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DEVON STRUT NEWS – NOVEMBER 2007

Welcome to the Devon Strut: Co-ordinator's Comments

by Pete White

The first winter meeting of the season was extremely successful on several counts. Firstly, our new venue, The Ley Arms, proved more than suitable with an excellent meeting room, delicious food, a fine selection of beers [*& cider-Ed*] and to cap it all, friendly and attentive staff. Considering it was a Friday night we were blessed with about fifty Strut members and although the subject of discussing the PFA name change could have been a little dry, the evening went off brilliantly with a mixture of discussion and snippets of aeronautical film and photographs including a delightful PhotoStory slide show by David Cottingham of a flight along the south and east Devon coastline.

Amongst our merry throng were 3 new members, 1 potential new member and a very welcome appearance from Peter Gibbs and Mike Hanley who had travelled all the way from Truro. The name change from PFA to the LAA was predominantly the subject but other matters that were also discussed included the future format of our Strut's fly-ins and Young Aviator programmes. It was a very useful and enjoyable evening with many points of interest being aired by the enthusiastic and attentive gathering of Strut members. Many of the attendees have since expressed how much they enjoyed the evening and now after two social / forum events of this nature in 2007, it has been decided to repeat the experience periodically.

Taking one of the points of the evening a little further, I have always felt that 'free landing fees' are detrimental to our form of aviation. These are offered as a carrot to gain extra visitors in the hope that extra fuel and food sold would justify this gesture. But aerodromes have to survive and they need an income to do this, which is normally a landing fee. If you parked your car in a car park you would expect to pay perhaps £1 an hour so why should you expect to land your aircraft and enjoy all the facilities of an aerodrome for free?

If we continue to expect this free service, our aerodromes will disappear and as time passes we will lose destinations for our leisure flights. Therefore, my thoughts on landing fees for fly-ins would be for a half price charge on the basis of the aerodrome getting say, four times more than the usual visitors and be very happy with twice the normal take and the pilot paying half the usual price; and everyone is happy. I welcome your feedback on this and any other subject via my e-mail or through the Editor for "Aeroletters".

Saturday 6th October saw Dunkeswell invaded by at least 75 Jodel variants for a truly successful "type" fly-in. Besides being very well subscribed by visitors and expertly managed by the Strut's 'ground forces' it was another good 'dress rehearsal' for our 2008 regional rally. (Oh! Have I let the cat out of the bag?). Seriously though, many thanks to all the team that worked very hard to achieve a highly successful event. [*One briefing item that hadn't been publicised but needs promulgating for future events is that there should be no overhead joins at Dunkeswell when parachuting is in operation – Ed*]

We hope to have dates for next year's fly-ins with you shortly but certain national dates have to be decided first. Until then please come along to the Ley Arms, Kenn, Exeter and enjoy our Autumn/Winter programme of guest speakers (see list on the Events page). The meetings are on the second Thursday of the month, starting at 19.30 for a 20.00 kick-off but do come earlier and sample the food; I shall! Our guest on 8th November will be Francis Donaldson, PFA Chief Engineer, so it should be a full house and another reason to come early!

All the best, Pete White

When a new kit finally obtains PFA approval it has usually gone through very stringent analysis and inevitably collects mandatory modifications to comply with that approval. Thus, the X-Air Hawk did not escape during the 2 years of tests, analysis, design changes and flight tests. What Tim Gilmore-White and I didn't know was that the official modification and build book would not be sent to us until some 6 months after the youngsters had started the project! Consequently on the 1st of October I received a consignment of new parts and instructions to carry out some 9 mandatory mods, needing over 100 separate changes to the airframe as built by the kids. Almost back to square one!

Predominately the changes were to the control cable pulley assemblies and a totally new fuel tank installation. With the help of 2 of the youngsters we managed to incorporate the mods affecting the rear fuselage during the first two weeks of October and our inspector, John Skinner, was able to confirm yet again that the rear fuselage could be covered, subject to fuel leakage tests of the new tanks.



The test showed that the installation was sound but the transfer rate of fuel during filling was inadequate. (two tanks with one filler!). On reference to the X-Air agent we discovered that yet another mod had taken place requiring new, larger fuel transfer unions and pipe to be fitted. These arrived this week (w/c 22nd October) and have now been installed. So, at last, the Scouts and Cadets can be back on the job and from the 1st November we expect to get back to work on the project 3 times a week, with the aim of having the fuselage covered, the empennage refitted and the engine installed in time for the SPLASH exhibition on 24/25th November.

We will be sharing a double stand with the original BaP1 Rans S6 on the Youth and Education Support display, all of which backs onto the PFA presentation stand and several of the Devon Scouts and Cadets will be on duty during the weekend, as will several Strut members. If you want to come along and see a good light aviation show, be able to buy those pre Christmas goodies at knockdown prices and do a couple of hours on the stand, we would be pleased to see you. - Jim Gale.

Members' News

Mike Benwell, PFA member from Newport Pagnell, is moving house to Wadebridge and has recently relocated his homebuilt Colibri G-BKRH to Bodmin.



Zac Rockey, who's Tiger Moth is being restored by Mike King at Branscombe, also owns Auster J1 Autocrat G-AIRC, which he ferried down to Devon from Perth with Richard Webber (via Rhigos, for rectification of an oil problem!).

Last year long-time Strut member Bob Beard bought the ex-demonstrator Escapade from the UK agents and based it at Halwell. Unfortunately Bob allowed his PPL to lapse but with help from Paul Aston, he's now completed his NPPL-M and is operating the Escapade from his own, albeit short, home field at Buckfast.

Dave Silsbury has a new email address – see Contacts page.

Welcome to New Members

Sam Lucas of Liskeard owns RV9A G-XSAM and is a CAA Instructor & Examiner (A2QFI)

Tony Gibson from Littlehempston, Totnes is currently flying with D&SFT at Dunkeswell but is looking for a share in a permit a/c.

Ray Blatchford from Plymouth has been introduced to the Strut by Steve Leach and having bought his GT450 QUIK G-RAYB at the beginning of the year, has done over 70 hours since then. Ray currently keeps the a/c at Dunkeswell but would like to base it closer to his home in Plymouth.

Aeroletters

Hi Mike,

I was driving through Par / St.Blazey today (22/10) and beside the road I saw a yellow Fred on a trailer parked with some milk floats. (see photo). On investigation I find it belongs to Charlie Appleton, a micro-light instructor from Davidstow. You may remember that he and his wife came to the Bodmin Aerodance as Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun!



Devon Strut member Ernie Hoblyn, who is often seen displaying his Sopwith Triplane, was photographed flying a more modern craft for this year's flying event at Southport Sands. If you look closely you can see Herr Ernie in the lower of the two Me108s performing for the crowds.

Regards, Pete White

FOR SALE

Slingsby Motor Falke motorglider - forming a group, maybe at Bodmin or similar. The motorglider has been restored and recovered and is ready for mega cheap flying @ 1.5 gals an hour! It's a T61a with a low hours Stamo VW engine. It's pretty basic, no radios or electrics but that means it's light, unlike the RAF Ventures. Anyone interested, please contact Andy Greenslade on [andy@greenslade](mailto:andy@greenslade.co.uk)

A pair of working Bendix Scintilla Mags. (Recently removed from IVOR). 4 New ignition 'fingers' plus a selection of used ignition leads for the above. Offers to Pete White, 01752-406660 or pete@ aeronca.co.uk



Above the Mist of Autumn - by Beryl Smyter

We climb swiftly up through the early morning mist
Into a bright blue sky, bestrewn with fleecy white clouds.
Here above is a stillness, free from the hassles of life
Below, the trees and hills veiled in a floating haze.

As the dawn breaks the sun's warmth burns vapours
Which cover the coloured patchwork of fields
Revealing a farmer ploughing a furrow
With black crows pursuing in his wake.

The air, cooler now that the summer's warmths curtailed
Flying towards the sea, the mists thicken once more.
The seasons ever changing, we must return to
Brighter skies before dusk falls

As we descend, our pathway clear of autumn fret
An orange windsock in sight, blowing in the breeze
To guide us down onto a dew-soaked meadow
The milky sun now waning, the mist once again to enclose.

November Free Landings

Pilot: Bagby, Beverley (Linley Hill), Old Sarum, Popham, Rayne Hall Farm (Essex), Sandtoft.

Flyer: Fife, Panshanger, Wycombe Air Park - plus one more tbc

Today's Pilot: Islay, Kemble, Old Sarum and White Waltham

Next Meeting:

Ley Arms, Kenn, Exeter. **Thursday 8th November 2007**, 7.30 for 8.00 p.m.

Francis Donaldson, PFA Chief Engineer, will be our guest speaker.

The Ley Arms is reached by exiting the A38 at the Kennford junction, adjacent to the Shell petrol station and following the minor road eastwards for 1km from Kennford into Kenn village. <http://tinyurl.com/2zw3dq>

Future Meetings

Thursday 13th December '07 **Kevin Lambton**. SATCO, Plymouth Airport - how we can work together.

Thursday 10th January '08 **Strut AGM** followed by the **Derek Boyce** slide show.

Thursday 14th February'08 **Polly Vacher**. Aviatrix extraordinaire will be our valentine for the night.

Thursday 13th March'08 **Rob Midgely**. Shell Oil's technical expert.

Thursday 10th April '08 **Bill Leary**. AN2 Club. Discover this big biplane and how you could fly one!