



**Severn Valley
Microlight Club**

Club Newsletter

January 2001

This month's speaker

It's you! Yes it's the AGM - the time for you to elect a new committee or re-elect all or some of the existing members, to air your views on the past year and to make suggestions for the coming year. The big question is "What can **YOU** contribute to **YOUR** Club?" The Club is only as good as its individual members.

AGM Agenda

1. Chairman's Report
2. Treasurer's Report
3. Training and Safety Officer's Report
4. Election of Officers
5. Club subscriptions for 2001
5. Any other business - to include the proposal for the February meeting outlined above.
6. Presentation of trophies - The Spitfire Award and The Poser Trophy.

February Meeting, a social supper at Ashleworth.

21st February 2001 7.30 for 8pm

Instead of the usual Christmas party, it was decided to do something different, in a month that is usually cold and boring! It is planned to hold a dinner at the Queen's Arms in Ashleworth, which has a good reputation, as well as having a separate cosy dining area for groups. We hope that you will bring your partner not only to enjoy the food but also to help you in the "Pop Picking" brain-teaser that we've organised! (A bottle of bubbly for the best result!)

After heavy negotiating we have reduced the price of this feast to only £15 each and what is more, the wine with the meal will be provided with compliments of The Severn Valley Microlight Club.

Booking: We need to know how many of you would like to come and what menu you would like. (These will be made available at the AGM, but if you cannot make the AGM, contact Rob Keene and he'll send you one.)

Please complete your menu request and return it with your cheque, payable to the "Queens Arms" as soon as possible to Rob. Last day for returning requests will be the 14th Feb (assuming there is still space left then)

PLEASE, PLEASE let Rob Keene know asap if you would like to come even if you don't yet know what food or which partner you are going to bring! Either

phone on 07831 237353 day or 01452 414975 (eve) or E Mail on rob@overfarm.freeseve.co.uk

Directions to Queens Arms: Take A 417 from Gloucester to Hartpury. 5 Miles. After sharp bend to the left, and just before Royal Exchange pub, turn right to Ashleworth. Village is 1.5 miles from Hartpury, and Queens Arms is in village on left.

Important Communications Alert

Lynx Communications are going to increase the prices of their equipment from 1st February, 2001. Ges Hatchett is an agent for Lynx and has told the Editor that "*prices will increase by a considerable amount*" - I say again - "*prices will increase by a considerable amount*". If you wish to order any equipment please let Ges know before the end of January if you want to secure it at the current price - don't say you have not been warned!

Round Britain Rally by Chris Ball

Episode 4 - The Final day

We decided to do Chilbolton, we had missed it the day before, do the Isle of White (Sandown for a card stamp and Freshwater for a marker), then on to Somerset (Dunkeswell) and Devon (Eggleston) before heading up to Newport and then across to Swansea, Haverfordwest, up Coastal Wales to Caernarfon, along the top and on to the finish at Ince Blundell. But it didn't quite work like that.

We started well. Picked up Chilbolton, in company with others, and on to Sandown. We got there about 5 minutes before they opened and found two other microlights already there. Rather than wait, the first arrivals had discovered the tower was unlocked and the stamp was on the desk !. So up we went, stamped and were away before anyone arrived. On to the Western tip of the Island and located the marker, which we probably wouldn't have done without the advice of the previous evening. Then across the water to the mainland making landfall South of Bournemouth and across Southern England to both target airfields without problems. The engine did prove difficult to start again at Dunkeswell and another worthy showed us HIS version of how to start an uncooperative 503 after 10 minutes of us amusing the locals (file note, must get an electric starter for next year—or a Jabiru says Ian).

After Eaglescott, where we had a short delay for parachutists, it was off to Newport to find Upfield farm strip. I was a bit of a coward and was not willing to cross the Severn Estuary at the wide point that would be on our 'crow flies' track, instead opting for a crossing from Weston which halved the over water distance (still no lifejackets). Upfield was difficult to find and challenging when we found it, a really narrow and very bumpy strip (which Shadows don't like) with several dirt patches and potholes along the way. I was so focussed on these while taxiing after landing that I didn't notice the flag and stamp were located half way along the runway. So had to go back and do quite a bit of unnecessary taxiing. From there to Swansea was an interesting and scenic flight, past windfarms (I hadn't realised how many of those there are in UK until this rally), over mountains, and of course 'the valleys'.

As we approached Swansea we heard that bloody Negal again on the radio calling for landing instructions as he was just crossing the coast. We concluded he must be in front of us as we were over Port Talbot at that time. But we kept hearing him calling for some 10 minutes or so and we eventually arrived at Swansea 2nd in a flight of three Shadows in the circuit. The first was a locally based non RBR entrant, then us, then Keith. He later explained he had flown straight across the widest part of the Estuary direct from Lands End and had actually made landfall near Cardiff, thinking it was Swansea, hence the delay. So he wasn't 'that bloody Negal', he actually had rather big balls flying the direct route from Lands End. We both stamped and we refuelled, Keith not needing to as his single seat 912 engined Shadow has a huge fuel tank in place of the rear seat. We had a problem finding a mixing vessel for the oil and lost a fair bit of time.

When we were ready to leave we realised that our original flight plan had been a touch optimistic for that day (over confidence perhaps?) and this, coupled with our fuelling and starting delays meant a rethink. We concluded we must miss out all the Coastal stops and instead fly through the mountains (yes, we now knew how to fly through, not over, mountains – find a railway line with no tunnels and follow it !) to Welshpool then on to Greenlands, a tiny, anonymous strip that the Yules (plus embryo as Jaine was pregnant) had told us approximately how to find the night before at Sarum. All went well, the navigation and countryside were both great and the weather was not too unkind, leaving us enough room to stay on course rather than jump saddles whenever we were confronted with high bits. We found Welshpool, fuelled again as there would be no more between there and home and set off to Greenlands. This was certainly difficult to find even though we knew roughly where to look. We were circling the area and could see nothing but working

farms when we spotted a blue Rans descending into a field full of sheep. It was the first time we had seen the Claphams since Eastern England the previous day. Being the gent he is, Eddie cleared the sheep for us with the Rans and we landed, avoiding droppings where possible. Take off was interesting as the sheep's curiosity had by now overcome their fear.

Now all that remained was a straight sprint past West Kirby and over the water to Ince Blundell which was helped by the diminishing spot in front that was a fast disappearing Clapham family. We found Ince, landed safely and checked in. Here we made possibly our biggest mistake of the rally. Ian had copied the I.O.W. marker onto our card in soluble marker, intending to redo in biro later, something he had forgotten to do. Just as he handed our card in he remembered the omission, took the card back and remarked the X, which had rubbed off during the day. All this was done in front of the officials who could, quite reasonably, believe we were being inventive. As it was, we were more than that score in front of the next highest scoring competitor so it didn't matter, but we did feel a bit awkward when our 'witness' photos were called for ! After Ince we had to fly back to Barton for the celebrations, a hangar party, and to reload the plane into its trailer. We were so pleased at having completed the rally, our major objective, that we didn't note bearing or landmarks after take off and promptly got lost. We resolved this by flying around the outskirts of Liverpool looking for obvious landmarks, but there were so many motorways (that all look the same) that we ended up doing what I have always thought was just a yarn. We flew down to a level (501ft) where we could read the motorway signs. At Barton we caught up with lots of faces and the news of JH's lost wheel, Brian and Bruce's engine out, Robbie's engine failure and so on. Much beer was consumed while all this went on. During the hangar party the provisional results were posted on the wall and we were initially disappointed not to find our names on the list. In the crush of people we had been looking at the bottom of the list. Imagine our surprise when Robbie congratulated us for being a bit nearer the top.

Now it is all over, and we have had time to ponder, what are our real feelings? In no particular order they are:-

- 1 - What an amazing job Chris Ellis and his North West MAC team did of organising such a superb competition.
- 2 - It was a fantastic journey and, for us novices, a genuine modern day adventure.
- 3 - I learned many things about flying, or perhaps saw in practice some of the things learned in theory from Bill's ground school classes.

4 - We both discovered that a microlight is capable of so much more than we had ever imagined.

5 - This was so much more fun than flying around Gloucestershire on a Sunday morning.

6 - I feel I am a very much better flyer now (and I realise I still have a lot to learn having seen what others did), I certainly have much more confidence.

7 - How very much we want to do it all again.

We had taken the easy option of having Liz follow us around which did add to the comfort, though at some financial cost as the car used about as much fuel as the Shadow and, of course, we then had an extra bed to pay for and so on. Liz had thoroughly enjoyed herself and also felt she had participated, which made us all happy – and she saw Scotland.

Finally, and if JH does it again, treat yourself to a glimpse of the adventure of a lifetime and go along to his RBR “familiarisation and training” session. You will certainly emerge enthused, and we may even be able to enter an SVMC team next year.

(What a fascinating and detailed account. Thanks Chris for sharing your experiences with us - warts and all! Ed)

Internet

The Americans are still ahead of us in providing useful aviation services. The latest to be found is <www.ahas.com>. This is a site currently only of use if you are flying in the USA as it will tell you the likelihood of having a bird strike on your projected flight. For GA pilots this is useful as at certain times of the year there are large movements of birds across the States and forewarned is forearmed - a revised track can be plotted in advance.

Another site <www.sky-alliance.com> gives a full flight briefing service but you have to register to use the service. The service includes Flight Plan submission for the defined route, TAF/METAR/MET information for your indicated airports plus NOTAMS. The complete Flight Plan can then be printed out.

When using the Internet remember “Don’t byte off more than you can view!”

Safety

Winter is the time to undertake major maintenance and general overhaul of your aircraft without losing precious flying time. However, this task is not without its risks as the following quote from one of the flying magazines shows. “During the final approach to St Petersburg a passenger in a B737 spotted a pair of pliers lodged near a flap hinge. A flap motor had been changed the previous day.” If this can happen in a large commercial maintenance organisation then it is even more likely to happen to us often working in less than ideal conditions. Always do a final check to see that nothing is left in

or on the aircraft when you have finished and double check that you have got all the tools that you started with back in your toolbox. If you have a workshop it would be worth making a shadow board for your tools which will show up immediately anything that is missing at the end of the job. Remember, too, those places which are difficult to see and take note from the following, again from one of the magazines - “On rotation a small bottle of red wine rolled from behind the pilot’s rudder pedals,” (I’m not suggesting that we serve drinks in flight but a tubular spanner could have the same effect!). In some aircraft this could cause problems because it is likely that the object would roll out of the back of the pod and be deposited on the runway to be collected by the next aircraft’s propeller. Maintenance is no different from flying, in that vigilance, checks and a good look-out are necessary if safety is not to be compromised.

Sun ‘n Fun 2001

A reminder that this year the dates are 8th to 14th April and the venue, as usual, is Lakeland Airport, Florida. If you are thinking of going, now is the time to be making bookings for flights, car hire and accommodation. It is particularly difficult to secure accommodation reasonably close to Lakeland if you leave it too late. Those members with access to the Internet can log on to the Sun ‘n Fun site and download the list of motel, etc., offering rooms.

The tiredness computer

Tiredness and fatigue can be dangerous things for pilots, and new research suggests that they could be identified by computers up to 20 minutes before the subjects themselves notice them setting in.

The research has been conducted by Kakuichi Shiomi, chief researcher at the Electronic Navigation Research Institute near Tokyo in Japan. He has identified that voice patterns can carry signs of fatigue at an early stage in the tiring process, thus giving some warning of this apparently everyday, but nevertheless potentially fatal, condition.

The system uses chaos mathematics to translate the speech patterns of a tiring pilot into graphic format, and then compares these patterns to those of his more awake self, and spot changes in the patterns that could signal fatigue. The system has so far been tested on subjects in ‘laboratory’ conditions, reading and commenting on complex subject matter. Next step will be to try it out on pilots and air traffic controllers in the field

Farnborough prepared for sell-off

A story in the Guardian newspaper revealed that the Ministry of Defence had agreed in outline to the sale of Farnborough Airfield to TAG Aviation for a sum said to be in excess of £100m.

There are various conditions to the sale, one of which is that the biennial airshow should continue to take place at the site.

Another set of conditions, though, are likely to prove more controversial. This is that the CAA grant a licence to the field so that it can be used by executive jets. In order for this to happen, three local hills will have to be reshaped. One will lose seven metres, another two metres and a third will also have to be 'scalped' (in the words of local environmentalists). These environmentalists are concerned because the areas under threat of reworking are home to a number of Britain's rarest birds and other flora and fauna. The MOD is able to carry out such work, before sale, under crown immunity and outline planning permission has already been given. The MOD claims that sites would be improved by the works. The planning permission includes a proviso for up to 28,000 traffic movements a year.

Radio Licence fee

You hopefully read in Microlight Flying the good news that a reduction in the fee payable for a transportable radio licence had been negotiated with the Radio Communications Agency. Instead of the proposed £30 annual fee it will now be £15 and you will be able to use your radio in any aircraft. In order to actually use the radio you also need to obtain the Flight Radiotelephony Operator's (Restricted) Licence. See Bill Austin if you are interested.

More details of new National Private Pilots' Licence

The CAA has recently issued a more complete overview of how the new National Private Pilots' Licence (NPPL) may shape up. The authority says that rapid progress has been made since the announcement of the new licence in June this year, with 'significant progress towards a full technical specification for the licence'.

The outline below has been drawn up after discussions with the industry, although it is admitted that many of the solutions are only interim ones which will allow the licence to be put in place quickly. It can then be 'amended as appropriate when further experience has been gained.' The currently agreed details include the following:

Initially, the ground syllabus for the licence will be based on the JAR-FCL 1 PPL syllabus. The eventual goal is for the NPPL to have its own ground syllabus to be tested in an FAA-style multiple choice exam. A minimum of 32 flying hours will be required for training. 22 of these will be instructional or taken up by the skill test. A minimum of one hour's instrument appreciation training will be required, including the ability to make a 180 degree turn on instruments. This ability will be checked in the skill

test. Once a pilot has an NPPL, his/her first three land away cross country flights will require an instructor's approval. In addition, passenger briefing will be a part of the skill test. Medicals will be based upon the DVLA group two licence (for professional driving). An NPPL applicant will need to declare their own fitness, and this will have to be endorsed by their GP. A copy of a pilot's medical certificate will be sent to the relevant association to which they belong (AOPA, PFA etc). Validity will be the same as for the DVLA medical - from issue to the age of 45, then five yearly from 45 to 65. After 65 it will be annual.

Pilots who are unable to meet the requirements for the group two medical will have the chance to pass a medical which is equivalent to the DVLA group one standard (for car driving). Since these are not currently all that well defined, the CAA will be issuing guidelines for pilots and GPs, covering conditions which could affect pilots but not drivers. A pilot's declaration of fitness and GP's endorsement will again be required. If you have this sort of medical you will be able to fly solo or with another pilot qualified on that type of aircraft.

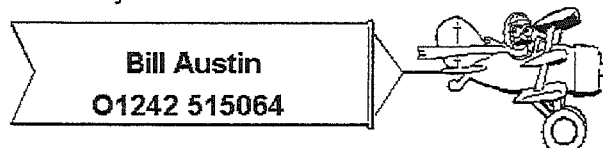
The privileges of the licence have also been clarified. They include restriction: i) to flights within UK airspace, during daytime, under visual flight rules with minimum in-flight visibility of 5km (10km under Special VFR); ii) to single engine piston aeroplanes with a maximum take-off weight of 2000kg; iii) to a maximum of three passengers plus the pilot; iv) to simple aircraft types, although differences training will be available for more complex features (retractable gear, variable pitch prop, etc); and revalidation automatically if the pilot flies at least six hours a year, four of which must be as pilot in command. A flight with an instructor will be required every two years.

For Sale

Medium light blue Ozee flying suit £45, Medium summer weight light blue/purple Ozee flying suit £40. Pr battery powered heated gloves. Ideal for cold passenger £25 Trevor Cale on 01684 564685

Wanted

Communications equipment: headsets (Electret microphone type) and a connector box - compatible with Icom IC-A22E transceiver (GA plugs fine). Bits may do, what have you got? - Communica, Sonic, Lynx or complete systems with helmets. Ring Ed Wells on 01452 830951 evenings or 01452 784044 in the day





Severn Valley
Microlight Club



Club Newsletter

February 2001

February meeting - The SVMC Winter Feast

A reminder that this month there will be no meeting at the Gloucestershire Club. Instead members will be gathering at The Queen's Arms at Ashleworth for a three course meal - 7.30 for 8.00pm. Details were circulated by Robbie Keene at the AGM and members were asked to complete and return a form indicating their preference of menu. If you wish to attend it may not be too late. Contact Robbie as soon as possible - Tel:- 01452 414975 or 0831 237353 as it still may be possible to fit you in.

Subscriptions

Members are reminded that their annual subscription is now due. The AGM agreed that the fees would remain the same as last year so it's £15 for single membership and £20 for family membership. If you have a form with this issue of Airscrew it means that you have not yet paid. If your subscription is not received by the time the March edition of the newsletter goes to press then this will be the last newsletter that you receive. Help the Treasurer by paying promptly - preferably in cash for ease of paying in.

AGM

Chairman's Report

by Andrew John

In her Presidential report to the BMAA Annual General Meeting at Telford, Anne Welch suggested that "... the fun had gone out of flying", due to bureaucratic regulations, public attitudes and not least the weather. However she was swift to add ".....thanks largely to the Microlighting movement", private flying was still very much alive and kicking, which was good to hear.

Ben Ashman, during his visit to us in November summed up the essence of flying with an anecdote of two microlight pilots flying to a destination, one in a

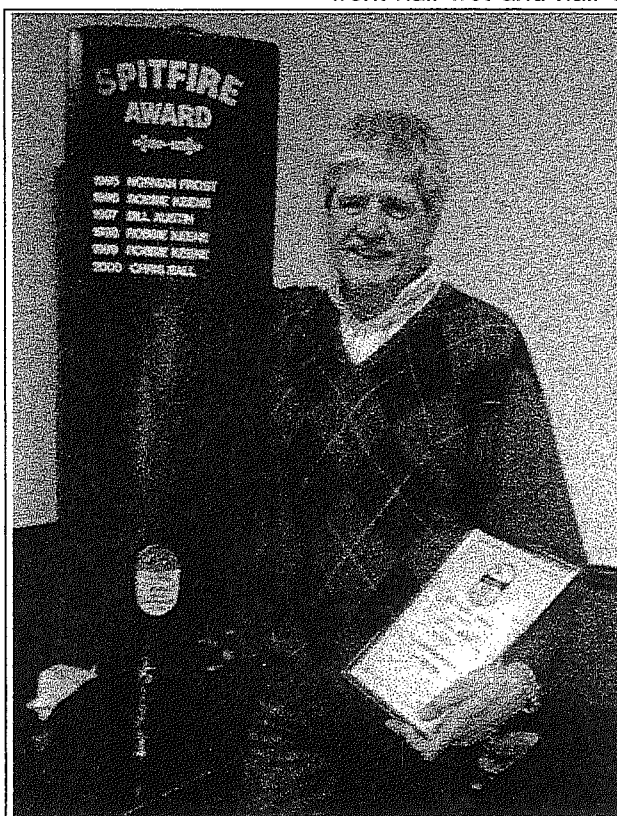
swift ship the other in a more sedate and slower machine. The first, having waited some time for the other to arrive, enquired where he had been, only to receive the reply that he had "... been flying"! We all have slightly differing ways of quantifying just what we get from the freedom of flight, but most will agree it is the time in the air that really counts.

So a brief resume of the year must inevitably begin where we left off last year with an explosion of X-Airitis, with it's launch in 1999 eclipsing even the popular MiniMax. JH informs me that he test flew 23 X-Airs of which 3 were built by SVMC Club Members, Barbara Austin, John Davidson and Chris Payne. Returning to Ben Ashman and his visit to demonstrate his Doodlebug powered Hang Glider, he too was able to report an amazing figure of 100 units having been sold, proving that original and well priced aircraft will find a market.

Bill Austin persuaded John Davis to accompany him to Sun and Fun in Florida which they both thoroughly enjoyed, Bill for the second time. Popham came and went half wet and half dry but as usual well worth the

opportunity to see new aircraft in the air and dream a bit! Many Fly-ins and other events were washed out during the summer but the Round Britain Rally hit a better spell of weather at the end of July giving our own members who entered an experience they will always remember. Chris Ball came second in the Fixed Wing Class, Rob Keene 5th in the Solo Class despite problems which would have grounded others pilots for months! Brian Finch and Bruce Drake came a highly creditable 8th overall.

Colin Bodil, flying a 912 Blade challenged Jennifer Murray in her Robinson R44 helicopter to a circumnavigation of the globe in the aid of charity. Their departure, adventures, frustrations and final safe



Chris Ball - Spitfire Award Winner

arrival back in the UK could be followed on the Web and were greeted with great acclaim.

An invitation to visit the National Air Traffic Centre, arranged by Neil Duncanson, proved to be a highly interesting and dramatic insight into the workings of one of the world's most active ATCC's. As usual Telford and the International Airports Exhibition rounded off the year with probably the best show of all the available kit for anyone interested in Sports Aviation in whatever form you wish to fly.

Training

Groundschool now runs as required and there were 4 students during the year. Training for the Radio Telephony Licence has become more popular and another 4 students attempted to conquer the airwaves.

Finance

Ges has managed the accounts with skill, proving that we can hold our own with a subscription of only £15 per annum. Not bad!

Social

Due to a very low attendance at the 1999 Christmas party a change to the traditional festivities was planned. An informal dinner at a local hostelry would take the place of the February Club meeting in the hope that this might attract greater numbers. Sadly this decision has not been popular with some members, but it is hoped they will join in nevertheless.

Airscrew

Our monthly Newsletter gets better and better. There can be very few clubs who circulate their members with such comprehensive information on all matters aeronautical. Thanks to Bill and John we have an excellent production which keeps members fully informed and entertained with articles, many of which are penned by our own members. Of particular note must be Chris Ball's saga of his Round Britain Rally – superb!

Monthly Meetings

Our monthly meetings produced the usual crop of interesting subjects, presented to us by many who had a fascinating story to tell and illustrate. Topics covered included paragliding, powered parachuting, the Doodlebug, competitive flying, and tales from Sun and Fun. Many thanks to John Davis for arranging the speakers for the last few years.

Safety

It is good to report that we had no serious incidents during the year.

Fly Ins and Outs

Mostly scrapped due to the appalling weather, but the occasional foray was made, notably to Lyneham, Milsom, by Bob Hinds, Chris Ball and myself.

Competitions

We have a Euro Champion in Robbie Keene who won GOLD for the Solo Class at the European Championships. As mentioned earlier Chris Ball came second in the Round Britain Rally Three Axis Class with Brian Finch and Bruce Drake 8th. Congratulations to you all.

Awards

Two Trophies are awarded annually by the Club Committee. This year the Spitfire Trophy was awarded to Chris Ball for his outstanding achievement in the Round Britain Rally. The Poser Trophy was given to Dave Watson for his determination and enthusiasm, in addition to being the pilot with the highest number of hours before achieving his licence and for being the only member of the Club to have joined twice!

Committee

As with most organisations the annually elected officers do their best to satisfy the members and keep the books balanced. We have tried to achieve this but

are finding that support from members, particularly when organising flying events, is beginning to wane. Your support for the Club events is vital and your assistance with all other matters will be much appreciated. My thanks to the Millennium Committee who have all been very supportive



Dave Watson Poser Trophy Winner

Treasurer's Report by Ges Hatchett

The Club accounts showed that there was an excess of income over expenditure. The recommendation was that subscriptions should remain at the level of £15 for single members and £20 for family membership. There were no questions arising from the accounts and they were approved by the meeting.

Training and Safety Officer's Report

Four students had taken ground school during the year and two of them had gone on to achieve their licences. As far as safety was concerned, within the Club there had been no major accidents or incidents. This reflected the national position reported by the BMAA Safety Officer at the AGM at Telford. Members were asked to let the Club Safety Officer know of any safety related incidents so that lessons could be drawn from

them and published in *Aircrew* for the benefit of the whole membership. Any information given would be treated confidentially. One Radio Course had been run with another projected in January.

During the year, in his capacity as a Ground Examiner he had signed 32 logbooks compared with 27 in 1999. Members were asked to note that he was not now permitted to sign GA log books.

SVMC Rally

At the last committee meeting Robbie Keene put forward a proposal for an event to encourage all pilots in the Club to venture a little further afield but still remaining within 30 miles of Over. Basically the aim would be to fly to a number of specified sites, both large and small, over a period of two days. Although it might be possible for the whole rally to be done in one day by a pilot used to flying for hours on end the Committee felt that it would be unreasonable to put such pressure on less experienced pilots in the Club. Full written details of the sites would be available at the start where members would also be fully briefed. Members would be able to visit as many or as few as they wished in no particular order. This would not be a competitive event but merely one that would have the objective of personal achievement and broadening of horizons. The objective is purely for each pilot to see what he/she can do and to navigate successfully and confidently around the sites. The event is at the moment only in the very early stages of discussion and planning and more details will be available next month. It would be helpful to have members' views and an indication of the level of support for this idea. With this in mind the Chairman will be asking for your reactions at the start of the March meeting. It was also thought that it would be reasonable to invite other Clubs in our area to come and join in the event. The proposed dates are 23rd and 24th June.

Surrey threatens to restrict GA

Surrey is the latest UK authority to issue a draft policy statement which includes proposals specifically aimed at restricting the growth of GA (which in the long term will inevitably lead to its decline). Surrey has two general aviation airfields within its borders - Fairoaks and Redhill - and both these are impacted by the draft document. The introduction states: "The development of business aviation at Fairoaks Airport will only be permitted on a limited scale where the impact on the surrounding area is acceptable. Development likely to cause an intensification of flying and other related activities at Redhill Aerodrome will not be permitted. The development of new airfields or the reopening of disused airfields will not be permitted. Airstrips or landing sites for private and recreational flying will only be permitted where the environmental impacts are acceptable." The document goes on to point out that Fairoaks currently has a movement limit which gives

scope for "controlled expansion" of business aviation, but that "the other elements of general aviation, such as recreational and training flights, tend to generate more environmental disturbance. This factor, coupled with Green Belt considerations, indicates that further development which leads to increased disturbance from such flying will generally be resisted."

All in all, it seems that GA in Surrey may be throttled back to nothing if the process goes ahead as planned.

PFA to re-locate

It has been reported in the aviation press that the PFA are likely to re-locate their headquarters to Long Marston airfield and it is possible that the annual rally will also be held there. If this is so, then SVMC members who are also PFA members will have no excuse for not attending the rally. Another advantage is that the airfield is situated in open airspace and more centrally than Cranfield.

Safety

When was the last time you had a thorough look at the propeller on your aircraft. It is an essential piece of kit which revolves at an incredible speed to provide you with the adrenaline rush you seek. Because it rotates so fast it does not take a railway sleeper to inflict substantial damage on it while it is working. Wooden propellers probably incur the most damage from objects drawn into their circle of operation so most damage will occur during operations on the ground. Having removed the propeller from the aircraft what should you be looking for? 1) Damage to the leading edge and tips. 2) Any cracks or delamination. 3) Elongation of the mounting holes 4) The balance. Minor damage can be repaired but anything major requires a replacement propeller. Balancing is usually accomplished by applying thin coats of varnish to the light blade, allowing it to dry and then checking the balance again. Repeat the procedure until you are satisfied that it is as near perfect as you can get it.

Replacing the propeller on the aircraft entails torquing up the mounting bolts to the manufacturer's figure. The bolts go through the faceplate and screw into the backplate and it is at this point that the correct torque is applied. Having done this the nyloc nuts are threaded on to the bolts and tightened up while holding the torqued bolt steady. Next remove the spark plugs to check the tracking. Set up a piece of wood or metal in front of or behind the lowest blade so that it is just clear of the blade. Then rotate the propeller - ensuring that the aircraft itself does not move - and check that all the other blades pass the check point with the same amount of clearance. Correct tracking is achieved by adjusting the tension on the mounting bolts as appropriate. You should now have a rejuvenated propeller. Composite propellers can be dealt with in a similar way.

I say, I say I say - again!

The last radio course has produced the first licensed radio operator in the club for 2001. John Davidson completed the course and went on to take and pass the CAA test at Staverton Flying School on 18th January. Well done John! He found the test quite demanding and draining in that total concentration was needed to cope with the demands of the "Controller" in requiring information and action. The whole process, including the written exam took in excess of three hours which included a thorough debriefing session after the practical test. Ask any members who have "been through the mill" in the past and they will tell you the same story. The only answer is to practise, practise, practise, at every available opportunity so that the basic calls and procedures become second nature.

New cell 10 times more powerful

Matsushita's battery company has developed a coin-type lithium-ion battery capable of delivery high currents. The new cell is capable of discharging around ten times as much current as previous cells, said the company.

With this characteristic, the new battery is expected to power such next generation devices as wrist-worn GPS (Global Positioning System), compact portable terminals and card-type information tools, said the company. Battery technology is becoming increasingly important as handheld devices get smarter and do more complex jobs. Accompanying these improvements in the performance are increases in the amount of power needed to keep them running.

The new battery, which has a capacity of 140 milli-Ampere hours and a 500-cycle charge-discharge life, will enter mass production in October this year at the rate of 500,000 units per month. Sampling pricing has been set at \$6.90.

Internet

It is reported that a new virus is in circulation, again through the e-mail system. This one has two possible identifiers. The first is the title "Win a Holiday" and the second is headed "California IBM" The latter is really part of the first message but both are said to be extremely powerful and will chew up all the contents of your hard drive. Do not open them!

Net browsers will be interested to know that they now have a Patron Saint of the Internet. The Vatican has decided from a shortlist that it is St Isadore of Seville. This illustrious person was a 7th century researcher who wrote the world's first encyclopaedia in which was summarised medicine, maths, rhetoric, grammar, history and theology.

Our American ultralight friends will be rejoicing since the EAA and the FAA have agreed a reduction in the flight test time for ultralights from 40 hours to ten hours. Unlike our regulations the Americans have their plane inspected when it is ready for flight (no stage

inspections!) and, if the inspector is satisfied, they, the builder, then has to fly it for 40 hours before re-calling the inspector to issue the equivalent of our Permit to Fly. Another interesting difference is that the plane only has to be flown for the requisite number of hours. They don't have a test schedule to follow and the inspector never flies the plane!

Quote of the Month

This month it comes from the top - none other than the Duke of York himself:-

"You need reasonably good sight to be in the Navy, but as a pilot, once you've flown a bit you can guess the way" A good argument for doing away with the navigation exam?

A happy pilot - a letter from a member

Dear Bill and Fellow Members,

On 26th June 2000 after two long frustrating years and having to re-sit my theory exams I finally passed my GFT and that coveted PPL is now at last mine.

This morning I have received the Club SVMC New Pilot patch. The Club apparently has a tradition of presenting one of these to each member who has obtained his microlight licence. I am only sorry that work prevents me from attending Club meetings to receive it. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Club for this patch which will be worn with pride. A special thanks must go to Bill Austin for his expert guidance and endless patience; to John Hamer for the excellent facilities made available at his own home; to Graham Slater, instructor at Clench Common and to Eric and Pat Woods for their endless encouragement and enthusiasm.

I look forward to meeting many of you during the year at fly-ins. Many thanks to all. A very happy pilot.
Graham Howley

For your diary

The provisional programme of speakers for the coming months is:- **March** - Chris Finnegan, Chief Executive of the BMAA; **April** - Dave McGauley, who flew a Blade around the USA and **May** - Eddie Clapham.

Aviation book swap

Richard Webb has acquired a number of books related to aviation and he has suggested that members might be interested in some of them. He will be bringing them to our meetings and members will be able to take away any that interest them. It is suggested that when they have read them they bring them back so that other members can take them. Members are also encouraged to bring any aviation books that they do not wish to keep and add them to the collection. Richard will be responsible for the collection generally and will keep those books not taken out between meetings.

Bill Austin
01242 515064





Severn Valley
Microlight Club

Club Newsletter



March 2001

Important Announcement

There will be **no Club meeting** this month.

In view of the increasing seriousness of the Foot and Mouth situation, not to mention the fact that a number of members are directly connected with farms, it has been decided to cancel this month's meeting. Although this will be disappointing for members it is no doubt the right decision in the circumstances

Flying restrictions - Foot and mouth disease

The BMAA has consulted the MAFF regarding the flying of microlights from farm strips and has circulated the Ministry's advice that **all flying from farm strips should cease until further notice**. As responsible fliers we should comply with this advice. The logics are obvious in that, should you land at another farm strip then you could, quite innocently, spread the disease from your point of departure or even bring it back with you on your return notwithstanding the possibility that either farmer could insist that your aircraft should be thoroughly sprayed with disinfectant. However tempting, for the present, the advice is **do not fly**. At time of going to print, five cases have been confirmed in Gloucestershire, and a large area of the Severn Valley as well as the Forest of Dean has been designated an infected area. This it is not a time for complacency.

Membership Renewal

Have you renewed your membership of the Club? In the last edition of the newsletter you should have received a membership form a) to remind you to renew and b) to enable the Secretary to update the Club database. It is essential that you complete the form as the details are the basis for all written communication about Club events and meetings. Club fees remain the same as last year - £15 for individual membership and £20 for family membership. Can you think of a Club that charges less for the service that you receive? Renew now or you will not hear from us again!

Chairman's Ramblings

For mainly soggy reasons I found last year one of the worst I can recall, so with the New Year safely past I naively felt we could be on our way to better things. How wrong can you be?!

Serious rain, followed by the frostiest sequence, with snow, emphasised just how much we had changed from the mild winters of the last five years, only helped to depress my mental state. Flying opportunities had been limited, and then along comes Foot and Mouth Disease to revive memories of 1967 the last but one outbreak when, up on the Cotswolds, we closed our access for ten weeks in order to reduce the risk of contamination on the farm, while only ten miles away the funeral pyres were burning the carcasses of some of the finest cattle in the area.

Now, for those not involved with farming, the nightly sight on TV of flaming trenches consuming the bodies of thousands of susceptible animals to the disease must be very hard to understand. Yet the harsh reality is that to the cloven hoofed animal F & M disease is the same as Smallpox was to human beings over a century ago. It would not necessarily kill you, but it would render you incapable of living a healthy life in the future, unable to enjoy normal expectations. The spread of the disease this time has complicated the control measures and made the work, learned from earlier outbreaks, almost useless at this stage. Almost everyone will be affected by this scourge in some way or another, though no human is likely to be contaminated, as we are immune from the disease. MAFF are doing their best under very difficult conditions, understaffed and lacking in recent experience now having to import foreign vets to assist with the control.

As aviators operating out of farmers' fields and flying freely from county to county we pose a serious threat for the spread of the plague, hence the request from the BMAA to cease flying until the epidemic is over. For some a very hard decision, particularly when that glorious day dawns and you may not have been airborne for weeks if not months because of the weather and you yearn for the blue sky above. For those who stay earthbound and walk the public rights of way, they too now find access barred and the countryside out of bounds. A harsh reality demonstrating just how seriously our scientists consider the risks of accidental contamination, no matter how small.

As a farmer and flyer I ask for your patience and understanding during what will be a long and increasingly painful period while this dreadful disease is brought to it's knees and exterminated.

By contrast I have great pleasure in reporting that the SVMC's Winter Feast at the Queen's Arms at Ashleworth last month was a resounding success. An excellent venue chosen by Robbie Keene, with food to match at a price we could afford, which was enjoyed by sufficient members and their partners to hopefully ensure a repeat performance next year. However, due to circumstances this year beyond our control, it would be more popular perhaps to have this event in addition to the monthly meeting next February.

Robbie and Sue also provided the entertainment with a taxing quiz on past Pop Titles, which awoke many hazy memories of twistin' and a shoutin'!!

Today I had a phone call from one David Lord (passenger in Engine Out Video "xxxx-xxx") who purchased my Flash 2 Alpha -HZ to complete his PPL. Much chuffed, he reported having completed his AFI course and passed with flying colours (pardon the pun!).

Having replaced the pod on HZ, he has promised to return the original to me as a memento as it displays some of the 'graffiti' collected over the years, including a large Welsh Dragon Logo stuck on by it's original owner, Graham Stallard, to cover a 'minor' body blemish!

Finally, for those of you who knew Manuela Breen, Gerry's delightful wife, you will join with me in mourning her untimely death from cancer last month in Portugal, as reported in the latest edition of Microlight Flyer with a vivid biography by David Young.

Rotax servicing

The Club now has amongst its members a fully qualified and approved Rotax service engineer who can carry out anything from general servicing to a complete re-build on any two or four stroke Rotax engine. Adrian Lloyd has recently obtained his certification from Rotax and offers his services to members at a competitive price. Congratulations Adrian - I'm sure members will avail themselves of your services. Adrian can be contacted on 01885 482504 in the evenings or at weekends.

Quote of the month

Smokers in the Club who also fly should note under the Human Performance Limitations heading - "Respiration is composed of two acts. First inspiration then expektoration"

Kemble bought - future is secure

The future of Kemble airfield - the home to a growing number of GA aircraft and activities - looks secure following the news that a consortium of three companies have exchanged contracts with the MOD to buy the airfield.

Iron Mountain (Europe) Ltd, Kemble Air Services Ltd and Rapid Racking Ltd will pay £6.8m for the airfield, which has in its time been used by the USAF and as a home for the Red Arrows. The purchase is expected to be completed towards the end of March.

Plans are reportedly afoot for developments which will encourage GA users once the deal goes through.

Xair News

Barbara has now sold her Xair and it was delivered to its new home at a farm strip just north of Bedford on Friday 9th February. The first flight was carried out by JH who reported an 800 foot a minute climb rate and a very responsive aircraft. Because it was the first Xair with a 3:1 gearbox and a Brolga propeller it was required to carry out 25 hours flying before it could be issued with a Permit to Fly. At the time of its delivery it had already done 5 hours.

Self-Healing Material Developed

Researchers have developed the first material that automatically repairs itself, offering a potential way of fixing the hairline cracks that develop in the space-age composites used in everything from tennis rackets to aircraft.

The scientists' secret: tiny capsules of glue that are added to the composite material.

Composite materials consist of fibres of glass, carbon or other substances mixed with a resin. Fibreglass is one type of composite. Some tennis rackets and golf clubs are made of graphite composites. Damage to composite materials often begins as tiny cracks. As they grow, they weaken the material until it breaks. To heal tiny cracks automatically, the researchers sprinkled capsules about the thickness of a human hair throughout an experimental Fiberglas-like compound. When a crack appeared, capsules in its path broke open, spilled their contents and sealed the cracks.

The researchers reported that the compound retained 75 percent of its original strength after the cracks had healed for 48 hours. The new material "nips the damage in the bud" but is not yet ready for commercial production. Temperatures higher than 200 degrees stop the setting agent from working, and the curing time is too long for many applications.

The material contains 100 to 200 capsules per cubic inch. While all of the capsules will eventually break, objects made with the material could last several times longer than those made of current composites. Materials such as the self-healing composite are part of the infant field of smart materials. Objects such as spacecraft, artificial joints and bridge supports, which are difficult or impossible to reach, are prime candidates for self-healing materials. Researchers are also exploring the use of the material for computer circuit boards, many of which come off the production line with small cracks that make them unusable.

Brian Milton's latest challenge

A couple of years ago, you will remember, Brian Milton made the headlines by flying round the world in a microlight. The achievement won him a number of awards. Brian's now looking to make a new mark in the aviation history books, with a solo, non-stop flight across the Atlantic in a microlight. Brian's mount will be, as in his round the world flight, a Mainair Blade with a Rotax 912. The trip - which Brian's intending to make in July this year, weather allowing - should take something like 33 hours and cover 1685 miles. The route will take the aircraft from St John's in Newfoundland to Shannon.

40km jump attempt

A parachutist is planning to make a leap into the record books - by jumping from 40km above the earth. Rodd Millner is intending to make the attempt near Alice Springs in his native Australia. Special equipment he'll need will include a pressure suit and a larger than normal parachute (to compensate for the weight of the suit). If all goes to plan he'll break the sound barrier in the descent.

However, surprising as it seems, Millner can expect opposition in his race to leap from altitude. Cheryl Stearn is also planning a gargantuan leap - also from 40km - in the near future.

Note from Barbara

Now that IT has gone, I'm feeling much better and am actually thinking about flying again. John Davidson was kind enough to take me up for a trip which I thoroughly enjoyed. This has wetted my appetite for more. I am unsure which way I am going (fixed or flex) at the moment but will let fate decide. Meanwhile I am keeping my hand in on the practical side by stripping my bicycle down - and re-assembling it! Well I did think that it was rather stupid that I had built an aeroplane and yet couldn't manage to sort out my bike!

See you all at the next meeting....whenever!

Rules of the Air

Every take off is optional. Every landing is mandatory.

If you push the stick forward, the houses get bigger. If you pull the stick back, they get smaller, that is, unless you keep pulling the stick back-then they get bigger again.

Flying isn't dangerous. Crashing is what's dangerous.

It's always better to be down here wishing you were up there, than up there wishing you were down here.

The only time you have too much fuel is when you're on fire.

The propeller is just a big fan in front of the plane used to keep the pilot cool. When it stops, you can actually watch the pilot start sweating.

When in doubt, hold on to your altitude. No one has ever collided with the sky.

A "good" landing is one from which you can walk away. A "great" landing is one after which they can use the plane again.

Learn from the mistakes of others. You won't live long enough to make all of them yourself.

You know you've landed with the wheels up if it takes full power to taxi to the ramp.

The probability of survival is inversely proportional to the angle of arrival. Large angle of arrival, small probability of survival-and vice versa.

Never let an aeroplane take you somewhere your brain didn't get to five minutes earlier.

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

Reliable sources also report that mountains have been known to hide out in clouds.

Always try to keep the number of landings you make equal to the number of takeoffs you've made.

There are three simple rules for making a smooth landing, unfortunately, no one knows what they are.

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.

Helicopters can't fly; they're just so ugly the earth repels them.

If all you can see out of the windscreen is ground that's going round and round and all you can hear is commotion coming from the passenger compartment, things are not at all as they should be.

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.

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

It's always a good idea to keep the pointy end going forward as much as possible.

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

Remember, gravity is not just a good idea. It's the law. And it's not subject to repeal.

The three most useless things to a pilot are altitude above you, runway behind you, and a tenth of a second ago

There are old pilots and there are bold pilots. There are, however, no old, bold pilots.

For Sale

Black Mercury flying suit, medium size with red lining. One careful lady owner, low mileage (the suit not the lady!). Comes complete with lots of happy memories (the suit again!) An irresistible bargain at £40. Also very lightweight two-man tent - will also take two women or even mixed sexes but not all at the same time! Suitable for stowing in your flexwing should you land out or don't fancy facing the music when you get home 6 hours after leaving to go for an hour's flight!. Very little used and in excellent condition. Another bargain at £25. Contact Gay Nisbett on 01684 561822

Medium light blue Ozee flying suit £45, Medium summer weight light blue/purple Ozee flying suit £40. Pr battery powered heated gloves. Ideal for cold passenger £25 Trevor Cale on 01684 564685

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

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

REDLANDS MICROLIGHT CLUB

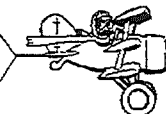
Hangarage available for fixed & fully/semi rigged flexwing microlights.

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

Bill Austin
01242 515064



"I don't understand it - the paperwork's all in order."



Severn Valley
Microlight Club



Club Newsletter

April 2001

This month's meeting

In view of the relentless increase in the number of cases of Foot and Mouth disease the Committee have regretfully decided to **cancel this month's meeting**. Members will no doubt be disappointed but can rest assured that as soon as it is considered appropriate to do so the monthly meetings will recommence.

Foot & Mouth - A close Encounter

By John Hamer

The past couple of months have been very anxious ones, particularly as we had 50 odd sheep on our hill/airstrip. Nightly we would watch the TV to see burning pyres and were concerned that the friendly flock that my daughter would feed each day when she put her pony out, would be killed in front of her, and left for days before burning on our land. That anxiety got worse as the disease spread down to the Forest of Down. It then jumped the river and a case appeared just 2 miles or so away. Initially it appeared that everything within 3 km would be culled and fortunately we were just outside that, but within 2 nm of the farm so flying (not that we were doing any) would have to cease. It wasn't until the MAFF indicated a 2 mile culling zone instead of 3km that we really got worried, as part of our land (but not with stock on) was apparently within this area. The CAA had by now formally published the TRA (Temporary Restricted Zone) giving co-ordinates. With these plugged into the GPS, I walked round our land and found my strip was 70 yards outside the TRA, but better still our land was about 50 yards outside the MAFF 2 (statue) mile zone. The centre of the site turned out to be the field adjacent to the farm and not the farm itself. So we breathed a sigh of relief - but still held our breathe as cases in Gloucestershire

increased, and most of our neighbours were served with 'D' notices. You could smell the burning pyres in the wind. Then out the blue I got a call from our farmer to say the owner of the sheep hoped to get a licence to move them the following day. Neither of us really believed this possible. However the following day, accompanied by a vet and mountains of paperwork, he arrived. MAFF had given him four hours to move them. He brought five sheep dogs and proceeded to play 'One Man and his dog' - well several dogs. An amazing exhibition and thus in lightening quick time they were rounded up. The vet checked them before they were loaded and off they went - just as the farm in the next village was having their stock rounded up to be culled. An hour after the farmer arrived back in Wales, all further movement orders were withdrawn. What a relief to get rid of the sheep alive, others haven't been so fortunate.

However we weren't spared the JCB arriving to dig a pit, as Penny's old horse dropped down dead in the field just a few days later.

As they say, things can only get better from now on can't they? Well, MAFF have now reconsidered the risk posed by aircraft and as a result the CAA have withdrawn all the TRAs near us. There is now no livestock near us. The strip which has been totally waterlogged for the past two months is now drying out, so you never know, I might get back flying one day, but in the immediate future, visitors are welcome once again at Catsbury.



The ones that got away

Foot and mouth repercussions - Exams, Log Books and Check Flights

Some members might be getting a bit edgy because the present Foot and Mouth crisis is preventing them continuing their practical training and their ground exams may well run out before the crisis ends. Bear in mind that some training schools are still

operating because they fly from tarmac runways and the answer might be to contact one of these to arrange lessons and GFT's. If you do not want to follow this course and prefer to wait until your original training site becomes operative again then the CAA advice is that you should write to them giving the date(s) on which your exams expire, what stage you have reached with your flying (e.g. awaiting GFT) and details of the school you are training with. They will then make a decision on a case by case basis. The address to write to is:- Miss E.Cullen-Hayes, CAA Flight Crew Licensing, Aviation House, Gatwick Airport South, West Sussex, RH6 0YR.

As far as log books are concerned, don't panic too much. Remember that you must have flown 5 hours in the last 13 months. When Bill looks at your book he locates a date in your book which is 13 months prior to the day on which you present it to him. If, within that period you have five hours recorded and those five hours are also within the period covered by the previous C of E stamp then he can sign your book. If this doesn't make sense ask Bill to look at your book! Those members who have a Permit to Fly inspection in the offing and are wondering about the associated Check Flight, the Editor understands from the BMAA that the CAA have granted a 60 day extension of time in addition to the normal limit of 28 days for this to be done. If you find yourself in this position you will need to write to the BMAA asking for the extended period to be applied.

At the beginning of April the regulations relating to the size and height of exclusion zones were changed. The majority now extend for a radius of one nautical mile and up to 500 feet and apply only to helicopters. The 'burial' sites however retain the original limits of two nautical miles and 1500 feet, and apply to all aircraft. Check the Notams for precise details.

Mayday, Mayday, Mayday!

This is an opportune time for an appeal to all members to come to the help of the Editor in providing news, anecdotes, "ramblings" or anything else which can be published in the newsletter. Otherwise the articles will get fewer, the margins wider and the print size larger! A small contribution from everyone would make a big difference.

Big Country - Travelling and flying in British Columbia - by Ed Wells

Introduction:

With the approach of the new century and an increasing awareness that I may not live to see another I decided it was time to stop working for a while and focus some attention on a big trip out. Some friends had immigrated to British Columbia back in 1996, they had invited us to stay. We wanted see both them and Canada so the decision on where to go was easy.

We were invited to stay as long as we wanted whenever we wanted, but eight over excited kids in one house might have tested our friendship to destruction! Also we were hoping to see more of Canada than just one area and so I decided to explore another possibility...

How does a family of six with limited budget in high tourist season contain the cost of an extended holiday like this to an acceptable budget - especially when they want the flexibility to move around?

Answer: "<http://www.holi-swaps.com>". This Internet site maintains listings of people all over the world with housing or accommodation who are potentially willing to swap with you - a leap of faith based on mutual trust, e-mail and of course good luck.

A quick scan through the Canadian listings revealed only one holi-swapper close to matching our needs. They wanted to swap the whole of August with someone in the south of England. Additional research on "<http://www.expedia.com>" found the approximate location in relationship to our friends. It turned out to be within around five hours drive and close to what was described as BC's Riviera? Our swap was potentially on Apex Mountain - somewhere in the Coast Mountain Range (you know the one - just left of the Rockies!).

A flurry of e-mail through January resulted in us agreeing to swap our home on May Hill for 24 days with The MacGregors. Oddly enough the MacGregors turned out to be a British family, working in Dubai but owning two Ski Lodge apartments on Apex mountain. This was either an elaborate international scam or a stroke of good fortune - we opted for cabin fever and good fortune. The plan was coming together nicely, we shook electronic hands on it and the second location was sorted...

The flights, car hire, hotel and holiday insurance were all easily arranged via the Internet and a single Canadian phone call. On the 31st July we threw our house keys at the MacGregor's and with no proper idea of where we were going headed for Gatwick.

There just isn't enough space to do a running commentary on where we went and what we saw. For the rest of this series I will concentrate on the flying I both saw and did during our stay.

Flight experience 1: Airtransat Airbus A330

Nine hour direct flight from Gatwick to Vancouver International

A typical sanitised, homogenised, cynically and clinically executed charter flight with total focus on fuel burn and economy rather than my request for the jump seat - I found I could handle the rejection OK after a few medicinal whiskies had dulled the cramp in my legs. Mercifully our four children slept peacefully for the majority of the nine-hour flight as I staved off deep vein thrombosis by repeatedly visiting the various, but not varied, toilet facilities.

I've noticed over the years that the more people there are packed into close confines the less social we all become. I met no one of any apparent interest during my nine-hour promenade preoccupied as I was with the vision of frozen Airline waste products hurtling towards some poor unfortunate holidaymaker sleeping peacefully in the sunshine (mouth open of course!). Maybe my fellow travellers were telepathic - more likely they were intent on avoiding the galloping promenades!

The highlight of the trip, which took place entirely in daylight, was passing over Iceland, Greenland then Foxe Basin followed by a near perfect view of the breaking ice flows in Hudson Bay. As we flew at nearly 600mph for two hours over nothing but tundra I suddenly began to appreciate the sheer size of Canada - no visible roads, railways or people, just tundra!

A slightly cloudy approach over the Rocky and Coast Mountain ranges into Vancouver was followed by a perfect landing. Not my idea of heaven as you can tell, so after breathing in the re-cycled farts of total strangers for nearly 10 hours - things just had to get better...

Next Month - Canadian Flight experience 2: C-FVFA - Zenair STOL CH701

Safety

Maybe there is a little light at the end of the tunnel and we may be able to resume flying in the not too distant future. With this in mind it is perhaps timely to repeat one of the safety tips from the past. You do not need reminding that we have had a lot of wet weather over the past months and that, coupled with a long period of inactivity, spells corrosion for most microlights hangared in barns on farms. One item in particular to inspect at the first opportunity is the fan belt and the pulleys on which it runs. Members will not need reminding that a recent accident was caused by the fan belt being abraded by rust on the pulleys and breaking in flight - result engine seizure, forced landing and death in that case. Take the opportunity before your first flight after the lay-off to inspect the pulleys and, if necessary, remove them and shine them up with fine emery paper. At this time of year also look for nesting animals and birds in the recesses of your aeroplane and check that they have not sampled your electrical system or other cables in their quest for a more varied diet! It is too late to find out once your wheels have left the ground.

Medical Certificates

The Medical Certificate which we all have signed by our GP has been amended in respect of colour vision. The previous certificate merely contained the statement "Applicants who do not have normal colour vision should be referred to the CAA medical division (not applicable to balloon pilots)". The new form is

more specific in requiring your colour vision to be assessed (not required for balloon pilots) and the doctor has to indicate on the form whether your colour vision is normal or abnormal. If your colour vision is abnormal then you are limited to aerodromes where "if Air Traffic Control is provided, it is by means of radio communication". In other words, you cannot visit any airfield which uses light signals only. Bill Austin has a supply of forms if you need one.

Quote of the Month

"A mile of highway will take you from A to B but a mile of runway will take you anywhere in the world"

Internet

Those of you who use the Internet frequently might like to bear in mind the following:- "Don't byte off more than you can view."

There is an interesting site to be found at <www.ukmicrolights.co.uk>. Currently it provides a detailed list of all the F & M infected sites listed by their Latitude and Longitude references. It also provides for Sales and Wants of aircraft as well as links to other sites.

Looking on the bright side that we will be able to fly at some time this year take a look at <www.flyppl.com> where you will find a directory of airfields. The information given includes GPS co-ordinates, runways, hazards and in some cases landing fees. It was noted that Redlands was listed but absolutely no information came up other than its name. Perhaps Joe and Sara (or whoever submitted their airfield) would like to complete the picture. Although there are a great many airfields listed, there is scope for a lot more to be added but the list may provide you with the information you need to plan your flight.

Popham

There have been doubts spread around the microlight community as to whether the forthcoming Microlight Trade Fair scheduled for 5th & 6th May will take place.

JH has talked to Dick Richardson, the airfield manager at Popham about this. Basically Popham is presently in a Foot & Mouth free county and thus he sees no reason for the show not to proceed. Obviously, if there is a case off the end of the runway, MAFF may decree otherwise, but the recent CAA edicts indicate that the risk of spreading the disease via fixed wing aircraft is negligible. Dick hopes though that people are sensible and think before flying in from 'infected areas'. He indicates that you will also most likely find disinfectant mats at the airfield gates.

'Palestinian' computer virus warning issued

Internet security experts are warning web users about a new, politically-motivated computer virus.

Symantec say they have spotted yet another attempt to reprise the recent Kournikova outbreak, this time with a rogue e-mail from Palestine.

When opened, the attachment displays a message box attacking Israeli security forces and calling an end to bloodshed in the Middle East.

Symantec says the virus, dubbed VBS.Staple.Worm, apes recent outbreaks by replicating itself using Microsoft Outlook.

They are warning users to be on the lookout for e-mails with 'Re. Injustice' in the subject line.

Despite beginning by apologising for the interruption, the virus threatens chaos by creating high volumes of extra web traffic.

Microsoft hails new system but users face charges

Microsoft has unveiled a system which it hopes will be as big as Windows.

HailStorm users will, for example, be able to buy a plane ticket on-line, then find out if the plane is on time, either via computer, handheld device or mobile. HailStorm will work with Microsoft competitors, such as Apple and Palm but customers will have to pay for Internet-based services. Hailstorm is the first set of services to define what the company plans to do with .NET. This is Microsoft's system for writing programmes for the Internet that work with most other computing devices. Bill Gates has said it is the most important thing to happen to Microsoft since Windows. In its final form, HailStorm will keep track of everything a computer user can imagine, from credit card numbers to calendars to address books.

From there, the system will provide people with a way to easily make purchases or conduct other transactions on-line, or to be notified of certain things via a variety of electronic devices.

HailStorm builds on the services that the free Microsoft product Passport already offers. Passport, which has about 160 million accounts, lets users store passwords, credit card numbers and other information, letting people easily get onto web sites or buy products.

Consumers will not see the final product until 2002.

The company does not expect to see a profit on it until beyond the company fiscal year ending July 2002.

Flying power stations planned to harness wind

An Australian scientist is proposing to build flying power stations.

Professor Bryan Roberts has been testing lightweight aircraft which can fly like kites and generate wind power from on-board propellers.

The craft would send their power to the ground using the cables which tether them to the ground.

Prof Roberts' craft looks like a bit like a balsa-wood helicopter but he hopes it will help meet future energy needs.

Dozens of gyromill wind turbines would be sent 14,700 feet into the jet stream and he wants to launch the first batch near Woomera in South Australia'. He told the BBC programme Tomorrow's World: "The cable connecting it to the ground can draw energy and use that to power the machine as a helicopter.

"Then, when it gets to altitude, the gyromill's motor can be switched to a generator and energy is pushed back down the cable to the ground."

Weather for breakfast!

An inventor has created the world's first weather-forecasting toaster. Robin Southgate's toaster is linked to a weather forecast website and browns the bread using different stencils. The machine can produce images of clouds, sun or rain by using stencils that mask part of the slice while the rest carries on being toasted.

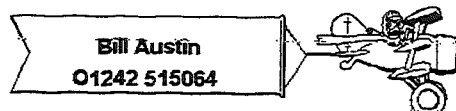
Mr Southgate, a design student at Brunel University, said: "It works with brown, but it's best with white - but it should work with any bread." The bread is toasted until the last half-minute when an electric motor inside the toaster rolls out the stencil in front of the bread. A modem inside the toaster regularly consults a website with up-to-date weather information, the BBC reports. I wonder if anyone will think of putting Notams on their toast? It would be a change from marmalade!

For Sale

Black Mercury flying suit, medium size with red lining. One careful lady owner, low mileage (the suit not the lady!). Comes complete with lots of happy memories (the suit again!) An irresistible bargain at £40. Also very lightweight two-man tent - will also take two women or even mixed sexes but not all at the same time! Suitable for stowing in your flexwing should you land out or don't fancy facing the music when you get home 6 hours after leaving to go for an hour's flight!. Very little used and in excellent condition. Another bargain at £25. Contact Gay Nisbett on 01684 561822

Medium light blue Ozee flying suit £45, Medium summer weight light blue/purple Ozee flying suit £40. Pr battery powered heated gloves. Ideal for cold passenger £25 Trevor Cale on 01684 564685

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





**Severn Valley
Microlight Club**

Club Newsletter

May 2001



This month's speaker

With the last case of foot & mouth now over three weeks ago, it has been decided to resume club meetings. The speaker this month will be Eddie Clapham, the well known aviator, who will be coming to talk about his flying experiences.

Cranfield Rally

The PFA have decided to cancel this year's Rally on the basis that it would be irresponsible to encourage people to fly in from all parts of the UK and abroad when the situation regarding Foot and Mouth is uncertain. Apparently exhibitors' bookings were below the normal take-up and the PFA stood to lose a lot of money if the Rally had to be cancelled at the last minute. The decision has been taken not to postpone the Rally until later in the year but to start planning the one for 2002.

Popham Sunday 6th May 2001

By Andrew John

Flying down this year to this popular event was not an option for me due to Foot and Mouth restrictions which have our farm on a Form D, meaning that we have been close to an outbreak and subsequently need a licence from MAFF to move anything off the farm – even a Microlight! The BMAA recommendations are also unequivocal over this matter within restricted areas. So having disinfected my car wheels and my shoes I set forth to discover what is new and interesting this year at the Annual Trade fair and demonstration. Apparently the sun had shone the previous day but it hid behind heavy cloud with a strong blustery very cold north easterly creating interesting turbulence on the main runway.

For several new aircraft this was their first public airing, the CT from Pegasus stole the show flying with great ease in the conditions. However the Sky Raider, now well into it's flight testing programme, took to the air powered by a Rotax 503 with two on board to show just how effective that power unit can be when installed in a seemingly well designed airframe. I was particularly taken with the simplicity of the folding wings. The Fox Bat, zipped up and down and it too gave an impressive performance and I particularly liked the excellent side and downward visibility from the cockpit. As usual flexwings fluttered in profusion with pods wobbling from side to side in the turbulence, but without doubt Air Creation with their recently imported Kiss will have given the competition something to think about as it gave a very sturdy and positive display with two up.

Still, probably the most significant factor that has assisted the 450kg Category is the new range of 4 stroke power plants, with now four or five well tried and tested engines and more on the way. Their attributes are now well known if you can afford them initially, but now even Medway have adopted the Rotax 912 after the Jabiru experiment. So, by now almost all top of the range airframes have been modified to take these power plants resulting in pretty dramatic performance increases, particularly when you need a bit more 'grunt' to cope with less than ideal conditions.

As you may know by now Rob Keene has a new Raven powered by a 912 and he showed just how well this extra power could be used. However some work will be needed to be done to quieten the engine noise which, when approaching, sounds more like an R22 helicopter! They are working on it I understand.

X-Air have an upgraded machine yet to be approved which looks very sturdy, powered by, again, a 912. Avids and MiniMaxes, Blades and Quantums, including Brian Milton with his 912 Blade ready for his Trans Atlantic attempt this summer. I witnessed an elderly punter with a Paramotor strapped to his back and the demonstrator pushing at his chest as the guy opened the throttle to full chat. Judging by the way he walked away afterwards I think the punter needed a change of clothing!

By now it was lunch time so I risked a human form of FMD and wolfed some chips washed down with plastic coffee, then found the smartest portaloos I have ever used!

But the sting was in the tail when, not having purchased a thing, I succumbed and bought a gasket set for the next decoke on my 462 - £36.50! Not having flown since January and unlikely to fly again this summer it should be a long time before I need again invest such a huge sum to keep my engine in good heart.

So, to sum up my Popham 2001, I could say disappointing but that would be unfair because I was cold and in need of stimulation. But, of one thing I am certain, there is a danger that for those who cannot afford the big bucks, their future choice of cheaper and safe flying machines is becoming more and more limited to the ageing second-hand market.

Fly-ins

No, it's not a printing error it's a fact! We have been notified of three fly-ins all taking place in June. All we need now is for Foot and Mouth to disappear and for the weather to be fine. The first event is at Milson on Sunday 24th June. Hugh Thompson has sold the airstrip

to a helicopter pilot and this will be Hugh's farewell event. For those not familiar with Milson all landings are made from the South and a listening watch on radio will be kept on 129.825. GPS co-ordinates are 52 21 68N 002 32 75W. It is recommended that you phone for any last minute briefing before takeoff 01584 890486 or mobile numbers 07702 077996/0777 558 2023.

The other two events are both taking place on Saturday 30th June. One is a repeat of last year to RAF Lyneham. If you are interested in participating please let John Hamer know and give details of your aircraft and names of pilot and crew. As last year, it is likely that a slot time for arrival will be given but details will be forthcoming nearer the time. The last fly-in is to Bembridge, Isle of Wight, which is intended to take the place of the Cranfield rally which was cancelled this year. Precise details of this are not known at present but contact JH who will probably be in a position to provide more information.

In addition in July, because of the cancellation of Cranfield, the boys in the Midlands have come up with a replacement event for that weekend. There is to be a fly in at Sittles, near Lichfield on 6th/7th July

Easy GPS route planning - by Tall Paul Underwood

Like many of us, I now fly around with a GPS providing a 'backup' to my navigation skills. Until recently, whenever planning a trip, I had to use a cumbersome user interface to tap in the co-ordinates of each waypoint directly into the GPS one after the other.

At the tail end of last year I bit the bullet and coughed up the extortionate amount of cash demanded for a cable to connect my GPS to my PC. This has allowed me to manage my GPS data on my PC, saving batteries and a considerable amount of patience.

The application I use is 'Waypoint+', a FREEWARE application that can be readily downloaded from the Internet. It provides all the usual features, allowing waypoints & routes to be created plus it also has a map facility, allowing you to zoom in and out, so you can see where everything actually is in relation to everything else! Note, it only supports Garmin GPSs I'm afraid.

Anyone who wants a copy of the application can download it for free from <http://www.tapr.org/~kh2z/Waypoint/>

I've also been spending the last few months consolidating data from a variety of sources to construct a number of GPS databases that comprise the following:

- Civil Airfields / Active
- Civil Airfields / Disused
- Civil Airfields / Gliding
- Civil Heli-pads
- Microlight Sites
- Military Airfields / Active
- Military Airfields / Disused
- Military Gliding Sites
- Miscellaneous Landing Sites
- Motorway junctions
- Nav aids

-Water landmarks

These were obtained from other freeware applications & data on the Internet. This currently totals over 1600 entries! Whenever I plan a route now, I can simply load one, some or all of the above databases into the Waypoint+ application, create my route, select the geographic area I'm interested in (from the map) and download the relevant waypoints plus routes straight into the GPS. Saves a considerable amount of time and didn't cost me a penny.

Anyone who would like a copy of the GPS databases can get them from me AT NO CHARGE! Just drop me a line at <tallpaulunderwood@yahoo.co.uk> and I'll e-mail them by return. If your having any bother making it work, let me know.

Just one word of caution though, all of the data was knocked up by other pilots like me, hence, it could contain errors. I'd recommend that you at least check the destination co-ordinates when you call up for PPR and please don't follow your GPS blindly off into the Irish Sea.

Anyone who has a Palm organiser should also drop me a note, I've a great flight planner and database for those as well.

Quote of the Month

For those contemplating crossing the Channel and perhaps not quite making it ditching may not be so bad if the schoolboy who wrote this in a science paper is to be believed. "Water is composed of two gins. Oxygen and Hydrogin. Oxygen is pure gin. Hydrogin is gin and water"

Big Country - Travelling and flying in British Columbia Part 2 - by Ed Wells

Introduction:

After a few days of jet lag recovery and holiday mountain stuff I decided to treat the family with a visit to the local Air Show to see The Snowbirds (Canadian Air Force Display Team) which was scheduled, I thought, for the 5th August at Penttican. The airfield is on the shores of Okanagan Lake about an hour's easy drive down the mountain where we were staying. Unfortunately the Internet supplied information was wrong this time and we were a day early for the show. A chat with the airfield restaurant manager put us right on the date, strangely enough he turned out to be a retired Australian who used to be a senior Airport manager from Heathrow! We drank tea and chatted for a while until the conversation veered towards me flying either under instruction or as a passenger around the local area, he directed me to my best prospect - a German Ultralight Flying Instructor called Dieter.

Canadian Flight experience 2: C-FVFA - Zenair STOL CH701

5th August very hot evening, awesome...

Dieter combines flying instruction with electronics engineering in his native Germany, he migrates annually from Germany to Canada for a few months each summer to grab some decent flying weather. His plane,

the Zenair STOL CH701, is not good looking but this magazine quote may give you some idea of what was to come.

"Takeoff in the STOL CH 701 is breathtaking. Depending upon how aggressive the pilot wants to be, the airplane can be hauled into the air with a ground roll of less than 100 feet. ...the control response was very good, and because of the low stall speed, it is possible to make the airplane literally pivot on a wing tip. I've seen airplanes that could be flown through a hangar, but as I have said before, I think a really good pilot could fly a STOL CH 701 into a hangar, do a 180, and fly back out. The performance is truly that spectacular".

Dieter apparently was planning on returning to Germany on the 7th, the 6th was out of bounds due to the Air Show so he volunteered to take me flying that very evening. A fast dash back up the mountain to deposit the family then down the mountain again - for a spot of relaxation... How wrong could I be!

At this point be aware that I thought I was looking at a rather ugly Ultra light designed as a cheap trainer. I did a quick video interview for later and jumped into the left seat declaring that I used to fly 3 axis and had a lapsed PPL-A. I wish I had kept my mouth shut! Dieter was clearly a direct descendant of the Red Baron! He gunned the 912 Rotax on the runway to show me just what this miniature bush plane could do. Awwwwwesome... the ground roll was nothing! Seriously, it felt like feet not yards... At this point we had maybe 15mph on the nose and the CH 701 unstuck at around 30mph! The climb out attitude felt very like a lightly loaded powerful flex wing - my feet were well above my head, the shock was so acute I nearly kissed my ass goodbye!! And what is the colour of adrenalin? - I still cant tell you, but it was close - very close...

We flew out over the lake in search of some calmer air and headed south towards Okanagan Falls. I took the controls for a while and did a few turns, ups and downs and all those things we remember from training. When I had finished my sympathetic and gentlemanly flying and the engine was well warmed up, Dieter took over for a while. I didn't know which way was up or what the hell was happening as Dieter threw the thing all over the sky kicking the full flying rudder in time with the flaperons and throttle.

The CH701 turned on a sixpence, climbed nearly straight up and can apparently take 6gs without breaking up. To graphically demonstrate the climb capability Dieter increased the angle of attack until we were dragging along at 30mph. He then carried on increasing the angle of attack whilst winding the 912 Rotax up to maximum revs. Prop hanging with an indicated airspeed of 20mph - and most or all of that was prop wash! When we had finished hanging around he continued by demonstrating some stalls which again were different from anything I had ever experienced - no buffet, no nod, no wing dip... nothing. It just kind of headed down perfectly flat until one of its flying surfaces was asked to do something meaningful.

I flew a while longer whilst my stomach calmed down then filmed as Dieter returned us to the airfield. By this time the reliable north south headwind had turned into a strong westerly caused by the sun still shining on the Rockies whilst the newly shaded Coast Mountains triggered a catabatic flow to die for... Pentictan is a straight north south strip big enough to take small commercial jets but with no alternate runway. Dieter wrestled the CH701 to the ground and by his own admission the cross wind and the landing was one of the most interesting he had encountered.

My video has worked ok so you can experience the battering through the safety of a lens.

So we were down, film 'in the can,' stomach recovering, and the experience just beginning to sink in. We had seen some beautiful country during our trip but the lasting impression I have is, how can an ultra light perform like that? I offered to pay Dieter for the lesson but he wouldn't hear of it, eventually I persuaded him to take \$10 (about £5) for gas.

We chatted for an hour or two joined by his friend Walter (Walter makes a very good living re-spraying aeroplanes for rich Americans). Conversation veered towards float planes and who might know where I could get a ride. A man building a Murphy in the next hanger was allegedly friendly with a Doctor who had one - somewhere on the Lake, but where?

A fire had started somewhere up country, it must have been a big one as three big tanker planes (DC6s I think), full of extinguishing stuff, clambered slowly into the air and flew north. Minutes later a Rapid Intercept fire squad went off in their helicopter closely followed by another one carrying a large bladder of water for spot dousing isolated houses. A country of extremes, intensely cold in winter and very hot in summer, but almost always dry. In a good summer, fire is a big earner for the Pentictan area, fire crews and itinerant American helicopter pilots based there survive on retainers and pray for long dry spells during which they all get rich.

Dieter explained about the economies of fire fighting and how two years ago 8000 hectares of forested mountain ridge just across the lake had got out of hand and burnt for over three weeks. It was in Pentictan's own back yard - they had not been inclined to incur the cost of putting it out early! The mountain winds had driven the fire on taking with it many homes whilst the authorities debated the cost of action. A lesson to be learnt in England perhaps as privatisation attaches a cost to everything and relegates the value of safety to budgets that will never be spent until some major damage has been done (NATS watch out!).

A great evening spent in good company, I said goodnight to Dieter and Walter and headed back up Apex Mountain in the dark. Saw plenty of deer, a coyote and nearly collided with a bear! The bear turned around startled and somehow transformed itself into a black horse... Magical evening - well it couldn't get much better... or could it...

Next Month - Canadian Flight experience 3: C-FZRD - Cessna 185 on floats

It's a Gyke!

Two of our members are would-be gyro pilots and one of them, Colin Reeves, has drawn the Editor's attention to a new development in Australia. Rob Patroney was a trike pilot whose other interest was making propellers for Jabiru aircraft. He then moved on to making fully composite rotors for gyroplanes and was looking for a suitable "vehicle" on which to test and develop them. This was where his Eagle flexwing came into the picture. He fitted the rotors in place of the wing, controlled them via the A-frame of the trike and added a rudder connected to the front wheel steering of the trike. Throttle and brake controls are retained as on any trike. The advantage of the A frame system is that it is very difficult to overcontrol the rotors when compared with the traditional stick arrangement used in gyros and makes it a safer aircraft to fly. The bar movement is about 26 inches from fore to aft - not very different from a conventional trike - compared with about 12 inches in a three axis machine. The Gyke inherits the gyro's ability to deal with weather conditions which would give the average trike pilot a lot of "exercise" and discomfort and conversely enables him to fly when flexwing flying would be marginal. Rob maintains that the engineering considerations in converting a trike to a Gyke favours the Gyke in that the stresses on the A frame are less than for a trike and, therefore, there should be minimal problems in getting it approved. To clinch the matter Rob says that he would not now return to flying a trike. I wonder what the CAA and the BMAA would make of such a conversion? Guy Gratton's reaction would be interesting. *(Thanks to Mel Morris Jones for permission to summarise his article in 'Fly Gyro' - Ed)*

Internet

The CAA have now put the complete register of UK aircraft on to their Web site - <www.srg.caa.co.uk/aircraftregister>. From this starting point it is possible under the "General Aviation" heading to access details of both half and quarter mil charts, the amendments made to them since publication and a glossary of abbreviations.

Push to Talk -or how not to impress ATC!

The following are said to be actual exchanges heard in the USA:-

1. "Tower, Airways 123 is going round"

"Roger, what are your intentions?"

"Er, go with it, I think"

2. A Huey Cobra practicing autorotations during a military night training exercise had a problem and landed on the tail rotor, separating the tail boom. Fortunately, it wound up on its skids, sliding down the runway doing 360s in a brilliant shower of sparks. As the Cobra passed the tower, the following exchange was overheard: Tower: "Sir, do you need any assistance?" Cobra: "I don't know, tower. We ain't done crashin' yet!"

Ultralight Warbird Replica

Does the \$80,000-\$150,000 asking price for a vintage Stearman PT-17 take the air out of your dream of flying one of these classic open-cockpit biplanes? Help is on the way. A company in Duncan, B.C., Canada is working on a solution that will turn that dream into a reality. In a tiny workshop on the outskirts of town, craftsman are putting the finishing touches on a scaled-down ultralight version of the Stearman Model 75. This 80% replica of the legendary WW II primary trainer is the brainchild of Richard Walton, founder of Replica Aircraft Works. The prototype is being hand-built from quality Sitka spruce, Douglas fir and Western red cedar, with metal fittings and Ceconite fabric covering.

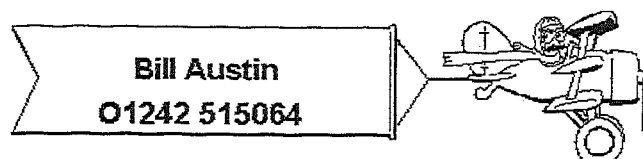
Replica Aircraft Works' parent company, RAW Resources, has been in the wood business for years. Its salvages timber from the forest floor, as well as old bridges and buildings, and turns it into precisely milled aircraft-quality wood.

"We're building the plane with wood that has exceptional and distinct features. It meets or exceeds the specifications set by the Canadian Ministry of Transport, the FAA and the British CAA," explained Walton. With an empty weight estimated at 690 pounds and a useful load of more than 500 pounds, the plane will qualify as an ultralight with the Canadian Ministry of Transport. Despite its scaled-down size and weight, the replica Stearman is not really a "small" airplane. It is 20 feet long and has a 25.7-foot wingspan with 190.5 square feet of lifting area. The cockpit openings are 26 inches across, wide enough for the average pilot. Unlike its big brother, the replica will have ailerons on both the upper and lower wings. Flight controls are activated by push-pull tubes with anti-friction bearings. The tubular steel landing gear is a scaled-down exact replica of the full size Stearman, including the internal mechanisms.

The powerplant is a custom-made, seven-cylinder Rotec R-2800 radial turning a 70-inch, fixed-pitch wood prop. Made in Australia, the 173-cubic-inch (2703cc) engine develops between 80 and 100 hp at 2500-2800 rpm.

Even with all accessories, including a rear-mounted, 12-volt starter motor, the R-2800 weighs a mere 219 pounds. Walton estimated it will pull the plane along at 100 mph (90 mph at 60% power, top speed 108) on a stingy three gph fuel burn. The instrument panel in the replica will meet minimum VFR requirements but there is space for optional gyro instruments and a radio. Otherwise, pilots will use handheld GPS and NAV/COM units with antennas mounted inside the fuselage.

By restricting the useful load and subject to Section S this could fall within the new SLA category in the UK and provide a challenge for builders.





**Severn Valley
Microlight Club**



Club Newsletter

June 2001

This month's talk

Following a successful evening hosting Police Aviation Services at Over, they have been persuaded to give a talk to the Club about their work of fitting out helicopters for the police forces. This will take place at their hanger at Staverton Wednesday 20th June at 19.30hrs. To find the hanger, enter the main site at Staverton and follow the signs to P.A.S. Please be on time. **Note the venue change from the usual meeting place. Reprogramme your GPS now!**

Not the PFA Rally

West London Aero Club, based at White Waltham airfield in Berkshire, has issued an open invitation to anyone who had been planning to visit or exhibit at the PFA Rally, to come instead to White Waltham on that weekend (6th, 7th, 8th July). The club is currently assessing how many people might attend such an event, so if you're interested call Tony Cooper or Gareth Aggett at White Waltham (01628 823272).

Over the same weekend, also to compensate for the cancellation of Cranfield, the Midland Microlight Club are also holding a fly in at Sittles.

IOW Fly In

The plan which originated on the microlight e-group, to hold a fly in at Bembridge on 30th June, seems to have really taken off. The event has been christened 'Spamfield' and was devised as an alternative to the cancelled Cranfield. Apparently the Isle of Wight tourist board has even been persuaded to fund all landing fees, the camping site and even provide an evening meal. At the time of writing over 90 people have indicated their intention to attend. Hopefully the weather will oblige.

If you want more details, they are available on the BMAA website - www.bmaa.org or from JH.

Lyneham

The club has received an invitation once again to fly into Lyneham for their ATC open day. The event is scheduled for Saturday 30th June, thus allowing you to go onto the Isle of Wight. If you wish to attend please advise JH as soon as possible.

Milson Fly In

Hugh Thompson has sold his airstrip, but as a final farewell gesture is holding a fly in on Sunday 24th June.

Love and Kisses from Popham by Myron Burak

Colin rings me up the night before, "are you going to Popham?" "Dunno" I replied, "is it on?" What with the greatly extended and wet winter and F&M, I have almost forgotten what it is to fly, and have just about tuned it out of my life, apathy rules. "I don't think I'll fly", I said, hoping to be let off the hook. "Good" says Colin, "I'm hoping to fly the Doodle Bug, and I could well do with a lift back if conditions aren't so good later". "OK" I said, "What the hell" I thought.

Next day proved to be very nice, but iffy for a doodle bug to say the least. Colin agonised at Kemble for a good couple of hours before knocking it on the head. "But I'd still like to go, as Ben Ashman has this new microlight called a Kiss, and he's promised us a flight". So off we went after all.

Popham was Popham. All old friends, loads of aircraft buzzing about, and loads to see. A couple of minutes watching the aircraft convinced me that the conditions were absolutely awful. Usually, no matter how bad the turbulence upstairs, things sorted themselves out a few feet off, generally allowing for a safe, if not always dignified landing, but today everything seemed to be really struggling to get on the ground, even some of the bigger 3 axis stuff. It's amazing what some people will fly in, not me. Further discussion with some friends telling of quite horrible flights down, made me glad to be on the ground.

Still we could have a look at this Kiss, made by Air Creation in France, and now being sold by Ben's company in kit form. It certainly looked really great. Good general looks, nice colours, 582 Rotax, well built, solid feel, good strong brake, very small wing span. "Well says Ben" to the pilot "both these guys are experienced flyers, so its the front seat for them". Is he talking about me? I wasn't even contemplating the back seat very seriously. I'd hardly flown in the last six months, did I really want to fly in a completely strange aircraft in these conditions. Colin, of course, went up first while I thought about doing a runner. All too soon he was down, so if I didn't want to lose face I would have to prepare for a thrashing. One thing, Colin knows my flying inside out, we've flown various things together since the early 80's, and he's taught me a great deal of what I know. He said nothing as he got out, but a certain look on his face gave me great reassurance.

So it was I found myself taxiing out, now feeling a good thrill at joining the other flyers in the air at

Popham. The wing needed some steadying in the rough air near the ground. We had to wait quite a few minutes because of the amount of traffic. Then we were off, a very conventional lift off, to then experience a very rapid gain in altitude, which was fine with me, the further away from the ground the better. Inevitably the bad air started to hit us very soon after take off. About the only thing I was really interested in about this trike was the handling. And it was truly amazing. The Kiss was remarkably stable in this trashy air. If it did get picked up, the response was the most immediate of any aircraft I've flown, and the amount of effort required was very pleasantly, not that great at all. I really did feel so secure in this aircraft. To sum up my impressions, it has the lightness of handling of our Q, coupled with the stability of a Quantum, and for good measure, something indefinable about the co-ordination, and the effort needed on the controls. Come on you turbulence, gimme more, I can handle it.

After a few steep turns to really show the handling, the pilot who came with me, Rob, started to get me interested in the speed characteristics. The ASI was in kms, and with the trim set for cruise we seemed to be going somewhere between 90 and 100 clicks. That would be somewhere around 60 mph. Rob trimmed it fast, and I pulled the bar in for max cruising speed, which seemed to be around 120 kph, say 80 mph, not bad. Too soon, it was time to land, bar pulled in, dropping like a stone at 140 kph, and we landed with as little drama as the aircraft had shown in the air. I felt quite chuffed with myself as we taxied back past all the other aircraft and people, and I certainly was very impressed with the Kiss.

The rest of the afternoon was taken up with comparisons of our impressions, which were all favourable, except a couple of small niggles about the foot throttle being uncomfortable and the size of the fuel tank (which I think is going to be increased). We enjoyed the warm and DRY weather, talked to our friends, had a cup of tea and a bun, looked at the planes. As I said Popham is Popham. Maybe this year we'll get some flying in. I don't intend this as a flight report, I'm no test pilot. But its not often I get to fly something new, and I'd recommend any one to have a look at it out of interest. I think its different. On the way home, we resolved to buy a Kiss. Any one want a really nice and well loved Q.

Safety

Life appears to be gradually getting back to normal with Foot and Mouth on the decline and the weather improving to the point where it tempts us into the sky again after a long, enforced hibernation. In all our excitement to get back in the air we should not overlook essential safety precautions. A recent incident highlights the perils of just moving the wing of a flexwing in and out of the hangar. The wing is

some 38 feet in span and even a small breath of wind at the wrong moment gives it a will of its own which requires more strength than one person can muster to stop it running off on its trolley or swinging around using you as a pivot if you are carrying it. The worst scenario is when the wind catches the underside of the wing and tips the whole thing on to its back when it is on its trolley. This is exactly what happened in the incident referred to earlier. Fortunately no damage was done but it does emphasise the need for care, awareness of where the wind is coming from and "a little help from your friends" as the song puts it. If someone else is around don't be afraid to ask for help in steadying the wing while you move it. After all your wing might survive but may damage another one nearby which hardly puts you in the category of a safe, considerate pilot!

Still on the subject of wind, have you ever thought what happens to your wing if it is on a trolley in a barn with others also on trolleys and the wind circulates through the sides of the barn? While you are cosily tucked up at home the wings are having a party moving around under their own steam and possibly crashing into each other - another recipe for disaster. The answer would appear to be to locate the trolley wheels in recesses made in small wooden blocks so that the wheels are not in contact with the ground and cannot roll. A few stones against the wheels are powerless when faced with the leverage of the wind on the wing. Think of others and you will be protecting yourself also - hangar rash is preventable!

Health

Lately we have had a lot of publicity relating to Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT). Most of us associate this problem with economy class travel on the big jets. However an article in the EAA magazine "Sport Aviation" reminds us that sitting in any aircraft in a cramped position for any length of time makes us vulnerable to DVT. Since prevention is better than cure, it is as well to bear this in mind when you next attempt a longer distance flight. Yes, I know that getting up and walking around is not an option in a microlight but there are several ways in which the formation of blood clots can be prevented. Isometric exercises keep the blood moving in the veins. These are exercises where you tense the muscle without actually moving the leg - for example push the ball of your foot against the floor for ten seconds and then relax it. Follow this with the opposite exercise by lifting your toes as high as possible and then relaxing them. If you have enough room in the cockpit you can massage your legs (and those of your lady passenger if you are lucky!) from the calf upwards to promote the flow of blood. The same applies to travel by car or bus for any length of time. Look after your circulation and your flying years will be extended!

Local news

Gloucester Airport is in the news again. Construction is underway on a new £200,000 apron, fire service building and accommodation for Bond Air Services plus plans for a new hangar. It is reported that the pilot briefing area in the new terminal building makes the accommodation one of the finest General Aviation terminals in the country.

Noise

We all know what a sensitive subject this is, especially in relation to aviation. In the hope of achieving a more consistent approach to the subject a new unit of measurement is to be introduced - the L_{den} . This will replace the decibel. The new unit's subscript stands for "day and night" and is calculated by summing the total amount of noise disturbance in a given place. The proposal is to use it for all noise measurements around towns, motorways railways, etc. The introductory date for the L_{den} is 2005 but it is possible that a number of countries will introduce it before then. It appears that this will be a fairer way of measuring noise levels but it does not absolve us from taking all possible precautions to prevent noise nuisance in those areas immediately surrounding our own airfields.

Big Country - Travelling and flying in British Columbia - by Ed Wells

Introduction:

Dieter and the manic STOL CH701 had taken the edge off my need to fly. For a week I returned to the mountains and lakes to do more normal family holiday things. I talked to lots of people in the continued hope that someone might know anyone with a floatplane. No leads to follow up apart from the mythical Doctor somewhere on the lake! The temperature in the Okanagan Valley was in the 80s and 90s most days so we decided to take a cooling trip on the lake in a paddle powered Dragon boat searching for Ogopogo (Nessie's cousin!). Once again I passed the time chatting to friendly strangers about anything and everything - including float flying... The Captain let each of the kids take a turn at the helm whilst he told the story of Ogopogo - as luck would have it he knew a man with a float plane which was kept to the north on the Summerland lakeshore. That man was T.P.Manders, M.D. his surgery number was in the phone book - (250) 494-0515, time to make a call...

Canadian Flight experience 3: C-FZRD - Cessna 185 on floats

11th August from Okanagan lake another very hot evening.

Doctors are in short supply in Canada and are consequently overworked. Flying Doctors are even rarer so it was a massive stroke of luck when I called the Summerland surgery that I actually caught Dr

Terry Manders passing by his administration desk. A brief explanation of who I was, what I was and what I had hoped to do, was met with... "Well you know I was just planning on taking a flight this evening - how would you like to come along?" Don't you just love it when a plan comes together! I quickly re-arranged some horse trekking we had planned for that evening and drove the wheels off our hire car to get there on time.

I followed the same routine as with Dieter, I introduced myself then asked for a video diary of the experience - no problem. We walked down the side of Terry's lovely house on the Lakeshore onto his private jetty - on the left a boat hoist for the family speedboat, on the right a boat hoist for his floatplane. Terry's passions are flying and fishing, he explained how the best fishing lakes are way up in the mountains where people find it hard to get to. He uses his plane mainly for fishing and pleasure trips and had been North to Alaska and East over the Rockies a number of times. Until 99 he also had a land plane based at Penticton airport until a friend of his crashed it and was killed, so now he flies his 300hp 6-cylinder bush plane off floats all summer then fits wheels and transfers to Penticton airport for the winter. Economy doesn't really come into it - gas is cheap and the odds of survival improve a lot when you're being trashed by mountain winds or powering out of a small lake in, what is literally, the middle of nowhere! Natural raw beauty is everywhere in British Columbia but it was becoming increasingly clear that the weather and circumstance leave little option for survival if it all goes wrong!

Floatplane flying, it appears, is a cross between sailing and flying. You need to assess drift, waves and current whilst in the water then transfer to wind and clouds for flying. Simple eh! Well Terry has been doing it for years and by his own admission still gets it wrong. The plane's rudder is connected to the float rudders, which made our departure from the jetty a relatively easy job. We just unhitched the mooring ropes, pushed the plane away from the jetty at the same time as jumping on the nearest float - then into the cockpit. Engine started and warm up took place as we gently cruised the waters of the Okanagan looking to ensure there were no boats, jet skis or Ogopogo's on the runway!

The trick seems to be to find water with a small amount of wave on it. This helps the floats unstick and move quickly from displacement to planing - reducing float drag considerably. The drag reduces - the speed increases; no need for flaps at this stage as the less drag the faster we achieve takeoff speed. We reach 60/65 and Terry hits the flap control, she un-sticks and we are away. Mooring ropes, which were just left dangling around, now hang neatly on the floats in the slipstream. Terry fiddles with the float

rudder hoist to ensure they are not torn off when we decide to land again.

We flew out over the lake to gain height, the 300hp engine allowing us to climb at a very respectable rate considering it was carrying two small boats underneath. We followed the lakeshore North with Terry giving a running commentary on the terrain, local population and employment statistics – his flying was reassuringly calm which I guess was due to his knowledge of local conditions, experience and of course faith in the machinery.

Summerland is mainly a retirement community built around Giants Head Mountain – in fact the whole Okanagan area is predominantly retired (a bit like Eastbourne). Apparently ninety percent of the local wealth is in the hands of the aged few. The only real money being made is from tourism with Americans bringing much needed dollars to the local economy. I learnt a lot about the Okanagan area that evening as Terry wove stories of wildlife, history, social and technological infrastructure into a rich tapestry of information. I filmed for a while as we flew up into the mountains, he showed me played out aluminium mines and phosphorous lakes as we searched fruitlessly for herds of wild mountain sheep. We eventually turned back towards the lake where Terry insisted on taking over the video whilst I flew us back. A magical evening in a big safe Cessna, perfect visibility and time to reflect on the natural beauty of British Columbia as the long mountain shadows once again began chasing the daylight from the Okanagan Valley.

We chose our runway (passageway?) making sure no boats were in the way. Landing is again best accomplished with slight waves to ensure the water drag is not too dramatic. Glass smooth lakes present some drag problems but not as much as heavy swells, if the waves are too large the theory is that you stall into the water and rely on float buoyancy to keep you up. Not recommended and irrelevant on the majority of Canada's many large unspoilt lakes.

The taxi/voyage back to Terry's house was a relaxed boating affair. He lowered the float rudders into the water again and we cruised for home on a fast tick over. Just prior to the jetty he suddenly cut the engine and jumped out of his door onto the float shouting, "you take the rudder – I might get wet now!" Well I wish he had warned me, but in the event it was no problem at all. He had assessed the drift and approach speed perfectly; all I did was plant my feet on the rudder pedals as directed and we docked without a damp foot between us.

No worries just peaceful fulfilment. Where else can you experience the tranquillity of mountains plus water and couple it with the ultimate privilege of flight in a country more beautiful and unspoilt than I can ever hope to describe. I spent that evening eating, drinking and chatting with Terry and his family

increasing beyond measure my understanding of Canada and its people.

It appears to me that Canadians (well at least the ones I met) share a deep love of their country and their lives; they actively seek out that thrill which can only be found at the very edge of experience. The seasons are so intensely different – the very real prospect of death is everywhere so why worry? Understand what might happen, what could happen and then do it anyway...

Next Month – Canadian experience 4: North to Salmon Arm

Aussie 'scramjet' to be tested

A jet that may allow spacecraft to do away with rockets and take off from the ground like planes is to blast into space on its first major test flight. The Australian scramjet is in its early stages, but offers the possibility of taking off like a plane in years to come.

The Hyshot has just completed its ground tests and engineers will send it into space on the back of a rocket for its first data-collection flight. A scramjet is aerodynamically complex because the combustion of fuel and air isn't slowed down – it takes place at supersonic speeds throughout the engine. Nasa scientists will test their more sophisticated X-43A scramjet on an air force jet in June but say the two systems are not in competition. Australian scientists will launch their scramjet-powered Hyshot from the Woomera rocket range in South Australia on August 13.

Internet

Those members who do a lot of travelling by car must have noticed the increase in the number of speed cameras sprouting up on the side of the road. Much has been made of their benefit (in raising more money for more cameras?) but if you want to know where some of the cameras are and the various types of speed trap then look at <www.speed-trap.co.uk>. Thank goodness that we do not have to worry about that when we are flying – apart from maintaining sufficient airspeed to prevent a stall!

I will return

Some of you may have noticed I have been out of the county for several months, but I am now scheduled to return on 23rd June. Those wanting logbooks signed etc should contact me after this date. There is even a plan to start building my aircraft again, so I may be out at Hartpury frequently in the coming months.

Bill Austin
01242 515064





**Severn Valley
Microlight Club**

Club Newsletter



July 2001

This month's meeting

This month, if the weather is fine, we will meet at Over Farm, by invitation of Robbie Keene for a BBQ and a fun flying event. Non fliers can arrive by car, watch the flying, look at the aircraft and at around 19.00 hrs partake of the BBQ followed by strawberries and cream. Those arriving by air have the additional opportunity to participate in the flying event which will take about an hour. If flying, you should be at Over not later than 18.30 hrs for a briefing. It is important that you get there by then.

If the weather is unsuitable for flying, it is still planned to hold the BBQ. However, in the event that the weather makes this impossible, then we will meet as usual at the Gloucestershire Club for a general social evening. If there is any doubt whether the flying event or the BBQ will be held, please check with Robbie on 07831 237353 after 1300 hrs on Wednesday 18th July.

Fly-in - South Cerney

On Saturday 28th July there is an invitation to fly in to the Army Open Day at South Cerney. The airfield will be open from 11.30 - 17.30, but should be approached from the south with circuits to the south. The north side will be occupied by gliders. Call 129.90 for landing instruction or contact Roger Davies on 07773704510 on the day or 01285 656942 any evening for further details. You don't incidentally have to fly in - you are welcome to go by road - the entrance is on the Swindon side of the airfield - off the old A417. We are advised that it will be signed.

Future meetings

For the August meeting we have Chris Finnigan, the Chief Executive of the BMAA, as our guest speaker. In September we have booked Dave Magauley to tell us about his flight in a Mainair Blade around the USA. Members who followed his progress on the Web will know that he has an interesting story to tell.

Round Britain Rally

The Round Britain Rally scheduled to take place at the beginning of August is the latest event to fall victim of the Foot & Mouth crisis. With the problem still ongoing in Yorkshire/ Lancashire, the organisers

decided to cancel the event this year, especially as they were having difficulty getting airfields to accept visitors. There is still, however, likely to be a fly in to Barton on 4th August as a consolation.

Report on Fly Ins

Hugh Thompson's final fly in at Milson exceeded all expectations with over 90 aircraft flying in on the Sunday. Never has there been more aircraft on his strip to enjoy Hugh's free hospitality. Many SVMC members were in evidence throughout the day. The weather on the following weekend was less favourable, so the prospective dozen SVMC aircraft scheduled at Lyneham, were reduced to one - Brian Finch in his Kit Fox. We had a better representation at Spamfield - the fly in at the Isle of Wight the same weekend. Nearly 100 microlights from all over the country attended in very breezy conditions to say the least. Again Brian Finch was in evidence and he was joined by David Howells in his Shadow. JH with his MiniMax flew in on the Sunday.

Over the Water

Paul Underwood is currently arranging a flight from Over Farm to Abbeville over the weekend of August 18th/19th. His plan is to be depart on the Friday evening for Headcorn via Popham, followed by an early start on Saturday to cross the channel. Once there, there may be an opportunity for local flying or a local visit, before the return on Sunday. He's got a few people signed-up already with aircraft of differing speeds, including slow 503 flexwing's (principally his) & three-axis. If you're interested in extending your flying experience and joining them, then just drop him a line at "tallpaulunderwood@yahoo.co.uk" or call me on 07785-533048. Anyone with an unnatural fear of flying over water should bite the bullet, stop whinging and go along too. You know who you are.

Big Country - Travelling and flying in British Columbia

Episode Four by Ed Wells

Introduction

Ten days into the Canadian trip our time had been driven more by events and opportunities than by forward planning. At that point I had already sampled

two very different flying experiences - the manic Zenair STOL CH701 and the Cessna 185 on floats. For the 'motor heads' of the family, things were going incredibly well with the arrival on Apex Mountain of huge logging machinery clearing snow mobile tracks closely followed by the Jeep Jamboree, yahooooo!

Melanie and my daughter Polly were less than amused as 'the good time boys' disappeared repeatedly into the mountains in search of motorised adventure. It was time to say farewell to the Okanagan region and head North on Highway 97 to the Shuswap, our friends and whatever came next...

Canadian experience 4: North to Salmon Arm

The average journey in Canadian terms is always an easy going five hours which, I was starting to appreciate, converted into around nine hours British time. We set off at lunch time from Apex Mountain and meandered North up the valley towards the Shuswap region passing through countryside that changed rapidly in colour, agricultural production and culture. The further north we travelled the more Dutch, German and British settlers had stamped their own architectural heritage on the landscape. The major crop at that time appeared to be Alfalfa which was clearly profitable as mile upon mile of irrigation tubes crossed the landscape to ensure the sun didn't ruin its commercial value as horse feed.

The world of the Amish farmer still survives, steadfastly refusing to use internal combustion engines to power machinery. Surprisingly, to me at least, was that this apparent rejection of modern life had not stopped development of their machinery; the implements were modern and had evolved to make best use of their single horsepower bio degradable power units (horses, I assume, must be a bit like batteries, run them in series or parallel depending on the power characteristics you need!).

By early evening we entered the Shuswap where deep lakes fed continually with snowmelts from The Rockies dominating the landscape. We turned west on Highway One and carried on to Sorrento close to where our friends had chosen to settle. Sorrento would qualify as a one-horse town consisting of two stores and a garage on the side of the main Trans Canada Highway. I rang my old buddy Sam from the garage and he came out to lead us back on an unmade road to Notch Hill, which is where he had chosen to settle with his family.

Sam had emigrated to Canada, complete with pacemaker, through sheer perseverance, on the condition that he would move to a lesser-populated area of British Columbia and set up his own business within two years. He had been happily working in a sawmill and renting property whilst they settled in when the two year deadline encouraged him to

become Mr Shuswap Fire & Safety. As I wrote previously fire is big business in Canada with very strict rules and regulations governing all businesses and their ability to deal with fire effectively. Sam's certification training and extinguisher franchise now keeps him busy all year supplying, inspecting, certifying and re-filling extinguishers over most of the Shuswap area. Not a huge earner but a nice way to make a living given that you end up knowing just about everyone. One of the places on Sam's extinguisher round was the local Salmon Arm Airport - handy eh...

The following day we were all down on the lakeshore at nearby Salmon Arm admiring the huge holiday houseboats when I spotted a float plane coming into land. I grabbed the camera to take a picture to match with my talk on Terry's Cessna 185 floatplane. We watched the plane cruise up to the jetty and join a Maul. Out jumped Terry Manders and a friend - they had been up country somewhere for lunch and had dropped into Salmon Arm Lake for fuel on the way home. Down came the public barriers and far too many of our excited children busied themselves investigating the workings of both planes. It all became a bit too much after ten minutes - Terry and his mate were fine but when the kids started pulling lake weed from the water and decorating floats and ailerons it was time to herd them back. The shame of that encounter was that Terry had taken out the back seats in readiness for all the fishing gear he needed to carry for his next trip to 'the high lakes'. He said he would have taken the kids up if the seats were in - I knew him well enough by this time to know he wasn't just saying it. What a nice man.

A week went by, we ate bear, canoed the rivers and cooked Wieners on sandbars. We rode horses, motorbikes and quads most days - very restful! Taking road grime off the car in nature's own car wash was a memorable experience. The snow melts crash on down towards the lakes from all over - this one on the side of the road had been ducted up high by someone to form a small waterfall over a shallow lay-by, we just drove through the icy deluge slowly and then reversed back out onto the road.

As for flying... Well Sam's friends spent a day with us down on Shuswap Lake complete with their speedboat. Adrenalin rush, low flying and major bruising came courtesy of 'The Tube', which is essentially a large hi-tech inner tube with straps you attempt to hang onto. The speedboat pilot goes as fast as they can whilst zipping you in and out of the wake turbulence. When the thing goes airborne anything can happen and did a number of times. I'm happy to say the fear kept me on - but what an exhilarating way to gain air experience. I didn't bother

to put the time in my logbook – no type or registration...

The activity since we had arrived in British Columbia had been non-stop - but the bear meat kept the energy levels up. Sam introduced me to some interesting local characters, one was Sandy who worked in the local sawmills, he looked a lot like Father Christmas and no one, not even Sandy, knew how old he was. Sandy had property all over the mountains, which they used during the hunting season to shoot moose from.

Imagine wanting a hunting lodge, taking your chainsaw and quad to wherever you think is a good place and building one – pioneer stuff eh! Perhaps it's not quite that simple. Sandy had apparently got 'tree rights' granted from Canadian Hydro Electric which allowed him to take trees from anywhere near the overhead cable runs that snake around in the mountains. All he did was move away from the pylons and logging tracks into dense forest, pick a spot with a good water supply and build. He said we could borrow his most recent and palatial cabin so with a day's forward planning we set off for the wilderness. To be continued....

Next Month - Canadian experience 5: C-IROW – Chinook ultra light - then home

Planning

It appears that there has been a "break through" in the planning field in the publication of PPG 13. This is a Planning Guidance Note issued to all Local Authorities which now "requires Local Authorities to consider the role of small airports and airfields in saving business, recreational, training and emergency services needs. In formulating their planning policies and proposals, and in determining planning applications, local authorities should take account of the economic, environmental and social impacts of GA on local and regional economies". They are also required "to identify and where appropriate protect sites and surface access routes both existing and potential (including disused sites) which could help enhance the aviation infrastructure serving the regional and local area, and significantly, to avoid development at or close to an airport or airfield which is incompatible with any existing or potential aviation operations ". Let's hope this will improve the position of all aviation planning applications.

Chart updates

We all know that we should always fly with a map and that that map should be the current edition. However, we equally know that when a new chart is published it is already out of date because of the "lead time" required in the printing process. Help is now at hand

in that the CAA has put on to its Web site - "<http://www.caa.co.uk/dap>" - details of amendments as they occur so there is now no excuse for not having the latest information - assuming that you have access to the Internet, of course!

Somewhere to visit

Your Editor has spent the last two months in the West Country and used some of the time to explore Devon. One place visited was Dunkeswell airfield north of Honiton and on the top of the hills. Apart from being an active GA and microlight airfield it is home to a unique museum. It is the only WW2 US Navy museum in the country. Currently located in a prefabricated building – rather like four Hartpury Portacabins in one – it houses a fascinating collection of photographs, aircraft pieces, uniforms and articles related to the activities of the base. The collection is too large for it all to be on display at once so they "revolve" it on a regular basis. It is essentially a private collection with a lot of items donated by US personnel who served at the base, or their relatives, with others which have been recovered from the surrounding area. There are plans to expand the collection and, ultimately to re-locate it to a larger building on the airfield. It was encouraging to hear that plans to acquire the old Control Tower and one of the T-hangars were well in hand with the full support of the Local Authority, English Heritage, the MOD and most of the local residents. Despite its small size two hours passed very quickly and the lady "curator" is very knowledgeable about the history of the airfield and can tell many captivating tales of the events which happened there. Make a note to visit in the future. If you fly in and go to the microlight school on the airfield, the museum is on the other side of the airfield around the peritrack. For those of you with access to the Internet you can log on to "<http://www.usn-dunkeswell.co.uk>"

Internet

Other articles contain references to Internet sites so they will not be repeated here. Members might like to note that a new catalogue has just been published by Light Aero Spares and can be obtained by e-mailing "<mailto:sales@lightaero.co.uk>"

Many of us complain about interference on the radio when flying. Some of this comes from the engine and other electrical sources in use. One way of eliminating ignition noise is to fit good sparking plug leads. These can be tailor made to your requirements by Magnecor who provide leads for Formula One and airlines. Log on to "<http://www.magnecor.co.uk>"

Sherwood Ranger

Members will remember the arrival of the Sherwood Ranger on the microlight scene some years ago and will have seen it at Telford. Since then it has disappeared from the list of available planes. However, it is now going to make a come back. Dudley Pattison has formed The Little Aeroplane Company based at Ogbourne St George near Swindon to market kits for the plane. He hopes to start taking orders at next year's PFA Rally. Approval of the design under the 450kg SLA category is being sought. Anyone interested can contact him at TLAC Ltd, Lower Upham Farm, Ogbourne St George, SN8 1SZ . Fax 01793 790955 or e-mail: "mailto:dudleypattison@dial.pipex.com"

Trevor commits to big time aviation!

Trevor Cale decided some time ago that he wanted an aeroplane that would take him to foreign climes and put his Quantum up for sale. It was snapped up more quickly than he anticipated with the result that he has been without an aeroplane for many months. Now the decision is made and he has ordered a C42 kit which should soon be delivered

Safer flying

The new editions of American half-mil maps - Sectionals as they call them - will have on them symbols marking waypoints that can be used for the safe navigation of passes through mountainous territory. These points can be identified by GPS and will be included in GPS databases. It is not thought likely that such symbols will appear on the UK half-mils but it might be a good plan to mark and record such points on your own maps if you are likely to be flying in Scotland or using the Manchester Low-level corridor.

Safety Sense Leaflets

Members who have been through Ground School with the Club will recall that they have received a pack of the above leaflets from the Training Officer. They were produced by the CAA and were free of charge to anyone who requested them. The CAA have now decided to stop printing them but have made them available on CD. The Training Officer has obtained a copy of the CD and is able to print copies as required - if demand is too great he might make a small charge to cover costs of paper and printing! If you want a particular one let him know.

Insurance

In recent days several members have had a note through their door advising that John Wimble is discontinuing providing insurance for microlights. The

BMAA recommended alternative is Bartlett of Leeds (0113 2585711) who are providing the same insurance at equally competitive rates. Proposal forms were included in the MF magazine earlier this year, but if you want one, JH has copies.

Fairford

For the past year or so Fairford has been closed while the runway was dug up and re-laid. This week the runway was reopened and the first American aircraft have flown in. Members are warned that Fairford is now active again and should contact Brize Norton when going between Cirencester and Swindon.

Thought for the Day

Man to his son:

"It's time we had a little talk, my son. Soon you will have urges and feelings you've never had before. Your heart will pound and your hands will sweat. You'll be preoccupied and won't be able to think of anything else. But don't worry, it's perfectly normal.....it's called flying".

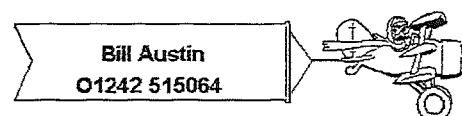
Postal Delays

Last month the newsletter was, as usual, posted the Friday before the meeting. Five days later, at the meeting over half the members appeared not to have received their newsletter. One member didn't receive his for a further week - 12 days to travel four miles! We hope things have returned to normal and you receive this before our meeting.



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

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





Severn Valley
Microlight Club



Club Newsletter

August 2001

This month's speaker

This month we welcome **Chris Finnigan**, Chief Executive of the BMAA as our guest speaker. He is an active microlighter himself so should be able to tell us about both sides of the fence. This is your opportunity to get some answers to questions – make full use of it. Don't forget that we now start our main speaker at 8pm to give plenty of time afterwards for questions and socialising. Don't be late.

Next Month

On the basis of his reports on the Internet at the time, **Dave Magauley's** talk about his flight around the USA should be an event not to be missed. It's an opportunity to bring along a guest who might like to know more about microlights and their capabilities.

Over Treasure Hunt

It was a case of second time lucky for Robbie's BBQ and Treasure Hunt. The weather on the planned evening was not at all flyable but the following Wednesday produced a perfect evening for flying. The result was what must be a record turnout for the Club of twelve aircraft for the Treasure Hunt. In addition there were a lot of other members and friends on the ground supporting and watching the activity as well as enthusiastically helping to dispose of the food on the BBQ and the raspberries and cream.

The flying task was simple in concept but somewhat more difficult in execution. The objective was to fly the curving course marked on the map identifying the waypoints marked and answering a question about each one. Added to this was a hidden gate over which the competitors had to pass and do a spot landing within a box marked on the runway, preferably exactly on the minute. The tie-breaker was the actual second on which the wheels touched the ground – the nearest to the whole minute being the winner.

The final calculations showed that pilots Jim Taylor and Andrew John tied on a total of 1100 points but the overall winner was Jim Taylor closer to the whole minute on landing by a margin of six seconds. Congratulations Jim!

The statistics of the evening showed that out of the twelve aircraft 3 got all the answers to the questions correct, 5 went over the hidden gate, 4 stopped within the box on landing and 3 actually managed to land exactly on the minute but nobody scored points for every task.

Irrespective of final position all the pilots, their crews and all the "ground support staff" enjoyed the task and the BBQ. Thanks must go to Robbie for organising the flying task and for providing the BBQ.

Safety

Some members responded to the Editor's request for information on what they had been doing recently. Two points raised concerned the fly in at Milson. Not having been there before and wanting to do things properly Pilot A, being non-radio, telephoned for information just before he departed his home field and was told the wind direction and that he should land from the **North** end of the strip. On arrival with nothing visible in circuit, he joined as instructed and on final saw another aircraft on final coming towards him! He went around. On the second approach the same thing happened and on the third try he landed without incident. The problem facing you in such a situation is which pilot is in the right? Written information had been circulated which said that all landings were to be from the **South** but the telephone briefer had said the opposite. Having been told to land from the North, but finding that two aircraft had landed in the opposite direction, our pilot should perhaps have revised his flight plan and followed the pattern of other two aircraft. The interesting point of this is that, having landed and spoken to Hugh Thomson and others, nobody questioned why he had landed from the North!

Our other member did use radio to ensure as many aircraft as possible knew where he was and his intentions. He asked three times for landing clearance confirmation when late downwind as others continued to depart seemingly unaware of his presence. In the end, the most worrying plane was the one holding on the runway facing him at the top of the slope waiting to depart as he was on finals – at that point there is no substitute for alertness. Irrespective of what level of radio service was being provided there should have been some response from the ground operator or the aircraft waiting to take off – assuming that it was on radio. If an event is advertised as having a radio service it is incumbent on the organiser to ensure that such a service is available for the whole time of the event or at least within published times. When going to fly-ins be aware that the actual situation at your destination may be somewhat different from information you have been given, even an hour before arriving. This particularly applies to a change of runway due to a change in the

wind direction. There is no substitute for good airmanship and the Mk1 eyeball!

Speaking of Mk1 eyeballs, listening to Gloucestershire Airport ATC the other day, the local Air Ambulance was heard just after lifting off from Cheltenham General Hospital. The pilot reported that he was transiting low level North East at 300 feet. It is as well to remember this as the Bolkow 105 helicopter is not one to be argued with. It is based at Strensham services on the M5 so it is always operating locally.

Hopefully we all stay wide awake while we are flying but if there is a tendency to fall into a doze during a flight then a development of a computer activated monitor might be the answer. A device has been developed for cars which asks the driver questions. If he answers these quickly and correctly then the computer deems that he is alert. If, however, he is slow at answering or gets some answers wrong then the computer fires a jet of water at him, opens all the windows and changes the channels on the radio in an effort to keep him awake. Flexwing fliers would no doubt appreciate the automatic washing of their visors!

Arising from the Treasure Hunt there is another safety issue regarding takeoff and landing being in opposite directions. All pilots were made aware that this would be the case. However, towards the end of the evening, one aircraft pulled on to the runway as one of the competitors was on the last part of base leg. As the last task was to land and stop in the box on the runway it seemed that the competitor was concentrating on that and had not seen the other aircraft. The aircraft on the runway was in a difficult situation, as the runway at Over is not wide enough to permit an aircraft to turn around. Eventually the competitor did abort his approach but rather later than many watching from the ground would have liked! This all emphasises the need to be aware of the possibility of concentrating on one task to the detriment of a good lookout at all times. This is where your passenger, if you have one, can be put to good use as the "second pair of eyes". If your passenger is new to flying it will give them a sense of purpose and help you to be a better pilot. The "eyes (ayes) have it" as they say in Parliament!

Big Country - Travelling and flying in British Columbia

Episode Five__

Introduction:

To re-cap, we were on our way up the mountain in search of Sandy's cabin. After my hired people carrier could go no further up the logging tracks without completely ripping the floor out we stopped and off loaded Sam's big Bombardier Quad. The trailer it had been in was then attached to the quad, two kids on the quad with me and five in the trailer. Sam issued me with some crappy directions and I set off for a 35km trek into the unknown. The cabin was sited at '51.06.49N' -

'119.16.30W' - it would have been handy if I had those coordinates on my GPS before we set out. Lucky we're not still up there somewhere!

We shot fish, cooked out and got bitten by mosquitoes - all the time keeping a wary eye open for bear, mountain lion and snakes. The outside loo was built well away from the cabin so inquisitive bears homed in on it rather than us. The door had already been ripped off by a bear, which certainly stopped anyone hanging around reading the paper (the bear had eaten the paper anyway!). Our trip was cut short - Melanie had been bitten on the knee by a poison spider so we had to rush down the mountain to get some emergency treatment. Whilst Mel hobbled around for a few days Sam and I took the opportunity to desert the women and children and take a trip to Salmon Arm airport...

Canadian experience 5: C-IROW - Chinook ultra light - then home

Salmon Arm airport is a straight North South strip, smaller than Pentictan but thriving just as well with many Ultra Light and GA aircraft based there. Interesting to see yet more itinerant American helicopters and pilots waiting for forest fires, glory and money. We went over and chatted to John C. McDermott, Airport Manager and part time Ultralight instructor. Someone in an impressive looking Autogyro was beating up and down the runway repeatedly doing small hops and landings. He eventually returned towards the hangars. John gave us clearance to nose around as much as we wanted so we went off to see what the guy was doing.

We set out for a couple of hours originally but ended up staying all day. We met, talked and videoed several guys who I can introduce you to when the talk is done. I won't go into too much detail here - but briefly:

C-GAVM - RAF 2000 Autogyro, the best I've ever seen. Another Subaru engine and all the toys inside. The pilot and builder was Alan Car, it had taken 400 hours. If it wasn't for the fact he was starting his flight-testing schedule and doing various rotor angle changes he would have been glad to take me up. Damn - maybe next time!

C-???? - Avid Flyer (tail dragger). The pilot was Joerg Klaemt a German immigrant who was busy coming to terms with his first tail dragger. We had watched him struggling earlier in the day with some very hairy landings. Again he offered to take me flying but didn't feel to confident in his ability to get us down in one piece. Nice man, nice wife, nice parrot! Try klaemt@telus.net if you're into Avids.

C-ILCU - Challenger on floats & wheels, at the same time! The pilot was a man called Gary who was in partnership with David Skelhons running the Skyworks training school at Kamloops using mainly Challengers and Zenair 601 Zodiacs with and without floats. Try www.skyworksflying.com or skelhons@telus.net if you're over that way. I got the interview on the Challenger with floats as this seemed the most interesting. The 601 Zodiac which is now SLA certified in the UK shows more

than a passing resemblance to the Robin R2100 which I trained on many years ago at Staverton— not surprising really as the designs come from the same man, Chris Heinz.

C-GTIJM – Kitfox. Couldn't locate the owner of this machine but it was interesting from the fact it was licensed as 'experimental' and had some nifty looking engineering in the shape of a Subaru engine and a variable pitch prop.

C-IROW – Chinook. It seems that someone does all the development work and certification, gets into financial difficulty then sells the manufacturing rights to another. The Chinook and the Beaver manufacturing rights are now owned by ASAP (Aircraft Sales & Parts). The builder and pilot of this one was Jim Rowe. Jim is a retired aircraft engineer from Edmonton. The plane was recently completed and immaculately built. Great visibility and stacks of room for two. The kits are around 7k -see <http://www.ultralight.ca/> for more detail – also worth a visit for the parts they supply like auxiliary, yet aerodynamic, under wing tanks. With a full fuel and passenger load the 503 Rotax was clearly struggling. Jim was looking at converting to a 912 at which point this should be a very good machine. Jim was the only one we met who didn't want to be photographed or interviewed but better than that he took me flying. Excellent trip around the Shuswap Lakes and mountains. The intercom failed so I unfortunately missed Jim's travelogue but the Cam was working so we do have the pictures. The flight was around an hour and a half which took us all over the area, spotting from the air some of the sites and places we had visited during our stay. Most interesting site was the dynamite works built on a star like principle. I assume this was so that if one production/store building went up the rest should survive.

Well one thing had become apparent during the trip, these Canadian guys all fly regularly in and over terrain that would give us palpitations. The troop from Salmon Arm were all fettling their machines and watching the weather forecasts so that they could go for the ultimate Ultra light trip – right over the Rockies and back. The standard way was, apparently, to follow the Trans Canada Highway; Jim reckoned he knew a better way but the chances of anyone ever finding you if you were forced down were slim to zero. Always up for a challenge and living life on the edge, this trip had made me appreciate the achievement of Brian Milton and Colin Bodill much more than any talk, book or pictures could. Until you have been mountain flying in the Rockies or been in and out of a lake on floats you can really only guess at what pioneer flying is all about. Whatever else you may think of these people - make sure respect is in there somewhere!

We completed our stay then returned to Vancouver (via the scenic route) we followed the South Thompson river and the log jams much of the way which took us west through Cowboy Country over to Highway 99 (Alaska)

then down through Pemberton and Whistler. Excellent all the way but yet again the Canadian five hours driving time turned into eleven. We arrived in Vancouver at 1am in the morning and got totally lost trying to find our hotel. What had happened to the simple life? - towns with one road in and one road out. Water and mountains, snakes, moose and bear. Out there folks it's all out there...

The return flight was via Calgary on the east of the Rockies. It wasn't until the afternoon so that gave us all time to recover from the long journey. The A330 Airbus got trashed all over the sky as we descended over the snow - covered Rockies towards Calgary. The heat from the Canadian mid-west must have been flying up those slopes creating turbulence worse than anything I've ever experienced in a flex wing. People were praying, people were throwing up and almost everyone looked very pale. Even the air conditioning couldn't cope with the smell of fear, not very pleasant I can tell you. We dropped a few passengers in Calgary and picked up some more then tripped back to England via Hudson Bay etc Landed on schedule, found the car and went home.

Summary

The holiday was good – very good. The only things I had organised properly were flights to Canada, car hire plus a couple of places to stay – the rest just happened. Our big trip out gave us all some lasting memories and completely re-charged my otherwise over committed batteries. Kids take it all in their stride but Canada had surpassed anything I had hoped for. We went to see old friends and made new ones, we went for a rest and did more stuff in three weeks than some do in a lifetime. If you do decide to go – don't mess with all that tourist stuff. Get out in the sticks go down to the local Airstrip start talking and see what happens – it worked for me. Now I think I've got a couple of cousins in Australia somewhere, mmm I wonder....

(Sadly all good things come to an end and this is it for Ed's magnificent account of his holiday in Canada. Thanks, Ed, for five entertaining episodes. Having read the book can we now look forward to the video at a future Club meeting?)

Internet

Those of us who use the Internet a lot might like to reflect on the thought that the original point and click device was a Smith and Wesson!

The following was seen on the Net recently. I wonder if anyone has had a similar experience?

"Student 'misses' Florida

You remember your first solo and the nerves and apprehension that it aroused. So you'll feel sorry for a guy in Florida (50 year old John Reese) who was on his first solo, got an attack of the jitters and... just couldn't land. It appears that instead of a quick circuit of Marathon airport in the Florida Keys, Reese got scared, headed south, and didn't stop until he got to Cuba.

There he crash-landed on rocky ground near Havana, happily walking away safely. He's been able to make no comment so far, as he was escorted away by some Cuban officials. The aircraft he was flying (reported to be a Cessna 172) had been shadowed by US fighters until it left US airspace, and in the final stages of his flight was reported to have been very close to the sea. A spokesman for Reese's flying school said "He looked like he knew what he was doing," but added, "We are not exactly ecstatic about it."

Weather is an important ingredient in our flying and the usual problem is to get some sort of forecast showing what it might do. There is a site - 'www.weather.co.uk' which provides forecasts for UK cities together with satellite maps, a ten-day outlook and even a daily forecast set out in three hourly sections. You may remember from some years ago when we visited the Met Office at Bristol that we were told that up to three days the forecast was reasonable but any more than that was guesswork. Perhaps technology has improved dramatically since then and longer term forecasts are more accurate. However this site will be a help in flight planning.

Quote of the Month

"When in doubt, hold on to your altitude. No one has ever collided with the sky."

Long Marston

Members should be aware that drag racing and other activities will be taking place at Long Marston Airfield on the following dates. August 25th to 27th inclusive, September 8th/9th and 22nd/23rd and October 6th/7th and 27th/28th. This may not mean that the whole of the airfield is closed to aviation but that you should check by telephone before setting out if that is your destination.

The White Horses Flight 2001

The Club have been invited by the 'gyro people' to take part in the White Horses Flight 2001 on 1st Sept 2001. The aim of the flight is to fly around the various White Horses on the Wiltshire downs. The journey starts at Wing farm (nr Warminster) at 1300hrs and takes in five white horses before landing at Redlands for lunch after just over an hours flying. The return leg - slightly shorter - back to Wing farm takes in a further three white horses. Further details and a report on last year's event can be gleaned from the gyro website www.avnet.uk/melmorrisjones/whitehos.htm or just give JH a ring. Those intending going need to phone Mel Morris-Jones on 01398 323903 or make contact via mel@flygyro.com. Fuel will be available at Redlands if you make your requirements known beforehand to Colin Reeves 01452 780475.

Defford Model Aircraft Show

The Model Airshow is scheduled to be held at Defford on 8th/9th September. In addition they are also arranging for fly pasts by various vintage aircraft including a Gypsy Moth, a Stearman, a Yak, a Jet Provost and hopefully, a Spitfire from the Battle of Britain Flight. Microlights are welcome to fly in, but strictly PPR and on radio preferably. Those without radio must be in before 10am and those with, before 10am or between 1pm and 2pm. No departures before 5.30pm, except by special arrangement with the Flight Director (Trevor Cale). They are limited on space and thus you must phone Trevor on 07773702837 or 01684 564685 to reserve your space and for a detailed briefing.

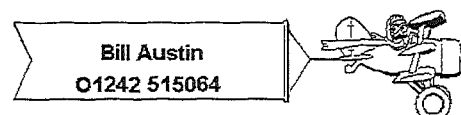
Fly In/Out Dates

25th/26th Aug- Haverfordwest Fly In
26th/27th Aug- Sittles Fly In
1st Sept - White Horses Flight
1st Sept - West Zoyland Fly In
2nd Sept - Microlight Fly In - Popham
8th/9th Sept - Defford Model Airshow



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

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





**Severn Valley
Microlight Club**



Club Newsletter

September 2001

This month's speaker

The evenings are beginning to draw in and the leaves are falling from the trees. This month's speaker Dave Magauley, will take us back to the sunshine of Florida in April 2000 and his trip around America starting at Sun 'n Fun. This is another opportunity to bring along a friend who might be interested in microlighting to see what can be achieved. From Dave's account on the Internet it is an evening not to be missed.

Future events

Three of our members and one from Redlands flew across to France in August and, it is rumoured, they had some exciting experiences. We hope to hear about them in the coming months. We have also been promised the video of Ed Wells' Canadian holiday adventures – we've read the book, now we await the film!

Christmas Party

Your Committee is doing some forward planning for the December meeting and has tried to take on board some of the comments made at the last AGM. It is proposed to have a sit-down meal at our usual venue with some entertainment being provided. The Club has already booked the entertainer and are presently discussing the menu with the Gloucestershire Club. Members will be asked to buy tickets for the meal, the price of which will reflect the cost of the meal. The entertainment is to be financed by Club funds. Final details are currently being worked out and will be published in the next edition of this newsletter.

A sobering experience

by Andrew John

Four inches! That's all I needed to clear the sheep and cattle fence ahead after a take off roll of 110 yards into wind with a three degree upslope and a lightweight female passenger strapped in behind me. I had previously done a solo takeoff and circuit to test what admittedly was a small field but estimated that there was enough margin to go dual. The field was situated in a valley, windspeed at 1000ft was given at 10 knots and the temperature was a coolish 68 degrees F. This was to be a fun flight for my passenger, whom I had already briefed, and pre-

takeoff checks completed, I applied full power and accelerated across the field. I passed my previous takeoff point as expected, but with no sign of lift off as the sheep fence rapidly approached. We lifted off reluctantly about twenty feet away from the fence travelling at a good 45 mph. A strong push forward on the bar had little further effect. I felt the impact and realised immediately that we were in trouble as pitch control was lost and with a second fence running at an angle across my trajectory any chance of making a controlled landing had gone. Contact with the ground and impact with the full height of the second fence happened almost at the same time, followed by a blur of folding struts, wire, inversion, then silence.

We were both upside down held fast by our seat belts, the intercom was still working which established that my passenger was seemingly uninjured but was having difficulty unstrapping herself. I had taken the full impact of the wire fence and the pod had largely disintegrated as we had cartwheeled and were now on top of the wing. However, the front strut remained intact protecting my body from contact with the fence but the cross bar of the A-frame had snapped. My first concern was for my passenger who was, to my considerable relief, totally uninjured, though shocked.. Secondly, the damage to the fence, - one of the best I had seen in many years! Thirdly the sight of the crumpled remains of my lovely Blade caused me great pain and rising self recrimination. The only injury was to myself - a damaged hand lacerated by the barbed wire. I took photographs of the site muttering "Bugger, Bugger, Bugger" and tried to control the onset of shock.

Why did this happen? Despite what I thought were good precautions, measuring the available takeoff run and a solo test flight to assess the upslope effect I had not allowed for the unexpected (and the unseen) which in this case was, I am convinced, rotor, created by the upwind hill tops at the head of the valley. Not enough margin for error. A lesson learnt, painfully.

As for my aircraft, I was left with more bits than I started with but with the encouragement of JH I intend to make an early start on a rebuild. Bruised ribs will heal and minor surgery to a finger should sort out the physical problems. My attitude towards the disciplines of flying remains steadfast and, in my case, it is the

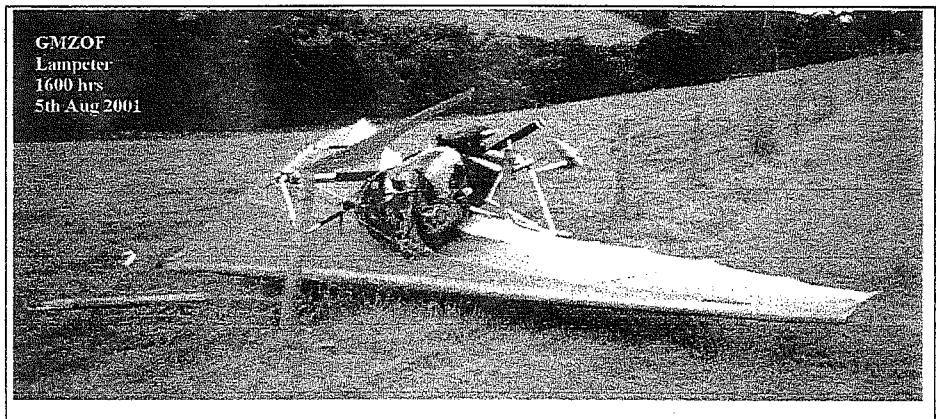
application of those disciplines which now require review. (Thank you Andrew for being so honest about your traumatic experience. We can all learn lessons from it. We look forward to seeing you back in the air soon. -Ed)

Safety

The Met Office is considering producing a new type of aviation forecast. Called the Civil Aviation Planning Index (CAPI), the aim is to enable pilots to plan their flying, up to five days ahead, by providing an immediate but informed decision as to whether conditions will be suitable. The rough idea is that the CAPI will give - as the index - a number between 0 and 100 indicating the forecast flyability of the day in question. According to the Met Office site, "in essence, above this figure you can fly, below it you can't. Clearly, there can be different thresholds, eg for experienced, intermediate, and novice pilots; and/or for different types of aircraft. In order to make the new service more accurate for private pilots, the Met Office has set up a web-based questionnaire which pilots are being asked to fill in.

Fly-ins

Defford Airfield - the grass airfield just south of the collection of radar golf balls and satellite dishes north of Bredon Hill - was the venue for a model aircraft flying display on 8th and 9th September. These were not the usual small model aircraft but their larger cousins and included a 13 foot wingspan B17, an Extra 300 and two Spitfires. In addition, the organisers had arranged for displays or fly-bys of "real" aircraft including a DC3, an SE5A and a Triplane, a Fiat Flapjack, a Hunter from Kemble, an Extra 300 and a hot air balloon. The whole display had the approval of the CAA and a representative of the CAA Safety Regulation Group was present on Saturday to monitor the situation. Bill Austin provided the ATC function on the Saturday for the full sized aircraft participating and flying in and John Bowditch did the same on Sunday. Unfortunately on the Saturday, there were two incidents which wrote off two of the models. It was not clear what caused the aircraft to crash but the strong crosswind could have been a major factor. Unfortunately the windy conditions prevented a number of Club members from flying in.



Bognor Birdman -

by Barbara Austin

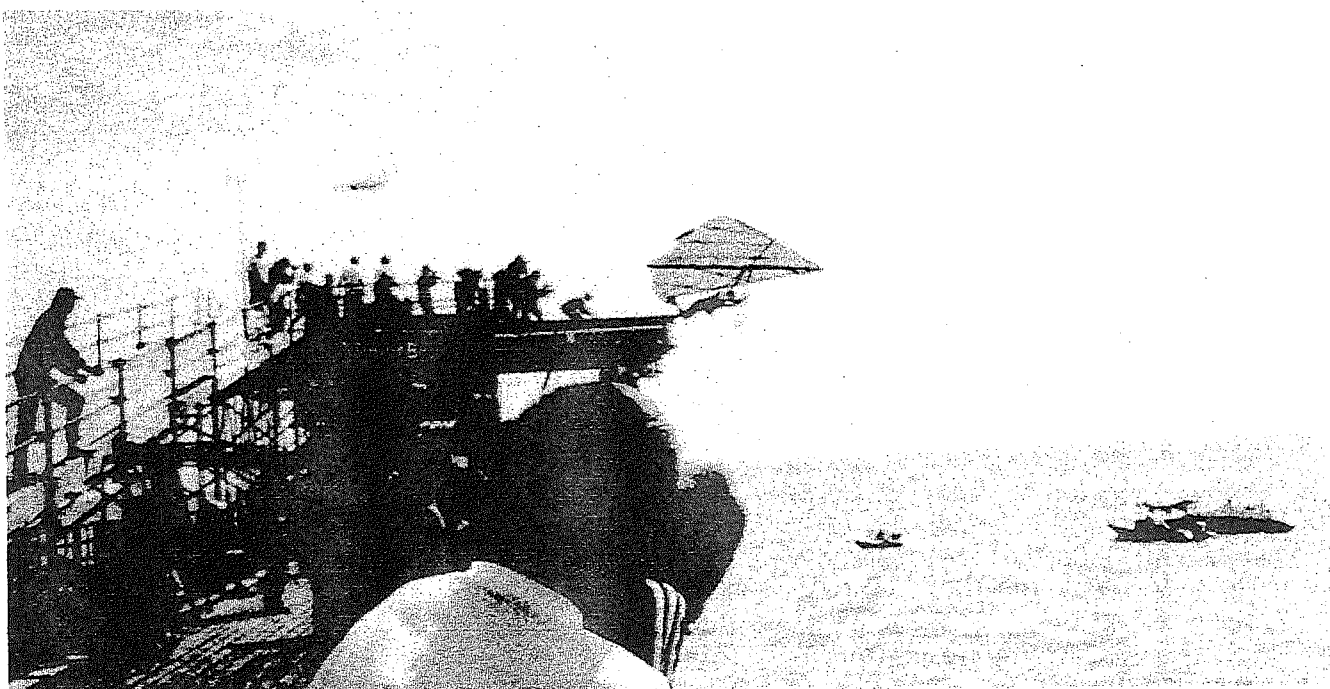
On Sunday 22nd July this year I attended the above extraordinary event. For a fee of £25 each, entrants competed for cash prizes in one of a variety of categories both serious and frivolous. The competition in essence was to jump off the end of Bognor Pier and fly (or otherwise!) as far as possible before hitting the water. Many competitors entered just for fun to raise money for their chosen charity but there were serious competitors hoping to win the Jackpot prize of £25000 for the "furthest flight over 100 metres".

The competition took place over the two hours covering high tide when the sea was expected to be twenty feet deep at the jump site. Every "flier" was required to jump off a west-facing scaffolding platform erected on the end of the pier regardless of wind direction. (This year the wind actually was westerly so all was well!) The platform juts out 35 feet above the sea and is approximately 12 feet wide and 15 feet long.

Rules state that "pilots" must be over 16, able to swim 100 metres unassisted and must wear a life jacket supplied by the Council during the attempt. No flights would take place if the wind reached 20 kts or more, in which case the competitors would lose their £25. Interestingly all contestants were "strongly advised" to take out personal accident insurance!

Apart from the Jackpot prize, there were other prizes more readily attainable with a £1000 first prize and £250 runner up for entrants in the Magnificent Flight Trophy (the serious competitors) for the furthest flight irrespective of distance. There was also one prize of £100 for the longest time in the air covering all categories. Only 10 entries were allowed in the 'Magnificent' category on a first come first served basis, so if you're interested.....

Wings are limited to a 30 foot span "which may be used for either flapping or gliding flight". Any design of aircraft wing may be tried with any method of propulsion, provided such propulsion is attained solely by the efforts of the entrant. "No nails, screws or objects that can cause injury should be used in constructing the craft" and only one pilot per craft is allowed. It is a requirement that "if wings are to be attached to the body of a pilot a quick release device is to be fitted"



This led to an assortment of wings both straight and Rogallo and even a home-made bi-plane with a pedal powered propeller! The latter was a framework covered in paper and built by a group of PFA enthusiasts. They didn't expect the paper to survive the dunking in the sea (although remarkably it did) and assured me in advance that it would be rebuilt and that they would be back next year!

There were at least three ex-hang glider wings one of which belonged to the winner with stiff vertical winglets on the extreme ends of the wing – a modification new for this year, I was told. One of the strangest things to see was one entrant with a very old hang glider wing sawing off a chunk of the leading edge at either end. This wing then proved how much it needed those wing tips by almost nose diving into the water.

Details of the event come out in January each year. Next year's competition is programmed for 11th August 2002. The longest man-powered flight to date in Bognor is 89 metres achieved some years ago which indicates that the Jackpot prize is attainable. However, this year the longest flight was 52.6 metres under a modified, cut down hang glider wing by the

same contestant who won it last year. His distance then was only 25.98 metres partly due, I understand, to the adverse wind direction.

I forgot to mention that there is a rescue boat on hand complete with divers to help fish you out and drag your beloved aircraft back to the beach. I know that at least one competitor rescued his wing and took it along to Eastbourne for a similar competition later in the summer. I understand that the Germans are "very keen on this kind of thing" and run their own serious

competitions so you could even consider going international. How about it – any ideas?

Before you think that this is very easy and you set off to make your fortune you must consider the following. You jump off a platform that is only 35 feet above the sea and there is no updraught. The pier and the jumping platform are all just frameworks so all competitors drop as they first step off. It takes a few seconds for even the best wings to start flying – it must seem like a lifetime to the pilot!

For those interested details are available from
HYPERLINK "http://www.birdman.org.uk"

www.birdman.org.uk or e-mail birdman@arun.gov.uk. I am on their mailing list so I should receive a copy which I will make available to any Club member interested.

Internet

US government researchers have been showing off ASCI White, the most powerful supercomputer in the world. The machine, otherwise known as Accelerated Strategic Computing Initiative White, is capable of 12.3 trillion calculations per second. The computer, at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, has

been shrouded in secrecy because it's used to simulate nuclear weapons launches.

General John Gordon, the Department Of Energy's under secretary for nuclear security, says the computer is key to assuring nuclear deterrence. Its simulations must be as precise as possible because the United States suspended underground nuclear tests in 1992.

ASCI White is roughly as powerful as 50,000 desktop computers. It can store the equivalent of 300 million books, or six Libraries Of Congress. It has 8,192 microprocessors, housed in a series of black refrigerator-sized boxes linked by 83 miles of wiring in a room the size of two basketball courts.

A giant air-conditioning system that cools ASCI White requires three megawatts of electricity - enough for a small city.

ASCI White was designed for the government by IBM, which transported it to Livermore last year in 28 juggernaut deliveries. The computer is 1,000 times more powerful than Deep Blue, which defeated chess grand master Garry Kasparov in 1997. The government says that to certify the nuclear arsenal with full confidence, it needs a supercomputer that is 10-times as powerful as ASCI White by 2004.

Quote of the month

"The quality of the box matters little. Success depends on the man who sits in it." Baron Manfred von Richthofen (The Red Baron).

Aviation News

Members will have heard of the Sky Raider three axis aircraft first seen at Cranfield in July 2000 and which was the subject of a review in the September issue of 'Pilot' magazine. The company has recently circulated information saying that they have changed both the name of the company and of the aircraft. The company is now called Reality Aircraft Ltd and the aircraft will be known as the "Easy Raider". These changes have been necessary to reduce confusion with other like named aircraft and to ensure that BCAR Section S aircraft are distinguished from the non-compliant version from the USA. The aircraft is a Piper Cub "look-alike" with folding wings and is being marketed as a kit complete with Rotax 503 engine and propeller for £14761.53

NASA's solar powered Helios (basically a solar wing 247 feet across) made a record-breaking flight in mid August when it took nearly seven and a half hours to climb to 96,500ft. The flight was controlled from the ground, by 'pilots' sitting behind PCs in a van near the departure runway. The 1557lb aircraft is powered by two engines - each of 14hp - which effectively gain

fuel as they climb. This is really environmentally friendly propulsion!

Shobdon

The round of the National scheduled at the beginning of August was cancelled due to the weather. This has now been re-scheduled to take place 29th/30th September. Members are encouraged to take part or just come and support. Further details can be obtained from Robbie Keene 07831237353 / 01452414975.

Aircscrew Delivery

Every effort is made to try and get your Aircscrew to you before the monthly meeting by posting it not later than the Saturday before the event. Last month the newsletters were posted on Sat 11th August. One of our members - Ed Wells - did not get his until 8th September. In other words it took 28 days to travel about 6 miles. Is this a record?

Dates for your diary

1st / 2nd December - BMAA show and AGM at Telford with the AGM on the Saturday

For Sale



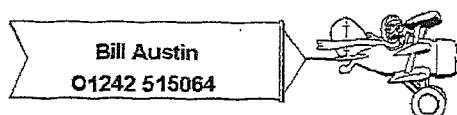
Hangarage available for fixed & fully/semi rigged flexwing microlights.

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

October 2001

This month's speaker

A change from the usual format in that we are having four speakers telling their stories of one trip to France. Ed Wells, David Howells, Paul Underwood (Tall Paul) and Les Hosegood will tell us of their individual feats of heart-stopping airmanship hopefully with some illustrated material. Another adventure, I understand, which will be of interest to all of us and any aviation-minded friends.

Christmas Party

The Committee have finalised the details and, enclosed with this newsletter, you will find a menu and a booking form. In order to ensure that everything goes smoothly, booking **forms must be returned to Robbie Keene together with payment before or at the Club meeting on 21st November 2001**. The Committee has agreed to subsidise the cost of the meal on the same basis as in previous years and to provide each table with a bottle of red and white wine so members are only being asked to pay £10 each. Meeting time will be 7.30pm for 8.00pm and the meal itself will be a silver service event. The Club is also meeting the full cost of the entertainment. Please note that there will be no raffle at the Christmas meeting as hopefully, we'll be too busy eating and dancing. Let's make this a night to remember. Bring your wives, partners, girlfriends/boyfriends and any guests you wish.

A fright around Scotland or Haggisfield 2001

A personal view by Chris Ball (but with input from others)

Episode 1 - The Plot

It's all a bit like Harry Potter really. Lots of similar names in each episode. Professor Dumbledore is Eddie Clapham (or maybe the other way around) which might make his wife Val, Prof. McGonogal, Gordon and Jaine Yule might be Mr and Mrs Weasley (I am sure Gordon does work for the Ministry of Magic), Steve Slade and his brother would certainly be Fred and George, while Robbie could even be Harry himself.

The problem was as Jethro would say, (and you can see that this article is written by and for those not culturally challenged !!!)the problem was that our

fearless leaders failed to completely and permanently solve the Foot and Mouth crisis. Instead they solved it completely, but for just one day, May 7th – and by mid July, when RBR 2001 plans had to be finalised, there were not enough grass strips around the country – but especially in Northern England or Scotland – that were willing to allow a possible 50 plus aircraft to land.

So there were several pilots with 3 days holiday booked in early August with well honed, freshly serviced aircraft sitting at home with nowhere to go. Steve Slade, the incredible, quasi aerobatic (quasi in this case means very) Rans pilot, never one to let a little thing like a cancelled event stop him, started to talk up (or email up actually) a trip to Scotland and a flight around the Western Isles instead. It wasn't long before Steve assembled a list of candidates which quickly included Rob Keene. Rob, looking for others silly enough to put themselves through the deprivations of the RBR without even the possibility of a finisher's medal, talked me into it. Rather like last year, when his idle comment that the party on night one of RBR 2000 would be at the Scottish night stop, this also nearly made my children orphans. I really should have known better. So should my trusty navigator, Ian Finbow, but he was just as gullible when I relayed Robbie's tales of swimming in the gulf Stream and raucous nights drinking malt whiskey, etc. Both easily led I suppose.

The list of names got longer as the Plan got more solid. It would be a straightforward trip to North Connel airport at Oban where we would base ourselves and then a day or two of unpressurised flights around the islands meeting others as and when for lunch or whatever. It would all be easy and relaxing. (You might buy a potato, or even a bag or two from Robbie, but would you buy a car ??). Answers on a post card please). Eventually the organisation got so slick that we even received the a La Carte menu for the Thursday night dinner party with requests that we select our choices and email them back. I just couldn't decide between the haggis or the Scotch salmon.

The list of punters included the above mentioned Harry Potter characters, with Rob's navigator/co-pilot being Hagrid, or "Ground effect" as we called him on account of his being just a little heavier than the rest of us (the rest put together - says Rob), Jim Pearce and friend from Hampshire, Pat Nicol from Yorkshire, Paul

Jacques with his BMW powered Raven, and Graham Pritchard with friend Merv, in place of Judy, from Hay on Wye.

Steve, Eddie and Graham, all in fast craft (especially Eddie's just completed but not yet certified Eurostar that had us all green with envy) flew in a stick of three and no doubt had their own adventures, but probably in more comfort and certainly at higher speed. Rob and I, with crews, met at his Over Farm (home of those potatoes) strip at 2.30 pm on Wednesday and prepared a flight plan for Ince Blundell where John North had agreed to make fuel available. So off we set into the calm blue yonder flying together at a compromise speed of around 60-65 mph. Any faster for Rob's Eclipse, or any slower for my Shadow would seriously compromise fuel economy.

We decided to reduce the navigation load a little so we took it in turns to lead transit legs - we drew the short straw for the first leg to Ince which was pleasant and uneventful in good weather. We made easy transitions through the MATZ of Shawbury then through Sleaford, courtesy of Ian's impeccable "military speak", then followed the Motorway through to the Mersey where Liverpool traffic control asked us to follow the South/West bank of the Mersey and cross it when we reached the Northern end of the Wirral. All simple enough, but livened up a bit when Liverpool came on again, just as we were passing the end of their operational runway at 1500 ft, to tell us there was a 737 just starting its roll, knew we were there and would pass us on the way up and out!! After this little excitement we flew on to Ince, landed, picked up and paid for the fuel John had kindly provided and planned the next leg to Carlisle over a cup of tea.

We took off and flew North, got no response from Woodvale radio, crossed the Ribble estuary, spoke to Warton MATZ and got permission to pass Blackpool airport. Just before Morecambe we saw a Cessna 172 zooming around the sky erratically and getting very close, we later discovered this was a favourite PPL training area!. We flew the first part of this leg separately and were surprised how easy it was to lose sight of Rob's bright red Eclipse even though we were basically on the same track, at similar altitude and within probably half a mile of each other. We flew over Morecambe bay and into the Lake district, where we joined up again and followed Windermere at about 1800 ft and on up past Ambleside. Beautiful views and some good photos too. We started to climb to clear the rising ground ahead and here we noticed for the first time the incredible climb rate of Robbie's new 912 engined Eclipse, just like a jet fighter and leaving the Shadow's climb rate for dead. Another superb leg with stunning views and easily finding and landing at Carlisle Airport. The AT Controller here was ex-RAF and extremely helpful. He identified a good spot for us

to park and tie down, then spent some time phoning local Hotels to get us accommodation for the night and then a taxi to take us there. Top service. Our taxi driver was blonde and buxom and almost as big as Ground effect, so we gave him the front seat. She must have been impressed with him as she agreed to meet us next morning at the Hotel at 8.30 am to return us to the airport.

A pleasant hotel, a good meal, several beers and a decision to proceed to Oban the next day via Tumberry - then off to bed.

Ground Effect's friend was there the next morning and off to the Airport we went and were surprised to see flexwings landing as we arrived. It turned out to be Jim (Quantum 582), Pat (Chaser 508) and Paul (Raven BMW). After a conflag, coffee and refuelling it was agreed we would all head for Tumbury, in the face of deteriorating weather, and decide on the next leg when we got there.

Rob, GE and ourselves took off first with Rob leading this leg flying North West, past the power station, Dumfries and on up into the Galloway hills. As we got into and over this higher ground of up to 2600ft, the cloudbase started to squeeze us down towards the hills and eventually forced us into valleys and below hilltop height. We were encountering occasional poor and diminishing visibility even in these valleys so we closed up to within a couple of hundred yards (Christian units you will note - we were beginning to pray you see) of Robbie so we didn't lose contact. So much for that plan, as not very many minutes later Rob disappeared in front of my very eyes into cloud. Now the worry was that I may be too close and run into him as the Shadow's natural inclination is to fly faster than the Eclipse. So we did a descending 360 orbit to well down into the valley with not much separation to the valley floor. While doing this we called Rob who had also descended out of the cloud and was flying along the valley where before too long he found a small road. We followed, keeping in radio contact, and with Ian working overtime on the 1/4 mill maps identified which road he thought it was and by calling landmarks we kept check on how far behind Rob we were. Eventually a small village, a river and a road junction identified beyond doubt where we all were.

We continued following the road as we could see from the maps that there were no obstacles and that it would eventually lead us out of the hills in about the right direction after Loch Doon which was another foolproof landmark. One light note in all of this was the police car over which we flew. Robbie swears the policeman was looking up and he was low enough to be booked for speeding !! (obviously a tall story, the Eclipse doesn't go that fast!). Eventually we got out of the hills and approached

Turnberry. I turned my GPS on (short battery life and its inability to tell me where a hillside was in a cloud meant it had not been used so far on this leg) and faithfully followed it to the point marked Turnberry telling Rob he was half a mile East of track. Imagine my embarrassment when I found myself circling barren and bumpy pasture land and a Radio beacon!! So Rob got to Turnberry (the Airfield) first, identified the best bit of a very dilapidated ex airfield, avoided learner drivers and landed. We followed suit and we both taxied to the boundary fence which was only about 100 yards from the Turnberry Hotel, home of ageing golfers (what's a golf??). As we were securing our craft, in torrential rain we heard the sound of Rotax('s) and saw Jim and Pat circling followed by Paul's BMW. We all trudged into the Hotel where we ordered coffee and sandwiches, warmed up and dried out and all told our stories of survival and impeccable navigation (follow a road mate) before contemplating the next leg amidst the growing interest of a band of geriatric golfers. *(To be continued)*

Internet

Have you managed to crack the code for METARS so that you know the weather before you depart? If you haven't, help is only a mouse click away. METARS can now be viewed on the Web in plain English by going to the site www.thehangar.co.uk/metars/index.php. All you need to state is the airport for which you require the information. Locally you can get information for Gloucester, Brize Norton and Lyneham. This site certainly "de-mystifies" the reports and therefore makes for safer flying.

You will have seen that each month Richard Webb brings a selection of books which members can borrow to the Club meeting. The books cover a whole range of aviation topics. If you are interested in WW2 in particular look at <http://members.loop.com/~tstel/marshw.htm>. This site contains the story of Marshall Stelzriede's wartime experiences as an American Navigator on B17 bombers based in England.

An experience to remember by Dave McGauley

(Before he left us last month Dave gave me a copy of an article he had written for his own Club's magazine in connection with his Round America Trip. This is reproduced below - Ed)

Like most larger airfields I had landed at, especially near big cities, the staff were not very friendly except for a few that made up for it. For that reason I went for the small town places usually manned by only one man or often none at all and just left open. I had to turn east to avoid the near masts and as I gained

height the sun was straight in my eyes. The light morning mist made it worse. So, relying on my moving map, I made my way around the towers to my left.

A slight ache in my bladder region suggested that another quick pee would have been a good idea but I had learned to ignore that for a time, at least on the longer hops. I had made a pact with myself long ago that if the worst came to the worst and I couldn't land I would pee my pants and clean up later out of sight.

At this point I hadn't seen the speed at which I flying across the ground and hadn't bothered to look on the GPS.

Now at 1000ft a few minutes later I noticed an office block about 500ft below whizz by unexpectedly fast. A quick look at the GPS confirmed the worst. I was moving across the ground at 102 miles per hour and increasing as I looked. I watched almost transfixed as within seconds my ground speed increased dramatically as I climbed, now at 110 miles per hour. Bloody Great!

I was heading for Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, a small isolated airfield cut into the woods outside the small one horse town. Who knows what turbulence I would pick up as I approached and landed in a wind like this, now at 45mph and still going up. At 125mph and 1500ft I began to seriously weigh up the odds - risk a high wind landing in unknown territory ahead or get back before it was too late.

I had only been in the air three minutes so decided to turn gingerly back - ground speed now 128mph!

I fly at 65mph hands off trim, but now, for the first time in my short flying career I was able to virtually hover into the wind moving at just 2 mph. My mind racing, I quickly calculated that it would take me 3 weeks to get back to the airfield I had left 4 minutes ago. I then calculated that my fuel would run out well before that!

My ground speed actually went down to 1 mph before I decided to pull the bar in and descend. I got down to 600ft (the local high rise office blocks were about 500 ft) and my ground speed began to pick up. Pulling the bar hard into my once flat belly and increasing power as much as possible without climbing I was able to get 10 mph and as I was now about 12 miles from the field that meant over an hour like this. I pulled in my stomach wrapped my arms around the bar and pulled with all I had, descending a little. My speed increased to 13 mph. I sat like that for a good 20 minutes my speed going up and down.

The office blocks slowly appeared and passed by below and I had to swing right to avoid a radio mast on top of one as I flew only 100 ft above them. The sweat poured off me running into my eyes and down my neck but I was determined to get back and sit this out. Down below a few cars had stopped with the driver and passengers standing staring up at me, one or two waving. Needless to say I made a quick decision not to wave back! A small crowd of early starters at the

last office block appeared to be standing around smoking at the front entrance their white upturned faces watching me crawl by. The wind on the ground appeared to be almost nil!

Now over the office blocks the much lower trees appeared ahead and I descended to 200 ft. The airfield was about 2 miles away and my arms were ready to explode. A Macdonald's appeared below and I smelt the burgers and coffee as I edged across the rapidly filling car park. At this level my ground speed had gone up to 20 mph.

I was in a bad way, my arms were aching badly and I was absolutely soaked in sweat and worse because of the bar pressure on my abdomen I had wet my self a bit, only a bit though, the smart arses out there will probably say it was for other reasons.

Now a mile from the runway I radioed ahead and dropped to 100 ft just skimming the top of the trees and entered the base leg of runway 36. Directly into wind my ground speed was now 40 mph. I gritted my teeth ready for the inevitable wind turbulence from the distant trees and descended to the threshold expecting the worst. Absolutely nothing! The wind down here a gentle breeze, same as when I had left about 40 minutes ago!

I taxied to the airport buildings - now full of life as one or two small commercial flights were loading up - parked down the side, composed myself and massaged my arms before climbing out on very unsteady legs.

I was determined not to show any sign of weakness to this generally indifferent airport staff.

I "strode" confidently into the building without removing my suit, for obvious reasons, my tan coloured clothes beneath would reveal to the waiting yanks that this intrepid Limey flyer was not all he was cracked up to be.

Amongst mostly disinterested glances I made it to the coffee machine on well disguised wobbly legs and sat indifferently down with a half-bored and laid back look on my lying face.

I sat and listened to the radio and the pilot chatter, hardly a mention of the winds! The mechanic sauntered over and idly wanted to know why I was still here?

"Oh' no plans to fly on yet" I lied. "Just thought I would take a look at the local area."

(Thank to Dave for permission to print this account - Ed)

Push to Talk

The following exchange allegedly took place at Ohare Airport:-

O'Hare Approach Control: "United 329, traffic is a Fokker, one o'clock, 3 miles, eastbound."

United 329: "Approach, I've always wanted to say this...I've got that Fokker in sight."

Why is it that the Americans seem to be much more relaxed in their use of radio than ourselves? Listening

in to our own Gloucestershire Airport the impression often given is that time and speed of transmission is more important than clarity. Certainly a number of transmissions from aircraft indicate that the PTT button is depressed just after the pilot has started to speak. The ATC staff themselves are, at times, inclined to rattle off replies like machine-gun fire - something which is guaranteed to "frighten off" microlighters who, by comparison with their GA colleagues, are less familiar with "radio speak". If you listen closely it will become apparent that the majority of exchanges are routine and therefore "predictable" in nature. However, it is bad and dangerous practice only to hear what you think is going to be the reply. (Remember your navigation when, reading from the map rather than from the ground, you anticipated you would see a feature appear and, yes, there it was? Then five minutes later none of the other features seemed to fit) Safety is easily compromised. It is far better for the ATC to know that you are there and what your intentions are than for you and a GA to "come across" each other by accident (no pun intended!). Perhaps we should invite the SATCO from Gloucester to come and talk to us sometime so that we can hear the other side of the story.

Dates for your diary

1st / 2nd December - BMAA show and AGM at Telford with the AGM on the Saturday

For Sale



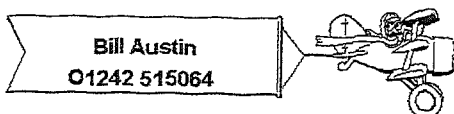
Hangarage available for fixed & fully/semi rigged flexwing microlights.

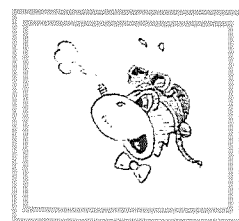
For more information phone 01793 791014 or email microlights@redlands67.freemove.co.uk

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

For all your ROTAX engine needs - from diagnostics to decokes to complete engine re-builds, ring Adrian Lloyd (Rotax approved engineer) on 01885 482504, mobile 07787 847064





November 2001

This month's speaker

Robbie Keene will be talking to us this month about his trip to Scotland. He features in Chris Ball's articles on the Haggisfield adventure so we will be able to judge who is telling the truth!

Christmas Party - Final reminder

Have you booked your places for the Club Christmas Party? Please make sure that you have returned your meal selection form together with your cheque (made out to *Severn Valley Microlight Club*) to Robbie Keene by the end of this month's meeting. Those members who do not attend meetings regularly and for whom the Post Office delivers the Newsletter after most meetings have taken place, should contact Robbie as soon as possible with their details – 01452 414975 (Home) - as it will make the final arrangements much easier to organise.

A fright around Scotland or Haggisfield 2001

A personal view by *Chris Ball* (but with input from others)

Episode 2 - The Plot thickens, as does the weather.

The forecast front from the West had not yet materialised so we all decided to fly along the 35-40 miles of The Firth of Clyde, The Sound of Bute and up into Loch Fyne. If we stuck close to Arran and then the elbow of Kintyre the "water" worries and dangers would be somewhat subjugated (though not removed as I didn't know how we could land on what were mostly rocky cliffs). Being aware of the difficulty Ian would have getting out of the back seat of the Shadow if we had to ditch (he wouldn't), we were eager to get the long sea crossing over as soon as possible, and we wanted to fly as high as was reasonably possible to extend our glide range. This translated into our using a little more throttle and getting to Kilbrannon Sound (between Arran and Kintyre) before the others with whom we were in radio contact on 129.825. Unfortunately the predicted front had arrived. Right place, just a few hours late. We were now at about 3000ft and the cloud in front extended above and below and looked pretty dark and murky. We elected

to fly under it and along Loch Fyne, up to Lochgilphead and follow the canal across the peninsula to the Sound of Jura. Radioing our intentions back to Robbie and Jim and co, we descended, and descended...

We got below it at about 600ft but the cloudbase kept descending until we were at less than 200 ft and flying alongside the shore (very close to keep it in sight) and were by now seriously debating whether we should turn back. The visibility was now getting really dodgy, twice we only just saw wall of rock headlands in time to bank and avoid them, and the waves kept looking closer. I had not realised that the barometric pressure would have dropped and that we were not at the 200 odd ft being indicated!!!!. Just as I was about to turn back, Ian spotted a brightening spot in the darkness ahead and above and we broke out into a "hole" through which we could see blue sky. We circled up into it keeping the others informed of where we were and what we were doing. We circled up to about 3000 ft and came out into a clear gap between total dark cloud cover below us and total, but much brighter and whiter cloud above us. GPS went on again after new batteries had been fitted and we proceeded in our cocoon towards the Sound of Jura. Rob in the meantime had not found our hole and was proceeding on at low level to Lochgilphead and the "canal route" across to the Sound of Jura.

Back at 3000ft our problems were returning. Our cocoon was squeezing us again and the top cloud cover was descending, our strip of clear air was about to disappear. Just in time another hole magically (Harry Potter ???) appeared below us through which we could see land and a bit of water. Having no choice we opted to descend (spirally as it was too narrow and deep a tube to just dive through) until we were back in the familiar position of 200 ft (we still thought) and just beneath cloud, but this time we were not certain exactly where we were. A combination of GPS and 4 x Mk 1 eyeballs identified our position as being in a narrow inlet that ran out to the Sound of Jura – so we had made it over to water that ran straight to Oban. We were in fact in Loch Sween. We had heard nothing more from Rob, Jim and co for some time and could now not raise them at all. Visibility was now very poor with a cloudbase of around 200ft and heavy rain.

Having got across to the Western side of Kintyre, we no longer realistically had the option of turning back unless we were willing to risk repeating what we had just gone through, which we weren't. So we had to press on. We followed Loch Sween South West and out to the sea then turned North into the Sound of Jura to follow the coast up to Oban. It sounds simple but was truly difficult and frightening. First, the GPS (with failing batteries and no more) and second, visibility was appalling probably no more than a few hundred yards. We felt our way along the coast and through and around the inlets and islands making only one mistake by flying up a "dead end" past Balvicar, but were able to just squeeze over a saddle and into the Sound of Kerrera and on towards Oban. It was here that we first appreciated the error of our altimeter. We passed several sailing boats and noted we were flying not very much higher than their masts. A friend tells me that boats of the size of these usually have masts about 50 ft high!! We saw the welcome sight of the town of Oban and not long after, the even more welcome sight of North Connel Airfield. No reply to our rather plaintive calls for landing instructions so straight on to the flooded runway and taxi to the well manicured grass apron in front of the Flying club with great relief, at 1550

We were greeted by North Connel club member Donald Hendry (the deer hunter) and two or three other visiting crews who had come up the previous day, all of whom had enjoyed our arrival, - describing it as looking like a speedboat cruising down the runway, there was so much spray. We were made very welcome by Donald and the two Johns, (Borrill and McAvoy) who provided coffee and biscuits aplenty. Not much later the door burst open and in came David Whitelaw asking "who is the Shadow man". My fear of admonishment for low flying was unfounded. He lived near Balvicar and had seen us appear out of cloud and fly past his kitchen window. He ran through the house to the conservatory to see us disappear over the headland towards Oban. He wanted to make our acquaintance as he is also a Shadow owner - and we are a strange bunch !! As we warmed up and dried out (we discovered that Shadows do leak), time had passed and we began to worry about the rest of our convoy. Then the cellphone rang (bless them). It was Robbie who was pretty hyper having just made an emergency landing on a small lane in the middle of nowhere calling to say they were OK and were being driven to a farmhouse by local residents. Shortly after there was a call from Jim to say that he, Pat and Paul had landed on the lawn of Skipness Castle on the elbow of Kintyre. Having heard Robbie's and our transmissions relating to conditions ahead, they had wisely decided to look for a suitable spot to sit out the weather. The castle appeared, the lawn looked fine and down they all went. They looked around the

Castle, had refreshments in the coffee shop and were made very welcome by the owners who were quite impressed with this additional and unexpected tourist attraction. Well done Jim, a good decision and a good result.

Robbie's escapades had been much more dramatic. He had pushed on along Loch Fyne to Lochgilphead by feeling his way along the cliffs/coast. He knew the canal started there and crossed flat land to the Sound of Jura. But when they got to Lochgilphead the cloud was down to the roofs of the first row of houses that he would have to fly over. He was just not willing to fly over them and possibly find some more higher ones behind. So, based on what we had told them about the gap in the cloud, they turned back and found the same hole and climbed to 4000 ft, quickly regretting this as all holes then disappeared and they were in a whiteout with no GPS (or even any batteries!). They cast about and spotted a house through a gap and dived towards it, successfully. Once they had determined their position they flew North in worsening rain at about 200 ft over the sea, but a new gremlin struck in the form of a "low fuel" light. Not knowing exactly how much was left, Rob was unwilling to chance his arm (and GE's come to that) over the cold sea. He spotted a small track on the Peninsula North of Crinan and near the Isle of Scarba which would normally have looked dire, but described it as LHR after the last hour's flight. Stopping was difficult as the road was very short and ended in a bank of rock but the new fangled disc brakes and Ground Effect's substantial downforce enabled them to stop with just 3 metres of track left. They had been observed by the local farmer's wife who thought they had crashed. She collected them and took them home to warm up and calm down with a wee dram. Their "landing strip" had served them well but was far too short to lift off from 2 up and with luggage etc. Their hosts described a large flat field a couple of miles away and the plan, once the weather cleared, was for them to drive Ground Effect and luggage to this field and for Rob to fly there solo. The weather did clear in the evening and the plan was put into effect. It nearly went wrong. First, one bank and wall were so high they limited the take off roll to too short a distance, so Rob started his run with the right wing tilted until the wall ended, secondly, the torque of the 912 "twisted" the trike off the road just at take off speed, straight into some tall reeds which, despite getting caught in the spats failed to stop him. He got off and found the field to which Ground Effect and luggage had been duly delivered, loaded up and off they went, landing at North Connel some 20 minutes later at about 1900 hrs.

Early evening saw the arrival of Eddie and Val in the Eurostar and Steve and Mike and Graham and Merv in their Rans. Warm, dry and with luggage to spare, what luxury !.

John Borrill and colleagues phoned around and located bed and breakfast accommodation for us just around the corner from the hotel where the evening banquet was to be held and where Steve, Eddie and the A team had pre-booked accommodation. We were then driven there by John McAvoy and were able to shower and clean up ready for dinner and drinks.

Airborne Again

By Andrew John

Rebuilding G-MZOF has taken three months, involving visits to Mainair and Conair to deal with repairs to the wing and checks on the engine respectively, plus the total strip down and rebuilding of the trike unit by myself, here at home, with parts collected from Rochdale. The support and encouragement from JH and others has been tremendous, culminating in a late afternoon test flight last weekend, which satisfied John that all was well and as a result my suspended Permit to Fly was lifted with a phone call from Ray Wilkinson at BMAA HQ a couple of days later.

Yesterday I spent two hours fifteen minutes flying from home base to Hardwicke via Over to visit Graham and Judy Pritchard, enjoying some of the very best of flying conditions enhanced by the beauty of autumn colours and reminding me so much of what I have missed over the last nine months, with FMD as well as my accident.

On Sunday 13th October I took Julia, my passenger on that fateful flight on 5th August, for a pleasant trip over Gloucestershire, thanks to the loan of 'Charlie Fox' from JH, landing back at Catsbury Cottage with four peacocks roosting on the cottage thatch as we landed! She was more than satisfied that microlighting is an amazing way to fly, and in addition, as a passenger, was as relaxed as any veteran flyer.

Of all the bits and many pieces that required replacing the last one was the VSI, which, until the test flight, was not checked. It had suffered severe damage and needed replacing, which thanks to Mainair arrived overnight. However, I was reluctant to fit it before testing. The only way I could think of, and which I used, was to take a quick drive up Bredon Hill and was relieved to see the needle reach 500 ft per minute as I accelerated through 50 mph up our internal route to the top!

So, all in all a testing time, emotionally, physically and financially!

It is great to be airborne again!

Safety

A NOTAM has been published establishing until further notice a TRA up to 2000 feet and 2nm radius around all nuclear installations. In our immediate area this includes Berkeley and Oldbury.

Chris Ball's article highlights an important safety point which can be easily ignored or forgotten when flying in

adverse conditions. (The effect of deteriorating conditions on the information provided by his altimeter did not dawn on him until much later!) Cast your mind back to your meteorology classes at groundschool. You learnt that as you climbed away from the airfield your altimeter registered an increase in height but, at the same time, the atmospheric pressure decreased as you got higher. What then is the effect on your altimeter when atmospheric pressure drops? The altimeter will indicate that your height is greater than it actually is. So if you fly in steadily deteriorating conditions at what you think is a constant height as indicated by the altimeter you will, in fact, be steadily descending. Be aware, especially when flying over a period of hours, that atmospheric pressure is constantly changing and if conditions worsen your altimeter might not be telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth! This is the time when being on radio can be an advantage in that you can contact someone and find out what the regional QNH is and thus avoid involuntary low flying!

Internet

Following September's tragic events in America an article on the Web suggests that remote controlled airliners may stop suicide hijackers. New technologies which will allow a pilot on the ground to retake control of a hijacked aircraft may prevent future suicide attacks.

The US military are developing dozens of spy planes which can be safely piloted miles away from the front line. Some experts say the technology could be adapted to commercial aircraft for use in an emergency. Remotely piloted vehicles, or RPVs, and autopilots which can land aircraft without human help are current technologies which might have helped foil the suicide attacks on New York and Washington. *(Some reports have said that on one plane the hijackers pulled the transponder breaker thus foiling any attempt by the pilot to let the ground know what was happening)*

Dr Simon Bennett, an expert in aviation safety and disaster management, at the University of Leicester's Scaman Centre, says such hi-tech systems would be a useful second line of defence. He says: "I don't think you should replace pilots but perhaps these technologies could be used as a safety net if you were confident a plane had been hijacked. These systems could take the hijackers out of the control loop. They would still be sat at the console making inputs but the aircraft would be being piloted from the ground." The systems would need to be secure and hacker-proof, but Dr Bennett says: "This technology exists in the military to such an extent they are confident enough to use it in the field. Maybe a commercial version could be looked at."

Quote of the month

"There are airmen and there are pilots: the first being part bird whose view from aloft is normal and comfortable, a creature whose brain and muscles frequently originate movements which suggest flight; and then there are pilots who regardless of their airborne time remain earth-loving bipeds forever. When these latter unfortunates, because of one urge or another, actually make an ascension, they neither anticipate nor relish the event and they drive their machines with the same graceless labour they inflict upon the family vehicle." *Ernest K. Gann.*

Robot fighter plane to be tested

US Air Force scientists are about to begin testing a robot fighter plane.

The Unmanned Combat Air Vehicle will begin trials in December.

The aim is to make a fully armed, self-piloting combat plane capable of carrying out offensive missions.

At the moment the only unmanned drones used on missions carry out reconnaissance duties.

The new plane would need to accurately choose its own targets and distinguish friend from foe.

But Andrew Brookes, air defence analyst at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, told New Scientist: "It would have to be able to tell if a truckload of nuns was about to cross a bridge before blowing it up."

Dates for your diary

1st and 2nd December - BMAA Annual General Meeting and Show – Telford. (Don't forget to take your BMAA membership cards with you - it will save you £3 on the entrance fee)

19th December – Club Christmas Dinner and Dance at the Gloucestershire Club

Aviation News

Trevor Cale reports that at long last the kit for his new plane has arrived in the UK. It was being delivered just after the last Club meeting and, by the time this newsletter appears in print the building will have started. Trevor has arranged to go away for Christmas so it will probably be early 2002 before we have the pleasure of seeing him back in the air in his super hot CT Icarus. Hopefully, Trevor will keep us informed of progress.

Seen on the Guardian Internet on Monday 29th October – "It might not be the most efficient way to travel, but Ian Ashpole realised a childhood dream yesterday when a bunch of 600 toy balloons took him up, up and away. The cloud of helium-filled balloons lifted the 46-year-old pilot to 11,000ft before he cut himself free and parachuted back to earth at Chatteris, Cambridgeshire.

His height was verified by observers in a hot air balloon and a helicopter, and will win him another place in the Guinness Book of Records. He set the existing record of 10,000ft two years ago near his home at Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, and hopes one day to reach 15,000ft.

Supporters spent 10 hours filling the balloons for Mr Ashpole, who weighs 12 stone. He rose to 5,000ft attached to a support balloon before releasing himself and rising the rest of the way at around 1,000ft a minute.

"It got to a point where a lot of balloons were starting to burst - it was like machine guns going off - and I cut myself free without any problem," he said. "The one thing you don't want to do is drop the knife."

He has also set records for bungee jumping, abseiling and tightrope walking between balloons. But even his wife, Louise, had problems appreciating the appeal of this particular stunt. "I have no idea why he wants to do it," she said. "But it's obviously great fun for him."

For Sale/Wanted

Interesting Shadow deal??

Shadow for sale with many extras and spares. Shadow 503 CD, with slipper tank, electric trim, spats, strobes, extra windows, under seat storage boxes, Icom radio and headsets, dual controls, full service history (by Shadow Flight centre), always hangared, 190 hours engine and airframe, permit to August. £11,000 ono – or bought in two instalments of £5k each, one now and the second in April/May, including continued hangarage and operation from my strip but allowing me 1 hour's a month flying till April/May. Or combinations of the above. Call Chris Ball on 01242 820055

Hangarage

available for fixed & fully/semi rigged flexwing microlights.

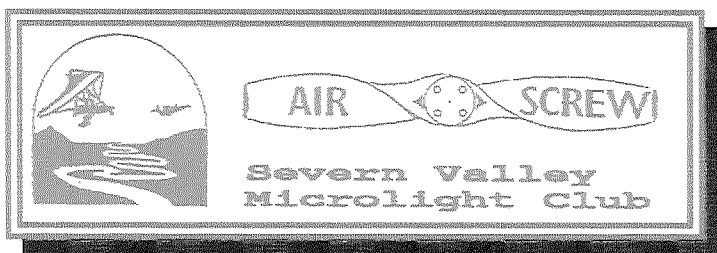
For more information phone



01793 791014 or e-mail
microlights@redlands67.freemove.co.uk

Wanted – good 582 crankcase halves. Phone Adrian Lloyd 01885 482504





December 2001

This month's meeting

The Christmas dinner with entertainment and dancing will be at the usual venue - 7.30pm to be seated for the meal at 8.00pm. Please be punctual. We have arranged to have our own bar facilities in the room so there will be no excuse for missing out on the entertainment whilst recharging your glass.

BMAA AGM Telford 2nd December 2001

By Andrew John

Despite a change in the day and location to a curtained off section of Hall 3 at Telford this year's AGM was probably the best attended in the history of the Association. Having overcome initial PA problems the meeting welcomed our President **Ann Welch** with her usual enthusiastic summing up of the place microlights have taken in the furtherance of private aviation. She highlighted the 100th anniversary of flight, to be commemorated in 2003, and the place that the DH Moth had later had in the experience of so many early pilots in this country. Despite heavy controls on private flying there has, more recently, been a more simplified and sensible approach by the CAA, and this has been achieved with a significant input from the BMAA. For the future we must not be complacent, there are changes on the way and we must continue to have an influence on them. She paid tribute to the work of our past Chairman Keith Negal and current Chairman Geoff Weighell.

Chairman's Report

Geoff Weighell reminded us of the enthusiasm of members over the years which contributed to the creation of the BMAA. He listed the many advantages of membership of the BMAA and compared that with what was available to non-members. Reviewing the work of the Association during the last twelve months he was glad to report the appointment of an additional engineer to help cope with the huge work load in that department. There had been several very significant planning appeal successes thanks largely to the voluntary work of Brian Cosgrove - now considered the most experienced and persuasive expert in that field. The BMAA website is growing fast and is well used as is the E-group membership.

Treasurer's Report

John Rose reported a modest profit of £8135, representing a turnaround of close to £20K from last year. This was despite a reduced membership which now stands at less than 4000. He felt the impact of F & M was partly responsible but membership fees were up and costs had been significantly reduced, thanks to the Deddington team.

Having considered the future needs of the Association he recommended a small increase in annual subscriptions of £2 taking it to £41 for an existing member, which was approved with only 4 members voting against.

This increase will contribute towards the extra costs of the new engineering appointment, higher insurance and inevitable increases in other costs. Fixed Assets had increased by £109K due to the revaluation of the Deddington Office and now stand at £239K. The accounts were adopted.

Chief Executive's Report

Chris Finnigan mentioned the reduction in the total membership of the Association but was glad to report an increase of 19 new members this year compared with 14 last year. A better funded BMAA can only be more efficient, so he encouraged a big national recruiting campaign to swell membership numbers. Consideration was being given to reduced membership fees for pensioners and a review of the database was in hand. Aircraft registrations were up some 138 but he felt that there were many aircraft that could be re-registered under the new scheme and, if not flown by their owners, then put up for sale. He reminded members that the website had proved very effective for sales of second hand aircraft. Also it is a free service!

He introduced **Jon Viner**, recently appointed as Assistant Aeronautical Engineer to Guy Gratton in the Technical Department. John comes from BAE at Bristol having been involved with production of the Airbus.

During his visits around the country to various clubs he was aware that membership was largely short of females and long on male Saga recruits! This he felt was due to the inevitable attraction that flying has for men and the financial impact that even microlight flying can have on mid-life domestic expenditure. He

closed by mentioning the plans for a joint demonstration of Microlight manufacturers for the RAF at Cranwell sometime next year.

Chief Technical Officer's Report

Guy Gratton made it quite clear that he was not happy with the slow turnaround time for many aspects of the work but was pleased to confirm the recruitment of John Viner from BAE. However, considerable progress had been made in the last year namely, 39 home built projects had been registered, minor mods averaged one per week with 24 standard mods and 26 major mods approved. Two new Check Pilots had been enrolled. Six new prototype aircraft had been cleared for testing under Section S, two new engines had been tested together and many other investigations etc carried out.

Safety Officer's Report

With great sadness **Ray Wilkinson** reported 2 fatalities in two accidents last year, and a further 32 accidents resulting in few serious injuries but considerable distress and cost to those involved. He thanked all those who had provided details of their accidents for others to learn from. Reports on these accidents will appear in due course with the March Edition of Microlight Flying.

Trophies

Due to Foot and Mouth disease competitive flying was seriously curtailed this year so awards were also cut back and for various other reasons several Trophies were not awarded. However amongst those that were presented was the Steve Hunt Memorial Trophy awarded to Simon Reeve for his solo trip to Australia in a Mainair Blade and the Chairman's Trophy awarded to Gordon Wilson who, after serious injury, took up microlight flying and recently handled a potentially disastrous situation in flight by safely landing his aircraft on two wheels.

Council Elections

Four new members were elected following a postal vote of five candidates. They were, Paul Dewhurst, Jeff Bowman, John Mills, and Tony Gordon.

Any other Business

The formation of Microlight display team is being investigated, and anyone interested should get in touch with the BMAA. Members were reminded that the pink Medical form now includes a mandatory requirement for colour blindness to be checked by your medical practitioner. The cost of medicals could be infinitely variable from one medical practitioner to another. The BMAA an explanatory letter on the subject to show your doctor if members are experiencing difficulties.

On the question of deregulation of single seat aircraft under 200 kgs, the CAA apparently still need convincing. Finally, the proper use of the BMAA radio frequency was raised. At times it seems to be regarded by some pilots as a general chat channel while flying. As there is no possibility of a further frequency being allocated in the foreseeable future it is every pilot's responsibility to promote safe flying and keep all messages short, precise and related to flying.

Quote of the Month

"An airplane might disappoint any pilot but it'll never surprise a good one" - Len Morgan

C42 progress report

By Trevor Cale

On one of those perfect flying days of clear, calm blue skies, a rather large trailer packed full of boxes, tubes and other paraphernalia, arrived at Hardwicke Farm, home of Graham Pritchard.

Arrived at last indeed, one Ikarus C42, my new baby and that sinking feeling at handing over a rather large cheque was somewhat mollified by the prospect that it would not be long before severe withdrawal symptoms would finally be cured.

Armed with 2 videos, a build book translated from the German plus detailed assembly drawings, Graham had the fuselage put together and standing on it's 3 wheels within the first week and a week later, the 912 was in place and we were fitting the instruments.

There's a 'but' here however, as Teutonic efficiency has not extended to certain areas and there have been, and are, irritating pauses whilst various missing bits are awaited or require exchanging. In addition, none of the individual components were marked and numbered relative to the drawings so it has proved to be a bit of a jigsaw puzzle to find out what goes where! Despite all that, Graham and the PFA Inspector Eddie Clapham continue to be very impressed by the quality of the kit and consider that it will be a fine little machine once up and away.

Four weeks on and the seats are in, windscreen fitted, engine cowling in place, wings fitted, ailerons and flaps made up and covered. Once more a pause however, whilst we await additional 'missing bits'.

When this new 'state of the art' rolls out onto the apron, I then have to learn to actually fly it and though one hour's free instruction is included in the price, I have to get it to Sywell and I may be calling on some kind soul to 'hold my hand' so to speak. Any offers!? 'It' also has to have a name, as 'C42' is not exactly inspirational and hardly resonant of wanderings in the clear blue skies of Europe. Suggestions please.

Telford 2001

by Bill Austin

So what's new? The simple answer is "Not a lot" judging from what I saw on the Sunday. My overall impression was that the show somehow lacked sparkle and innovation. I gather from talking to a number of people that there was no lack of interest on Saturday when the attendance was described as "heaving with people"!

There were two new 3-axis aeroplanes on view. The MVP740 "Savannah" being marketed by Sandtoft Airfield was an all metal, side-by-side plane of Italian origin powered by a Jabiru engine. Probably the most notable feature was the square box shape of the fuselage. If it had been sited alongside the Eurostar there would have been no contest for

aesthetic appeal, the latter would have won hands down. An unusual feature of the cockpit was the central 'Y'-shaped yoke. I'm not sure how this will appeal to pilots. Statistics for the aircraft are:- wingspan 9.0 mtrs, length 6.5 mtrs, height 2.9 mtrs, fuel capacity 75 litres, maximum speed 105mph, cruise 85mph, approach 35mph, stall 30mph and take-off run 30-40 mtrs. The total price is £17500 and kits are expected to be available in the last quarter of next year. Construction time is said to be 400 hours. It is being put through Section S via the BMAA. The other was the "Sky Ranger" being marketed by Flylight Airports Ltd at Sywell and which has yet to clear the hurdles of Section S. It is a two seater side-by-side kit built aircraft priced at about £7000 plus VAT, engine (Rotax 582 or 912), propeller and instruments extra. Wingspan is 9.5 mtrs, length 5.5 mtrs and height 2.4 mtrs. Climb rate on the foreign registered prototype was 1000 ft/min at MAUW. It will be a hard choice for anyone thinking of buying this style of aircraft!

As far as weightshift aircraft were concerned the latest arrival was the Kiss from Air Creation. This was a sturdy looking aircraft which carried its water radiator under the pod. It is available as a kit and one member of the microlight e-group has set up a site on the Web detailing his progress in building one.

All the usual manufacturers were there but it was noticeable that there was very little that was new or exciting in any field. There seemed to be a predominance of 3-axis aircraft amongst the microlights with the majority of the show being taken up by the BHPA stands. I believe for the first time the British Rotorcraft Association had a stand at the show with three gyroplanes on show. Each time I passed their stand there seemed to be lots of people taking an interest.

A conversation with the Director of Andair, a company which, up to now, has concentrated on manufacturing gascolators and fuel equipment for the GA fraternity proved interesting. They think that the expanding market for their products is within the microlight field. They intend speaking to the manufacturers and developing suitably light weight and small components for our type of aircraft. Certainly the equipment they produce for the GA aircraft is of a high standard. We will have to await developments.

My overall impression was that it is in the hangliding, parafling and paramotoring fields where development is currently taking place. Microlights seem to have become stuck on 912 engines and a price tag around the £20000 mark. Is affordable flying no longer enjoyable?

Safety

Having a radio in your aircraft (the Icom type not one which receives Radio 2!) is an additional safety factor. However, as you will have read in Andrew's report of the AGM, there is some concern over how it is used by some pilots, particularly on the frequency allocated to the BMAA. In the UK there is

no frequency allocated solely for in-flight communication between aircraft nor is there likely to be one in the foreseeable future. Pilots must realise that when they are transmitting on a frequency they prevent anyone else using that frequency until they release the PTT button. To use the radio for general banter is irresponsible and dangerous because your concentration is not where it should be – flying the aircraft and keeping a good look-out – and you may be preventing another pilot who has a problem from obtaining early assistance. Be a good, safe and considerate pilot by keeping your transmissions concise and relevant – save the chatter for after you arrive.

"Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth" or "How I went to Shobdon for lunch"

By Adrian Lloyd

The day dawned gorgeously sunny – the sort of day for flying and sod the household chores! So off to Milson we went to prepare Romeo Tango for flight. On the way, the sky was showing signs of interesting wave activity and the glider pilot in me began to stir. By the time Romeo Tango was ready and fuelled, my plan was clear – go to Shobdon for lunch and see what the wave was like on the way.

Take-off achieved, we headed west skirting the southern end of Clee Hill. There was a fair amount of turbulence below the cloud, typical of the type found at the bottom end of a wave system. Around 2000 feet the turbulence decreased and we turned north westwards to head out from under the cloud. By 2500 feet I knew we had connected with the wave system. We had throttled back to less than cruise but the climb rate was around 1000 feet a minute. Also, the turbulence had ceased and the air was oh so smooth. The climb was rapid, the altimeter needle moving steadily round – no incremental jerks! By now we were climbing parallel to the wave base ascending the leading edge of the clearly defined cloud line.

High above me, a secondary wave bar system was clearly visible. The thought crossed my mind whether this was within reach or was it too high and require power to reach it.

The climb continued. Sometimes the VSI showing rates as much as 1500 feet a minute. The sky above was azure blue and I was really warm in the sun. The heater continued to blow warm air around my feet.

By now we were climbing through 6/7000 feet – the wave system above was getting closer and, although the climb rate had now slowed down, I began to feel we could reach the upper system. At this height I could hear radio calls on 129.825 from all over the country. I decided to broadcast a call to whet other people's appetites – or was it to boast of my progress heavenwards!

Eventually around 9000 feet I reached the upper wave bar system. Several things were now apparent. The heater was blowing cold air! The engine thermostat

was now only allowing hot water flow within the engine itself. The side of me in the sun was still warm – the side in the shade was distinctly cold! Although the attitude was correct the ASI was certainly under-reading– a 20 knot discrepancy in fact.

More slowly now the climb continued and we started to explore for the best areas of lift. Somewhere around 10500 feet I decided to jump the step system and move further west towards the primary. The 'jump' cost me about 2000 feet but we soon contacted lift again. By now we were somewhere above Church Stretton - the ground a very long way below much of it hidden below the cloud base. The GPS showed a ground speed of 15 knots for an altitude airspeed of 60 knots! We flew along the wave system by now gradually inching up. I occasionally spoke to another Romeo Tango from Long Marston who was somewhere very close to me. Actually at no time did we 'eyeball' each other despite the superb horizontal visibility.

Eventually the altimeter showed 11500 feet QFE above Milson – 12000 feet above sea level. At this point the climb had ceased. The engine was still at less than cruise but it was definitely running slightly lumpy now – it would, as it was now very over-rich because of the altitude

It was cold; the view stunning! I was also fully aware of the oxygen question – time spent above 10000 feet without supplementary oxygen. Could I go higher; was it worth jumping another system? Watch for symptoms of hypoxia! A quick ascent to 14/15000 feet or a quick descent? I doubted it. I felt I had 'topped out' with the system. Difficult to put my finger on anything definite, perhaps a slight wooziness, a buzzing in the head? I was not sure but one thing I was sure of – I pulled the throttle! What a hell of a height to pass out at! Not for me!

As we descended the wooziness disappeared. I felt elated – my best ever height reached in Romeo Tango, stunning views, and a real sense of the full meaning of John Gillespie Magee's wonderful poem "High Flight" – for those who know it you will know what I mean.

I was now some 20 odd miles north of Shobdon so we set the GPS and proceeded towards my waiting lunch. Let me assure you that descending with throttle shut from that height, especially through a lot of air that was going up big time, takes one hell of a time! The result was that I arrived in the vicinity of Shobdon still at 6000 feet.

Eventually down to circuit height the air was very turbulent as expected at the bottom of a big widespread wave system. However, all went well and we arrived to a welcome lunch.

What a wonderful flight to reflect on – over one and a half hours in wave and my best height yet in Romeo Tango. What can I climb next?!!

Dates for your Diary

16th January 2002 – Club AGM. Your chance to say what you would like to see happen in the coming year,

to pass judgement on the "retiring" Committee's efforts in the past year or even to become a member of the Committee yourself. Come along and make it lively!

21st – 23rd June 2002 PFA Cranfield Rally

John Dance

It is sad to have to report the death from cancer of a former Club member, John Dance. Members might recall that he and Peter Lewis built a Rans some years ago at Peter's house. When it was finished it was hangared for a short time at Defford. John eventually gave up flying his own aircraft and returned to being a willing passenger in GA aircraft from Gloucestershire Airport. Our condolences go to his family.

For Sale/Wanted



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

For more

information phone 01793 791014 or e-mail
microlights@redlands67.freemove.co.uk

Hangarage, semi-rigged available at Defford now -
£30 per month. Contact Mike Porter – 01386 750179.

Wanted – good 582 crankcase halves. Phone Adrian
Lloyd 01885 482504



*Merry Christmas &
A Happy New Year
To all our members
and their families*