

# ***DEVON STRUT NEWS***

**The Newsletter of the Devon Strut of the Popular Flying Association. October 2004.**

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

**by Chris Howell**

Now the fly-in season has come to an end, it's appropriate to thank the various members who agreed to host individual events. Mike Mold was to look after the Dunkeswell day before it was cancelled. Martin Pengelly organised the Bodmin party. Truro was organised by Graham Barrall - the owner, and Martin and Josh were the marshals. Bolt Head was John & Trish Kempton. Farway was well supported by John & Betty Havers and family, Eggesford by Family Skinner and Halwell was twice organised by Keith Wingate and South Hams Flying Club members. Eventful Lundy was care-of Pete White and Terry Wilson, and Taw Mill by Richard & Denise Horner and Martin Robinson. The big event at Branscombe was Joe Thomas's baby supported by a last minute gaggle of Strut members. Roserrow was to have been hosted by Paul & Mary Aston but got blown away. Jim Gale honoured his commitment to Bellevue and missed the PFA AGM and Brian & Margaret Anning & family again hosted our final event at Watchford in September.

This all took a fair bit of time and effort to organise and there were many areas that we will improve on for next year. Many events will be hosted again by the same members and we will have to take on board some of the comments from critics regarding safety. My response to that is "Stand up and support the event beforehand". It has been extremely difficult to organise help for our events and whilst we have made great strides this year, we will need improvements for next year's events to enable them to continue safely.

There'll be a new meeting place for our winter meetings 2004/2005 - The Buckerell Lodge Hotel Topsham Road, Exeter. Very easy to find from the Countess Weir roundabout! [*see map below - Ed*]. The hotel has very pleasant meeting rooms, very pleasant bar and restaurant and good hotel parking. And for the penny pinchers, a good price to boot!

Our first guest speaker will be Cliff Mort, Chairman of the Popular Flying Association. Thursday October 14<sup>th</sup> 7.30 for 8pm start. We are making every effort to highlight our concerns for our wish to see a far more efficient and improved PFA. As an exercise I wrote to Andrew Moore Head of Engineering on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2004. Receiving no response or acknowledgement of my letter after one week I felt obliged to ring in!! I did then receive an email back confirming that my letter had been received. I confirm to date I have received no response or acknowledgement from said Head of Engineering. At the recent NC Meeting there was no planned representative from engineering in attendance [Ken Craigie stood in at the last minute-Ed], What is going on? We are without doubt one of the most active struts in the country and we need to formulate a list of our grievances and put them to Cliff Mort when he lands in Devon in October.

The Devon Strut website is undergoing a major overhaul and within the next few weeks we should see the new improved site. It has, over the years, become a larger expense drawing on Strut funds. There are certain members who see it as a waste of funds!! I would appreciate all feed back on the new site both positive and negative. Mike Mold has put a tremendous amount of time and effort into gathering material for the new site so please send him your cheery comments!

On a personal note I achieved two firsts at the beginning of September. Firstly my daughter Esther Minnie at 3 years and 4 months came flying with me in our Luscombe. We strapped her car seat into the cockpit, she wore a standard David Clark headset with noise cancelling and we launched off from Branscombe. Esther beamed the whole flight and eagerly pointed out the boats at sea and the trams over Seaton. We returned back to Branscombe, Hannah was in tears and pleased we

were back safely. It was the proudest I have ever felt. It is a huge privilege to bring a small person into the world and to see them grow and begin to chatter and the grin on Esthers face when we landed is a moment I will never forget. The following day I managed to prise my mother into the aircraft and took her for her first flight at 76 years. What an amazing weekend!

Happy Flying  
Christopher

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## **Farway Common Fly-In, 21/22 August 2004**

**by John Havers**

Terry Case again opened his strip for a Strut fly-in and how lucky we were, for after a week of poor weather, which saw the devastation of Boscastle, Saturday dawned fine and bright heralding a good day which it proved to be in every sense of the word.

Cubs G-AYPM & G-CUBP from Eggesford were our first arrivals at about 10.00, followed through the day by the usual mix of aeroplanes totalling 62. Among the long distance arrivals were Pitts G-OKAY from Waits Farm, nr Sudbury, Suffolk, Robin G-BBJU from Winwick, Huntingdon, Jodel 150 G-OABB from Swanborough, Lewis and another Jodel Richard Mole's G-TREK from Leicester. J R Stainer in Cessna 140 G-ALOD arrived from Bennington, Herts accompanied by his Swiss friend in Cessna 170 N170ER, which had to be the star of the day. The Swiss had, many years previously, delivered the Cessna from Montreal, Canada to Switzerland! We thought we had another "foreigner" when right at the end of the day Robin DR400 F-GAOM arrived but proved to be the latest acquisition of Dermot Richardson, which he had collected that day.

Possibly a first was Alan House from Brimpton with his Saab Safir G-HRLK, from where also came Europa G-CBYN, one of three that joined us. Among the Microlights was X'Air G-BYTR from Chickerell, Weymouth. Turner TSW Hot Two Wot G-BLPB from Shoreham was one of the more unusual, as was Cessna 170 G-MDAY from Bourne Park and Maule N882JH from Exeter.

Aeronca's were, as ever, well represented by G-WBTS, G-BRWR, G-BRCW & NC33884, Piper Cub's were out in force with G-AKIB G-AYPO G-AYPT G-BJBK & G-BRLI, Luscombe's made a good showing with G-BRUG, G-BSOX, G-BULO, G-LUSI & G-SAGE. Brian Anning gave his Super Wot G-AVEY an outing, as did Ernie Hoblyn in Emeraude G-BJVS from Watchford Farm. Roy Young again trailered in his Tri-gear Europa, now looking splendid in its smart paint scheme completed at Branscombe. He was followed by Mike King with the wings and G-SRYYY was then assembled for what we hoped might be a first flight. Apparently this is still some weeks away.

For Sunday we were warned to expect a day of high winds and heavy rain which didn't auger well, but the morning again dawned bright and at 09.10 at home on my VHF I heard Cessna 152 G-BSTO call Exeter en-route for Farway. I loaded tea & coffee pronto and drove to the strip to find Mark Keith-Hill had landed. Later on came Paddy & Kim Clarke in Europa G-KIMM from Wadswick. Both departed around mid-day with the weather closing in and so soon after we decided to shut up shop.

A review of those flying in to Farway shows that at least a third were Strut members with a few more arriving by road. It was good to see the number of cars which appeared through the day with families which we were able to ensure got a close view of the aircraft and hopefully will become future flyers! Our charity this time was the NSPCC, of which one of our helpers, Cheryl, is the

local organiser and to whom we were able to hand £255 so generously given by those attending. My thanks to all who helped but especially the catering team of my wife Betty, daughter Sue with Ken, Cheryl and Mary Aston; Alan Faupel for his many duties, Martin Pengelly for his usual high standard of marshalling and finally Terry for allowing us the use his delightful strip.



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## Members' News

Congratulations to **Colin Wood** on the recent first flight of his Jabiru UL-450 G-OCDW and to **Keith Wingate** for his in Taylor Titch G-MOLE, both at Dunkeswell.

### **Barry Enock's** Nicollier HN700 Menestrel 2

Hi Mike, Thanks for the newsletter. Yes. I still have a share in the Jodel (DR1050 G-ARXT). Unfortunately I have not managed to fly to a Strut fly-in this year as I have been putting my spare time into the Menestrel which is progressing well. I plan my work on the project around the seasons which means I work on the wood and glue in the "warm and dry" summer months and all the rest in the winter months. Last winter I installed the engine and modified the cowls to fit, fitted the panel, fuel tanks and canopy. This summer I have covered all the flying controls and I am now in the middle of covering the leading edge of the wing with ply (bit of a learning curve here but John McNab and Dave Silsbury gave excellent advice when I could not contact my inspector). I hope to have the wing finished before the summer's end, then I can marry the wing to the fuselage and make the cables for the controls. Then it will only require covering and painting to finish. I have invested in a good digital camera so I can photograph this so I will feed you the photo's as I go. I have never put a finish date on the project but next year I hope to attend the PFA Rally in the Menestrel. I have met Joe McCollum a few times and he is always generous with advice and encouragement. At the rally in July about six Menestrel builders met up and we admired Joe's Menestrel, it gave us all an incentive to push on with our projects.

Regards

Barry

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## The Eurostar Dream

by Robert Nicholson

This is a story of two brothers who, for the greater part of their lives, lived 12,000 miles apart. I lived for over 30 years in Australia whilst my brother Nigel was mostly in Devon and it seemed that every time I returned to the UK, Nigel moved to Australia with his wife and young family. I learnt to fly in Australia and gained my PPL in 1976 at the Royal Aero Club of Western Australia and on a trip to the UK in 1981 gained my UK PPL at Exeter Flying Club. I tried to get Nigel up for a flight but anything smaller than a 747 and a large supply of tranquilisers wouldn't get him in

a small plane. Well, 25 years later and wanting to occupy his spare time, he decided to try gliding. He subsequently gained his Australian PPL in early 2004, also from the Royal Aero Club of WA, flying Cessna 152s and 172s. By now, severely bitten by the flying bug, there was no stopping him and in May 2004 Nigel returned with his family to resettle permanently in the UK.

Like myself (I'd returned some 6 years ago) he now discovered the hassles of club flying in the UK. Not only do you need to be checked out but if you fail to fly each month to keep current you require another checkout before you can fly and therein lies the problem of trying to get both a plane and instructor for a slot to suit you both. Invariably either the plane was u/s on maintenance or the weather was crap, so what was to be done? Earlier this year I took a trip to France to look for a property to renovate and Nigel came along. During our trip we came across several airstrips and managed to get to speak to the local French microlight pilots and got to see and fly several types of craft. On our return to England Nigel started to investigate the second hand aircraft market and this also got me interested. Within a very short time I had almost negotiated the purchase of a Condor, together with masses of spares, but Nigel had set his mind on a Europa. Well, we couldn't agree on a joint purchase and we were looking at all makes and types and visiting the many strut fly-ins. I felt the Europa had poor visibility and was narrow across the shoulders, plus was a lot to pay compared to other craft. Nigel liked the fuel endurance whereas I liked the Condor even with its shorter range.

I think we were at the first Farway fly-in of 2004 and we'd been looking at everything there. I had just about decided on the Condor and was about to leave, when we both went for a last walk along the lines of the few remaining aircraft. Then we spotted an all aluminium low wing two-seater and the pilot enthusiastically gave us all the information. He kindly let us sit in it and have a play with the controls. I think it took about 30 seconds for me to say to Nigel "This is it" and he agreed as it fitted his requirements in all aspects, up to 6 hours endurance (not that I would want to stay aloft that long - I don't think my bladder could take it!), plenty of luggage space, good fuel economy of approx 11 litres per hour, cruising speed of 100mph and excellent visibility. The final deciding factor was that it could be a group A machine which suited both of us as we wish to retain our PPL-A's for the times we may want to fly a 4 seater from the local club.

What is this aircraft we were so excited about? It's a fairly new type of kit from the Czech Republic - the E.V. 97 Eurostar and price-wise it's at least £10,000 less than the Europa so I was happy. The kit is fairly easy to construct with a fairly short build time as against the Europa which I am led to believe is quite a mammoth task and some are taking up to 5 years to build [*or more! - Ed*]. Well, I don't have that time to waste and luckily we didn't place a deposit as things at Europa have since gone bust. So off we went to Skydrive to test-fly the Eurostar. We placed a deposit and awaited delivery of the kit. Several months later and after a lot of work, running around purchasing bits and pieces, the aircraft is now completed and awaiting a permit to test fly. Unfortunately, Francis Donaldson, PFA's Chief Engineer, went on holiday the week he received our application and wasn't due to return until the end of September, meaning that we wouldn't be making our maiden flight before our hoped-for goal of the Watchford Farm fly-in.

One good thing that came out of all this was that whilst the aircraft was being built the weight for the group A category increased by 15 kgs, a whole 30kgs above the maximum weight for the microlight version. This now allowed Nigel to fit in the extra instruments he wanted, providing he could convince me to part with half the cash(!), which really didn't take a lot of arm twisting. So now we also have a DI, an A/H and a mode "C" transponder. Together with the Garmin GPS, we have no excuses for getting lost. I will be posting some photos of the various stages of construction on my website (Nicholson-webmail.co.uk) within the next few weeks if you're interested and we hope to be flying-in somewhere near you soon. The call sign is G-CDCC and I believe we are going to name it "The Dream". If anyone has any questions about our new aircraft we will be only too happy to oblige. My email is robert@nicholson-webmail.co.uk and my mobile is 07771 590232.

Happy landings  
Robert Nicholson  
(with my apologies to brother Nigel if it causes embarrassment!)



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### **Over-heard at Frankfurt**

The German air controllers at Frankfurt Airport are renowned as a short-tempered lot. They not only expect you to know your gate parking location, but how to get there without any assistance from them. So it was with some amusement that a Pan Am 747 crew listened to the following exchange between Frankfurt ground control and a British Airways 747, call sign Speedbird 206.

Speedbird 206: "Frankfurt, Speedbird 206 clear of active runway."

Ground: "Speedbird 206. Taxi to gate Alpha One-Seven."

The BA 747 pulled onto the main taxiway and slowed to a stop.

Ground: "Speedbird, do you not know where you are going?"

Speedbird 206: "Stand by, Ground, I'm looking up our gate location now."

Ground (with quite arrogant impatience): "Speedbird 206, have you not been to Frankfurt before?"

Speedbird 206 (coolly): "Yes, twice in 1944, but it was dark, -- and I didn't land."

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### **More Recommendations of Where to Stay**

**by Mary Aston**

#### **Manor Farm, Collingbourne Kingston, Nr Marlborough**

Manor Farm is run by James & Jackie Macbeth who offer excellent B&B in their Grade 2 listed period farmhouse on a working family farm, 9nm NW of Andover (N51.18.20; W001.40.00). Visitors are by strict PPO but there are free landing fees and collection from the 10/28, 600m x 30m grass strip, which runs along the top of Inham Down (643ft amsl). They have their own website [www.manorfm.com](http://www.manorfm.com) and e.mail [stay@manorfm.com](mailto:stay@manorfm.com). There are several excellent eating places within 100-150 metres of the house, e.g. The Barleycorn Inn Tel. 01264-850368.

#### **Brick House Farm, Byton, Presteigne, Herefordshire (near Shobdon)**

This farm, 2 nm west of Shobdon, has a self-catering holiday cottage with 2 double bedrooms and a twin plus 2 double rooms within the farmhouse, offering B&B (& evening meals). The business has just been taken over in the last month by Wayne & Sarah Poulter and they are willing to collect and deliver visitors from/to Shobdon. [info@brickhousefarm.ws](mailto:info@brickhousefarm.ws) Tel. 01544-267306, or [www.kc3.co.uk/chamber/brickhouse/index.html](http://www.kc3.co.uk/chamber/brickhouse/index.html) for details.

### **Chateau La Chassagne, F-21410 Pont-de-Pany, Dijon, Burgundy**

This privately owned chateau was completely gutted and refurbished by Swiss-German pilot Michael Dresin 10 years ago. On arrival at the 800m strip (N47.18.71; E004.49.52) you are collected and driven to the chateau in a Rolls Royce! On the terrace at an agreed time you are enthroned as a member of the Confrerie du Cremant de Bourgogne, i.e. free bottle of champagne from the chateau opened with a champagne sabre. The use of all the facilities in and around the chateau are included in the room rate, e.g. bicycles, solex, electric golf karts, swimming pool & sauna, gym, table-tennis, croquet, outdoor chess and golf range. Extras include horse & carriage rides, cruises on one of their two luxury narrow-boats, wine tasting, hire of Smart cars at E25/day and balloon rides if weather is suitable.

Costs from 165 Euros per day for basic room and upwards to 350 Euros for the deluxe and super deluxe rooms! 50 Euros for half board include excellent full service breakfast. Dinner comes as 4 course, silver service gastronomique delight! 10 Euros gets you free landings for a week. All the chateau personnel were very pleasant and exceptionally helpful to two stranded pilots who got marooned for 3 days. What a sad & difficult way to celebrate that special birthday! The chateau is furnished as a hunting lodge and there is free use of the Internet for pilots' weather. The flag of your country is placed on the standard above the front door and on your table in the dining room.

Confirmation, PPR and room booking is required by fax. At our time of visiting, they were refurbishing the chateau chapel so anyone who brought an angel of any size or material got a 10% discount off the cost of their room. Altogether an ideal and very romantic stopover to be remembered for a long while!

Mail: [info@chateau-chassagne.com](mailto:info@chateau-chassagne.com) internet:[www.chateau-chassagne.com](http://www.chateau-chassagne.com) and <http://www.aero-checkpoint-charlie.com/index1-gb.htm> tel. 0033-3.80.49.76.00

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### **Devon Air Ambulance Trust**

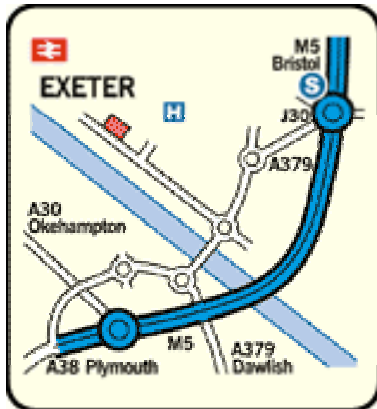
The DAAT is totally funded by public donations and since its launch 12 years ago has flown approximately 7,500 missions, costing £4,000 per day to operate. This is achieved through the skills of the aircrew, the dedication of the DAAT staff and volunteers and the support from everyone who helps this important local charity. Last month they took delivery of a new helicopter, an EC135, with increased capabilities but which will increase the operating costs from £1.5 million to £1.8 million per year and they want us to help make the new chopper a success. Their latest initiative is a lottery named after the 135, with weekly prizes from £13.50 up to £1,350. For those of us working for companies rather than running our own businesses, we can participate through a £1 per week deduction from our salaries if our employers agree to administer our contributions.

Last year we raised several hundred pounds for the DAAT at our Watchford Fly-In. This scheme gives us the opportunity to continue that support on a regular basis and with the incentive of a cash return. For detail contact Caroline Creer or Stephanie Martin at the DAAT Lottery Office on 01392-469886 or see <http://www.daat.org>

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**Next Meeting**      **Thursday October 14<sup>th</sup> 7.30 for 8pm start.**  
**Cliff Mort, Chairman of the Popular Flying Association**

At our new venue:      **The Buckerell Lodge Hotel, Topsham Road, Exeter.**



The Buckerell Lodge is located on the B3182 Topsham Road, on the right hand side between the Countess Wear roundabout and Exeter city centre, just past the Barrack Road lights. (see attached map). Tel. 01392-221111