I've trod  
The High untresspassed sanctity of space  
Put out my hand and touched the face of God."

That says it all.

### ***Unleaded Fuel***

There are some advantages in flying a microlight and one of the biggest at the moment is being able to use unleaded fuel. It appears that despite notice that 4 Star fuel was being withdrawn from 1st January this year the CAA carried out no research into the effect on GA aircraft of this decision. Technically many GA aircraft who relied on going to the garage for 4 star are now effectively grounded as they are not certified to use unleaded fuel and Lead Replacement Petrol is a total unknown entity as far as the effect of the additives on the internals

of an aircraft engine. In the USA they have carried out some work on using various fuels in aircraft and the information is available to our CAA but they seem not to want to consider it. Perhaps this will lead to more GA pilots joining the ranks of microlighting especially now we have the 450kg limit and a number of very smart aeroplanes are coming on to the market which fall into the new SLA category and can be flown on the microlight licence.

### ***Diesel Engines in Aircraft***

We are always looking for more efficiency and economy in our flying. Well, it might be just around the corner in the form of a diesel engine. PFA members will have seen a report in the latest magazine on initial flight tests of engines from DieselAir and Wilksch. The DieselAir DAR-100 engine was in a Luscombe 8A and the three cylinder Wilksch WAM-120 in a Europa. An unusual feature of the DieselAir is that it has only two cylinders but each cylinder has two pistons. Initial impressions were good and development is continuing on both engines.

### ***Aircraft and Engine Logbooks***

A club member has asked whether all the information in the existing single aircraft logbook, including details of mods and airworthiness inspections that were signed off, has to be transferred in detail into the separate CAA approved engine and airframe logbooks which are now required to be kept.

The simple answer is that the BMAA log book is effectively the second log book for the airframe/engine, so only relevant details are transferred across to the title page - i.e. aircraft registration, engine number, owner, etc. The opening line in both airframe and engine books will be :- "Hours carried forwarded from original log book (1) xxx hrs". The original log book forms part of the aircraft documentation and should be retained.

### ***Tip of the Month***

After all this winter's flying do you have a muddy wing bag? If you do, don't what ever you do put it in the washing machine - they shrink and then your wing does not fit them again. If they are to be washed, use cold water and soap to avoid the £80 odd replacement cost. Should you have already shrunk yours, sell them to an Xair owner, their wings rolled up fit nicely into them!

### ***Round Britain Rally***

As the newsletter goes to press, it looks as there will be a record number of SVMC members attending this year's rally. Bruce Drake and Brian

Finch are teaming up to fly the former's Rans, while Andrew John plans to take Ges Hatchett with him. Robbie Keene will be flying solo in his Chaser in an attempt to repeat his success of 1998 when he won outright, while JH has a ride booked in an Xair. John Bowditch has also indicated that once again he intends to take part.

### ***Wednesday Night is Club Night***

At the end of last summer, the club started having a function every Wednesday night, be it a Club meeting, a committee meeting or a fly in. Well with the imminent arrival of summer and the hour change at the end of the month, it has been decided to recommence the scheme. From the beginning of April it is planned to have the following functions:-

5th April - meeting - Canning Arms - Hartpury 19.30  
12th April - Fly In / drive In JH's place Hartpury - 19.00

19th April - Club meeting - Gloucester - 19.30

### ***Airfields under threat***

You will recall that last year South Cambridgeshire District Council produced a local plan which included some draconian restrictions on light aviation within their area. The District Council lost the battle over Little Gransden airfield and were ordered to pay costs in the region of £300,000. You would think that this would make any sane person sit up and re-think their next move. Not so SCDC who now intend to take the proposed policy on small airfields to a full Public Enquiry which is expected to last for 25 weeks! The other aspect of this case is that there are apparently several other local authorities watching the case with interest and if SCDC succeeds in its efforts to virtually close down GA activity in its area, others will introduce similar policies. Your airfield could be next! It is understood that SCDC have approached the Government to get permission to impose a considerable Council Tax increase upon the residents of the area to offset the anticipated costs of the Public Enquiry. The other side of the coin is that organisations like the PFA and the BMAA together with others have to assemble a competent team to argue the case for GA and this costs money which can only come from members of those organisations. If you are asked for a contribution don't be backward in coming forward.

### ***Internet***

If you are interested in knowing what airshows are taking place this year go to the Royal Aero Club site at <[www.royalaeroclub.org](http://www.royalaeroclub.org)> Here you will be able to choose between the UK, USA, the Mediterranean area or the World and see a list of all the shows and aviation events available.

One British microlighter, Dave McGauley, is planning to fly around the coast of the USA and will be starting from Sun 'n Fun in April. If you want to keep track of his progress look at <[www.micropages.co.uk/cuttingedge](http://www.micropages.co.uk/cuttingedge)>.

If photos of microlights interest you then you should add

<[www.cs.fredonia.edu/~stei0302/www/ULTRA/graphics.html](http://www.cs.fredonia.edu/~stei0302/www/ULTRA/graphics.html)> to your Favourites. This site is a collection of photographs sent in by owners. Needless to say most of them at the moment are American aircraft but they make interesting viewing.

Colin Bodill's next expedition will be chronicled on the Web at <[www.solochallenge.com](http://www.solochallenge.com)> - this time he will be pitted against a helicopter flown by Jennifer Murray who recently flew a Robinson R44 around the world with a co-pilot.

### **Single Engine Piston rating revalidation - update**

Over the last few months much concern has been expressed by private pilots about the guidance the CAA gave in AIC 127/99 on the conduct of the training flight required as part of the "experience" route to revalidating SEP ratings every 24 months. The guidance reads like a repeat GFT and it says that instructors should not sign a pilot's log book unless the flight was "satisfactory".

This seemed to turn it into a test when the law is clear that a skills test or proficiency check is only required in cases where a pilot cannot meet the experience requirements (12 hours including 6 PIC and 12 take-offs and landings in a SEP - single engine piston aircraft - in the 12 months prior to expiry of the existing certificate).

The roles of the pilot and instructor and the nature of the flight must be decided in advance, so once the flight has lasted more than an hour, the requirement for revalidation has been met. There is no need for (or requirement in JAR-FCL for) a signature.

The CAA are revising the AIC and will hopefully cover other issues surrounding this flight such as the position of those operating PFA or private category aircraft and those operating from unlicensed strips. PPLs should note that a pass of a skills test or proficiency check for ANY rating can be substituted for this training flight.

### **Quote of the Month**

An aeroplane might disappoint any pilot but it'll never surprise a good one.

### **Dates for your diary**

8th - 9th April Nationals Round 1 - Kemble

29th - 30th April Microlight Trade Fair - Popham

13th - 14th May Nationals Round 2 - Shobdon

22nd - 23rd July Royal International Air Tattoo - RAF Cottesmore (Fairford is being re-surfaced)

24th - 30th July Farnborough Air Show

### **Wanted**

Second hand Airband transceiver Icom A2 or A3 if possible. Also wanted Rotax 462 complete with all ancillaries for weight shift trike - less than 300 hour unit preferred.

Available as part exchange or for sale separately a Robin 440 engine complete and running with two sets of exhausts. Contact Ed Wells (01452 830951) or Pete Smith (01594 562545) evenings

### **For Sale**

Chaser 508 G-MYMY - 4 stroke - 300 hours - Round Britain Winner & National Champion offers around £5k- Rob Keene - 01452 414975 or 0831237 353

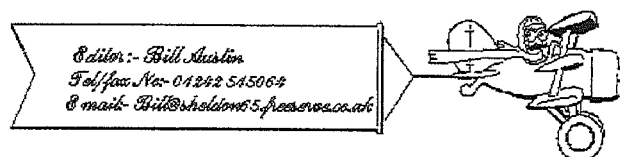
Mainair Alpha -G-MTPA 462 LC - 250hrs approx - £3600 - Jim Taylor - 01989 563866/ 0976818566

MiniMax - G-MWLW - Rotax 377 - John Hamer 01452 700314

Hangerage available at Redlands Airfield & Microlight Club for semi-rigged and de-rigged flex-wing microlight aircraft. Facilities include two grass runways and clubhouse with provision for refreshments and changing etc. Please contact Sarah Smith on 01793 791014.

Hangerage available at Sandhurst, nr Gloucester 250 yrd strip - low fees  
Contact Paul Bedford 01684 290423

Castrol TTS two stroke oil - 25 litre drums at £145 i.e. £5.80 per litre when normally over £8.00 per litre - ring Adrian Lloyd 01885 482504





**Severn Valley  
Microlight Club**

**April 2000**

## **Club Newsletter**

### ***This Month's Meeting***

The speaker will be Simon Baker who has taken over as CFI of Avon Microlights at Long Marston and who is a regular member of the British Team.

### **New Issue Charts**

Of particular interest and importance to those members entering the Rally 2000 is the publication of new VFR charts by the CAA. The dates for the three half-mil charts are:-S.England and Wales 23rd March; N.England & N.Ireland 18th May; Scotland 15th June. The publication of the quarter-mil charts is spread over seven months. The ones most used by SVMC members are England South 20th April and (the) West and South Wales 13th July. Westward Digital are no longer the agents for the sale of charts but you can obtain them from local flying schools at Gloucestershire airport. In the past Staverton Flying School has been very helpful in this respect. If any members want the new charts Bill Austin would be willing to co-ordinate orders and obtain them for members. The price is £12.99 per chart and money in advance would be appreciated.

The charts themselves incorporate a revised method of presenting information adopted as a result of consultation with users over the past months and are intended to be clearer in their detail and therefore less confusing to use.

The new S. England and Wales chart also introduces a realigned low level corridor in the Manchester /Liverpool area. The entry point to the corridor has been significantly moved West to allow adequate operational separation when Manchester's second runway comes into operation later this year. The alignment is now virtually North South.

### **Xair News**

We are pleased to report that Chris Payne's aircraft is now fully permitted and is now at Defford while John Davidson's aircraft has completed it's flight test programme and is awaiting the issue of its Permit to Fly.

### **New Aircraft**

The Aeroprakt A-22 is being put through Section S by Gordon Faulkner of UK Ultralights at Otherton Airfield. It will be known as the A-22 Foxbat in Europe. It is powered by a 100hp Rotax 912S and is expected to sell at under £30,000. It cruises at 100mph on 14 litres an hour is classified as a SLA and is expected to make its first appearance at the PFA Rally in June.

### **Flying over the Coral Sea by Chris Ball**

As I am sure you are all well aware, coincidences have a habit of happening and I would like to share a recent one with you.

I was on one of my frequent overseas business trips and, as is my habit, took a couple of recent magazines with me (long distance flights are almost the only chance I get to catch up on Motor Sport, Flyer and of course the MF magazine).

On this particular trip I sorted out Motor Sport on the way to New Zealand and started MF from NZ to OZ. I was to spend the weekend in Noosa, a couple of hours North of Brisbane. I had scanned the magazine and noted the article about flying two 'Fleas' from Perth to Brisbane, in terms familiar to me this is 5 hours in a 747, in a microlight it would be very hard work.

While in Noosa I saw a flexwing fly overhead and the thought occurred of how nice it would be to see this part of the Coast from the air. A look at the local area map revealed the Noosa Municipal Airport South of the town and a "landing ground" to the West. Clearly the landing ground was my target and I persuaded my hosts, (well they do work for me so it wasn't too difficult) to drive me out there. What we found was a well maintained grass strip in the middle of a gum/eucalyptus forest with no buildings, no signs, no microlights - nothing. So the next morning I thought I would visit Noosa airport and ask if anyone knew where I should look for the flexwing boys.

Imagine my surprise to find access to Noosa "Airport" down a dusty track. At the end was a large field with a single, but quite long tarmac strip flanked by a grass strip, 3 corrugated iron "hangars" a

caravan and an office. The lady on the portable phone in the office with the two youngsters was pleasant enough but in response to being asked where the microlight people were based couldn't help, pointing out the Cessna 172 parked beside the "office" and saying she had just arrived and would be going shopping. Sure enough, a taxi arrived a couple of minutes later and there I was alone again and apparently in sole possession of the airport. Being a curious soul, I thought I would have a look in the hangars and found a small selection of light aircraft. Finally, in the last hangar I was surprised to find human occupation. Two fellows were taking ground tuition from an instructor. The instructor turned out to be the 'microlight' man and mentioned that he had recently completed a trans Australia flight with a couple of Fleas. I was able to pull from my back pocket the MF magazine and say casually "Oh, do you mean this trip?". The tuition was forgotten, the article examined and the tale retold. It ended up with us agreeing on some flexwing training for me later that day as I am a 3 axis pilot but had never flown a flexwing.

My instructor was Bob Silver, a pretty impressive fellow of mature years. He was the first Australian to hang glide off the Himalayas some 18 years ago. He used to ridge soar off the sand cliffs North of Noosa just for fun (overflying waters seething with large and hungry sharks - in a HANG GLIDER for heavens sakes !!). You may not be aware that shark meat is widely eaten in Australia, a nice firm white meat known as 'Flake'. In response to my question about whether he was worried about the sharks, he said "No, I have an agreement with the sharks, I don't eat Flake and they won't eat me" !!.

Bob is CFI, ground instructor, flying examiner and ground examiner for all of Northern Queensland and all of the Northern Territories, a patch about the size of Western Europe. Students mostly come to him, the two he had been instructing that morning had driven down some 20 hours from the interior for a one week session. He said that whenever he can get three or more students in one location he and his wife jump into their Winnebago and hitch the flexwing onto the back and off they go for as long as it takes to get the training done.

As for my flight, Bob fitted the slowest of the 3 wings he has, to his (??? What type of trike Bob?) powered by a 503 Rotax. This wing has a cruise speed of only 54 knots and stalls at about 25, flying characteristics that he feels offer the best blend of feel for students and allows a serene and safe view of the stunning coastline and topography.

Following an explanation of the dynamics and aerodynamics of flexwings (and clear reminders of the different control inputs) we strapped in and took to the field. The take off was short, very short, and even though my Shadow can climb quickly, I was

impressed. We headed out over the Wy ---- lake (Aborigine for Sting Ray, and so named because it is the shape of a Sting Ray - though how the Aborigines managed to fly at 1500 feet to notice this is beyond me). We crossed the coast of the Coral sea and safe from the regulations of overflying built up areas, turned North towards Fraser Island, allegedly the biggest sand island in the world. We flew up the coast along a beach that was many, many miles long and only accessible by 4 WD's along the beach itself. The interior is a National park and so, apart from a couple of very small camp sites, is pretty well deserted except for the adventurers with 4WD's who wish to stroll through the wilderness, or surf fish (and risk being taken by sharks, which does apparently occasionally happen - they obviously used to eat Flake). All along this beach are wonderful sand cliffs rising some 400-500 feet, covered in tea trees which impart a variety of shades of golds and browns to the sand creating an amazing visual effect. With the stiff onshore breeze we were able to shut down the throttle, put the nose down, point slightly out to sea and 'surf' the wind along the coast. Not quite the basic flexwing training I originally had in mind, but enormous fun.

Bob also demonstrated another Australian flying aberration which he called altitude dyslexia. It usually manifests itself when you are alone over wonderful beaches and are unable to see the 500 foot mark on the instrument. We both suffered from this dysfunction for much of the flight and were enthusiastically welcomed and waved to (in a friendly manner) by the few people we encountered.

Eventually this magic flight up the coast came to an end and we had to turn back in order not to breach the VFR regulations. Being so near the Equator with so little twilight the 30 minutes after sunset rule does not apply. If I remember correctly, Bob said we have to be on the ground before the sun has fallen to 6 degrees below the horizon. I do remember his pragmatic comment that he would find it difficult to measure something he couldn't see because it was no longer there, so he preferred to land just before it got dark, and we just about made it.

My final impression was the huge difference in the "float" characteristics of the much more "draggy" flexwing as compared to the Shadow. Our angle of descent was so outrageous, and Bob chose to use just the last 50 metres of the strip in order to avoid a long taxi, that I really thought we would end up in lake Sting Ray. (the runway stops and the lake begins).

So ended my flight over the Coral Sea. Bob is a warm, interesting and amusing man as well as being an excellent pilot. Any microlight pilot with an excuse to visit Australia should allow a couple of days to visit Noosa (one and a half hours North of Brisbane Airport by Rental car) and spend time on



the beach (glorious), hire a boat to fish (cheap and wonderful), visit a sea food restaurant if you can't catch your own (spoilt for choice) and end up with a superb afternoon's flying with Bob. Oh, - and I GOT AN HOUR'S FLEXWING TRAINING INTO MY LOGBOOK!

### **Safety**

Are you one of the "Kick the tyres and light the fires" brigade? How often do you check the tyres of your aircraft not only for pressure but also for condition? An unusual noise heard as a B737 taxied at Heathrow turned out to be a large castor wheel embedded in the nosewheel! I would be surprised if anything so large got into our tyres but most of us fly out of grass strips and it is not always possible to see what is hiding in the grass particularly near the hangar where others might have been doing maintenance and dropped the odd bolt or screw. It's a bit late (and exciting) to find it on landing.

With the flying season just beginning it may be timely to remind members of some of the basic rules and conventions when flying to other airfields. The most important point for all microlighters is PPR. Do ring your destination, particularly if it is a small private grass strip, and ascertain whether the owner is happy for you to land there, whether you will be welcome, circuit height and direction and any areas to be avoided. Remember many private strips are on the outskirts of villages whose inhabitants are often very sensitive to the invasion of their privacy and what they perceive as "noisy" aircraft (lawn mowers are apparently not noisy or intrusive!). On arrival at your destination (a) make sure it is your destination; (b) look for other aircraft in the vicinity, in the circuit or on the ground; (c) carry out a standard overhead join and then, if all is clear, carry out the appropriate landing approach according to your PPR instructions. Many pilots fly from relatively quiet fields in terms of traffic. However, when going into a GA field the instruction is "Join overhead". This means that, subject to any instructions to the contrary, you fly over the centre of the runway at 1500 to 2000 feet towards the deadside of the circuit and descend to join the downwind leg at circuit height abeam the upwind end of the runway. Many GA airfields have a circuit height of 1000 feet hence the normally accepted minimum height for an overhead join is 1500 feet. You should also be aware that at some airfields both right and left hand circuits are in operation at the same time so be sure you know your left (port) from your right (starboard). Many members will also be aware that at Shobdon the GA circuit is at 1000 feet and the microlight circuit is at 500 feet so the approach for microlights is actually under the GA circuit. Remember, too, that at an airfield which provides an Air/Ground radio service the operator can only give you information -

it is no good asking for joining instructions or expecting to be told "Clear for take-off" - you will only be told the runway in use, whether any other aircraft are in circuit and the wind. The decision whether to proceed is left to you as the pilot. (Members who have done the radio course will know all this, of course!)

### **Low Profile = High Altitude**

The Editor's attention has been drawn to a complaint of low flying by a microlight aircraft on Sunday 19th March in the vicinity of Castlemorton Common. The complainant noted the registration, and contacted the local police and the CAA. This incident highlights the need to keep away from residential areas and places used by large numbers of people for recreation, to fly at a reasonable height and not to make several passes over the same ground features. Hence the heading's inference to "Keep a low profile by flying at a suitable altitude". This, as the Chairman emphasised at the Club AGM in January, will also reduce the noise footprint on the ground.

### **Quote of the Month**

You start with a bag full of luck and an empty bag of experience. The trick is to fill the bag of experience before you empty the bag of luck.

### **Internet**

Proverbs are pithy and sometimes wise sayings and they have now been adapted to reflect the increased use of the Internet. To whet your appetite think about this one:- "Too many clicks spoil the browse". There will be others in the coming months to keep you entertained.

If you are interested in the A22-Foxbat mentioned elsewhere in the newsletter go to <[www.foxbat.co.uk](http://www.foxbat.co.uk)>

Having decided to go to Sun 'n Fun this year, I thought it might be a good idea to try out the Web and see what information I could find. Using a search programme that I have on the computer I came up with a number of interesting possibilities. I got detailed maps of Lakeland and Tampa (my point of arrival) and lists of hotels/motels together with information on activities and events, restaurants, museums, etc. I was surprised that there were relatively few hotels on the list which could actually be booked on line. Narrowing down the search and the information was really the biggest problem bearing in mind that the phone bill is clocking up all the time!

Freemove are introducing free Internet access for BT customers who make £10 worth of regional and national calls a month from April. From June they will also have free access for evenings and



weekends for a charge of £6.99 per month. Further information from <www.freeseve.net>.

### **Long Marston**

Members will know that Long Marston Airfield hosts a number of events in the summer months which have, in the past, meant that the airfield has been closed as far as flying activities have been concerned. This year, however, there is only one weekend on which no flying in or out will be possible and that is the Bulldog Bash on 11th/12th August. All other weekends are available BUT grass strips 02/20 or 16/34 must be used and PPR is essential in case there are any last minute changes. PPR may be obtained by phoning Tony Blackwell at Aerolite on 01789 299229 or 0370 680195

### **Leaded Four Star Fuel**

Apparently leaded fuel is still available from a company called Bayford Thrust. If anyone needs this fuel a list of suppliers can be found at <www.come.to/motordata> or <www.bayfordthrust.co.uk>

### **Sun 'n Fun**

As you read this newsletter John Davis and Bill Austin will be making tracks for the airport at Tampa in Florida to catch the plane home following their visit to Sun 'n Fun. Hopefully the x-ray equipment at the airports will not affect their films which should contain the material to support a talk later in the year.

### **Dates for your diary**

29th - 30th April Microlight Trade Fair - Popham  
13th - 14th May Nationals Round 2 - Shobdon  
22nd - 23rd July Royal International Air Tattoo - RAF Cottesmore (Fairford is being re-surfaced)  
23rd - 25th June - PFA Rally Cranfield  
24th - 30th July Farnborough Air Show

### **Free Landings fees - not just yet!**

Each month Flyer magazine offers free landing fees to various airfields. It is an opportunity worth taking up, so recently a number of our members took the opportunity to visit Sleaford with a view to exploiting this generous offer. Imagine their horror when they found out they were a month early and had to fork out £6 each. It pays to check before you go!

### **Fly In Redlands**

The annual Redlands fly in will be held on Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th May. There will be a barbecue and refreshments. All are welcome but please observe their joining procedures. Further details can be obtained from Sarah Smith 01793 791014.

### **Wednesday Night is Club Night**

The programme for the coming month is as follows:-

Wed 26th April- Fly In / drive In - John Davies' - Hawling - 19.00hrs - 01451 850214

Wed 3rd May Mtg - Canning Arms Hartpury - 19.30 hrs

Wed 10th May - Fly In / drive In - Phone John Hamer 01452 700314 for details

Wed 17th May- Monthly talk - Glos Club - 20.00hrs

### **Wanted**

Second hand Airband transceiver Icom A2 or A3 if possible. Also wanted Rotax 462 complete with all ancillaries for weight shift trike - less than 300 hour unit preferred.

Available as part exchange or for sale separately a Robin 440 engine complete and running with two sets of exhausts. Contact Ed Wells (01452 830951) or Pete Smith (01594 562545) evenings

### **For Sale**

Chaser 508 G-MYMY - 4 stroke - 300 hours - Round Britain Winner & National Champion offers around £5k- Rob Keene - 01452 414975 or 0831237 353

Mainair Alpha -G-MTPA 462 LC - 250hrs approx - £3600 - Jim Taylor - 01989 563866/ 0976818566

MiniMax - G-MWLW - Rotax 377 - John Hamer 01452 700314

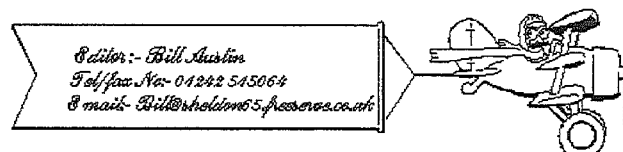


Hangerage available for fixed & fully/semi rigged flexwing microlights.

For more information phone 01793 791014 or email microlights@redlands67.freeseve.co.uk

Hangerage available at Sandhurst, nr Gloucester  
250 yrd strip - low fees  
Contact Paul Bedford 01684 290423

Castrol TTS two stroke oil - 25 litre drums at £145 i.e. £5.80 per litre when normally over £8.00 per litre - ring Adrian Lloyd 01885 482504





**Severn Valley  
Microlight Club**

**May 2000**

## **Club Newsletter**

### **Monthly Talk**

This month's speaker is Andrew John on his trip to Portugal. In addition the new CAA video 'Fit to Fly?' will also be shown.

### **Popham Trade Fair**

*By Bill Austin*

The annual pilgrimage to Hampshire was on 29/30th April this year. Was there anything to capture the imagination or any new "must have" toys to tempt us? In general terms the answer is probably no. However, for those with the necessary money (or an obliging bank manager) there was the CT and the CT42 from Czechoslovakia priced at around £30,000. Both were sleek fibreglass "hot ships" and were kept very busy giving demonstration flights. The other newcomer was the Zenair 701, an all metal Stoll aircraft which spent most of its time climbing out vertically from a takeoff run of a few yards. Aesthetically this did not appeal as it looked rather square and boxy and its drab grey finish did little to lighten the impression.

As far as flexwings were concerned there was nothing to excite. Many of the trikes on display were powered by the Rotax 912 except for one which was fitted with a 912S and a very large box of Bendix King electronics containing transponder, two radios, an EFIS screen which could also display VOR and NAV information. All the normal panel instruments were fitted into the small piece of panel left either side of this box. It was the trike to be used by Colin Bodill later in the year for his round the world race with a helicopter. It didn't look much fun to fly! The Raven powered by the Jabiru engine was not an impressive performer alongside this sort of competition and seemed to lack the urgency of climb exhibited by most other trikes but then again we have been accustomed to the urgency and immediate power of the two stroke. (Alright I know that the 912's exhibit good acceleration and climb but they are high revving engines anyway.)

Most of the excitement on Saturday probably took place in the car park at the end of the day where a tractor was very much in evidence pulling cars out of the mud. Thankfully Sunday was dry and the

ground, although spongy, was firm and enabled most people to leave under their own steam. Several Club members flew in and the early arrivals on Sunday were treated to a "challenging" arrival until common sense prevailed and the runway was changed so that landing was into wind rather than with a 90 degree cross wind. It was noticeable that, certainly on Sunday, there were more visiting trikes than for many years past - where were the three-axis crews this year? Having said that who could have failed to miss the lime green and purple Jabiru powered Rans of Graham and Judy Pritchard!

Anyone from the Club who flew to Popham would probably have passed within sight of the former airbase at Greenham Common. This, alas, no longer exists and has been "returned to the public as heathland". Barbara Austin's comment was not quite so flattering "It's all been dug up and looks like a rubbish dump" was her view. It was requisitioned in 1941, occupied by the USAF in 1968, approved to store 96 Cruise missiles in 1980 and was best known for the women's camp which existed outside the perimeter fence for many years.

### **GPS and Selective Availability**

Those members who have a GPS will probably be aware that to date it has not been that accurate in telling you your position - well, that is if you didn't mind being 30 meters adrift! However, the President of the United States (Big Bill himself!), has now decided that it is time to remove the inaccuracy. As from 1st May 2000 GPS signals will indicate your position absolutely spot on. One of our members commented "Now when I'm lost I shall know exactly where I'm lost!".

The President commented that the USA has already demonstrated that it has the capability to deny GPS signals selectively on a regional basis so there is no threat to security from their point of view.

### **Sun 'n Fun 2000**

*By Bill Austin*

Another year. another show. This time there were a lot more paramotors and paratrikes in evidence. Ben Ashman gave a good demonstration of the

"Doodlebug's" capabilities and the "Mosquito" also performed well. There was, however, one other Mosquito "lookalike" which ran amok and ended up not taking off but running off the runway to finish up in a heap amongst the parachute of a stationary paratrike. As far as microlights were concerned there were variations on a theme. The "Sky Raider" was akin to a high wing tail dragger MiniMax and performed in much the same way. More than that it also appeared at the Lake Parker "Splash-in" on Thursday on floats which seemed to do little to degrade its performance. The emphasis was on three axis aircraft but it was obvious that trikes were becoming more popular with Mainair, Pegasus and Air Creation being represented together with a South African trike called the Windlass Aquilla. This latter had chunky tyres and a very substantial looking frame and should perform well on rough ground. On the Mainair stand was the trike of Dave McCauley who was going to fly around the coast of the USA. This machine, with Rotax 912 engine of course, had more instruments than instrument panel! The surprise was that no publicity was evident to attract people to the stand or to encourage donations to the charity which will benefit from his flight. His departure from Sun 'n Fun was so low key that we could only assume that as the Mainair stand was deserted at 1730 on the last day of the show he had started as planned. His progress can be monitored on the Web at [www.micropages.co.uk/cuttingedge](http://www.micropages.co.uk/cuttingedge).

Do you fancy a twin engined, fixed wing aircraft which falls into the American "experimental" category? If so you could do no better than the "Air Cam". This has two Rotax 912 engines, two seats and a large space for luggage. On take off it goes almost vertical and is at circuit height before it has used the length of the runway. Engine failure on this aircraft should hold no terrors provided that only one engine goes at a time because such is the excess of power that it flies just as well on one engine only. The big drawback might be the price which starts at £40,000 (there were another two for sale at up to £60,000 each!). Not only does it perform well but it is almost silent in operation. In fact, the Florida police use these aircraft for airborne observation related to drug smuggling because the people on the ground can't hear them coming!

The static displays in the main part of the show were as extensive as ever. You name it and it was there. The Americans seemed to be interested in GPS's and, in particular, those models with coloured moving maps priced in the £800 region although other cheaper models could be found usually at the back of the display! Another interesting feature of the show was the number of stands selling lengths of aircraft quality aluminium and nuts, bolts and washers for ridiculously low prices. I picked up two

packets of 50 cadmium plated washers for the equivalent of £1.90 a packet - try matching that at Cranfield!

When your feet were sore from tramping around there was the daily three hour airshow to watch. This year the theme of the airshow was "Warbirds" The show started each day with a "dog fight" between a Sopwith Camel and a replica of the triplane flown by the Red Baron. The Sopwith had one of the original radial engines which operated on the simple basis of being on or off. Consequently its flight was punctuated by bursts of full throttle or none at all for 2, 4, 8, or 16 revolutions of the engine. With this type of performance it would be difficult to tell whether the engine was performing properly or not! On the opening day the finale of the show involved some 50 - 60 aircraft of different types being in the air at the same time flying at different heights and criss-crossing the airfield. This may seem amazing but it is even more so when you realise that all these aircraft were privately owned!

I took advantage of the free bus service between Lakeland Airport and Lake Parker on the Thursday to have a look at the seaplanes. They, too, have spot landing competitions and have to touchdown with their floats on a line between two buoys. There is no box as in the land competitions - the nearest to the line wins. Another novelty was the Takeoff competition in which two aircraft compete to see who can get airborne first. They have a rolling start because it is impossible for a seaplane to stop completely still unless at anchor Full power is applied when given the green flag from the starter's boat. Some of the aeroplanes appeared to sit very low in the water when at anchor and equally required serious amounts of power to get them airborne. In a place like Florida I could see a definite advantage in having a floatplane - preferably with wheels as well!

As usual the scale of the show is what leaves an impression. The main runway of Lakeland Linder Regional Airport is 8500 feet long and 150 feet wide and the secondary runway is 5000 feet long and 150 feet wide. For the duration of the show the whole airport was shut to commercial traffic and restricted airspace established up to 10,000 feet. Aeroplanes of all types, sizes and ages stretched as far as the eye could see and, what is more, you could wander amongst them as you wished without restriction. Something different this time was the "Night Show" where aircraft performed aerobatics with Roman candles and fireworks attached to their wings - can you imagine the CAA allowing that in England?!! One of the participants in the evening show was a paratrike - wing illuminated with an on-board spotlight and fireworks igniting around the propeller cage at the back. The only problem was that he had an engine failure just after takeoff and landed with

the fireworks still going off. This set fire to part of the airfield causing a delay in the proceedings! The trike and pilot were unscathed.

A comment made by a local resident at the end of the week was interesting. They told us that this was the first time for many years that the whole week had passed without someone being killed. As far as I could tell all the aerial activity was well controlled and on one afternoon they stopped airshow because of thunderstorm activity in the area.

For those members who might be interested new year's show dates are April 8th - 14th

P.S. A visit to the Internet site confirmed that Dave McCauley left Lakeland on 15th April and is now well on his way.

### **From the back seat**

by Barbara Austin

Since my X-air is still firmly on D-ground I was given the opportunity to fly back seat in Trevor Cale's Quantum. We flew to both Popham and Hardwicke - what a joy to be in the air again! On each occasion we navigated by the map and not the GPS, although the latter does give added confidence.

The Popham flight was preceded that morning by a ground frost ensuring that we had wet feet before we took off. Nevertheless we had a smooth flight only hitting severe turbulence over the trees on final approach to land. We had an "interesting" crosswind landing and were soon parked up with masses of other flexwings - quite a sight.

We spent a good few hours on the ground unashamedly immersed in flying paraphernalia along with people of similar bent. It was lovely to see a good many "smiley" faces from the Severn Valley - its like having an extended family! Time came to leave (we were not quite the last) and Trevor chose to fly high to achieve a smooth flight - 5000 feet to be precise (cold again!).

Last Sunday week we made a much later and warmer flight to Hardwicke. We had waited for the mist to clear but even so could not see the Malverns from Defford. However, once over the Malverns visibility improved dramatically and from 3000 feet we could see sufficiently well to navigate properly. We were glad we were on radio when we heard two flexwings saying goodbye to Hardwicke and climbing out on a collision course with us. From the conversation it was clear that they could not see much from down below. Although we all subsequently knew the other was there, we did not ever make visual contact.

It was easy to spot Graham and Judy's strip with plenty of hardware parked alongside. After another "interesting" landing - this time with a strong front wheel "wiggle"(!) - we parked and went in search of food. Graham and Judy always look after their aircrew well and we were not disappointed. Friendly

faces again but only Brian Finch and Julie from Severn Valley this time. (Perhaps others arrived later) The flight home was truly magic over thin mist and patchy cloud to land safely once again at Defford. My thanks to everyone who helped make these trips memorable and especially, of course, to Trevor.

### **Safety**

If you are considering any sort of modification to your aircraft then a visit to the BMAA site at <[www.avnet.co.uk/bmaa](http://www.avnet.co.uk/bmaa)> could prove useful. Here you will find a list of the Technical Information Leaflets (TIL) covering things like instruments, strobes, trading fuel for passenger weight. etc. All can be downloaded and printed for future reference. A recent reference on the Internet raised a point relevant to all of us - our hearing and the damage it can suffer. The item in question concerned the payment of compensation to GCHQ staff who suffered from tinnitus and other problems as a result of constant loud interference through headsets during monitoring operations. We all use headsets when flying and if you use a radio be sure to adjust the squelch control so that all the background hiss is eliminated when no transmission is being received. Also be aware of the fact that your passenger could be suffering because the volume in their headset is too high and they are not aware how to adjust it or are too shy/frightened to ask you to turn it down. This makes for a very unpleasant flight and some hearing loss for a short time afterwards. You don't want to spoil an exciting experience with something which, at the time, is of secondary importance to the passenger.

### **Quote of the Month**

Advice given to RAF pilots during World War II "When a prang seems inevitable, endeavour to strike the softest, cheapest object in the vicinity, as slowly and gently as possible."

### **Internet**

If you have not yet visited it try the Flyer site at <[www.flyer.co.uk](http://www.flyer.co.uk)>. The information seems to be updated more frequently than the monthly magazine and there are a lot of interesting snippets of information relating to the CAA, events and incidents.

The Americans have launched another shuttle and you can keep up to date with progress on this and what is happening generally at NASA on the official site <[www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov)>.

Our friend Graham Slater has his own web site at <[www.gsaviation.co.uk](http://www.gsaviation.co.uk)> with details of training both at Clench Common and in Spain, aircraft sales and links to other sites.

For those of you who cannot bear to be very far away from the Internet and find long air journeys boring, Boeing have the answer. The firm have come to the conclusion that the time is right to invite passengers to plug in their laptops and PC's to a connection in their seats and surf the Net, send e-mail and access their corporate intranets. Eventually Boeing plans to make Internet enabled devices available on the backs of aircraft seats for people who do not carry a PC. This latter service could be on commercial flights by the end of next year. Sounds as if tandem seat microlights could be next in line for aerial surfing of the Net (Guy Gratton tear your hair out - more mods to deal with!).

### New Zealand Experience

Chris Ball received the following press report from one of his colleagues in New Zealand:-

"A trainee microlight pilot had to teach himself how to land after his instructor died midway through a flying lesson over Napier yesterday.

Instructor Bob Gorringer, aged 56, fainted at the controls, leaving trainee Dean Spurge no option but to land at Napier airport by himself. Mr Spurdle was too shaken to speak about the incident last night, but fellow microlight pilot Errol Simmons told the *Herald* that it was the 37 year old trainee's "worst nightmare come true. He deserves a bloody great pat on the back for a copybook landing".

Mr Simmons, also a flying instructor, said the microlight had been wheeled back into the shed in perfect condition. "You go over a lot of scenarios when you are training, but this one is almost a bit too far fetched. It is amazing how level headed he stayed with all the trauma associated with this landing. He is going to be a great pilot" he said. Aviators believed that it was the first accident of its kind in New Zealand

Mr Spurdle was about three miles from the airfield when he alerted the control tower to his dilemma. He was immediately cleared for an emergency landing and with the airfield in sight eased the plane in. Waiting emergency services could not revive Mr Gorringer. The CAA are investigating the accident."

(With acknowledgements to the New Zealand Herald)

### Proposed National PPL

PFA members will have seen the report in their magazine of the meeting at the CAA on 10th February to discuss the format of the above new licence. It is aimed principally at the GA field but would introduce some new factors for those not wishing to go the whole hog and get a JAR licence. It appears that the syllabus will be in the region of 30 hours. Ground exams are still under discussion but the thinking is that pilots will possibly want to upgrade their licence in the long term and

commonality with the JAR requirements seems logical. An RT licence will probably be a necessity, the medical requirements could be the same as the current microlight GP certification and the licence would be valid for day VFR. No mention was made as to whether the licence, when issued, would be for life or renewable every five years as is the new JAR licence. It looks hopeful at present and may well attract those who do not want all the bells and whistles of a full licence.

### Wednesday Night is Club Night

The programme for the coming month is as follows:-

Wed 24th May- Fly In / drive In - Newnham

Phone Bob Hinds 01594 516320 for details

Wed 31st May - Fly In / drive In- Hawling

Phone John Davis 01451850214 for details

Wed 7th Jun Mtg - Canning Arms Hartpury

All welcome- 19.30 hrs

Wed 14th Jun - Fly In / drive In -Redlands

Phone Sarah Smith 01793 791014 for details

Wed 21st Jun- Monthly talk - Glos Club - 20.00hrs

Speaker:- Paul Blench on Powered Parachutes

### For Sale

Chaser 508 G-MYMY - 4 stroke - 300 hours - Round Britain Winner & National Champion offers around £5k- Rob Keene - 01452 414975 or 0831237 353

Mainair Alpha -G-MTPA 462 LC - 250hrs approx - £3600 - Jim Taylor - 01989 563866/ 0976818566

MiniMax - G-MWLW /G-BYZF- Rotax 377 - John Hamer 01452 700314

**REDLANDS**  
MICROLIGHT CLUB

Hangerage available for fixed & fully/semi rigged flexwing microlights.

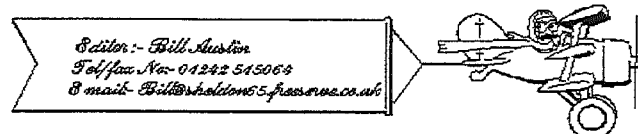
For more information phone 01793 791014 or

email microlights@redlands67.freemove.co.uk

Hangerage available at Sandhurst, nr Gloucester 250 yrd strip - low fees

Contact Paul Bedford 01684 290423

Castrol TTS two stroke oil - 25 litre drums at £145 i.e. £5.80 per litre when normally over £8.00 per litre - ring Adrian Lloyd 01885 482504





**Severn Valley  
Microlight Club**

**June 2000**

## **Club Newsletter**

### **Robbie Wins Again**

Robbie Keene is back to winning form having just won the round of the nationals held at Ince Blundell in Lancashire over the weekend 19th/21st June. Robbie is back on the campaign trail to retain the National Champion title that he won last year. Well done Robbie.

### **This month's speaker**

This month, Paul Blench from Kemble will be telling us about powered parachuting and the training involved. This form of aerial activity is gaining popularity and we should be on the lookout for them in the skies over Gloucestershire.

### **Fly-in to RAF Lyneham**

RAF Lyneham ATC section has invited the Club to nominate six microlight aircraft to fly-in to the base on 1st July. The invitation has also been extended to the Bristol Microlight Aircraft Club. Arrival will be in two blocks of six aircraft between 1100 and 1130 hours and radio will be necessary, with one aircraft doing the calls for the group. If you are interested let Bill Austin have your aircraft registration and the names of pilot and passenger as soon as possible as these details have to be passed to Lyneham by Thursday 22nd June at the latest. In the event of too many aircraft, the lucky ones will be decided by drawing lots at the Club meeting. Further briefing details will be given to crews nearer the date.

### **New members**

Robin White and Darren Howard have joined the Club and are two of the present groundschool students - welcome to you both. Robin is a powered parachute pilot who wants to graduate to microlights while Darren has returned from Australia recently and has flown in a large number of different types of aircraft. His father started out on the microlight trail some years ago but apparently frightened himself and decided not to pursue the matter! Darren will be part of Myron Burak's "team" eventually.

### **Another convert**

Another member has gone over to the "other side" and has completed his Alternate Control Systems test with Tony Blackwell of Aerolite at Long Marston. The event happened on Wednesday 7th June and the lucky member was John Davidson - congratulations John! This success was not achieved without some considerable effort on John's part over quite a long period of time with breaks in between not to mention building an Xair as well! We look forward to seeing both John and the Xair at some of the fly-ins in the future.

### **Reports of fly-ins/drive-ins**

24th May - Bob Hinds. The weather won again, it rained and the flying part did not materialise. However, Bob did invite anyone to drive in for a burger and coffee and at least three members took advantage of the offer. Perhaps we can try again later in the season if Bob is willing and his field is available.

31st May - John Davis. Someone somewhere has cottoned on to the idea that Wednesday nights is the ideal time to try out their wind and rain machine. This was another non event due to "inclement conditions".

7th June - At the suggestion of the Chairman the monthly gathering of the Committee at the Canning Arms was cancelled as it was going to be a nice evening and it would be a shame to miss a flying opportunity. Wrong! The wind did not abate and some even thought that it got stronger. The Chairman and several others did however bravely venture out and had a mini fly in at Hartbury

14th June - Redlands So, what's new? Another event knocked out this time by 15 knot winds and this only 7 days before the longest day of the year. It may well be all downhill from here as we will be on the road to Christmas. So, another win for the weather. I suppose that in the spirit of Euro 2000, the month's fly-in result could be announced as - Weather 4, Club nil! As our school reports used to say "Could do better!"

### Getting some In

The weather may be inhibiting flying, but it doesn't seem to have stopped JH. In one 8 day spell in the past month he test flew 4 Xairs and one MiniMax on their first flights, and fitted in three check flights of members aircraft as well as flew both his own as transport to fly these other aircraft. JH is certainly getting around test flying the Xair, for recently he has been to Cumbria, Lancashire twice, Somerset, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and is waiting to go to Dorset. To date he has test flown 16 out of the 21 Xairs that have taken to the skies in the UK.

### Quote of the Month

"Stay out of clouds. The silver lining everyone keeps talking about might be another aeroplane going in the opposite direction."

### PFA Rally - Cranfield, 23rd - 25th June

Members intending to fly-in to the rally are reminded that they should obtain a copy of AIC 18/2000 (Yellow 9) which sets out the special advisory routes for the Rally. A copy can be downloaded from the Internet from <[www.ais.org](http://www.ais.org)> or obtained from Westward documedia in Windsor Street, Cheltenham. It is a requirement that arriving aircraft have a copy of the AIC on board. Remember that this is the largest gathering of aircraft in Europe and the organisers are hoping that the number of movements over the three days of the Rally will approach the 2000 mark. It is essential, therefore, that if you intend flying in you are properly briefed and have read the AIC. All PFA members automatically get a copy of the AIC with their magazine so you might be able to scrounge one off one of them if they aren't going by air.

### CAA approved Log Books

You will recall from an earlier edition of *Airscrew* that it is an ANO requirement for aircraft to have separate approved log books for the airframe and engine. Although the BMAA aircraft have for some time ignored this and operated with a single logbook, this is no longer acceptable. There are only two approved types of logbooks available - the new combined BMAA airframe and engine logbook (blue in colour) price £14 or the CAA CAP 398 and CAP 399. (£4.70 each) When it comes to the time for your annual permit inspection your inspector will expect you to have these books. The BMAA logbook is obtainable from Deddington, while the CAA logbooks can be obtained from Westward documedia in Windsor Street, Cheltenham. However, if you can't get to Cheltenham, Bill Austin will get them for you to save you travelling or post and packing. It is not necessary to transfer all the entries from your present combined log book to the new books. The CAA log books are effectively the

second log book for the airframe/engine but split into two parts, so only relevant summary details are transferred across to the title page - ie aircraft registration, engine number, owner etc. The opening line in both airframe and engine books will be :- "Hours carried forwarded from original log book ('A' - where 'A' is the number of the last book if you have more than one) xxx hrs." The original log book forms part of the aircraft documentation and should be retained.

### Safety

A good lookout is an essential to safe flying. In order to maximise your scan of the sky you should mentally divide it into a number of small segments then, when scanning, pause briefly in each segment. The reason for the pause is to enable your eye to spot the movement of another aircraft relative to your own movement through the air. Those members flying 3-axis machines should be aware that other aircraft can "hide" behind windscreen pillars and struts. Even a GA plane is a relatively small object at more than half a mile and a continuous scan may not register its presence. Another microlight is even smaller and will, therefore, not be seen until it is very much nearer thus reducing reaction time to take avoiding action. Included in your scan plan should be a scan of your instrument panel just to check that all is well in the engine room and that you have not lost or gained height which would cause you to infringe controlled airspace.

Members who fly in the Cotswolds should note that parafliders are winched up to 2000 feet near Hawling and a new hang-gliding site has been established at Chedworth Aerodrome again up to 2000 feet. This will give you the chance to practise your scanning technique!

### Vulcan to fly again

Members who follow the airshow circuit will be excited at the news that it is hoped to get Vulcan XH558 restored to flying condition. The project will cost in the region of £3 million with running costs of £500,000 per year. Without doubt the sight and sound of one of these "gentle giants" in the air raises adrenaline to danger levels! Let's hope it comes to Fairford

### Has this happened to you?

The flying season has started, although you wouldn't think so from the recent weather. Some people, though, obviously do not see eye to eye with us! Can you identify with the following sentiments?

"The pilot was shouting and waving

His Mrs was ranting and raving,

"Off again into the sky?"

But Tesco beckons - things to buy!"



## Internet

There has been considerable activity recently amongst the Internet Service Providers to attract more customers by promoting single cost packages. Apparently some ISP's have linked with BT Surftime to offer discount rates. Freeserve actually pay their members using their Offpeak service (6pm to 8am Monday to Friday and all day at weekends) £1.00 for every month they remain an active Freeserve member thus reducing the £5.99 offered through BT Surftime to £4.99 per month - not a bad deal! Your Editor has been using the service since the beginning of the month and has found that it has induced a more relaxed attitude to the daily dose of the Web and given more time to explore new areas without the spectre of the telephone bill going through the roof!

Anyone interested in the Avro Vulcan should have a look at <[www.avrovulcan.org.uk](http://www.avrovulcan.org.uk)> to see photos and to access a large number of links to other Vulcan related sites.

With all the recent reports of viruses members might be interested in a site that performs a complete scan of your computer on line. It can be found at <[http://housecall.antivirus.com/housecall/start\\_corp.asp](http://housecall.antivirus.com/housecall/start_corp.asp)>. You will be required to download a scanner which will take a few minutes and then the programme goes into scan mode. On my computer it scanned 26,006 files and found no problems. The site also lists the current viruses with their descriptions and offers "clean up" facilities on the spot.

Great news - the Met Office has decided to make available free of charge TAFs and METARS for UK aerodromes on its Web site <[www.met-office.gov.uk/aviation](http://www.met-office.gov.uk/aviation)>. This came into operation on 11th May and the information will be updated half hourly. The only snag from our point of view is that the information is given in the standard coded format and most of us are not familiar with it. (The Training and Safety Officer will be able to enlighten you, no doubt!). However, it saves you having to go to a Swedish site for the same information! At the time of writing the TV forecaster has just announced that record high winds for the month of June have been recorded in Scotland - 83 mph! Who needs a Web site to see if it's flyable just look out the window.

Not strictly internet but connected with the essential part of it, the computer, it looks as if the silicone chip will soon be old hat in the pressure to develop more powerful, speedy machines. Talk is now of using DNA and ribonucleic acids to transmit information. The need to decrease the size of components also means that soon it will no longer be possible to even manufacture things small enough to prevent the end product becoming oversized and therefore negating all the effort. Watch this space.

## Team Trophy Event

By now you will have gathered that there will be no Team Trophy event at Long Marston this year. It has been suggested that the reasons behind this are the history of bad weather for the event, the enormous amount of work involved (usually done by a few people) and the cost to the Avon Club. At the time of writing the comment about the weather could not be more accurate - it's raining and the forecast for the Bank Holiday is windy with showers and maybe a little sun now and again! It is a pity that the event, which was generally well supported and very much enjoyed, has lapsed, hopefully temporarily. However, others who have tried to arrange events will acknowledge that it is very frustrating to find that, on the day, the weather upsets all the plans. There will probably be a fly-in later in the year with a BBQ but this has not yet been arranged - watch this space.

## A Rose by any other name!

You will probably remember that when your friendly local inspector carries out the annual inspection of your aircraft he refers to the TADS relating to it. We all know that this means the Type Approved Data Sheets. However next time just make sure that he has the right document in his hand since the new WAH-64 Apache helicopter also has TADS. The difference is that in the case of the Apache it stands for Target Acquisition and Designation System. Could he be looking to see if you have quietly slipped in an unapproved major modification a la James Bond?

We also hear that the Church of England is keeping up with technology and is to issue GPS to all vicars - GPS? God Positioning System of course! We are told however that Selective Availability still applies to their system! (See last month's article)

## The rise of the phoenix

Believe it or not Bill Austin's groundschool has risen from the ashes and is living at the Hartpury Training Centre! Quite out of the blue four people who required either all or some of the exams materialised out of nowhere. Bill suddenly had to put brain into gear and get out his personal revision notes to be one step ahead of the students. Anyone else who needs to take exams (the accommodation cannot physically cope with a larger number of students if they require tuition) should get in touch with Bill as soon as possible.

## Correct Microphone Technique!

Do you ever check that your PTT button is functioning properly and that it is not sticking in the "on" position? The following tale was spotted on the Web and is apparently true.

"It all happened at Oakland airport (the one near Detroit) when a gent called Jack boarded a corporate jet. He was greeted with a friendly call of "Hi, Jack". Trouble was, the aircraft's microphone had been left on and the greeting was heard in the tower as "Hijack!". They alerted the local police and a SWAT team descended. Order was eventually restored with no one being hurt."

### Wednesday Night Programme for July

The poor weather record on Wednesday nights has totally decimated the programme this year. It is thought that prior publicity of the events has brought the unwelcome attentions of Him who provides the weather, and that he is organising things to come rushing in at the appropriate moment. In order to try and fool Him, a different approach is intended over the coming month. It is intended keeping every Wednesday evening as Club night, but the venue will only be decided the night before. To find out where the fly in etc will be, ring JH on 01452 700314. Members who have made their email address available will be notified by that media. Note if you have an email address and didn't get the email about the recent Redlands fly in, then email JH on hamerj@ukonline.co.uk and he'll put you on the mailing list.

### For Sale

Chaser 508 G-MYMY - 4 stroke - 300 hours - Round Britain Winner & National Champion offers around £5k- Rob Keene - 01452 414975 or 0831237 353

Mainair Alpha -G-MTPA 462 LC - 250hrs approx - £3600 - Jim Taylor - 01989 563866/ 0976818566

MiniMax - G-MWLW /G-BYZF- Rotax 377 - John Hamer 01452 700314

**REDLANDS**  
MICROLIGHT CLUB

Hangerage available for fixed & fully/semi rigged flexwing microlights.

For more information phone 01793 791014 or

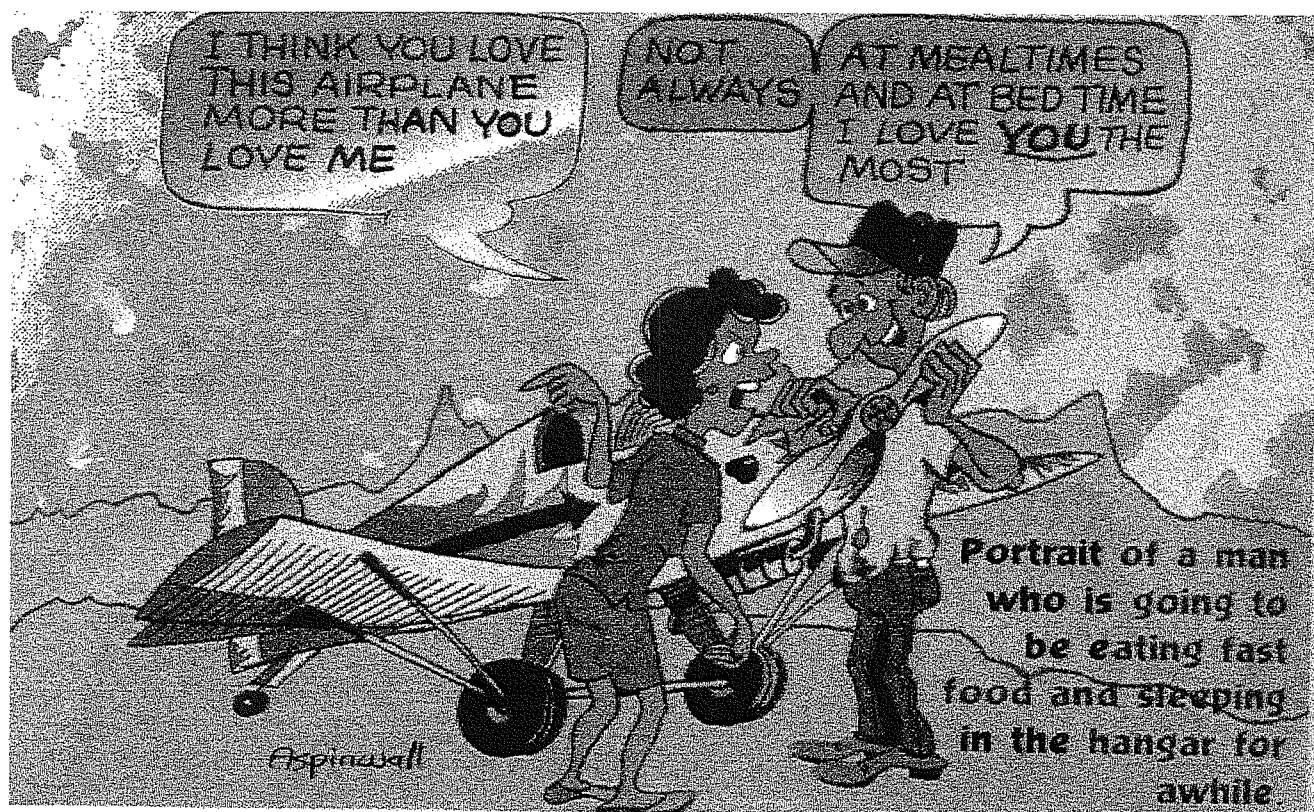
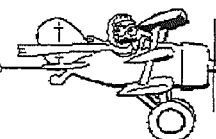
email microlights@redlands67.freemove.co.uk

Hangerage available at Sandhurst, nr Gloucester 250 yrd strip - low fees

Contact Paul Bedford 01684 290423

Castrol TTS two stroke oil - 25 litre drums at £145 i.e. £5.80 per litre when normally over £8.00 per litre - ring Adrian Lloyd 01885 482504

Editor:- Bill Austin  
Tel/fax No:- 01242 545064  
E mail:- Bill@sheldon55.freemove.co.uk





**Severn Valley  
Microlight Club**

**July 2000**

## **Club Newsletter**

### **This month's Speaker**

This month our own John Davis will regale us with tales from this year's Sun 'n Fun show in Florida together with slides of mouth-watering aeroplanes of all sorts.

Next month will be Bill's annual brain teaser quiz which will be specifically based around all the well known(?) and well remembered(?) groundschool topics with which all members are doubtless intimately acquainted. That is not to say that there will not be other aviation related topics included.

### **Millennium Pilot**

A brief spell of dry, calm weather in late June provided the long awaited opportunity for one of our members to fly long enough to pass his GFT. Congratulations to Graham Howley on obtaining his Restricted licence with Graham Slater at Clench Common. Graham is the Club's first new pilot of the Millennium. Most of us have been through what seems like a never ending nightmare, - namely learning to fly - bad weather when you are available to fly and good weather as soon as you have to work. Not only that but Graham even tried to beat the system earlier this year by going out to Spain for a week with the other Graham but the weather followed him and he returned home without the vital piece of paper. However, persistence has paid off and we hope to see him at some of our fly-ins and visiting some of the local strips in the future.

### **Kemble Hosts Nationals**

The weekend of 8/9th July saw competitors assembling at Kemble for the next round of the Nationals. The Saturday dawned fine and dry with a brisk breeze blowing so four tasks were possible, however Sunday was a washout. Robbie however came out top again in the single seat flexwing section. Well done Robbie.

### **Lyneham Fly-in**

After all the excitement and anticipation of flying in to this large RAF airfield, Saturday 1st July dawned cloudy and slightly damp. By 1000 hours the situation had not improved in the Gloucestershire

area and Brian Finch, who had been intending to leave Defford at 0900, decided to call the trip off after establishing that Kemble was reporting cloudbase at 100 feet and visibility at 2 Kms! Other members scattered around the area were also grounded. However, Myron Burak having tried from Over and run into cloud at 400 feet in the morning, apparently tried again later and arrived at Lyneham in the afternoon. John Bowditch also managed to get there from Charmy Down but at low level. There is a possibility of another opportunity to go in to Lyneham at some time in the future so watch this space.

### **Safety**

One of our members, being conscious that it had been some time since he and his aircraft had taken to the air, decided that he would check out everything carefully. Amongst the items checked was his fuel funnel. He removed the filter element, cleaned it thoroughly and replaced it. Just to see that all was well he poured some fuel through it into a dish. All was well until he looked into the dish and saw a slug and a dead spider which had not been in the dish before he started! They had been concealed in the spout of the funnel - one part he had not thought to look at! Had he just gone ahead and filled his aircraft's tank he could well have suffered "sluggish" performance not to mention engine failure.

### **PFA Rally**

It is now all over for another year. Several Club members attended and JH was there talking about MiniMaxes. There were certainly things to interest to microlighters. There was the Foxbat, a three axis machine known otherwise as an Aeroprakt. This was a good looking machine but the price was not quite so attractive - about £30,000. Reading the literature afterwards it was surprising that it was advertised as a kit but a number of the components you had to obtain yourself from other well known suppliers and the prices quoted for these were the same of those suppliers. Some people might say that this gives builders the opportunity to customise their aircraft



An impromptu fly in at Catsbury - Wednesday 28th June

but others would expect to buy a kit which provided all the necessary bits to build the aircraft. There was also the Sky Raider but that had yet to be formally submitted to either the BMAA or the PFA and no evaluation had yet been carried out on it. The American parent company had even lost the original stress calculations so these will have to be done all over again before any progress can be made. It could be some time before we see anything of this plane - and it might be never!

If you witnessed the arrival of aircraft and wondered how you would have coped with the pressure of joining the circuit and landing as part of a stream of aircraft, thank your lucky stars that you were not flying in to Oshkosh in America. In order to cope with the large number of arrivals in a short period they land up to three aircraft on the same runway simultaneously! They do this by painting three large but different coloured "dots" on the runway. Depending on the type of aeroplane and its speed, you are instructed by the controller to land on a specific coloured "dot". As soon as you have landed you are expected to vacate the runway pronto as there is another aircraft on your tail by this time. Aircraft monitor the radio but do not transmit unless they have a problem. Aircraft are identified by the controllers by aircraft type and colour, no callsigns are used. Aircraft spacing is dictated by control stations situated on the approach routes who tell people "Red Cessna 172 keep up with the Piper in front". It all seems to work very efficiently but could you imagine this type of procedure being allowed in Britain, always assuming that we had runways long enough to permit it?

The latest information is that some 1600 aircraft visited the Rally over the three days. Among the arrivals by air listed in the official log from the SVMC were Brian Finch, Chris Payne, Trevor Cale, Russell Church and Bruce Drake

### Wednesday Nights

Wednesday nights do occur sometimes! Despite begin consistently rained off, a Wednesday night fly in did occur the other week at JH's place at Hartpury. He had four aircraft visit and all different types. There was Steve Slade's Rans, Jim Taylor's Shadow - the first visit by a Shadow to Catsbury, Paul Underwood in a Mercury and Ken Cole in his MW6.

Wednesday night activities will continue, just give JH a ring on 01452 700314, perhaps he can find somewhere that the wind and rain aren't!

### Groundschool

The first hurdle has been successfully cleared and passes registered in the Navigation paper for three students. Now we go on to the controversial one - Meteorology. In view of the recent record of unflyable weather it makes you wonder what the value of this subject is!

### The Pressure's On!

You will be delighted to learn that we (the British) are once again falling into line. For many years we have been used to reporting our altimeter settings in millibars. However, now we will be using hectoPascals which, we are told, the rest of the European Community has been using for years. The good news is that we will not have to rush out and buy new altimeters because hectoPascals and millibars happen to be the same size units so 1020hPa will be exactly the same as 1020Mb. Hooray for change!

### National PPL

This proposal seems to be making progress with positive reaction from the CAA. The next step is to put flesh on the bones and work out the detail of the training required, instructor qualifications and routes to allow microlight pilots to convert to the new licence as well as providing a route for those who



wish to carry on to the full JAR licence. Things are looking up!

### ***Biggles lives on***

The following article appeared in a recent pilot magazine:-

Fifteen years ago Welsh forestry worker Steve Baughn painted *Piss off Biggles!* in large letters on the roof of his barn as a protest against low flying military jets. Alas, the sign proved counter productive because the barn became a waypoint for amused pilots. Although it has since faded, his protest has been preserved for future RAF pilots to enjoy, programmed into the scenery databases of flight simulators at the Hawk Synthetic Training Facility at RAF Valley on Anglesey. The databases are based on satellite imagery, which not only showed the barn, but similar message on the roof of Mr Baughn's van parked next to his cottage. "It a bit of fun for the students," commented an instructor. "It brakes up some of the tension of flying low-level sorties when they come across it".

JH has an original photograph of the said establishment taken from a Jaguar of 41 Sqn as it flew by at 350 knots. This is published below.

### **Round Britain Rally**

As you receive this newsletter, the Round Britain Rally should be underway. This year the rally is spread over four days, starting on Wednesday at Barton, Manchester and finishing at Ince Blundell on Saturday. Competitors will have spent two days in the north of the country, followed by two days in the south (or vice versa) visiting as many turnpoints as possible. This year the club have more entries than for many years. Chris Ball will be flying his Shadow with a friend, while Brian Finch has team up with Bruce to fly in Bruce's Rans. JH has a ride in an Xair, while Rob Keene will be going solo in his Chaser. This will be Bruce's, Brian's & Chris' first go at the event, while JH and Robbie have lost count of how many times they taken part. Indeed for their first event in 1987 they crewed up together. They both have come a few miles since then. We wish them all the best of luck although the weather forecast looks decidedly indifferent for the week

### **Internet**

There may be some members in the Club who are interested in Aviation Archaeology and a visit to <[www.bogo.co.uk/air\\_research.aahome.htm](http://www.bogo.co.uk/air_research.aahome.htm)> will



provide them with a large amount of information relating to missing WW2 pilots, recovered aircraft and much more. It is a fascinating site. For those who like delving into aircraft crashes <[www3.tstonramp.com/~kebab](http://www3.tstonramp.com/~kebab)> will provide a mine of information including some unusual crashes like the Russian aircraft which crashed because the Captain's children were allowed to operate the controls and the son switched off the autopilot. A sport unknown to me until I started exploring the Web is Cluster Ballooning. This seems a totally eccentric sport relying on latex balloons and other types filled with helium. For more explanation and pictures go to

<[www.home.earthlink.net/~ninomiya/cluster1.htm](http://www.home.earthlink.net/~ninomiya/cluster1.htm)>

Programmers working on a helicopter simulation programme for the Royal Australian Airforce unintentionally caused a laugh when putting a short cut into the programme. They programmed in a herd of kangaroos on the basis that a helicopter's position could be given away by a stampeding herd of the animals. All was well until the programme was demonstrated. The kangaroos appeared on cue and rushed off into the distance as the helicopter buzzed them. However they then re-appeared from behind a hill launching ground to air missiles at the helicopter! Apparently the problem was that the programmers had altered the code for infantrymen in the programme to produce the kangaroos but had forgotten to remove the code for the infantrymen's weapons!

The latest on the round the world trip by Colin Bodill and Jennifer Murray is that the Russians have blocked their proposals to cross Russian airspace. The Russians say that the airspace is too complicated and that if they do want to fly in their airspace then they must have Russian speaking crew with them. This latter condition would invalidate their efforts as they are attempting a solo trip. They are investigating alternatives including any US aircraft carriers in the area which could be used for refuelling.

Any Club members with an e-mail address and who did not get e-mail notification of the Lyneham fly-in please contact Bill Austin at <[Bill@sheldon65.freemove.co.uk](mailto:Bill@sheldon65.freemove.co.uk)> so that your address may be added to the distribution list. The fact that you have given it to JH does not guarantee that Bill knows about it!

#### **Date for the Diary**

Dennis Beale has arranged with the Vintage Motor Cycle Club that members can fly into their rally at Dene Magna School, Mitcheldean on 12th August. We are invited to fly in from 1700hrs and can camp overnight and enjoy the entertainment. The Club have been invited before and the sports pitches are plenty big enough to land on.

#### **For Sale**

Chaser 508 G-MYMY - 4 stroke - 300 hours - Round Britain Winner & National Champion offers around £5k- Rob Keene - 01452 414975 or 0831237 353

Flash II 503 Rotax G-MNYK. Full instruments, Alpha front suspension, long range tank, trailer, all in good condition. £2000. Des Williams Tel:- 01594 810116

MiniMax - G-MWLW /G-BYZF- Rotax 377 - John Hamer 01452 700314



Hangerage available for fixed & fully/semi rigged flexwing microlights.

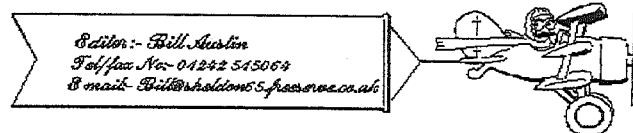
For more information phone 01793 791014 or

email [microlights@redlands67.freemove.co.uk](mailto:microlights@redlands67.freemove.co.uk)

Hangerage available at Sandhurst, nr Gloucester 250 yrd strip - low fees

Contact Paul Bedford 01684 290423

Castrol TTS two stroke oil - 25 litre drums at £145 i.e. £5.80 per litre when normally over £8.00 per litre - ring Adrian Lloyd 01885 482504



PS. Several people have complained that they can't get me on the phone or my telephone number is not correct. It is 01242 515064. Now you have no excuse not to ring and tell me you news!

Note :- This issue of the Airscrew is being printed and distributed earlier than usual due to the fact that the 'printer' is taking part in the Round Britain Rally. Hopefully next month the publication date will be back on schedule - unless of course your editor decides to go on a last minute holiday!



**Severn Valley  
Microlight Club**

**August 2000**

## **Club Newsletter**

### **Monthly Meeting**

As no one else seems to want to commit themselves to a speaking engagement at this time of year, Bill Austin has been prevailed upon (had his arm twisted up behind his back!) to compile another brain teasing session mainly aimed at flyers. As usual it will not be too serious and most of the answers will be provided - always assuming that you can read and choose between three possible answers!

### **Report on Round Britain Rally**

The Club had five members flying in this year's Rally. Chris Ball, with navigator Ian Finbow, came second in the two seat fixed wing class while Bruce Drake and Brian Finch in Bruce's Rans finished overall 8th. Two very creditable performances from first time participants. The other two members were not quite so lucky but had a rather more exciting time! Robbie Keene's engine decided to blow up in East Anglia but a quick retrieve to Over for a replacement plane no less, saw him back in the hunt. However, despite getting the organisers' agreement to the change of aircraft, a fellow competitor lodged a protest on the basis that the rules specifically excluded changing aircraft. The protest was upheld, but Robbie did come fifth purely on the score he had amassed on the first two days only! JH in the Xair was left humming the tune "Two wheels on my wagon" as they lost a wheel on the first day and didn't realise it until they landed at Enstone. JH's wife nobly retrieved the crew and Barbara Austin supplied one of her wheels to get the aircraft home to Taunton.

### **Just a few words on the Rally - by Brian Finch**

Around Britain in the year 2000 sounded like an excellent idea when Bruce Drake offered me the chance to navigate him and his Rans around Britain and compete in this year's rally. It has to be said some concern was expressed on the 503 Rotax's ability to transport two generously built pilots the length and breadth of Britain.

After a few flight tests we realised the kitchen sink would have to stay at home to achieve a 2hr

endurance with 1/2hr reserve. A pre-rally trip to Barton without GPS and the Manchester Low Level Corridor to negotiate, put us all to the test and left us wondering if this was a good idea.

Pre marital nerves gave way to Competition Adrenaline on the day as we packed the Rans, and sent Bruce away to Manchester (solo) while I followed in the support vehicle (Just in case).

The evening briefing revealed 80-odd control points to visit over the following four days, split North (2 days) and South (2 days) of Manchester with Lands End/Shetland Isles being the extremes. A weather warning of impending 30/40 mph winds on days 3&4 made sure our night under canvas was a restless one!

Regardless of the weather, points per mile etc, we decided to fly to Scotland for the first two days and set off North at 10:00 30secs as competitor No. 2 (the only time we managed second place!).

Flying up the East coast, past Humberside and Newcastle and on to the Borders, before turning and heading for Carlisle instead of Inch due to time constraints.

A good night's B&B brought 7:00am far too quickly, 20kt winds, mist and showers. A couple of Bravehearts departed for the East coast before returning 30mins later to dry out! . The compulsory overnight for the second day was Sandtoft, so we routed over the Lake district and turned left at Manchester. The 'highlight' for us was Crossland Moor, a strip north west of Manchester at 900ft asl, situated just below a ridge, with a deep quarry at one end and a 20 kt crosswind. As Bruce fought the Rans onto final approach I noticed we were losing more height than was comfortable - "bit more power Bruce, we'll be in the quarry" - "full power is already set ! , so we can't even go round !! ". I tightened my harness and joined Bruce holding on to the roof bar, I felt much safer now. Needless to say, Bruce made an excellent landing in conditions that would have made lesser pilots sane - (we were told we must be mad trying to land here on a day like this!). The QFI was most disappointed at Bruce's success - he was looking forward to picking up some cheap spares!. Sandtoft was a breeze after that with a mere 19kt crosswind although I



think Bruce was showing off. Everyone else landed into wind on the grass. We saw a 912 Blade land at a walking pace.

Another night's B&B, but this time a take off on the grass to start our Southern two days. We found several flexwing boys at Leicester, stranded due to the wind. Then through familiar territory to Old Sarum for a night under canvas - its much warmer down here.

On the last day, competition fever really took hold as we found ourselves choosing between the Isle of Wight to the south or West Wales. Our trip to Sandown required us to return to Old Sarum for more fuel and put us behind schedule for our return to Liverpool by 5:00pm. This wasn't helped by Lyneham "route west, keeping clear...." and a Young Eagles Fly-in at Kemble which explained Lyneham's attitude. After finding Welshpool, a quick turnaround left us 50 mins to make Ince (Liverpool), we were only 35mins late! The return to Barton completed the Round Britain Rally, last but not least!

Bruce and I have proved that the Round Britain is achievable by average pilots and ordinary aircraft. We felt very pleased with ourselves. Congratulations to Chris and Ian on their Second placing, Finally a big "Thank you" to Bruce for taking all the stress and verbals in his stride.

### Safety

A new **free fall parachute zone** has been established at **Rendcomb**. No further details are available but members should make a note of it as, for many of us, it is en route to Redlands and Clench Common. How odd that Rendcomb is not permitted to allow microlights to use their strip but, apparently, it is OK to drop parachutists there.

New exhaust gaskets have been introduced since May this year for 582 engines. They are thinner than the originals and made of an improved material. The important point is that owners should not mix the two different sorts of gasket. There is no need to rush out and replace those presently on the aircraft until the next service.

The weather has improved somewhat recently, so when the opportunity comes to fly remember this penned by John Miller last Christmas:-

"Ignition on and chocks away

I must go, I cannot stay.

The fuel is in and the radio's fixed

Did the oil I added mix? " "

### The Lyneham Trip – July 1st by John Bowditch

It started with a casual chat in the Control Tower at Kemble, things were quiet – another rainy day, and Dave, who works at Lyneham ATC had called in for

a chat whilst I was on duty. "Any chance of a few Microlights flying into Lyneham one evening?" I asked. "I think so," said Dave, "I'll look into it". He was as good as his word and a few days later he phoned to say that both the Severn Valley and the Bristol Club could fly in four machines: this was later increased to 6.

Given the weather this year I was never very hopeful, and as the week scheduled turned from fine to gloomy again, I really thought that once again we had been scuppered.

I had arranged for the Bristol Microlights to meet at Charmy Down on Saturday morning for a 10:45 take off. The cloud base was about 900 feet above the field, although the wind was fairly light. I was monitoring Kemble information and heard Steve Slade call for airfield information. About 15 minutes later he landed at Charmy, and about the same time, the cloud converted from broken to scattered and gave us a chance to go for it.

I led in my Chaser, followed by one XL with the bar pulled right in and the Rans flying with half flap to stay at our joint cruise speed. We tracked north east around the Colerne airspace and close to Castle Coombe racetrack. They had an event running there and I watched what seemed to be Scaletric models running around the former WW2 airfield. "Call south abeam Hullavington" said the man on Lyneham approach". "Wilco, Bristol Formation" I replied, and continued tracking south of the M4. About 10 minutes later, having reached the appointed place I reported and was given clearance to continue and expect use of 180.

If you are not used to flying so close to a large RAF airfield the scale of things is impressive; I will use that as my excuse for mistakenly lining up for 13! Having sorted that out, I led my little flock onto finals for 18 and we were soon parked behind the Tower.

There were only two other Microlights already there – both flexwings from Kemble – and no other SVMC machines but mine (I have dual citizenship of SVMC and BMAC!).

The event was a Families Day for the Lyneham ATC staff, and they made us very welcome. First stop was a tour around the Control Tower. They have some very high tech computers and radar to see. If you have ever felt nervous about talking to Lyneham on the radio, you might be reassured by meeting the staff, they are professional; but friendly. We were treated to a short fly past from one of the Hunter jets from Kemble.

Sadly, although there was a Barbecue, the 'man' who had our free meal tickets could not be found. The system did not allow us to buy tickets and so we had to depart still hungry!

So, after a pessimistic start, the weather did lift and allow us to make the trip. On my return to Charmy

Down I was being thrown about by the now really strong lift generated by some afternoon sunshine. I later spoke to Trevor Cale and he told me that in the north Gloucestershire area the weather didn't clear until much later, but I was pleased to note that Myron did get there. *(At 1000hrs Brian Finch who was at Defford phoned Kemble who reported cloudbase 200 feet and visibility 2kms - Ed)* I will try to organise another try at Lyneham but it may have to be a short notice event that will take advantage of a weather window. I will let Bill Austin know.

### Quote of the Month

"Flying is learning to throw yourself at the ground - and miss!"

### Lyneham Too (Two)! by Myron Burak

For me, satisfying flying is hard to get due to other commitments. I've always wanted to fly into Lyneham open day and also Wroughton during the BHPA's All Out event. Unfortunately, the possibility of this fell on the same day this year, so I'd have to try both. The forecast of course, was not favourable but correct, and I was determined to give it a try if at all possible. It was theoretically flyable when I arrived at Over.

I rigged and took off more or less on time for the planned rendezvous at Redlands. The cloud base was around 1200 to 1500 feet, and drizzling a bit. Ten minutes out, I realised that I'd little chance of going further. I was right up against cloud base, and I would have had to cross the Cotswolds with less than 500 feet clearance. Outside my envelope of safety I'm afraid, so I reluctantly turned back. I put the aircraft back in the hangar, resolving to do a few little jobs on it while the opportunity was there.

I came out the hangar again about half twelve, and could not believe my eyes! The sky had completely opened up, with cumulus now popping off everywhere. It would be rough, but I resolved to have another go. Rigged up and in the air again I pondered my flight plan. Conditions were totally acceptable, so I thought I'd call Lyneham and see if they would still let me in. If not, I'd go into Wroughton. Lyneham accepted my call for landing instructions without hesitation.

Now things got interesting. Visibility, was still only around 5 miles, which was fine, as I know the area really well. Not being too proficient on the radio, (I much prefer to fly without, even though I have a licence) I was being kept occupied by Lyneham. "Can you see the airfield? - Negative". "Can you see three Charlie 130's at your 3 o' clock? - Negative". "Can you see the M4? - Negative". I could not even see Swindon. I felt lost, come on, you know that feeling. But as my last known

position only ten minutes before was confirmed by the definite proximity of Tetbury, I couldn't be far off course. An approach-controlled turn to the south, soon brought me directly over Malmesbury. Lyneham sounded as relieved as I was, when I confirmed my position. Classic brain overload, I must use the radio more.

A few more twists and turns under radio guidance to avoid more Hercules, and more pressure on me with radio procedure, before I landed for the first time at Lyneham, satisfyingly behind a Dakota, which was a pleasure to see land before me. I taxied to the microlight parking area, switched off and headed off towards the tower. Now, I couldn't stay long if I also wanted to go to Wroughton. So it was a tour round the ATC, a quick cup of tea and a chat with some of my mates, who had made it in from Kemble, (a bit of a doddle that). Then I took off again, accompanied by another microlight, for Wroughton about 15-20 minutes away. Another very interesting approach, weaving in and out of various microlights, towing hang gliders, paragliders, PPG's, powered hang gliders and parascenders, none of them on radio.

I can heartily recommend visiting this event, either by air or road to any pilot. The number of tugs and other powered craft about will make you feel quite at home, and the diversity of other aircraft should be of interest to any air minded person. The trade stands too are very varied, with much to interest the microlight pilot. The size of the ground displays would rival something like Popham, I'd estimate. If that's not enough, the Science Museum always open up their hangars during this event. They have got some incredibly interesting aircraft filling two large hangars, including a microlight and a couple of hang gliders. But no time to dally this year. I had to be out for dinner that night, so I only had about an hour, which I used to buy myself a new flying suit from the OZEE stand, which I had been promising myself for some time.

I left our microlight at Wroughton with the other members of the syndicate, who were staying for the whole weekend, and bummed a lift back to Kemble with my friend Terry in his Q. It was now fantastically smooth, and the last of the mist had evaporated to give almost infinite visibility. A most pleasant flight to finish with, a pleasure to be a passenger for a change and have a good look around. Aha! there's Swindon.

Landing at Kemble made it the fourth aerodrome I'd visited that day. As we were having dinner in a pub not far from Kemble, my wife picked me up, with a change of clothes. Then it was off to meet our friends with much to talk about from the day's excitement. A really challenging and satisfying day.

### From the Internet

Colin Bodill and Jennifer Murray have traversed Russia and crossed the Bering Straight into Alaska. The Russians withdrew their objections at the last minute and the condition for a Russian navigator to be in the aircraft was solved by agreeing that he should travel in the support aircraft rather than in the microlight or helicopter.

Dave McGauley who left Sun 'n Fun in April to fly around the USA is still progressing but has had to revise his original plans because he had to spend several weeks on the ground after a mini tornado demolished his plane in Texas. Thanks to Mainair, he soon received all the replacement parts needed to rebuild the trike.

Those members who are always wondering what is on and where to go should have a look at <[www.flyer.co.uk/diary](http://www.flyer.co.uk/diary)>. This is a comprehensive list of fly-ins, events and talks over the whole of the UK.

### Groundschool

Groundschool is rushing on at a furious pace mainly due to the fact that the students are doing their bit very efficiently by putting in some time to study between the weekly sessions. This makes all the difference since each session can be usefully used to clear up problems and go into more detail on "sticky" points. Three students have now passed the second hurdle in the form of the Meteorology exam - well done to them.

### Plans for the National Private Pilots Licence

The Civil Aviation Authority is currently considering plans for a new private pilots licence, to be known as the National Private Pilots Licence (NPPL).

Much of the detail of the licence has still to be worked out, but the number of basic training hours are likely to be between 30 to 32. Medical requirements will be a certificate of fitness signed by the pilot's GP. This certificate would be equivalent of Group 2 professional driving medical standards which would allow a pilot to carry passengers or instruct. If these standards could not be met, solo flying would be allowed on Group 1 car driving medical standards. The licence to be restricted to fixed undercarriage, fixed pitch propeller aircraft of no more than four seats and with a maximum take off weight of up to 2000kg; restricted to daytime visual meteorological conditions (VMC) and restricted to UK airspace. A study group will also be looking at additional differences training to cover retractable undercarriages, variable pitch propellers and possibly tailwheel aircraft. The new NPPL will run alongside the existing European JAR-FCL private pilots licence which is ICAO compliant and gives

pilots more privileges, such as allowing them to fly outside UK airspace.

### ETA sailplane with 101ft wingspan

The German group ETA Aircraft - a group of three companies - has completed the prototype of its ETA sailplane.

The aim of the project is to produce a significant improvement of performance in comparison with today's open class gliders, and to that end the group has considered and challenged all aspects of glider design. The results have included new airfoils and a 101ft wingspan. This large wingspan gives an aspect ratio of 51.33.

It is also reported to include an engine, so that the aircraft can be self-launching - fine - but what size hangar/trailer would you need?!!

### Date for the Diary

There is a fly in at Broadmeadow Farm, near Hereford on Saturday 26th August.

### For Sale

Chaser 508 G-MYMY - 4 stroke - 300 hours - Round Britain Winner & National Champion offers around £5k- Rob Keene - 0831237 353

Flash II 503 Rotax G-MNYK. Full instruments, Alpha front suspension, long range tank, trailer, all in good condition. £2000. Des Williams Tel:- 01594 810116

MiniMax - G-MWLW /G-BYZF- Rotax 377 - John Hamer 01452 700314

62" 2 blade wooden propeller for Rotax 503. 2 Blue Ozee suits. 2 Helmets with visors. All in good condition Contact Andrew John on 01386 725229



Hangerage available for fixed & fully/semi rigged flexwing microlights.

For more information phone 01793 791014 or

email [microlights@redlands67.freemove.co.uk](mailto:microlights@redlands67.freemove.co.uk)

Hangerage available at Sandhurst, nr Gloucester 250 yrd strip - low fees

Contact Paul Bedford 01684 290423

Castrol TTS two stroke oil - 25 litre drums at £145 i.e. £5.80 per litre when normally over £8.00 per litre - ring Adrian Lloyd 01885 482504

Bill Austin

01242 515064





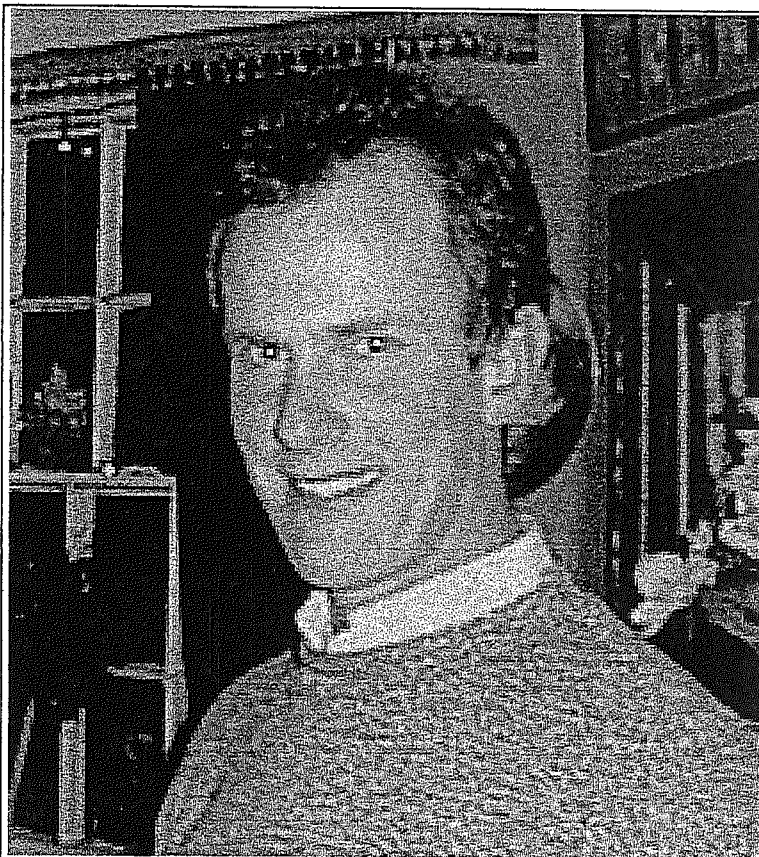
**Severn Valley  
Microlight Club**

**September 2000**

## **Club Newsletter**

### **Robbie strikes gold**

The European Championships took place this year in Levroux in France, and we are pleased to record that Robbie Keene returned home the gold medal winner in his class. It wasn't, however, all plain flying for he was initially disqualified for failing to photograph some markers because of a fault in the official camera issued to him. However, he carried a back-up camera and the evidence recorded on that was accepted by the organisers to put him into the first place. Congratulations Robbie!



**Robbie Keene - European Champion**

Hence, this expedition was going to put that straight. Although I'd been one of the more regular fliers from Over farm (what appears to be the flexwing equivalent of the elephants' graveyard!) I had never carried out a flight that I couldn't complete with the fuel carried on board. So this weekend event that would take me from Over Farm to Arclid, followed by a few local joy rides and a return journey back, would be quite an extension to my flying experience to

### **Monthly Speaker**

This month Ben Ashman will be telling us all about the Doodlebug which he very ably demonstrated at this year's Sun 'n Fun in Florida.

### **It was to be a grand day out**

by 'Tall Paul' alias Paul Underwood.

After having obtained my flex-wing conversion from a GA licence and acquiring my own aircraft, my work moved me almost straightaway to Gloucester. I therefore had only a few brief flights to familiarise myself with my new pride and joy. This move denied me the next compulsory period of flexing flying, specifically, taking numerous friends and colleagues to the skies and to bore them witless with endless tales of flying facts and feats.

date.

I've not joined the GPS crowd yet, still relying solely on a chart, compass and trusty Boots egg timer, yet planning the route was quite straightforward. Arclid is precisely north from Over Farm. A straight-line route would take me initially between Great Malvern and Worcester and then between Pound Green and Kidderminster. After this, straight overhead the zones of Wolverhampton (formerly Halfpenny Green, of course) and Cosford, then through some rather featureless terrain until I meet the M6 just south of Stoke. Following the M6 (North!) all the way to Arclid, just to the east of Sandbach. Easy!.

For good measure, I planned a dry-run of about half the route. A couple of days before the weekend, I followed my planned route all the way

to Kidderminster, then did a quick left jink and dropped into Pound Green. The descent into this strip mandated a bottom clenching descent over the woods to low level, before dropping onto the strip amidst the trees, staying clear of their very sensitive noise abatement areas to the north and west. The weather on the dry run was pretty miserable, with a cloud base of around 1500ft and vis at about 7km at best. Nevertheless, the journey there and back went without a hitch and I felt spurred on for the weekend.

The conditions on the Saturday morning in question were no better than the day of the dry run, the cloud base was low, practically nil wind and poor visibility. Undeterred, I rigged the machine, filled all available tanks with fuel and hoped to be able to get there, carry out some local flights & come back. However, I might have to scrounge a lift to a garage to top up. Just to be certain though, the oil & a funnel were stuffed under the front seat! Ed Wells was at the field the same morning and asked, rather alarmed 'You're not planning to fly in this are you?!'. Figuring that it was no worse than a couple of days before I remarked that I was. A sneaky call to Arclid after this conversation did not inspire me with any more confidence. My former instructor said that the conditions were 'less than ideal' (my interpretation of the words he used), but that if I was going to 'give it a go', I'd be welcome.

Having come this far, figuring that if it got really bad I could always turn back, I committed myself to go.

I strapped myself in, map on lap, stopwatch strapped to back of hand, freshly charged radio on-line (I am a former GA pilot after all!) and prepared to depart. The departure was going to be pretty easy, line up on the strip pointing north, apply power, keep the aircraft pointing in the same direction (ideally going up & then down) until I arrived.

Sure enough, the conditions were as bad, if not a little worse, than the previous flight. I levelled at 1200ft to keep just below the scud and concentrated on the navigation as the vis was marginal. Noting the time I departed and then crossed the M50, I worked out my total flight time should be about 1hr 40mins.

The leg from Over Farm to Stourport was uneventful. I could remember most of the features I used to get to Pound Green previously and, although the weather looked grim further ahead, I figured some patches were bound to be worse than others.

After Stourport though, the conditions did start to get progressively more unpleasant. The fine drizzle had started and the cloudbase had now brought me down to about 1000ft. The plans I'd had about flying over the top of the Wolverhampton zone were clearly out of the window, so I called them up

and requested a low-level zone transit. Following a brief dialogue, they advised that they couldn't accommodate my request for a zone transit at 500ft QFE as the circuit was active. The irony that I was surprised that anyone would be flying in conditions such as these didn't sink in until some time after the event. A quick examination of the chart left me with some less than ideal choices. Wolverhampton were landing aircraft to the south, using a left hand circuit (taking aircraft out to the east). Furthermore, the Wolverhampton zone extended out just over the edge of a built up area. However, the ground to the west of the zone rose somewhat and I didn't like the idea of being the microlight filling in a sky and ground sandwich.

I elected to transit to the east, conscious of the fact that I would have to sneak through the edge of the zone to avoid the built up area.

Unfortunately, my trike has no lights or strobes. Although I have a flying suit so fluorescent it makes dogs bark and sensitive people cry, I figured it wouldn't be much use against any of the GA jocks coming up behind me with their heads buried doing their downwind checks and/or trying to find the right page of the checklist (I should know, I used to do it!). Hence, my lookout, mostly over my shoulder, and radio frequency monitoring was very very thorough during this phase of the flight.

During this period the weather got quite nasty, now steadily raining and cloudbase down to about 500ft agl, some low level turbulence and very dark skies just helped to make the experience especially memorable. Finally sneaking out of the zone, to the east of my planned track, I eventually passed through the squall, that I'd been wrestling with, into slightly clearer skies and figured that in no way would I want (be able) to get back through that.

The visibility was still bad, no better than 3km at best and I could only have been at around 700ft. The second half of the route had no major landmarks and with the increasing wind, I didn't fancy the idea of wafting around Shropshire, without the first idea where I was, until the engine finally coughed for the last time and I dropped (the rather short distance) onto the ground. It was time to revise the route.

I had a quite reliable line feature some way to my right that I could follow, the M6! Introduce some drift to the east and I would inevitably come across it. Turning slightly to the right, I set off, trying to ignore the feeling that the gap between the sky and the ground was narrowing further.

In no time at all, I reached the M6. J13 at Stafford to be precise (I know this for sure as I could read the sign!). There were a number of concerns going through my mind at this point. I was definitely closer to the ground now than 500ft. I couldn't fly overhead the motorway at this height, I'd probably

cause a pile up, let alone be breaking the 500ft rule. I worried that some other daft sod might also be flying in this weather and might also be following this rather obvious feature. Once past Stafford, I placed the M6 firmly on my left to minimise the risk of any unpleasant mid-air encounters and continued northbound.

It really did start to go wrong now. Just after the Stafford services, at no more than 350ft agl into a cloud I flew. With my eyes fixed firmly on the white lines of the motorway just visible below, (the only thing I could see) I executed a swift 180 turn, promptly exited the cloud and praised the Almighty for his guiding hand during these very unpleasant and alarming few seconds. At this point I finally accepted that my plans for the weekend would now need to be significantly revised.

Tracking south alongside the M6, I considered my options. I couldn't return to Over Farm. Although I had the fuel I felt it would be foolhardy to continue through these conditions. I could look for a field, but with the risks inherent in a precautionary landing, this would have to be my backstop. The obvious choice would be to beat it down the M6 to Otherton, the magenta M leaping out of the chart at me.

Being at such low level I was concerned that any engine problems would mean a landing practically dead ahead. Hence, my route to Otherton whilst always keeping the M6 in sight and avoiding habitation, was from potential landing field to potential landing field. My only major concern was for the electricity cables that criss-crossed the motorway by Stafford. I estimated that I would clear them, but it wouldn't be by much. It wasn't.

As I approached Otherton, the cloud lifted slightly, allowing me up to 500ft. I flew overhead & spotted the windsock and, to my surprise, a small crowd of people on the ground. I flew the wrong-handed circuit (so it turned out), turned base, then finals and then, most thankfully, landed.

I pulled up on the 'apron', spat out all the fillings that had rattled out of my upper jaw on the landing run (they don't have the smoothest of grass runways) and switched off. Having flown for exactly two hours, I was overjoyed to finally place my feet firmly back on the ground.

Unbelievably, it was Otherton's fly-in, which was somewhat under-subscribed. So I swiftly had a burger thrust in my hand, followed by a steaming cup of tea (It was a British summer's day after all). As it turned out, I wasn't the only stray to get washed out of the sky into this strip, a few guys on their way to Kemble had also come unstuck. The kind welcome I received at Otherton was a credit to the microlight community and I felt quite embarrassed just being able to repay their

kindness by stuffing a few quid into their landing fee tub.

The weather didn't improve during the day and following a call back to Over Farm to advise that I wouldn't be returning and a call to Arclid to say I wouldn't be arriving, I dropped the wing and tied the aircraft down, resigned to having to stay the night.

The following day, after an excellent cooked breakfast at a local truck stop (I can highly recommend it!), the skies finally began to clear. By the time the aircraft and I were ready to go, there was more blue than white. Not wishing to get caught out again, I set off direct to Over Farm.

The return flight, mostly at 4500ft, was quite uneventful and I returned safe, if tired, just after 1pm on Sunday.

Lessons learned: more than I can list and most of which we've all heard many times before. The whole experience did show me what it was like to exceed the limits that would normally be acceptable and I was lucky to get away with nothing more than a temporary moment of abject terror. If I were in the same position again, would I make the flight? I hardly think so.

#### **Quote of the Month**

Good judgement comes from experience. Unfortunately, experience usually comes from bad judgement.

#### **Safety**

The preceding story is a good reminder to us all of the dangers of "pressonitis" and delaying decision time until it is almost too late. Despite good pre-flight planning the effort was spoilt by the forces of nature. As microlighters we do not normally have access to good weather forecasting information and have to rely on the good old BBC. Those members with access to the Internet will be able to look at the Met Office site others will have to interpret the national weather forecast and look out of the window! Don't forget "Hills have been known to hide in clouds".

#### **Gloucester to choose Satnav**

In what will surely be the first of many such decisions, the Board of Gloucestershire Airport has decided that future bad weather let-down procedures for the airport will be based on satellite derived information. The alternative case for ILS was considered but discounted for a number of reasons: - it would be fixed in one direction only; - acquisition and installation costs would be high - annual checks would be expensive - maintenance would be an ongoing cost - once it had been installed (at high cost) it is likely that satellite systems would be standard, so that the ILS costs



would not be recouped On the other hand, a satellite system would: - serve any instrument runway direction, have no acquisition, installation or maintenance costs - not require annual checks - achieve virtually the same minima as an ILS. The Global Navigational Satellite System used would initially be the American Global Positioning System, but when the European EGNOS system comes on line around 2002/3 this would replace GPS as it would provide better coverage in the EUMED area. Gloucestershire points out that many users already have GPS units, and that these pilots would be able to benefit from the new procedures as soon as they are approved by the CAA. Gloucestershire Airport intends to be one of the first in the UK to apply the procedures for real. In the meantime, of course, pilots should bear in mind that the existing NDB let-down procedures remain standard, supplemented by radar talk-downs to half a nautical mile "when conditions get really bad".

#### Engine Course

JH has been asked whether he will be holding any more courses on Rotax engines. The answer is yes, if people want to attend. The course which lasts a full day, covers how the engine works and the functions and problems likely to be experienced by all its accessories. In addition the basic top overhaul of the engine is also included. The course is essentially designed to provide you with sufficient knowledge and information to enable you to keep your engine going sweetly on a day to day basis. If there is sufficient interest, he plans to hold the next course one Saturday/Sunday at the end of October/beginning of November. If you would like to attend please contact JH as soon as possible on 01452 700314

#### Internet

The round the world challenge undertaken by Colin Bodill and Jennifer Murray ended on 6th September. However the Now site has only published details up to day 92 - somewhere in the Greenland area. The other event involving a microlight, Dave MacGauley's flight around America, has also come to an end but the final diaries have yet to appear on the Web.

#### The Microlighter's Lament

'Tall Paul's' article reminded the Editor of the following poem produced by a member last Christmas. The only difference being that Paul actually ventured into the unknown!

First the left wing then the right  
Fore and aft and harness tight.  
Check the instruments and trim,  
Now I'm ready the weather's grim!

#### For Sale

Chaser 508 G-MYMY - 4 stroke - 300 hours - Round Britain Winner & National Champion offers around £5k- Rob Keene - 0831237 353

Flash II 503 Rotax G-MNYK. Full instruments, Alpha front suspension, long range tank, trailer, all in good condition. £2000. Des Williams Tel:- 01594 810116

MiniMax - G-MWLW - Rotax 377 - John Hamer 01452 700314

62" 2 blade wooden propeller for Rotax 503. 2 Blue Ozee suits. 2 Helmets with visors. All in good condition Contact Andrew John on 01386 725229

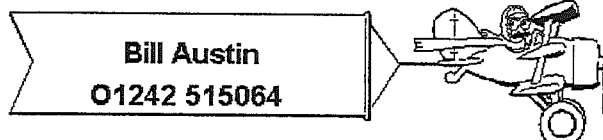


Hangerage available for fixed & fully/semi rigged flexwing microlights. For more information phone 01793 791014 or

email [microlights@redlands67.freemove.co.uk](mailto:microlights@redlands67.freemove.co.uk)

Hangerage available at Sandhurst, nr Gloucester 250 yrd strip - low fees  
Contact Paul Bedford 01684 290423

Castrol TTS two stroke oil - 25 litre drums at £145 i.e. £5.80 per litre when normally over £8.00 per litre - ring Adrian Lloyd 01885 482504





**Severn Valley  
Microlight Club**

## **Club Newsletter**

**October 2000**

### **This month's speaker**

Yes, it's true! This month Ben Ashman will be talking about the Doodlebug. Those of you thinking of getting a transportable flying machine will be interested in what he has to say.

### **Another convert**

Trevor Cale is the latest Club member to convert to three axis flying. He returned from Graham Slater's school in Spain on 30th September having completed the course and taken the ACS test. Congratulations Trevor! It is now only a question of time before he makes up his mind which three axis he will spend his money on.

### **New(?) Pilot**

Most members will remember Dave Watson who was seen at many Club meetings in the past. He has recently achieved his aim of gaining his licence with Graham Slater at Clench Common. Congratulations Dave and welcome back to the Club!

### **Quote of the Month**

The recent weather illustrates this one:-  
"Remember from your navigation training - trees break wind for up to 200 yards"

### **Round Britain Rally – 2000 by Chris Ball**

#### **Episode 1 – The Beginning!**

I suppose it all started when Robbie told us all about his experiences in last year's RBR, it all sounded like a wonderful adventure. However, a very thin log book and a pronounced lack of radio experience and confidence, to say nothing of a radio licence, meant I was likely to continue being satisfied with flying only in Gloucestershire !!.

Then John Hamer stepped in a few months ago with his idea of an SVMC team entry. This was just what I needed to get me over the confidence barrier. You know, someone far more experienced doing the route planning and probably the likelihood of being able to follow others through some of the more

difficult radio areas. I put up my hand, attended John's RBR "training session" and registered my interest with the organisers.

The help of Ian Finbow was enlisted. Ian is a GA pilot and a Cheltenham Police control room operator so I was certain his radio skills would be of value and hoped his navigation would be up to snuff. (He is also the only friend I have willing to fit in the back seat of the Shadow).

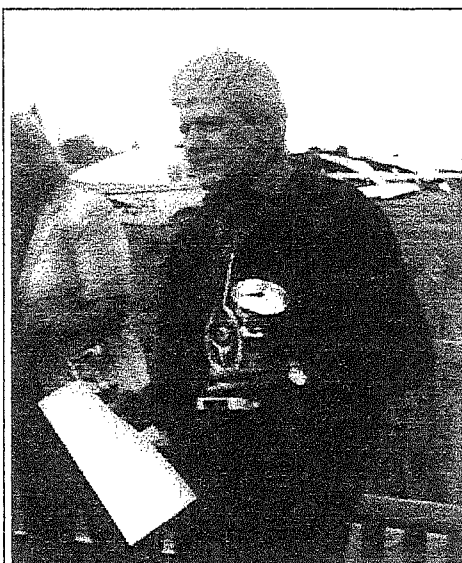
As the great day drew nearer we studied the rules, until we almost understood them, and scanned the weather forecasts with growing dismay. It didn't look good. We finally decided it looked too unsettled to fly up to Barton for the Tuesday night briefing so borrowed a Shadow trailer, dismantled the plane and towed it up to Manchester.

On a point of detail, the Shadow has barely enough room for the proverbial toothbrush, even less for tie downs, oil, camera, mini Pooleys, Mars bars etc. I had built two small underseat storage bins but as they still didn't provide enough room I told Liz her long held desire to see Scotland was about to come true. After checking that a wife, to carry change of clothes, find pubs with rooms and provide taxi services to said pubs (for as many contestants as we could squeeze into the car) was within the rules and did not constitute ground support, she was co-opted into the team. Press-ganged might be a better word

for an African who had never driven North of Birmingham before!

The first problem was when we discovered that 1/4 mil maps of Scotland were not available for purchase at Barton, as had been suggested. JH came to the rescue by loaning a set he 'just happened to have, but would not need' - and as for the team flight planning that we assumed would make it easy on us beginners, our team had been disbanded so we were all on our own.

The organisers gave a briefing explaining what one could or couldn't do, making special reference to something called Tain Range in the North of Scotland, a danger zone - clearly nothing to do with



**Chris Ball - RBR Prizewinner**

us. Then followed the first task of more than 50 people trying to copy about 80 airfield locations at the same time from one ½ mill map pinned to the wall of the Barton restaurant/bar. It was interesting. Having got our ½ mill maps marked up we then had to decide on a route that would give us the most points (different airfields carried different points values depending on their remoteness), which we could cover within the permitted number of daily flying hours (generally 8 am till 7 pm), and planning where fuel stops would be made (not all of the strips had fuel).

The first decision was fairly straightforward. Did we do the Northern or Southern half of the country first or vice versa. The weather was coming in from the North West so we elected to do the Northern route first and hope to get to the South 2 days later before the weather did. There were two possible overnight stops for night one on the Northern route and Robbie casually mentioned that 'the' party would be at Inch – in Scotland. Red rag to a bull of course as Ian and I always enjoy parties !!

We decided to fly up the East coast, but first had to negotiate a timed gate over Lady Bower Reservoir (where the Dam Busters had practised). Before setting off in the morning we would have to choose precisely what time we would fly over the Reservoir at 500 ft and had a time window of between 11 am and 2 pm to do it. We plotted our route on ½ mill then transferred it onto ¼ mill maps for Ian. Having estimated we could reach Inch, Liz was dispatched from Barton (before we set off ourselves) with toothbrushes etc to find the airfield and a good pub and be there when we arrived that evening.

Take off on the first morning was at 30 second intervals in competition number order (drawn at random) starting at 10 am. Before the start we were all given the appropriate card (North or South route, North for us) which had slots to be stamped at each strip we landed at. Being number 22, we joined the queue and were flagged away at 1011 hrs, we had decided to collect a few points in North/Central England, do the timed gate at 1210 hrs and then proceed across to and up the East coast. The procedure at each airfield was to land, identify where the card stamp was located (marked by an orange and white flag so easily visible) get out, stamp the card, take a photo of the location (for evidence in the event of a dispute), get back in the plane, start it and depart.

And so it went, first to Tarn Farm, a small strip North West of Barton, but via a mandatory ground marker (to be identified, noted and photographed) to ensure we cut no corners in the Manchester low level corridor. It was at Tarn Farm that we got our first taste of what was to come in terms of competition and the change of mind set that would eventually occur. We landed just after one flexwing and just before

another. We parked, shut off, got out, stamped card, smiled, took photos, got in (slow for the Shadow rear passenger), started (also slow with a pull start 2 stroke, especially when hot). We got away after the other two and only just in time to avoid making another approaching craft abort his landing. Close, but slow, stuff !!

Then Eastwards to Crossland Moor for a stamped card and more points, then our timed gate at Lady Bower reservoir, which we approached 7 minutes early and therefore potential penalty points. We were pleased to be there at the correct day, or even hour, to say nothing of minutes, but circled behind a hill to kill time before making a low level 'bombing run' across the timed gate, feeling guilty, but exhilarated, at flying so low. Just to make sure they saw us you understand. Then to Netherthorpe and Full Sutton where we saw the unfortunate Keith Negal who had broken a main wheel on his Shadow and whom we were unable to help (remember we didn't have room for toothbrushes let alone spare wheels !) Pressing North up the coast, to Peterlee, Eshot and East Fortune, skirting seaward of both Teeside and Newcastle ATZ's.

The leg to Peterlee was interesting to us first timers as we were being caught by others, strangers at that time, but to become friends over the next 3 days. We could hear other radio transmissions but because people were not always specific or accurate we were never sure if they were in front or behind us. At Peterlee we called up for landing instructions and were tersely, and in Geordie, told to steer clear. Moments later, while wondering what we had done or said wrong, we heard a different voice announce "5 parachutists away over the field". All was then obvious – and we stayed away for a few minutes. But the competitive spirit had started to appear and we edged nearer until we could eventually see all the 'chutes and lined up for an approach which this time gained approval. We were also now becoming more adept (and adventurous) at finding unusual vessels to mix oil with fuel. (would be winners should fit 4 stroke engines). At Peterlee I think it was a plastic bucket. Then on to Eshot, East Fortune and across the Firth of Forth to Fife and refueling.

Because of the Shadows very cramped rear seat I had decided to let Ian fly a leg or two from First Class (the Shadow front seat) every now and again. The first of these was Full Sutton to Peterlee and the second from Eshot to East Fortune. On arrival at East Fortune we joined the circuit and descended towards a huge ex-military tarmac strip. About ½ way along the strip I spotted a fence across the runway and said to Ian 'watch that fence'. ....his reply 'what fence'.....stunned silence from me in the back then 'pull up, pull up'. Fortunately he did and we missed the fence and landed on the separate microlight strip which occupies the last 2 or 300 yards of the runway.

That was it, Finbow condemned to the back seat and a numb bum for the rest of the trip, and a mental note that I should buy him some new glasses before he plays with my toys again.

We had planned to visit Fife and Perth before doing a dog leg up to Inch (hopefully to meet Liz) and to avoid flying over high and unwelcoming terrain in deteriorating weather. Various delays to our optimistic flight plan necessitated a change and we visited Fife but missed out Perth heading direct to Inch. Just as well as it turned out, because we arrived at Inch some 35 minutes after the deadline, which cost us penalty points. Had we done Perth we would have been more than an hour late and lost 2000 points. As it was, we hit Inch right on the nose, this was a great credit to Ian's navigation (different glasses) as it was not a very obvious airfield to those who had not been there before.

When we finally did arrive we found Liz leaning on the fence, worrying and looking at her watch; Jaguars are faster than microlights. Liz really was a pilot's dream, she had located an hotel (well a pub actually) and booked rooms, checked in the toothbrushes and then taxied two carloads of RBR crews into the village for beer, food and fun. (Including Keith and Bob who came second overall and ran Eddie Clapham and son close to victory). All the 'big names' were there, except Keith Negal who had eventually found and fitted a Thruster (?) wheel to his Shadow, and had insufficient time to reach the far North. We felt we were in very exalted company and probably out of our depth.

A super evening ensued with beer, lies, and food in abundance – followed by early retirement to plan day 2's route. Planned actually with the map spread on Liz's and my double bed with her in it - it made the mountains look realistic. We didn't feel we had the time, speed or confidence to make it up to Orkney and so decided to fly across to and down the West Coast and Western Isles.

(To be continued next month)

### **Another victory for the NIMBY's**

Hanley William airfield has been closed by a handful of protesters after the Planning Inspector ruled against the continued use of the site basically on noise grounds. Legal costs have amounted to £50,000. The worrying point about this decision is that it could in effect close virtually every airfield in the country. The Inspector gave some very odd reasons for his decision which seemed to go against all the expert advice and opinion advanced at the enquiry. The parties to the appeal had agreed to use a combination of maximum and average noise levels but the Inspector decided to go against this by using only the maximum level. Custom and practice over the years has used an average level. It is said that already one authority in the Bristol area has changed

its policy to reflect this latest decision. Evidence given at the enquiry also contained some unbelievable statements which, although challenged and refuted, appeared to influence the Inspector. We must learn from this and not give anyone the chance to lodge a noise complaint against us particularly as we are all dependent upon the generosity of others who allow us to use their fields and strips.

**Noise consultation paper threatens GA** The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions has issued a consultation paper which could deeply affect GA.

The Consultation Paper - Control of noise from civil aircraft - is available on the Web for browsing. The main issues include allowing (or maybe compelling) aerodromes of whatever size to prepare noise amelioration plans which pilots would be obliged to follow. These plans could include take-off/landing procedures and restrictions on the number of take-offs and landings. The paper also insists that it would be better if these plans' and disputes arising from them' could be prepared and debated at the local level rather than by Government, which could under some scenarios give local planning authorities a say in the plans. ATC could also be given directions that noise abatement considerations should affect the way that it controls traffic. The consultation paper has been sent to organisations that represent the aviation industry and the interests of people who live near airports as well as to MPs, Members of the House of Lords and others who have expressed an interest.

Responses had to be made by October 13 2000. Your Editor understands that Chris Finnegan, BMAA Chief Executive, and Brian Cosgrove have been involved in the consultation process. It has been proven in the past that local government are not the best people to safeguard the future of GA; some parts of this document could, it appears, give them powers to enforce restrictions on aerodromes and airstrips both large and small.

### **Old Sarum saved**

Old Sarum Flying Club is to remain as a fully-operational flying club for the long term. On 6 September Salisbury District Council refused developers planning permission to convert part of the airfield for light industrial use, thereby ensuring the continued use of Old Sarum Airfield.

The club has worked closely with both local residents and the council to maintain acceptable noise levels, and so became the neighbour of choice. The club's commitment to the preservation of the environment and to Britain's military heritage became driving factors for all parties except the developers.

So a large chunk of undeveloped land will remain as mini-green belt to the north of Salisbury, and the club's hangars (built in 1917 and the oldest fully

operational one in the country) will remain in place and in use.

David Scouller, CFI of the club, said "I think it's a sensible decision for all sorts of environmental and heritage reasons, but what particularly pleases me is that this is a good example of general aviation working in close partnership with the council and residents for the benefit of all."

### Safety

How well do you know the performance of your aircraft and, perhaps more importantly, how well do you know your own performance? Have you acquired any bad flying habits and, if so, do you actually realise that they are bad habits? No, I'm not making the case for a bi-annual flight review. What we all need to do is step back a pace or two from our flying and look at what we do and ask why we do it. Is it good airmanship or good, considerate flying to land directly from a spiral dive rather than plod round the circuit? Do you approach long and low under power and if so, how quickly can you react to wind shear?

The circuit at an airfield is there for a purpose. It ensures that all aircraft know where to look for other aircraft and are flying in the same direction. It also allows you time to assess what is going on and time to look carefully at the runway, windsock and signal square, if there is one, but, most importantly, to organise yourself for the most demanding and stressful part of your flight - the landing. We no doubt all fail to realise that the most crucial and important part of any flight always comes at a time when we are thinking of getting home (presson-itis) and our concentration levels are likely to be a lot lower than when we set out some hours ago. When approaching to land the value of a set of checks is invaluable in that all the major areas will be covered and all that will be left is for you to fly the aeroplane. The circuit introduces an element of routine and checks which bring our concentration back up to at least par. Don't ignore the normal circuit - it's there for your protection from yourself!

Long, low powered approaches are fine and, in some conditions are the only way to get on the ground safely. However, they do add to the work load at an important phase of the flight as there is little room for error if you and the ground are to meet at the desired point at the anticipated time. The lower you are to the ground the less "room" for manoeuvre you have. It doesn't take much lessening of the headwind component to push you closer to danger than you would like.

Thinking of your own performance, how is your health and your state of mind when you fly? We all saw the "Fit to Fly" video last month and it was interesting to hear the "noises off" from the audience as the plot unfolded indicating that some people were relating to the situations being acted out. Hopefully the video

will have sharpened up your understanding of the human factors which impinge upon your performance not only as a pilot but also as a driver and human being.

### Internet

Looking at the new PFA website <[www.pfanet.co.uk](http://www.pfanet.co.uk)> it obvious that a considerable amount of thought has gone into its design. You can find out the ICAO designators for all airfields in the UK and Ireland - those are those funny codes beginning with EG you are required to use in flight plans. Not only that but you can call up a list of MP's and their e-mail addresses - handy for lobbying - and while you're there you can check the lottery results, see what the most popular numbers have been and have some random numbers generated for your next attempt to win! One useful feature for those members who have a Group A licence is a list showing the Class 2 medical fee (including ECG) negotiated by the PFA for its members in various parts of the country. For Gloucestershire it is £70 but you have to contact the PFA to find out the name and address of the doctor.

### Flatpack spacecraft set for launch

A flatpack spacecraft is being developed by a US inventor - and it could be on sale at your local DIY store within four years.

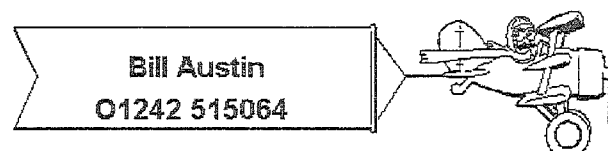
The "Kitten" would be big enough to take three adults to an altitude of 120 miles - half the orbit of the Space Shuttle, but high enough to experience weightlessness. The vehicle would take off like a conventional plane before blasting into the vacuum at a speed of 2,500mph and gliding back to earth after a few minutes 'space travel'.

Its designer, James Hill, hopes to sell the reusable craft for as little as £325,000 - cheap compared with a £250 million shuttle launch. Mr Hill, from Oroville, Washington, said: "It should be as reliable as any other kit - a boat, a helicopter or a small private submarine."

Although the laptop-controlled Kitten is built using ready-approved aircraft parts it would face scrutiny from regulators who currently limit the altitude of flights to 18 miles, reports New Scientist magazine.

### Engine Course

JH will be holding a course on Rotax engines on Saturday 21st October. There are still a couple of places left. If you wish to attend, please contact him as soon as possible.





Severn Valley  
Microlight Club

## Club Newsletter

November 2000

### This month's speaker - starting at 7.30pm

Well, if you don't know by now you haven't read the last two issues of Aircscrew! Unfortunately last month Ben Ashman was struck down at the very last minute with the 'flu and was unable to come but, fingers crossed, he will be here this month. (Floods and petrol crisis permitting!) **Ben has asked to start his talk at 7.30pm prompt** so please be there on time. There will be ample time for socialising and drinking at the end of the meeting.

### December Meeting

In view of last year's poor attendance, the Committee felt that there should be no party at this time. There will however be a meeting which will feature a talk by Robbie Keene covering his years on the competition circuit. Please do not let this change stop you bringing wives, girlfriends, partners or anyone else to the meeting. They will be very welcome. There is a proposal of a get together/ outing early in the new year when there is less competition from other festive activities.

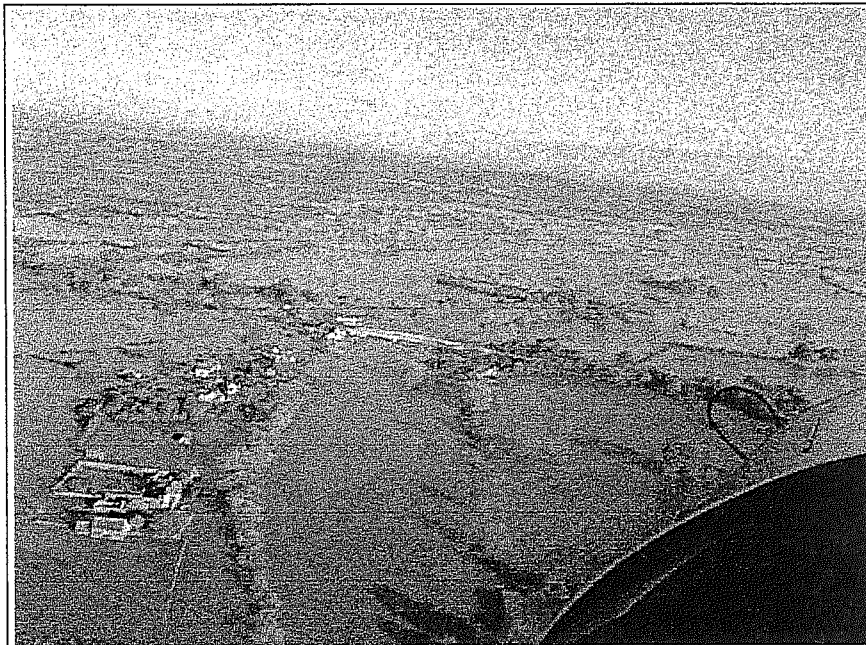
### A big thank you -

from Dave Watson

"I want to thank all those people who have helped me to get my licence. Graham Slater at Clench Common for being so tolerant and patient with my flying; John Hamer for his assistance in getting my plane permitted and airworthy; Bill Austin for his help in getting me through the five ground exams, not to mention Barbara for her encouragement and support, and all the members of SVMC for having me back in the Club - I've missed you all! Thank you to all of you!"

### BMAA AGM and Show

Yes, it's that time of year again. The annual show is at Telford on 2nd and 3rd December and is combined with the AGM. There are definitely some new aeroplanes to be seen and as well as "goodies" to have for your Christmas list. Many Club members will be attending, so ask around and try and share a car. Let's do our bit to save fuel.



The flooded river Severn at Haw Bridge - Sat 4th November photo JH

### Round Britain Rally Episode 2

by Chris Ball

*A 'Character forming' day*

You will remember we had reached Inch on Day 1, due to encouragement from Robbie, maps from John and gross overconfidence on our own part. Now we had to get back to England in the face of worsening weather.

In the bar, and presumably after too many beers, the brave fellows suggested that it was possible to follow the railway line along the valley from Cromarty Firth and break through the mountains to the coast at Loch Carron (Skye) that way. Since the cloud base was lower than the mountains we decided we had to be brave too. On Day 2 they reversed the take off order and the start time was 8 am. Still 30 sec intervals but the reciprocal of your competition number which meant we were about 4th away. First we had to fly due West through the Lossiemouth/Kinloss MATZ (where Ian's Radio skills gained us immediate access) and over the Moray Firth to Dornoch. An interesting feature of this morning was that most of the Inch overnights were following a similar route out for the first couple of stops. So now it developed into a race, and one where you could hear but not



always see your competitors. As we approached Lossiemouth the weather deteriorated and squalls appeared. My worries were not helped when we heard the plane in front tell ATC he was diverting to Knockbain to avoid the weather. We pressed on feeling we should also divert but didn't want to lose the 650 points for Dornoch, when suddenly a tunnel of clear weather appeared about a mile wide and we could see the mountains on the other side of the Firth where we believed Dornoch to be. We pressed on through our tunnel but then realised we would have to fly straight across the Firth and not divert to keep within gliding reach of land. Not really a problem, but we, foolishly, didn't have life jackets. Hadn't thought we would need them at home 2 nights earlier (it had been dry in the Cotswolds!). We survived, reached the other side. Then close to Dornoch I looked down and left and noticed a deserted 'installation' that somehow looked Military. In reply to my question Ian said "I think it is a place called Tain". As one we both recalled yesterday's briefing, scuttled through our notes and Ian got very official, exaggerated exactly how far we had got (presumably forgetting about radar) and obtained approval to continue to Dornoch and land. Which we did, stamped our card and promptly left just after Keith Ingham and Bob. As we climbed out we heard November Yankee November Yankee asking for clearance through Tain to Dornoch and also Tain's refusal. Robbie was made to fly to and circle over Dornoch road bridge while fast jets '30 secs out' came in for live firing practice. Shit!!, we were there just minutes ago.

On down to Knockbain which was hard to find for first timers (as many small fields were) It was right on top of a hill and not in the valley where we expected it to be. Ian and I definitely got scratchy with each other on occasions and this was one of them!

We found Keith and Bob on the ground, furious because they had phoned through that morning to arrange fuel and found some other buggers (that was I think the word he used) had been already and nicked it. We were still on the learning curve because Knockbain was listed as having fuel, we didn't know you had to resort to special deals to book and actually get it, nor did we have a number to call. We did eventually get hold of the farmer (who was building a Europa and repairing another) and got fuel. We then could not start the 503 - not for 75 minutes. Having no plug spanner or spare plugs (learning curve again) didn't help. Keith had by now fuelled and was long gone. Then Robbie arrived and being the gent he is, offered to lend tools and help. Perhaps it was a sense of guilt for having got us into all this! Trying to be gents ourselves we declined his help and insisted he get on his way and catch the others, who were also doing the 'valley route', before the weather came in, as had been forecast.

Eventually we got the 503 started but no obvious fault was identified, always worrying that.

We bravely (foolishly?) followed the professionals, along the railway and into the mountains (and the mist, rain and cloud). I believe I am a reasonably capable pilot but am quite cautious and found myself thinking this was a crazy example of the 'pressonitus' that Bill warns us of. Asking Ian's opinion (he would, after all, crash just milliseconds after me if the worst happened) he felt that when we got close and into the mist and rain, the visibility would probably be better than it looked from outside. I think I actually would buy a second hand car from this man. We eventually made it through despite worsening weather and landed at Broadford, Isle of Skye. A super little airfield, tarmac strip all very well equipped and up to date, but not a soul about. We were the only aircraft on Skye, quite eerie.

Then on to Glenforsa (Isle of Mull) and Oban, beautiful country, mountains and sea but spoilt by the poor weather and visibility. We almost caught up with Robbie at Oban and saw him climbing out as we approached to land. The very helpful airport manager/radio operator/Air Traffic Controller/fuel truck driver met us and offered us tea and biscuits.

"The kettle has just boiled so help yourself". He was so friendly, and we were so relieved to be safely on the ground, having endured more deteriorating and very bumpy weather, that we did stay for half an hour or so, drank tea, ate his biscuits and took on fuel.

Then off to Bute. By now the weather was really getting a bit dodgey and we had to fly a course taking us over hills of typically 1500-2000ft. As we ventured further into the hills the cloudbase got lower. Eventually, we were faced with the prospect of leaving our course to fly down lochs to stay VFR. Instead, we resorted to jumping from loch to valley by flying over any saddle that came our way and was in approximately the right direction. Here we learned another lesson. Once you deviate from your chosen course it is easy to stray further than you think from your track. We kept looking for saddles, valleys, lochs, anything below the cloud base that would take us in approximately the right direction, but were inexorably drawn to the East of track as we traversed Lochs Awe and Fyne (which it wasn't). Eventually we found ourselves flying down Loch Goil towards what Ian described as a danger zone, so "should we divert?" my reply "Sod that Ian it will be more bloody dangerous in cloud.....er, does it say anything about cables??" (I had just spotted the base of what looked like a pylon coming out of the cloud/mist down to the ground on either side of the Loch) "Yes, yes, cables !!". My reply, "Find me the lowest spot, left or right, quickly", "Left over the saddle, mind the pylons, try not annoy the people in those houses just below", Ian came back with. And so we flew, gratefully, into another Loch. Then Ian said that it wasn't a danger

zone but a prohibited area we were in. It seemed OK to us, until we looked down (the 3 or 400 ft) to Britain's nuclear deterrents moored directly below us, with a variety of submariners looking back at us !! I fully expected there to be someone waiting to take me away when I got back home, but so far, so good. We eventually arrived safely and in the rain at Bute but I can't honestly remember anything about the place, I was so relieved to have arrived at all.

Next, on to overfly Wigtown where we had to locate, identify and photograph a marker, that someone had forgotten to put out, so photo'd 2 blue portaloos instead. From there we went to Carlisle, where a military exercise was taking place, Helicopters, army trucks and soldiers everywhere. We had lost so much time on day two and were now running potentially late so had to push on from Carlisle over the Pennines to Sandtoft and night stop number two. Incidentally the Carlisle radio was our only experience of a somewhat 'superior kind of chap' that we experienced during the whole rally. Clearly thought microlights were well beneath him and his airport and was not very helpful when we got lost (on the ground !) negotiating runways, taxiways and Army manoeuvres.

Arrived at Sandtoft some 40 minutes late and collected quite a few penalty points but found Liz waiting with accommodation booked not just for us but also for fellow competitors. Super dinner in the Flying club, caught up on the news with and from the others, then Lizzie's 'taxi' to the pub for more route planning. It was at Sandtoft that we handed in our scorecard for the first two days and got our cards for the Southern leg. We had now caught up with Robbie who used our taxi and pub and we all compared notes about the day.

(To be continued next month)

### **Quote of the Month**

"Keep looking around. There's always something you've missed."

### **Trevor is planeless**

The unheard of has happened - Trevor Cale has sold his Quantum 582! No, it doesn't mean that he is giving up flying, it's just that he wants to "acquire" one of those super 3-axis microlights which will take him to Europe. He still wants it to be a microlight/SLA but, like many of us, would favour one that has folding wings. Why are manufacturers not developing aircraft which can fold their wings - it makes a lot of sense. It would certainly release more hangarage for aircraft, and increase income for those providing it as more could be accommodated in the same space.

### **Visit to NATS**

On Sunday 22nd October, seven Club members visited the National Air Traffic Services at London Air Traffic Control Centre (LATCC) at West Drayton. The

opportunity was provided and organised by Neil Duncanson who had a personal contact at LATCC. Our visit covered the civil side only so we did not get to see the military side of the operation which operates the Distress and Diversion cell.

The Centre provides the Air Traffic Control Service for England South of Latitude 55 North together with Area and Approach Control services for Heathrow and Gatwick airports. In the middle there is a centre based at Manchester which provides similar services in that area. The Area and Approach Control Sections are housed in separate rooms.

The rooms are laid out with most of the operating positions around the sides of the room while in the centre are management control positions. Each position can accommodate two controllers who are under the direction of a senior controller. The latter monitors the work of the controllers and will take and make any necessary phone calls. The screens in front of the controllers are some two feet in diameter and the range shown on them can be electronically adjusted to show the picture from 120 miles radius down to two miles radius of the centre of the radar scan. Although we were told that it was not busy because it was Sunday, to the inexperienced eye the screens did look rather crowded.

We all know that Heathrow is busy with an aircraft landing or taking off every two minutes but did you know that there are four "stacks" or holding points into which arriving aircraft are fed and from which the controllers release them into the final approach pattern? It is impressive enough to see from the M4 or the M25, how the planes stream in to land with precision spacing between them. But it is even more unbelievable when you realise that this is the result of four controllers co-ordinating their instructions to the aircraft in the "stacks", so that they arrive at the right point at the right time and slot into the stream. The controller achieves this by giving the pilots speed instructions to ensure that the plane arrives in the queue at the right time.

While we were in the Approach room watching the landing pattern, an alarm similar to a fire alarm sounded. Our guide suggested that it was a signal indicating that one of the aircraft had overshot and was going around. The alarm is initiated by the Tower controller at Heathrow to alert the Approach controller that an aircraft is coming back under his control. Confirmation is by an immediate phone call from the Tower to Approach Control. This turned out to be correct, as we saw the radar trace re-appear on climb out. We watched as the aircraft made another circuit and it was noticeable that this time the spacing between this aircraft and those preceding and following it was much greater. This time it landed safely. Later it was established that the cause of the go around was flap failure.

We also saw London Flight Information section - three people sitting in an area the size of a large kitchen! They have no radar and rely on the aircraft using the service for positional information. On the wall they have maps of England and Wales covered with large map pins indicating the airfields with their radio frequencies. They also have two other screens on which is displayed the weather for a number of other airfields.

Our visit lasted longer than anticipated, but all who attended agreed that it had been both a fascinating and instructive visit. One of the party commented afterwards that they had expected to see frantic near panic activity, but all they saw was a lot of people speaking calmly and everyone concentrating on their own activity. Hopefully having seen the set-up, we will now use the radio with a little more confidence. Our thanks go to Neil Duncanson for organising the trip.

#### What a year!

The weather has been the limiting factor this year. Did one of our members have an idea how true his poem last Christmas would be?

"The weather's bad, the prop is broke

This microlighting's just a joke,

Better luck another day

Another trip to the pub I'd say!"

#### Developments at Redlands

My attention was drawn to a Notam published recently indicating that a free fall parachute zone had been established at Redlands. A phone call to Joe Smith at Redlands produced the following information.

An approach was made by a parachute club to use the field and approval has been forthcoming from the CAA, the British Parachute Federation and RAF Lyneham for this activity to take place at Redlands. The aircraft to be used is an Antonov which will carry twelve parachutists on each lift and be hangared at Redlands during the summer. The noise test on the Antonov produced a lower figure than a microlight. All that remains is for the local authority to grant planning permission. Parachuting will not start until April next year. At present the intention is to have two flights on Saturdays and Sundays, each of which will involve four circuits of the airfield dropping three parachutists at each pass. There may be another flight during the week.

The owners of Redlands want microlights to continue to operate from the field, and aircraft from other Clubs will be welcome, as always, to fly in. However, procedures will be tightened to take account of the parachute activity and microlights will take precedence over the Antonov. More information will be forthcoming when the planning issue has been decided.

#### GPS is more reliable (if the batteries hold out!)

A man in a hot air balloon realised he was lost. He reduced altitude and spotted a woman below. He descended a bit more and shouted, "Excuse me, can you help me? I promised a friend I would meet him an hour ago, but I don't know where I am."

The woman below replied, "You are in a hot air balloon hovering approximately 30 feet above the ground. You are between 40 and 41 degrees north latitude and between 59 and 60 degrees west longitude."

"You must be an engineer," said the balloonist.

"I am," replied the woman, "how did you know?"

"Well," answered the balloonist, "everything you told me is technically correct, but I have no idea what to make of your information, and the fact is I am still lost. Frankly, you've not been much help so far."

The woman below responded, "You must be a manager."

"I am," replied the balloonist, "but how did you know?"

"Well," said the woman, "you don't know where you are or where you are going. You have risen to where you are due to a large quantity of hot air. You made a promise, which you have no idea how to keep, and you expect me to solve your problem. The fact is you are in exactly the same position you were in before we met, but now, somehow, it's my fault."

#### For Sale

MiniMax - G-MWLW - Rotax 377 - John Hamer  
01452 700314

62" 2 blade wooden propeller for Rotax 503. Contact  
Andrew John on 01386 725229

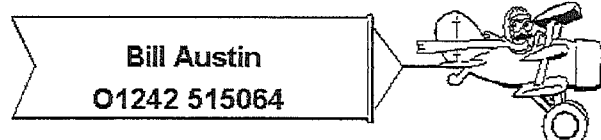


Hangarage available for fixed & fully/semi rigged flexwing microlights.

For more information phone 01793 791014 or email  
microlights@redlands67.freemove.co.uk

Hangarage available at Sandhurst, nr Gloucester  
250 yrd strip - low fees  
Contact Paul Bedford 01684 290423

Castrol TTS two stroke oil - 25 litre drums at £145 i.e.  
£5.80 per litre when normally over £8.00 per litre -  
ring Adrian Lloyd 01885 482504





**Severn Valley  
Microlight Club**

## **Club Newsletter**

**December 2000**

### **This month's speaker**

Our own Robbie Keene will be telling us about his years on the competition circuit and how the competitions have changed as the technology has produced ever more sophisticated and faster aeroplanes. In addition there will be the annual photographic competitions so bring along your masterpieces for all to see. Hot mince pies will be served during the evening and a bar will be available in our meeting room to save you the effort of trekking along to the other bar.

### **Club AGM**

Next month we have the SVMC AGM - a scintillating evening of cut and thrust debate over past performance and ideas for the future with the chance to sack all the present committee and start afresh with new blood. (Somehow that doesn't sound like the SVMC we all know). All the committee will up for re-election but that does not mean that other members cannot be nominated for any of the posts Give the matter some serious thought - after all there comes a time when even the Committee run out of steam and a new face might be just the catalyst needed to inject new life! We will in particular be looking for someone to take over from John Davis who has been responsible for organising and liaising with our speakers each month. He feels that his imagination has been taxed enough in the last two years. Not only that but at certain times of year his unsocial hours of work make him unavailable to make contact with or receive calls from potential speakers. He is, however, willing to continue as a member of the committee but in a less onerous role. If the Club is to live rather than exist we need a steady flow of ideas and suggestions principally for events and speakers - this is an area where every member can help.

### **Telford Show report**

by Bill Austin

SVMC were well represented at this year's show. Several members could not resist opening their wallets and parting with hard earned cash. There were plenty of things on offer.

On the aircraft side it was evident that the new SLA category was attracting the foreign manufacturers. There was the Samba from Czechoslovakia which had wing tips which could be changed depending on whether you wanted to soar or fly normally. The

fuselage shape behind the cockpit resembled that of the F117 - rather bat-wing in appearance. A unique feature of this aircraft were the flaps which retracted into the wing. This aircraft was being imported through Ireland and was in the process of going through Section S. The Ikarus C42 was another "composite smoothie" with side by side seating and a 912 engine in front. Cruise speed is reported as 109mph and climb rate two up is 975 ft/min and it has folding wings. One of our members has had a trial flight in one of these and was very impressed. At £21,500 plus VAT it could be a contender for a lot of people who want to go three axis or come down from the Group A licence. If you wanted a low wing, all metal aircraft there was the EV-97 Eurostar powered by a Rotax 912 being marketed by Cosmik Aviation (none other than Conrad Beale). Good old reliable Thruster was there but this time they had enclosed the fuselage aft of the cockpit in fibreglass. Another plane with folding wings was the Sky Raider which is at present going through Section S. It looks a good sturdy plane for farm strips and it will be interesting to see how it performs - hopefully at Popham! Xair have another model available - The Falcon - which has flaps and costs £16,950 complete.

There also appeared to be a minor explosion of powered hang gliders based on the Doolebug/Mosquito concept. For those interested in parafling - powered or otherwise - there was plenty to see and sit in including a personal hot air balloon! In general the show seemed to be better supported than last year and there were certainly more people present on the Sunday than last year.

### **Telford - BMAA AGM - 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2000**

by Andrew John

As far as I could see, Robbie and I alone represented the Club for the annual event. A great pity, as this is the only opportunity that members of the BMAA have to put forward their views on matters which affect their future flying activities and to appreciate just what the Council have had to consider during the year.

BMAA President, Anne Welch, opened the proceedings with a clear message "The fun has gone out of flying?!" And not just because of the appalling weather. However microlight flying has, more than any other type, kept the original concept alive, to be both enjoyable and affordable. New pilots are now

looking at the National PPL which, thanks to the unexpected vision of the CAA will give a new dimension to training and licensing in the future. She paid great tribute to the BMAA for being largely responsible for keeping the momentum going in order to achieve this.

Keith Negal, Chairman, referred to the huge achievement of Colin Bodil in circumnavigating the globe in 99 days in his Mainair Blade 912, for which he had been awarded his second Diamond Colibri Award. He also paid tribute to Brian Cosgrove for all the work he had done battling for our benefit over so many years. He wished him well following his recent ill health.

New under 450 kgs a/c from abroad were putting the current system under considerable pressure. The X-Air 'Explosion' last year had stretched BMAA resources to the limit. Nine others are in the pipeline. Should the BMAA carry on independently by employing another engineer, requiring an increase in subs, or should we join forces with the PFA in order to speed the new aircraft into the air? A majority vote supported the BMAA Council's decision to remain independent but to remain closely involved with microlight categories handled by the PFA.

Treasurer – John Rose, presented the annual accounts. The results were not what he wished to put forward for approval but reminded members of the cost structure being imposed on the BMAA. Due to the decision to develop the technical department by employing an additional engineer to cope with the demand created by new types of a/c needing section 'S' for approval, subscriptions would need to be increased to £39 and Permits to fly to £70. These increases were approved.

Chief Executive – Chris Finnigan, reported a very successful recruiting campaign taking membership to 4500. Registrations were up at 3295 but there remain some 650 a/c unregistered since 1995. He asked for a special effort to be made to locate as many as possible, as he suspected that most would be neglected and disused by now. He encouraged members who did not have a licence for their radio equipment to become legal by paying the reduced annual fee of £15. He referred to the proposed National Private Pilot's Licence and ongoing discussions over details such as the new medical arrangements. He had toured the country giving talks at many clubs during the year and had been given an encouraging reception. He would like to continue these visits.

Chief Technical Officer – Guy Gratton, reported a big improvement in the turn around time for paperwork. The backlog had been caused mainly by the influx of X-Airs. He had passed 19 major mods and cleared 24 home built with a PTF. Nine new Home Built design applications were being considered and it was hoped to have half of them ready to start by the summer

months. He was pleased at the decision to appoint another engineer to assist with the workload created by the BMAA's entry into the home build field.

Chief Inspector and Safety Officer – Ray Wilkinson, spoke about the Inspectors' Audit and was delighted to report that there had not been a fatality involving a BMAA registered a/c during the year. Both incidents and accidents were noticeably lower with 45 accidents reported of which 2 were serious. Most accidents occurred during the landing phase. He also emphasised the importance of reporting incidents and congratulated those who had done so, providing a vital link in the safety chain between the BMAA and its members.

#### Annual Awards –

National Championship – Solo – Richard Rawes

Dual – Steve Slade and Jeremy Hucker

The Steve Hunt Trophy - Colin Bodil for his Round the World Achievement

Photographic Competition - Keith Negal.

#### **Round Britain Rally**

by Chris Ball

Episode 3 – A day at the races

After enduring, and conquering, the Scottish mountains and weather we felt a day in Central England would be fairly simple stuff. We were wrong. On Friday morning we had to predict another 'timed gate' arrival before our 8 am departure, the gate was over a Motorway service station car park. We were about 8th or 9th away (still at 30 second intervals) and by now the spirit of competition had bitten hard. Immediately after take off it became apparent that most planes leaving Sandoft intended to take in the East coast. We saw a couple in front with presumably the same destination in mind and the throttle hand did begin to find a mind of its own. Rob in MYMY was one of them and the Shadow got past without too much difficulty. But before we could line up the next one, Whoosh, Keith Negal went past us in his 912 engined Shadow, one up, and almost immediately Eddie Clapham went past both of us in his exceptionally quick Rans with a fuel injected 912. We were quite deflated! There was a silver lining to this particular cloud though. Some of the next airfields were quite small and hard to find and we had never been to any of them before so didn't really know what to look for. With all aircraft within radio range and some actually visible it gave us a bit of a clue. Throughout the whole Rally Ian's navigation was excellent (well there was one point where I knew he was wrong and he knew he was right and we had words – on that one occasion I was correct) and we hit nearly everything spot on. But even so, it was sometimes difficult to see a small farm strip even when you were right over it. Especially when you are right over it. Having this little band of competitors around us at least made finding the small strips

easier. The first stop that morning was Hougham. Eddie and Keith (him with the new wheel) had both arrived before us and were parked getting cards stamped etc. We landed long and taxied right up to the stamp, I jumped out leaving the engine and throttle under Ian's control, stamped the card, took the photo, jumped back in and took off. Eddie had got away just before us but Keith was still on the ground, one place made up!

And so it went on during the morning as we kept in touch with several of the contestants, people who were becoming friends. We didn't do too well finding Fenlands, it just seemed not to be there, but it was, eventually. The weather again decided to break up and we had a real problem finding Swanton Morley. Ian had assured me this day would be no problem as he was a Norfolk boy and would know exactly(ish) where he was. It turned out that we were dead on track but 4 or 5 miles short and with visibility being very poor (heavy rain by now) we couldn't see the airfield. We spent several fruitless minutes circling over empty farmland until we spotted an aircraft descending to a short grass strip, while Ian had been looking for a large, ex WW II airfield. Next was the leg to Cromer where we had another dispute over navigation. I absolutely KNEW I was right, until we hit the coast at Sheringham and Cromer was nowhere to be seen. Appropriate apologies were made to 'him who will never be doubted again' (until the next time!) and we flew the several miles down the coast to Cromer and back on track. We found the strip, a small, slightly uphill strip into wind with the caravan and stamp at the far end of the runway. We used our, by now, standard routine of taxiing up to the stamp etc and back in the plane. Just in time for a bit more of the learning curve. Rather than taxi down this fairly bumpy strip to turn into wind and take off uphill, I figured that as the wind wasn't so strong, the grass not too long and with the slope on our side there would be enough room to take off with the wind. It would save us some time too. I was right, but by the tiniest and stupidest of margins. I had to turn to the right almost before leaving the ground to aim for the lowest bit of the hedge, we would have hit the 6 foot high part of it. Enough said, but another lesson learned and sphincters exercised.

Next to Priory Farm a delightful private strip, beautifully maintained by its owner who made us feel very welcome and was able to sell us fuel and provide a drum to mix the oil in. Very Micro friendly.

Over the past couple of days Ian had done sterling work on the radio, his confidence and experience and possibly also the natural superiority of one who tells the police what to do over the radio every day, had not gone unnoticed. We had run into Rob again and as he was experiencing intermittent radio problems reckoned Ian would get us both through the Lakenheath/Mildenhall/Honington MATZ and would

we tell them we were two aircraft. On the day there were three or four as we actually developed a convoy. Our track took us just past the threshold and we were warned about fast jet traffic by their controller. Sure enough we were buzzed close on the port side by a pair of F15's with wings swept back. Quite impressive once we got over the shock. Then a few minutes later we saw some lights coming towards us at about our altitude. As the lights got closer we saw it was two more (or the same?) F15's with their headlights on, which we thought was a bit cheeky. Then we realised that F15's don't have headlights, it was their landing lights and their gear was down. Just before what seemed to us like an impending near miss, despite us being there under the direction of their ATC, they turned left onto finals, descended and landed. They knew exactly what they were doing, it was all a bit exotic and different to us. It was about this time that we heard Keith Negal, who was behind us, being told to divert to the Northern limit of their zone and we lost touch with Robbie. As we all now know, he suffered an engine failure and made a forced landing, safely, fortunately.

On to Sutton Meadows where we just beat Keith in and out, then on to Leicester, an interesting and busy little airport, of not quite Staverton scale, where we received an efficient and friendly welcome and took on fuel. No mixing tanks or buckets though. It was here, I think, where we ran in to Brian and Bruce and where they had to resort to pouring oil straight into the tank and 'mixed' the petrol in on top of it. Fortunately their engine choked while taxiing to the threshold and not during take off. Another lesson learned by all of us. After Leicester we flew down to Swinford, but had been warned by other competitors it was a potentially dangerous spot especially with a North westerly wind, which was what we had. We decided to overfly, have a look and make up our minds. We were saved the decision by not being able to quickly locate it and also by running out of time for our scheduled arrival at our timed gate. As it turned out, we need not have bothered as, due to some problem or other the gate monitor boomed and all gate penalties were wiped out. Then up to Roddige (Sittles) which we had fortunately visited before and where we experienced another 'would not start'. A helpful bystander (as we thought) gave us the benefit of his way of starting recalcitrant Rotaxes after seeing our pathetic and ever more frantic attempts. It worked and it was only at the end of the Rally 1 ½ days later that we discovered he was a competitor too. Wonderful people. After Sittles farm we were bound for Milson. To get there we either had to overfly Walsall, Wolverhampton and Dudley, or make a big detour. Our decision was complicated by the Birmingham CTA which meant we had to be below 1500 ft in places. We eventually convinced ourselves there were enough parks and playing fields for us to



string together a continuous line of non built up area and proceeded on our way.

At Milson we had to put a £1 landing fee in the back of a parked car and the owner came down to check that we had. He then tried to sell us the house and airstrip. The strip was on a fairly steep slope with a stiff breeze blowing down hill. I would have gone for the downhill, wind behind me departure but for our experience of that morning. The owner paused from his sales pitch for long enough to tell us that uphill would be best. We nearly died twice that day!. From there to Shobdon was an easy, short haul then to Hardwicke which I had also visited with Andrew John a year or two earlier, so no problem. A pleasant flight in improving weather to Eastbach was misleading. When we found it (eventually, as it was well disguised as a field full of hay) we landed on what I really felt was a difficult and potentially dangerous strip. Very narrow, running round the side of a hill (so up hill and down hill all at once), with a serious camber when going either up or down and bloody long hay either side. Inevitably, as soon as we lost rudder authority the plane turned downhill into the hay, wonderful. Taking off was equally difficult and it took 3 attempts to get it right, by which time we had cut most of the hay. Probably won't go there again despite the people being wonderful and generous (offered us hot tea, hugs and kisses). Ian missed these as he was still strapped into the back of the Shadow.

On over the Severn to Kemble where the engine Gremlin struck again and another 45 minutes lost. David Young, CFI of the Kemble microlight club showed us yet another certain way of starting a warm 503. When we eventually did get started we had to fly straight to Old Sarum, our next night stop, and miss out Enstone and Chilbolton rather than risk the loss of our many points by arriving more than one hour late. There was Liz with accommodation booked for us and for Robbie, not knowing that he had (temporarily) fallen by the wayside.

One of the great things about the rally was the way people integrated at the night stops. By our choice of route (Northern leg first), we had limited the number of people we might bump into (not literally) to about 24 aircraft. The Insch nightstop saw us with about 12 of those and Sandtoft produced a few more different ones (who had stayed at Carlisle on night one). Again some new faces emerged at Old Sarum. One thing most of these folk had in common was their willingness to discuss problems and offer helpful advice. For example, at Sarum we were looking at the detail of the location of the Isle of White marker, which seemed to be in the middle of a forest. One of our fellow competitors told us there was a microlighter with a small camp site in the woods, the field would be identifiable by a caravan parked in it. He suggested this would probably be the location. He

was right and without that advice we may well not have found the marker. We met up with Brian and Bruce again and offered transport but they were happy to pitch their tent outside Sarum's pleasant clubhouse. Another example of co-operation and help was Keith Negal who told us that Sandown (IOW) airport did not open until 9am. Without that knowledge we would have offended some of their neighbours and waited for 30 mins on the ground. (To be concluded next month)

### Quote of the Month

Those members thinking of investing in one of the new swish composite planes might bear this in mind:- "In the ongoing battle between objects made of aluminium going hundreds of miles per hour and the ground going zero miles per hour, the ground has yet to lose."

### Xair news from Barbara Austin

Yes, I did it. I really did it. I finished building my own plane towards the end of October. Now, at the end of November, I can only just bring myself to write this.

By now most of you will know that, despite five firmly screwed in "tie downs", the strong winds lifted the aircraft bodily and flipped it head over heels into the adjacent hedge and fence. This all happened while I was away on a much needed holiday and I came home to be presented with a photograph of the inverted plane - the only photograph of the aeroplane in one piece that I had. I put so much of myself into it but after many trials and tribulations (an understatement if ever there was one) it is clear that this plane is not for me.

I would like to thank all those who helped me with my project in any way in particular my husband Bill and JH and also all those who turned out to right the plane on that fateful day.

I still cannot manage to talk about it and will only make any decisions on my flying future once the plane is gone - as though it had never been. How I wish.....

*Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New  
Year*

