

# ***DEVON STRUT NEWS***

The Newsletter of the Devon Strut of the Popular Flying Association. November 2004.

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## **CO-ORDINATOR'S COMMENTS**

by Chris Howell

Where did the summer go? I can recall early June when my little domestic wasp remarked about two weeks of dry weather "Was that our summer?" "No, surely not" I replied. Well it was!! Now into autumn, back to books and dreaming of clear skies.

This was a thought that crossed my mind as I began reading a book 'Aeronca's Golden Age', the exploits of pilots test flying the Aeronca C-2 in 1930 with their little engines developing 29hp and a 60mph cruise. I began to ponder, "Where have I been this summer?" The short answer, "Not far by a long chalk!" It was one of those summers where I was forever thinking "Next week we will see a fine spell of weather" but alas no. The beginning of June, I think we had about ten days on the trot when it was decent flying weather. I resorted to spending two separate weeks staying on holiday up at Branscombe and even then good days were rarely seen. So next year must go further.

The first of our series of winter meetings began on October 14<sup>th</sup> with a visit from Cliff Mort Chairman of the Popular Flying Association. Cliff had travelled down from Warrington. He is a long time member of Lancashire Aero Club and flies a C172 based at Barton Aerodrome. There was an excellent turnout of members and Peter Charles made the most of the fast disappearing daylight hours with an arrival early enough to take dinner in the bar before the meeting started.

We have fifty-three members who are building or have built aircraft in very recent years, sixty-six members operating permit aircraft and a membership which exceeds one hundred and thirty. I pointed out to our guest Chairman that we deserve far more respect and a far higher level of service from the PFA. Communication is the way forward. Send your details to the PFA and look forward to Postman Pat popping a polite note through your letter box from said PFA, thanking you for your communication and assuring you of their best attention at all times!!! Terry Wilson has cracked the secret - get to know Debbie at PFA Head Office. He received his long awaited permit to test fly his Pietenpol on Friday. I pointed out to Cliff that the biggest wind-up was non-communication from HQ so fingers crossed, he will pass the message on.

There are grand plans for an improved Rally, sorry 'Flying for Fun', 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2005 at Kemble. Cliff Mort heads up a sub committee. Suggestions were passed on and one that I hope gathers pace is guest fees at the Fun Event would entitle the ticket holder to a similar figure reduction from their first year's subscription to the PFA, - an excellent route to increase PFA membership. There needs to be discernible benefits from one's membership. Mike Mold has formulated a list (*abstracted from the last issue of "PFA Today" and to be included in a future NL- Ed*). The Devon Strut has worked hard to give the membership value for money and next month I will list a few of our plus points. Look out for the new-look website [www.devonstrut.co.uk](http://www.devonstrut.co.uk)

Happy Reading.  
Christopher Howell.

# DEVON STRUT CONTACTS

Our website:- [www.devonstrut.co.uk](http://www.devonstrut.co.uk)

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## Halwell Fly-in – Sunday 5 September

by Derek Boyce

As compensation for the poor weather in June at the previous fly-in this year, a second date was arranged. This time blue but hazy skies resulted in 23 visitors and Keith Wingate, Stuart Chambers, Mary Aston and fellow South Hams Microlight Club members were on hand to ensure everyone was well looked after. Arriving the previous day and staying overnight were Duncan McFadyean (Europa taildragger from Long Marston) and Paul Handover (Super Cub from Watchford Farm). Other visitors from Watchford Farm on the day were Michael Hayman (Currie Wot), Chris Pidler (Nipper) and Ernie Hoblyn (Emeraude). Visitors from Cornwall included a Thruster, Minimax and Rans S6 from Roche and from Bodmin a Super Cub, Shadow and Jabiru Geoff. Whilst the shortest flight to get there was John and Trish Kempton from Bolt Head (Aeronca Chief).



Mike Hayman - Currie Wot



Easy Raider



John Holden & Martin Pengelly in Eurostar



Brian Finch - Kitfox

We saw several people who make regular appearances at our fly-ins during the year from outside the area, including Brian Finch (Kitfox) and Rick Holt (Glaster) both from Defford, Robin James (Aeronca Champ) from White Waltham and John Holden (Eurostar) from Wadswick Farm. Other visitors included two flexwing microlights from Newton Peveril and a third from Wrexham. A three-axis microlight visitor that we had not seen down here before was an Easy Raider from Mount Farm.

Thanks to everyone at Halwell for there usual fine hospitality. Thanks also to Martin Pengelly for marshalling the aircraft and to Rod Etherington (Murphy Maverick) and John Holden (Eurostar) for taking him flying.

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## Watchford Farm Fly-in - Sunday 12 Sept.

by Derek Boyce

Poor weather moving in from the west caused me to cancel the aeroplane and drive up to Watchford Farm. A number of resident aircraft were airborne when I arrived, including Mike Wells in the Jodel D112 (regular readers will know he always likes a mention) and 8 visiting aircraft joined them before the bad weather arrived, causing an early end to the day.

Dermot Richardson (Robin 400) and Tony Lush (Cub Cruiser) made a brief appearance from Exeter. We usually see a number of Condors visiting Watchford but this time only Charlie and Anna Huke made in from Boscombe Down along with a Wittman Tailwind. Other visitors were a Robin DR315 from White Waltham, Stinson Voyager from Garston Farm, an Ikarus from Dunkeswell and Robinson R22 from Bristol.



Dermot Richardson's new Robin 400



Anna Huke's Condor



Robinson



Ernie Hoblyn's first engine run on Sopwith Pup

Ernie Hoblyn decided to entertain everyone by running the Warner Super Scarab recently fitted to his Sopwith Pup fuselage so searched around for a volunteer to hand swing the beast. After a slick sidestep from Dermot Richard, Steve Robson found himself to be the volunteer and only after the Super Scarab sensed that Steve had undertaken a sufficient workout did it burst into life. Due to the poor weather a large number of people arrived by road to enjoy the fine spread put on by Margaret Anning and her team of helpers. The raffle raised a fantastic £600 for Kidney Research. Many thanks go to Brian and Margaret for their usual excellent hospitality and to John Havers for marshalling the aircraft. [*Martin P had the mumps – hope you've recovered! – Ed*]

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## SafetyCom Air to Ground Radio Frequency 135.475

On 11 November a common frequency will be introduced for use by aircraft operating in the vicinity of an aerodrome or landing site in the UK that does not have a frequency assigned for RTF communications. The frequency, 135.475 MHz, will be known as SafetyCom. The introduction of SafetyCom is not expected to have a significant affect on the provision of air traffic services although procedures at certain ATS units may require minor amendment. SafetyCom is not an air traffic service. It is available to assist pilots to avoid potential collisions between arriving and departing aircraft and should normally be used only to broadcast the pilot's intentions.

Transmissions shall be made on SafetyCom only when aircraft are below 2000 ft above aerodrome or location elevation or below 1000 ft above promulgated circuit height (if applicable). Transmissions shall be made only within 10 nm of the aerodrome or location of intended landing. The frequency shall be used only to transmit information regarding the pilot's intentions, and there should be no response from the ground, except where the pilot of an aircraft on the ground also needs to transmit his intentions. Exceptionally, where the pilot of an aircraft on the ground has information critical to the safety of an aircraft in a condition of distress or urgency, the frequency may be used to transmit that information.

Further information on SafetyCom can be found in: UK AIP GEN 3-4-5 Aeronautical Information Circular 103/2004 (Yellow 153) and CAP 413 Radiotelephony Manual, Chapter 4 Section 6.

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## The Dartmouth Flyer

by Stuart Chambers

In preparing for next years Halwell strut event, I'd like to combine the fly-in with celebrating Dartmouth's famous flyer who never quite made it before the Wright brothers. I wonder how many members are aware that the South Hams nearly beat the Wright Bros into the history books. Along with the many pioneers trying desperately to achieve powered flight there was a young man from Dartmouth having a go. His name was Albert Liwentaal. Great interest was shown in the

1960s that he may have been the great German aviator Otto Lilienthal. This was not proved. Albert designed his final flying machine and grandly called it the Dittisham Aerostat. Looking at the plans, I couldn't find any aerofoil shape to the wings or that the tail surfaces were used for stability, merely to "paddle" the machine through the air. He also attended Dartmouth Hospital as part of his intensive flying programme! All the research on the Dartmouth Flyer was done in the 1960s by the local paper (at the time) and a small booklet was written by Bob Marsh of Dittisham (sadly Bob's gone as well). However, he did manage to get a small plaque placed in Dittisham. I'm going to find it one day.

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### **Cops' Speed Trap** (seen in the Berwickshire Gazette & NW Strut Newsletter)

A report has revealed that two traffic patrol officers from North Berwickshire were involved in an unusual incident whilst checking for speeding motorists recently. They were using a hand-held radar device to check unwary motorists on the Edinburgh to London trunk road. One of the officers was surprised to find that his target registered a speed in excess of 300 m.p.h. The £5,000 machine then seized up and could not be reset by the bemused P.C.s.

The radar had latched on to a NATO Tornado aircraft over the North Sea which was taking part in a low-flying exercise over Southern Scotland. Following a complaint by the Chief Constable of the Lothian and Borders Police to the RAF Liaison Officer, it was revealed that the officers had had a lucky escape. The tactical computer on board the aircraft had not only detected and jammed the 'hostile' radar but had automatically armed a Sidewinder air-to-ground missile ready to neutralize the perceived threat. Luckily the pilot was alerted to the missile status and overrode the automatic protection system before the missile launched.

The police have so far declined to comment, although it is understood that officers will be advised to point their radar guns inland in future.

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### **Paragliding in Tirol**

**by Roger Holman**

After reading about Ian and Mary Leader's flight in the Austrian Tirol, (*in the September issue of the Brissle Strutter -Ed*) I am minded to report that whilst in the same area, I indulged in an alternative form of aviation which had grabbed my attention during a holiday in the Italian Dolomites last year. I had watched with envy, paragliders descending through several thousand feet of staggering scenery in total silence.

In common with the vast majority of those involved in aviation, I had always thought it somewhat stupid to leap out of a perfectly serviceable aeroplane with a parachute BUT...these guys were not encumbered with the sickening wait until the canopy opened. On the mountaintop, the breeze gently lifted and inflated their canopy before they stepped into space. No feverish rushing ... just a gentle couple of steps and off.

This year, I was with a walking group at Söll in Austria with Crystal Holidays, and their helpful rep arranged for me to meet Otto, an approved paraglider pilot. Our nearest mountain launch point was the Hohe Salve, whose summit at 6000 feet permitted some 5000 foot gliding descent to the main valley floor and landing site, over beautiful hillsides and smaller valleys, with a grand view of the Wilder Kaiser Mountains flown over by Ian and Mary.

07.30 hrs. and up in the cable car to the summit with Otto... closely followed by my pedestrian companions complete with wives ... some concerned for my physical safety, and all apparently with my sanity! At the summit they stood back some 50 yards to watch like vultures, convinced

we would plummet to our deaths, or at the very least suffer a heart attack. Conditions were not perfect, the wind eddying round the roughly conical mountaintop, causing the canopy to collapse at about V1 on our first Take-off attempt (about 3 paces down a steep slope). The canopy and lines recovered, we tried again... this time success... Just 3 paces and we were off... an initial lift and then sink to gain flying speed... lift again to avoid the cable car lines and out over the soaring ridge some 4900 feet above the main valley floor....

On meeting me at the cable car, Otto had explained that in Austria, all passenger flights had to be registered with the authorities, and I was a passenger and needed a ticket and boarding pass! This, he said, would be an official flight on a subsidiary of Austrian Airlines. When I burst out laughing he looked quite hurt, so I shut-up while he solemnly stamped up my boarding pass and told me to retain my half of the ticket. I was also the baggage handler as well as passenger however, because I had to carry the paraglider on and off the cable car and over to the launch site. This comprised a padded tandem seat with harnesses, lines, and canopy in a large "sail bag", which was rolled up and stowed in a zipped compartment under the lower passenger seat, forming the undercarriage. The whole aircraft weighing some 25 kilos... quite a lot to lug about some 6000 feet AMSL. Nevertheless, I felt absolutely calm and relaxed as we wafted away from the mountaintop... much more dignified than taking off in a PA 28 from Filton... up here the only traffic pattern was a possible buzz from an eagle.

At first, a gentle descent to a level for ridge soaring, plenty of time to take video and still pictures. Otto also had a 35 mm camera on a long pole for "air-to-air" shots. He then commenced some violent pendulum manoeuvres during turns, pulling some quite severe 'g'... (I think he said that the lines and canopy were cleared for 4g), but I quickly advised him that I was more interested in photography than aerobatics, being aware that we were descending very fast during these manoeuvres, and I wanted the flight to last as long as possible... He said "not too long, because I have other passengers on other mountains".

The landing area was clearly marked with an orange wind sock as we circled some 500 feet over Söll's magnificent baroque church before turning on finals... no annoying RT up here! At this point it is worth mentioning the largely unsanitary policy for sewage disposal in Tyrol. During the winter when all is covered in beautiful white snow, and with no ocean to pollute, Austrians save their sewage and that from the enormously enlarged skiing population, together with all the farm slurry, (the cows live indoors in winter), in large tanks. Now in June, the grass is encouraged to grow for the enormous cows to recycle by spraying the raw sewage now matured into ghastly brown slime, over the fields. In short, the entire countryside is covered in excrement by wicked great tractors towing tanks whose evil contents pervades the valleys with slime and stench, particular attention being given to the landing place onto which we were rapidly descending!

Hold your breath... a gentle thud and roll onto one's side, trying to keep one's face and cameras out of the drying slurry. Otto expertly positioned himself on top of me to avoid the brown stains, and the flight was over... 35 minutes of great pleasure slightly clouded by the smelly landing, then back up in the cable car to resume walking. Now I know what it is like under a parachute without having to jump out of an aircraft, ....but at 90 Euros for 35 minutes - rather expensive... I won't be doing it again!

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## Members' News

After 10 years in the role of **Strut Treasurer / Membership Secretary**, John Mansell is retiring from the committee with effect from the AGM in January. Hence, we are looking for nominations for the job. His worthy successor must be computer literate (Excel / Access / Word etc) and be of honourable and orderly mind! If you would like to volunteer or to nominate someone please contact any members of the committee before the end of November.

Two members have recently moved house.

Francis de Beer can now be found at: Flint Cottage, East Harting, Petersfield, Hants, GU31 5LT  
[fvdeb@btopenworld.com](mailto:fvdeb@btopenworld.com)

Dave Storey (Inspector & CAA Lic. Eng) is now at 1 Trevenn Barns, Lamerton, Tavistock, PL19 8RR. Tel Evng 01822 612135, Mobile 07900 573119, Daytime 01752 707477.

[Dave@dcstorey.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:Dave@dcstorey.fsnet.co.uk) If anyone gets stuck at Plymouth Airport, knock on the VT Aerospace (Navy Grob 115's) hangar door, Dave's usually available to help.

Thanks Dave & best wishes to both of you in your new abodes!

In the continuing story of Nigel & Robert Nicholson's Eurostar, it is now sporting its colour stripes.



## Welcome to New Members

James Carrie, Laurel Cottage, Upham Street, Upham, Southampton, SO32 1JA. email: [james.carrie@btinternet.com](mailto:james.carrie@btinternet.com). James is a PPL with 150 hrs and flies from with the Devon School of Flying at Dunkeswell when he's in the southwest. He hopes to work towards an ATPL / Instructor rating in 2005.

Tim Powell of 2 Coggins, Station Road, Broadclyst, Exeter, EX5 3AL. [tim.powell@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:tim.powell@exeter.gov.uk).

Neil Kennedy of Oakapple Cottage, Holly Close, Broadclyst, Exeter, EX5 3JB. [kbigneil@aol.com](mailto:kbigneil@aol.com).

Bob Page, Kenley Cottage, Waterrow, Wiveliscombe, Somerset, TA4 2AX 01984-623043, 07812-177161 500 hrs A-licence in Cessnas, Grumman and previously owned Kent-based Robin DR400-108. Recently purchased Ikarus C42 G-GRPA and checked out by Paul Aston at Dunkeswell's Somerset Microlights.

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## Devon Strut Fly-In Calendar 2005

Dunkeswell	May 2nd	Tel.01404-891643/ 01404-891587
Bodmin	May 15th	01208-821419/ 01752-851821
Truro	May 29th	01872-560488
Bolt Head	June 5th	01548-842057/ 07790-989647
Farway	June 11th/12th	01395-597535
Halwell	June 18th/19th	01548-857513/07971-480078
Manstage	June 26th	01837-871518
Eggesford	July 9th	01363-83746/07703-397210
Lundy	July 10th	01752-338344/07774-017704
Taw Mill	July 17th	01837-849077/07770-325124
Branscombe	July 31st	01297-680259/07970-251386
Treborough	August 14th	01984-641179/07970-251386
Farway	August 20th/21st	01395-597535
Roserrow	August 28th	01208-863000 07970-251386
Belle Vue	September 3rd	01805-623113/07971-278984
Watchford	September 11th	01823-601268/07779/143439

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## Next Meeting

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November**, 7.30 for 8.00 pm, Buckerell Lodge Hotel, Topsham Rd, Exeter.

Our guest speaker will be **Andrew Moore, PFA's Head of Engineering.**

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The calendar of future evening meetings for your diary, (but as ever, subject to last minute changes):

December 9th	David Braine	Weatherman BBC Spotlight
January 13th	AGM followed by talk on Croydon Airport Society	
February 10th	Rod Dean	Display Pilot Former Head of CAA
March 10th	Ken Craigie and Francis Donaldson	
April 14th	Mike Rolffe Customs and Excise	

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