



SEVERN VALLEY MICROLIGHT CLUB

AIRSCREW

July 2017

Hello again and welcome to the July edition of Airscrew. Starting off with an article from Keith Vinning on the Pilotaware kit and why we should all have it. A brief pilot profile from Mike Tuck and of course the Chairman's Airwaves. I have also included a couple of taster pickies of the EPIC SVMC Summer Expedition to France, of which I was a participant. I will attempt to put an article together for the next Newsletter, suffice to say that with the exception of the first objective – the EFLEVA Fly In at Leopoldsville Beverloo airfield in Belgium, due to impenetrable weather, we still had a brilliant time and met some lovely people in the most unusual of places !

Pilot profile : Mike Tuck

Many thanks for your interest.

Not only am I a new club member, but also a student pilot which is challenging cos I'm 67 and partially deaf! .I started microlight flying lessons with Tom at the Flying Shack in Staverton, and having successfully flown the required 2 solo cross country flights hope to attain my licence shortly.

Thanks for that Mike, are there any more out there who would like to like to share their flying experiences ?

SVMC Summer Expedition 2017

John Ingram had bravely put out an invitation to SVMC members, to participate in a trip to a tour of France, followed by a flight to the EFLEVA Fly-in at Leopoldsburg in the east of Belgium. Replies were recieved from about six aircraft owners and the serious planning began. Advice on required kit was disseminated and a meeting of interested parties was arranged at a local hostelry. The attendance was impressive with a wide range of experience and aircraft types. I was prompted to buy a Personal Locator Beacon, which is a 'no brainer' really considering the tract of water we would be flying over. I had been considering buying one for a while as I fly all year round and the prospect of a forced landing somewhere remote in the depths of winter has always been a concern. I ordered one from Transair, it duly arrived a couple of days later and I registered it online. Simple !

So the departure date was set for 24th June, kit list worked on, French charts ordered (one for week days and one for weekends! Argh more expense !) Then the list of participants started to diminish till only three were left. Still, three is a good

manageable number and enthusiasm remained high. With less than ideal weather, the brave trio set off for our UK jump off point - Headcorn. Flying in loose formation with a respectable tailwind under a raggy cloudbase was a challenge. However, when only 20 minutes from Headcorn, the weather deteriorated to the point where a diversion to the nearest airfield became necessary. Fortunately, John's eagle eye had spotted a farm strip a couple of miles back along our route and he called turning for it and us stragglers duly followed. The strip was easily long enough and dead into wind. Down safely and shutting down the engines in what we assumed to be the parking area, a very amiable looking farmer approached. Offering profuse apologies we explained that we had indeed been caught out by the weather and we would be on our way as soon as the weather improved. Well it didn't and we then had to seek permission to camp overnight. The farmer 'Harold' didn't seem to mind and even offered to give us a lift to the local village so we could get a meal at the pub. However our run of bad luck had not quite run out yet as we discovered that this was the Chefs' night off... on a Saturday!!! Farmer Harold came to our rescue once again and offered to run us to the next village where there were three pubs which all did food. Arriving at the first one we found that a wedding party was due and they had the whole restaurant booked. The second however proved to be an absolute gem and we enjoyed a superb meal with great beer and the landlord even organised our taxi back to the strip later in the evening ! What service !



Looking down the strip



Happy Campers

Next morning the weather had improved only marginally but looking further afield (France) we could see that the weather was going to thoroughly miserable for the next week. After a short discussion it was decided to postpone the trip for a week and head home. The leg back to Popham (as a waypoint but not landing) was interesting enough but from Popham to Gloucester the weather again just got steadily worse until it became prudent to divert into Clench Common. Being at the back of the formation, a sudden squall line separated me from the other two and I was forced to 'consider my options'. I had just passed a farm strip and so I decided to go for that. Not letting the strip's wind sock out of sight for a second, I dropped flap and power, sideslipping straight onto it. No sooner had I completed the roll out, the rain arrived. I taxied back to the end of the strip and shut the engine off. Almost immediately my phone rang, it was John asking if I was down safe. Just then a 4 x 4 rolled up and the farmer asked if I was OK. Again he was a flyer and didn't mind a bit that I had done a precautionary landing. Such amazing people our fellow aviators! It transpired that I was about a mile from Clench, so when the rain stopped I made the short hop and joined the rest of the trio and sat down to a well earned cup of tea. The other guys

were studying the weather radar on the Clench laptop and after about an hour a gap appeared between inbound bands of rain and we rapidly got off the ground and completed our return flight to our respective home bases. Well that was the rehearsal, next time it would be the real thing! To be continued.....

A Thoroughly Modern Old Pilot Linking The Past To The Future.

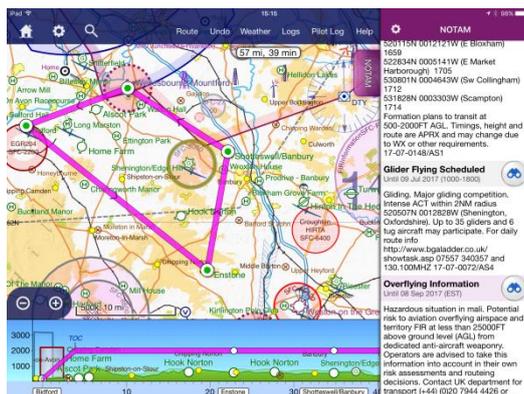
So, I'm much closer to 70 than 60 years old and I have been flying a long time I have to admit. However, something struck me today that links the past with the present and the future. For those of us who can remember when Microlights were "Minimum Aircraft" i.e. powered hang gliders with Soar-master engines strapped to them, or who drooled after a Hiway Skytrike with a Valmet 160cc engine, or anyone else who is interested read on.

In the 70's and 80's the development of microlight aircraft in Europe was rapid and those that were fortunate enough to be involved at the beginning were making history except we didn't know it. Before the introduction of Section S there was an element of risk but hey we discussed the physics and we wore flared trousers so what could possibly go wrong. As one of the early microlight instructors of this period I always exhorted my students to fly safe because there would be some fantastic microlight aeroplanes due to be developed over the next 10, 20, 30, 40 years and they shouldn't miss out. Well, we are here and the aircraft are fantastic just take a look at the Eurofox for example.

Little did I know that it wouldn't be just aircraft that would be amazing. Look at Easy VFR and Sky Demon. Who would have even envisaged these fantastic products at the Wellesbourne Microlight fly in in 1980.

So, that's the past what about the Present. Well here is a report of a typical flight in 2017. One I took today. If I had suggested that this would be possible at a meeting of the Midland Microlight Club at the pub in Atherstone in 1983 I would have been accused of drinking too much Marston's Pedigree.

This afternoon, I needed to take a short flight, by today's standards, from Bidford Gliding club in Warwickshire to Enstone Airfield in Oxford to drop off an antenna. Like all good Pilots I looked at the NOTAMS to see what was going on. Easy, log onto SkyDemon (Other navigation packages are available) plot the route and the NOTAMS are automatically available. Red Arrows in transit from Cardiff to Melton Mowbray and back again via Oxford between 500 and 2000 ft. Must keep a lookout for them. Then another thing caught my eye as the iPad screenshot of Sky Demon shows.



Ahah! a major glider competition at Shennington that covers most of the country but will start and finish at Shennington about 12Km from my track to Enstone. Best keep an eye open for them. But hey! this is 2017 and I have just had an update to the software on my PilotAware that says I can now see gliders if I am near an OGN antenna. Let's give it a go.

Yes, there is an OGN antenna at Shennington and yes there they are, all returning from their competition, and from PilotAware RADAR I can see that I am in the vicinity of 1 OGN uplink. As I approach Shennington the PilotAware Radar Screen lights up, and when we are 10Kms away the voice alert in the headsets lets me know that are at least 12 gliders 1000ft or so below. Best to keep away and let them have fun. Also, you will see another 3 possibly on route back to Shennington. Not green because they are more than 10Km away.



This gets me thinking and I have a look at the traffic page of PilotAware to see what gliders I am picking up on my very inexpensive portable PilotAware unit. There are lots of gliders and other aircraft being picked up. Most far enough away for me not to worry but this is fantastic.

Here is a screenshot of the traffic page of PilotAware that I saw.

HEX(18)	REQ	MODE	SO D(KM)	A(FT)	SR	DIR	ADEN	Status	AIRCRAFT	OWNER
28430A	G-RTTN	---	- 58.1	-15+00	1	0	---	---	---	---
00050A	UP-OGN	---	- 9.9	3328+00	4	0	---	---	---	---
000572	UP-OGN	---	- 1.6	2652+00	11	0	---	---	---	---
405A25	UP-OGN	---	- 3.5	4329+-21	11	0	---	---	---	---
0F1006	UP-OGN	---	- 22.4	3762+-09	11	0	---	---	---	---
404AC3	G-GDPY	CBA-	0144	22.8	37224+40	2	10	---	BOEING 737-86Q, JET2	---
008C51	UP-OGN	---	- 23.4	4657+00	10	0	---	---	---	---
4042AA	G-OGN	CBA-	4760	25.2	16149+00	4	20	---	BOEING 757-205, THOMSON AIRWAYS	---
008F94	UP-OGN	---	- 32.5	2976+00	5	0	---	---	---	---
40479F	UP-OGN	---	- 33.7	4904+00	6	0	---	---	---	---
008C04	UP-OGN	---	- 36.4	4850+01	11	0	---	---	---	---
0085A6	UP-OGN	---	- 36.9	4904+00	4	0	---	---	---	---
0F2A71	UP-OGN	---	- 39.3	3830+03	3	0	---	---	---	---
008F20	UP-OGN	---	- 51.1	3933+00	3	0	---	---	---	---
4010A0	UP-OGN	---	- 51.8	3482+05	3	0	---	---	---	---
00402F	UP-OGN	---	- 53.0	2995+00	3	0	---	---	---	---
000900	UP-OGN	---	- 57.4	3761+00	2	0	---	---	---	---
008B08	UP-OGN	---	- 58.2	4033+00	3	0	---	---	---	---
008C01	UP-OGN	---	- 58.4	4181+00	3	0	---	---	---	---
409F70	B741CF	CBA-	2126	64.0	34199+00	6	14	---	BOEING 747-400, KALITTA AIR	---
4099BC	G-CELV	CBA-	3132	66.5	33149+00	5	13	---	BOEING 737-377, JET2	---
40450B	G-ODRN	CBA-	0140	71.8	31149+00	5	10	---	BOEING 737-300, JET2	---
4023F4	UP-OGN	CBA-	6274	81.2	26599+-15	5	42	2,2,0,2,0	BOMBARDIER BRJ-1150, KLM CITYHOPPER	---
405F00	G-EFFF	CBA-	6371	137.7	39146+00	5	5	---	AIRBUS A319-111, EASYJET	---
4018A1	G-BCGJ	CS-	7000	-	2349+-20	-	62	---	PIPER PA28-140, PRIVATE OWNER	---
42K153	G-BAYF	CS-	7154	-	2319+-10	-	16	---	PIPER PA28-140, PRIVATE OWNER	---
40452E	OXF38	CS-	4500	-	4949+00	-	13	---	PIPER PA28-140, PRIVATE OWNER	---
405020	G-RVUK	CS-	0010	-	2749+00	-	8	---	AMATEUR VANS RV-7A, PRIVATE OWNER	---
401022	G-OPHF	CS-	7900	-	-	-	8	---	SCHLEICHER ASH-26E, PRIVATE OWNER	---
404780	G-PRFF	CS-	7131	-	34149+00	-	6	---	NONE, NONE	---
406160	E-EDNCS	---	5427	-	31149+00	-	61	---	AIRBUS A320-214, EASYJET	---

It's true. I am picking up gliders on PilotAware. 16 of them and one from as far away as 58Km. Truly amazing technology, available now and for next to nothing.

So, that's the past and the present what about the future. Well who knows? The ingenuity of some very clever people coupled with low cost electronics and open systems is revolutionising light and microlight aviation. As I exhorted my students in the 1980's fly safe there is some great aircraft coming for you to play with, I can now say this again. Fly safe there are some great innovations in avionics coming and not costing an arm and a leg. I can envisage a time in the not distant future when we will have in-flight NOTAMs, weather, etc. without having to have a mobile phone subscription. PilotAware bringing the future closer.

And what was the point of taking an antenna to Enstone? Well that's simple soon Enstone will be transmitting the presence of gliders within a 30Km radius to protect their PilotAware equipped fleet. The sky is getting safer.

Keith Vinning XD9.



Fly-in Season – six so far

The fly-in season continues with a significant fluctuation in attendance, both aircraft and ground based. The Committee would be interested to know the reasons for this given that the summer season is short and a mid-week excuse to go flying should in theory be attracting more people. On the plus side the charity collections are going well and we have had guest appearances from a balloon - and a drone demo.

Charity collections as follows:

Airfield	Date	Charity collection	Charity total collected	Number of planes	No of people (approx)	picnic event
Over Farm	24/05/2017	Gloucestershire Air Ambulance	£90.45	15	30	no
Ebrington	31/05/2017	Gloucestershire Air Ambulance	£70.00	17	30	yes
Staverton	14/06/2017	fly2help	£67.20	11	30	no
Bowldown	21/06/2017	Gloucestershire Air Ambulance	£60.00	16	25	yes
Over Feast	05/07/2017	Gloucestershire Air Ambulance	£301.36	26	50 plus	no
Defford	12/07/2017	Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF)	£53.90	13	28	yes

So, after last month's Airscrew publication we have managed another 3 fly-ins and as the statistics reveal there is a direct link between feasting and attendance! That's a shame because we have had some really nice evenings run as picnic events. To be clear we don't expect anyone to supply an excess of food on picnic events – just bring what you will and share if you want to. We run these to extend the locations without imposing the BBQ logistics on the airfield owner/organizer. This helps Club funds and creates a potential for more fly-ins to places we don't normally get to – that's a result for people who fly but maybe not so good for those who are driven by the smell of burgers! In fairness Monica's annual summer feast is one not to be missed.

As all the photos are published on the website and I try and do a brief write up just after each event, so I won't worry too much about including photos in my "Thoughts" in the newsletter from now on.

Short Films

Last month I was pondering if anyone would like to submit a short film depicting the flying season from a summer fly-in perspective to help promote the Club. This to date has no entries and, in truth, I can see why. I spent one evening with my Go-Pro mounted on the wrong place on the pod and got a result that really wasn't worth editing. Then having got that sorted I got some really nice film on one of those absolutely perfect evenings but as yet haven't managed to edit it into anything usable. Let's hope there are some more films in production. Please remember that these short films need to show the Club as a responsible organisation flying legally – so no hedge hopping or manoeuvres outside of normal aircraft limitations please.

Time for a new Airscrew Feature – “I learned a bit about flying from that....”

As a relatively new Chairman of the club I try and spend some time talking to the new students Robbie is teaching to fly and keeping track of their progress towards their GFTs. As part of this it becomes obvious that while learning we all had that 100% focus on the exams, the GFT and getting the licence. At that point your flying moves into a very different phase and, rather like driving on the road, the test is only the beginning. So let's have a think about a new series of articles titled “*I learned a bit about flying from that*”. This could be interesting as a trip down memory lane and also pass on some hard won experience to our new Club members and low hour pilots. I have a number of these. So to set the ball rolling.....

“I Learned a Bit About Flying From That...”

Ed Wells – Cloud Cover, forecasts and a Popham deadline to meet.

So, this experience goes back to the early days of my qualifying as a microlight pilot. The plan was for Pete and I to head for Popham airshow which, at the time, had issued a notification that all visitors should ideally register their attendance and be on the floor by 11am so as not to cause problems with the scheduled air displays. Saturday came and we got ourselves to Over Farm early - fuelled, rigged and ready to go. The forecast was a low cloud base but clearing for a fine day. Itching to get off but the visibility in the Severn Valley was very marginal below the cloud base (around 300') but soon the occasional hole appeared to reveal the blue skies as promised. I declared that we wouldn't make it on time unless we went NOW. So we fired up the motor did the checks and headed for a small blue hole in the murk. You can guess what happened I'm sure – we started to climb through the hole and the cloud closed in. A total white out. Going down was not an option in my mind as popping out of the low cloud base to find pylons wasn't where we needed to be (yes the cloud base was that low). So the instructor's words come through, “*Fly the plane, navigate manage the risk*”. Pete was actually in the front and had no instrument training which luckily I had. Simply it was a case of keeping calm carry on climbing whilst maintaining the wings level. So we went south over the river and climbed. That's actually very easy in a flex, keep the revs on for a no stress decent climb rate and keep the bar central. A great plan but it took the longest ten minutes of my life to pop out at the top of the cloud. This was one of those very magical flying moments where, for as far as you

can see, you have cotton wool underneath but no sign of land anywhere - and I do mean anywhere. What now? "*Fly the plane, navigate*". In those days we had a very early Magellan GPS2000 which simply had an arrow pointing to our destination (Having done the flight preparation we at least knew where we were going). We used the Severn Valley to gain height to clear the Cotswolds then turned left and followed the arrow to Swindon which was for us about 40 minutes away. And it took nearly all of those 40 minutes before we spotted the occasional hole beneath us. And then after nearly an hour the problems were over - by the time we were abeam Redlands we could consistently see the ground and we continued to Popham to endure the normal battle of Brittan approach where the volume of traffic was absolutely manic.

So what did I learn:-

1. Don't trust a marginal forecast and take off unless you can see and fly within the rules of VFR.
2. Fly the plane, don't panic, manage the risk (calm down and don't get suckered into the "get down at all cost" approach)
3. Navigate, don't bumble around waiting for salvation - any plan is better than no plan. And having a plan helps calm you down. A panicking pilot is more likely to make mistakes.
4. And always head for the Popham show with an extra pair of eyes. When it's busy there are more air movements and standards of flying than you can imagine. GA, Helicopter's, Gyro's and Microlights all with massively differing circuits, speeds and an inability to get their radio calls in properly. Declare your intention (*when you can*), stick with your planned approach and be prepared to take avoiding action. Keep your eyes peeled above and below - some GA pilots think they have some God given priority to land and have no qualms about diving over the top of your finals to land in front of you. Swear at them (not on the radio) I find it helps relieve the tension.

Footnote. Don't let any of that put you off. Popham the first time is always a challenge and when it's done and you are on the ground - having done it you will feel better about your flying and your abilities to cope