

DEVON STRUT NEWS

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

CO-ORDINATOR'S COMMENTS

by Chris Howell

August has been a busy month for the higher order of the Devon Strut. There was much negative feedback from the PFA Rally and the chant for 2005 is 'Flying 4 Fun' - very original! According to Cliff Mort this was a name used 15 years ago, say no more! Around the Strut I rarely, if ever, hear any positive comments about PFA Engineering. We aim to address this and need to hear from Strut members experiencing difficulties. It is one thing to hear tittle-tattle but we need to collate a list of the problems so they can be put forward to the PFA in a coherent manner. Jim Gale, our NC Representative, will pick up the points and raise the questions both at the NC meeting and the PFA AGM on September 4th.

We hear endless Euro-babble and the latest offering is raised later in this edition by Nigel Everett. In a nutshell it has been suggested that all aircraft owners should pay a charge for various "navigation" services, whether they use them or not, when they become airborne! Another enlightening article written by Colin Mitchell in the latest PFA Magazine about EASA's Licensing Proposals, explains the draft Essential Requirements and the Implementing Rules, which I am sure when you are part way through reading, sleep will have overtaken your mind and body. The frightening thing is that JAA tried to have a go some years back and made a complete cobble of it all and now we have to suffer again with EASA. Some of the area's outlined for fiddling will affect medicals, the NPPL, Group Ownership and non-EU visitors to our fly-ins. When you wake up again try another read -this affects us all!

Safety at our fly-ins will be an ongoing issue. Generally this year, due to the lack of a fly-in organiser on the committee, I asked a Strut members to host individual events. This has begun to work well but we will be looking for greater improvements for next year's events and more help will be needed to enable them to continue safely.

Exeter Air Traffic Controllers were very disappointed that so many pilots arriving and departing Farway for the recent Strut fly-in did not contact them. Due to the increase in commercial traffic it has become slightly more imperative to at least call them if only as a matter of courtesy. It really does not help to think " Oh, stuff them, I'm no where near their zone". It would help to oil the wheels of good airmanship and responsible flying if we were seen to be at least trying to let air traffic know we are there. They have a job to do and it is made more difficult by un-identified contacts popping up on their radar. If you fly non-radio a quick telephone call to flight briefing at Exeter is not too onerous, I have always found them most helpful.

Strut member and Aeronca Guru Pete White gave a complete day to encourage young people to be able to enjoy vintage flying and club life at Bodmin. The young man Luke Pollard wrote a very well worded letter to thank Pete White and Stewart Luck for the opportunity of a days flying in Cornwall. *[see Luke's letter and Stuart's reply below – Ed]*.

We are searching hard for a new venue for our winter Strut meetings as the George and Dragon has gone to extra bedrooms. The new venue needs to be in or around Exeter. It has been quite surprising how much money is being asked for rooms at local hotels but hopefully, we will have found a new location over the next few days. Meanwhile, any suggestions would be most welcome!
Chris

The Start of a Dream for Luke Pollard

(Luke Pollard is a schoolboy from Falmouth who contacted the PFA with a request for info about local flying activity and was put in touch with Stuart Luck, PFA Exec committee member with responsibility for Education and a commercial pilot. Stuart passed Luke's request to the strut and Pete White did the rest!)

Dear Capt. Luck,

Just what I hope will be a quick note to let you know about my PFA flying at Bodmin. It took a little bit longer than I had hoped to arrange a flight (this was on my behalf, mainly because of school). But I did get up to Bodmin today, 2nd August. Mr White met me from Bodmin Parkway Station and drove me to the airfield and I was introduced to the main people on the airfield. I was then taken to the hangar and shown the aircraft that would be my host for the day (G-IVOR, a 1946 Aeronca Chief). Pete talked me through the pre-flight walk around and all the checks needed. The map was brought out, a rough plan prepared, and before I knew it we were taxiing to the runway.

The first flight was absolutely amazing, getting to grips with the feel of a light aircraft was challenging but thoroughly enjoyable. I think the most interesting part of the first flight was the stall, I hadn't expected to experience a stall, and despite my concerns, I observed how it was done, and had a go at doing it for myself. It was a fantastic sensation, nothing as I had expected.

After the break for lunch, we talked about the second flight. Leaving from Bodmin we planned to go above Truro down to Falmouth, to see if we could find my house and then up around the west coast flying over the Lizard, up to Newquay and St Mawgan, then turning off to Bodmin to return to the airfield. The flight was brilliant. Seeing my local area from the sky was a new viewpoint, although until I got my bearings, it looked like a complete jungle!! Flying up around the coast was fantastic, smooth cruising, changing frequencies, and staying clear of RNAS Culdrose. Then climbing to 2500ft to avoid a Sea King, and as soon as we got there, we were told we could drop back down to 2000ft!! Sods law!! The landing was very smooth. The whole flight was unbelievably enjoyable. Well that was a very brief account of the day!! I was invited back, to help around the airfield, and maybe get another flight if possible. I was also talked to about the possibility of getting sponsorship for next year to get a few more hours under my belt. I'd like to thank you very much for all your help; a few months ago I would have never imagined I would have had this chance and I have no doubt this will put me in great stead for my future. I'd like to stay in touch, and I'll let you know how the flying's coming along. I'm sure it would be a great help as you are in the area of aviation that I want to get into for my career.

Many thanks again
Luke Pollard

Reply from Stuart Luck

Luke,

You are at the nice end of life, as a teenager you have time to enjoy everything in this world. Savour the moments! Life will start to get hectic soon. As you get older take time to reflect, move along the bountiful path, learn, apply humility and your wisdom will grow and allow you to help others.

Like most folks I have a job to do which is set up to feed the mouths of firstly me and then along comes a family, adding all the bits that go with them- cars, planes, holidays, friends etc. Keep yourself fit enough to cope with all this. Your health is of major importance and you don't get a flying medical without it! On to the flying bit. Through Penny at PFA HQ you contacted me as a PFA committee person about a work experience placing. That's how we got to where we are now. It was the first time in recent years we can remember having a request like this so it made us think a

bit. Graham at the PFA and others put their thinking caps on and our friends nearest to you at the Devon Strut came up trumps with the first real progress. A step towards what you wanted.

I have since found a big flying training company who have many bases in the UK. If I give them a call to make the introduction they are prepared to take youngsters on work experience. The offer takes in the admin side, flying training, engineering, ops, for both fixed and rotary wing, so you started exciting things for our future. I head up the Young Eagles flying at the PFA so I would like to reflect on your flight and share your and my thoughts with others. Perhaps we can get the information used in the wider world, in the PFA mag [*current issue- Ed*], Strut newsletters etc.

This flight you describe here was not a Young Eagle flight. You had the flying bug already and got a longer flight and gained more experience from it. Diversity is a word of the modern world so let's embrace it if it works for us! Y.E. flights are an educational experience introducing young people to the exciting world of aviation, the actual flight lasts about 20 mins and only takes place in good weather with strictly only straight and level flying. The Y.E. flights, because they need to be controlled and the children protected from harm, are all organized and run by the PFA Struts. It may seem unwieldy but it is safe and works well. The aim of flying 1 million children worldwide by 17th Dec 2003 was achieved ahead of the target date last year without incident. At the PFA we intend to continue this well proven programme into the future. It is the future! We still have to arrange to extend the EAA/PFA partnership details. However, I am happy to take this programme forward with the PFA or acting alone if required.

Our mates at the Devon Strut were awarded a trophy at the PFA Rally recently as Best Strut! I was not at the awards ceremony so I'm not sure if they received the recognition they deserve. I believe they were recognised for the all round work they do such as introducing you to the PFA in their area of the UK. From that flows your work experience and your flying experience grows. They have a great team of which Jim, Mike and Pete have played their parts well. It was a team effort and the Devon Strut would not have got to where they are now without every member of the strut contributing in their own way. Perhaps I could encourage you to join them to enjoy the fun of flying visits to airstrips, both formal and informal, strut nights etc etc? Also the Junior membership of the PFA costs £10 and you received the PFA magazine every other month to keep you in touch with our sort of aviation - perhaps you could have that as a birthday present?

On a personal note I should explain the experience just keeps on expanding. I am as excited as you felt after your trip. I have just done 2 flights at work which were new experiences for me. The first one was from Shanghai in China and took me westwards right across mainland China. For the first time in aviation I saw the curvature of the earth. A squall line that we saw stretching in front of us from horizon to horizon looked as if it was fireworks below a layer of low clouds. It must have been 250 miles away. As we approached it at FL 9600 meters!!!! the clouds towered high above us and the flashes of lightning were continuous. We turned and flew along the front. A heading of west became 030 and eventually we deviated 150 miles before we found a gap on the radar to fly through a less bumpy patch. We arrived in Almaty, a wonderful vibrant city in Kazakhstan at the base of mountains towering as high as the Alps. After 2 days we again flew west for 3 hours over countries I had never heard of before we came to the more familiar places like the Black Sea and Turkey, landing eventually in Milan. I never met a nasty person anywhere! The moment that stands out for me was a chance meeting with a guy in Almaty on his allotment. He was cutting the long grass under the apple trees with a scythe. We shared a few moments, reflected on life and the world in general. I bought home some apples and cucumbers he gave me but left him the bottle of Schnapps he offered me. The moral of the story? It's never too late to change, and things and opportunities come along all the time. Seize them if you can.

Best wishes
Stuart Luck

Treborough Fly-In Sun, 1st August

by Mike Mold

Mark Weatherlake bases his Piper Seneca at Dunkeswell but also he owns a relatively un-used strip on Exmoor that has been the venue for occasional summer fly-ins by the Devon School of Flying. This year we tried to organise a joint fly-in with the flying school but, for one reason or another, it turned into just a strut event. Nevertheless, the last minute circulation of information attracted 42 visitors to this delightful moorland location, situated to the north of and equi-distant from Wimbleball & Clatworthy Reservoirs. Without Derek Boyce (away in foreign climes) to record the movements, we don't have a full visitors log but suffice it to say that most of the southwest's airfields were represented with fly-in regulars coming from Branscombe, Exeter, Watchford, Dunkeswell, Halwell, Eggesford, Plymouth, Bodmin, Bellevue and Roche. Visitors from further afield included a Rotax-powered Falke motorglider and a Smaragd, both from Halesland on the Mendips, Martin and Jan Day in their Cessna 170 and Max Robinson in his Luscombe from Bourne Park in Hampshire and, probably the most long distance arrival to any of our events, Stuart Groot, in his Technam Echo from Holland (via Halwell).



Max Robinson's Luscombe G-LUSI at the end of the line



Martin & Jan Day's Cessna 170



Daryl Mansbridge's Smaragd (ne Emeraude)



Ian Mitchell's Fournier RF4D



Stuart Groot's Technam Echo from Holland

Many thanks to Mark, Sarah and their family for being such hospitable hosts for the day. We hope they will accept the return invitation to come to Watchford on 12th Sept. (but regrettably, not in the Seneca!)

(P.S. In keeping with what is now becoming a tradition, a small contingent returned to their respective bases via Eggesford for another cup of tea!)

Postscript 1

Dear Christopher,

Many thanks for inviting Luscombe G-LUSI to the first Treborough fly-in. I thought the set up at Treborough was great and enjoyed meeting some new flyers and catching up with some 'old ones'. That's two excellent events (Branscombe & Treborough) you have been kind enough to invite G-LUSI to attend, perhaps it's time I joined your Devon Strut (that's if you'll have a man from Bourne Park, Hampshire!). If you e-mail me an address I will forward you a cheque or set up a direct debit if you prefer. Thanks again for the invite and please pass on my thanks to Mark and Sarah Weatherlake for allowing the use of such a lovely place.

Kind regards

Max Robinson

Postscript 2

Christopher,

Thank you very much for forwarding the details for Treborough on Sunday. I had one of the most enjoyable flights for a very long time. We flew from Bourne Park to Dunkeswell for fuel and then set off for a sortie across Exmoor and along the coast past Lynton/Lynmouth before heading in for Treborough. It was a really good event and I am very grateful Mark and Sarah Weatherlake for their efforts.

Martin and Jan Day (Cessna 170B G-MDAY)

A Branscombe Visitor

by John Havers

One of the pleasures for me in being involved in the Strut Fly-ins is the opportunity to meet new and interesting people and Branscombe this year was no exception. During the display period whilst keeping spectators from entering the flight line, Arthur Tynan was approached by a young relative of a former RAF pilot, asking if the very elderly gentleman could view the Mustangs at close quarters. I was then asked to be escort the former W/C. John Mejor, DFC and what an interesting experience it proved to be. He was pleased to get close to a Mustang again having

flown the Mk.3 with 122 Squadron from various south-east airfields, making his last operational flight from Southend over the D-Day beaches on 6 June 1944. An introduction to the Mustang pilots and then a chair to view their display I feel sure made his day.

His earlier career, mainly on Spitfires, had taken him to Malta after flying off the USS Wasp on 20 April 1942. Here he distinguished himself by destroying 2 and sharing the destruction of 2 further enemy aircraft, plus 2 probables and 2 shared damaged; as well as a ducking in the sea when BR348 was shot from under him on 10 May 1942. He was awarded his DFC in April 1944. After D-day he carried out test flying duties with 39 MU, served with 2 Ferry Pool, held a number of staff appointments and at one time was C.O. of 130 Squadron equipped with Sabres. Retiring in 1964, he moved to Exmouth where he still resides, aged 83.

European Single Skies (Everyone Pays) Policy

by Nigel Everett

Dear Colleague,

At a recent meeting the UK Department for Trade (DfT) revealed that under The European Single Skies Policy to which the UK signed up earlier this year, it has been decided that in future all aircraft, regardless of whether they are IFR or VFR, and with no minimum weight cut off, should be required to pay for use of 'services' provided, such as air traffic control, NOTAMS and weather information, search and rescue and so on, whether directly or indirectly used. The main criterion for charging is that the aircraft should land somewhere other than its take off point. No exemptions are offered in the draft proposals even for gliders, microlights or balloons. The proposals seem to have been drafted without any thought of their impact on General Aviation (GA) and are directed mostly at getting short haul airline flights to pay more and long haul overflying flights to pay less.

Costs are to be apportioned on a total, not marginal, cost basis so that VFR aircraft will, for example, bear the cost of a VOR if it provides a service in uncontrolled airspace. This will be regardless of whether the aircraft actually uses the VOR.

Nothing in the draft proposals suggests that even a light aircraft flying non radio, from one private strip in uncontrolled airspace to another will escape being charged. The proposals apply to all civil air traffic and General Aviation (GA) is not mentioned. It will, apparently, be up to the governments of individual states to decide how the payments are levied. Details may be found at <http://www.eurocontrol.int/enprm/>

DfT is said to be sympathetic to the plight of GA and wants to exclude us as per the current airways charges exemptions but the regulations do not permit that unless the Government pays the costs thereof to the Air Navigation Service Providers - and it won't.

Eurocontrol has been charged with undertaking a consultation on how the charges are to be made and has given European aviation until 17 September to make representations. Not only has Eurocontrol imposed this outrageously short deadline, but it has also declined to recognise any representation unless it is made on its official form, [*also downloadable from their website- Ed*].

I don't think that I need spell out what this proposal could do to European GA and I hope that you will feel moved to do what you can to argue for the retention of the current exemption for all VFR aircraft and for IFR aircraft below the minimum weight for incurring Eurocontrol En Route charges.

Thanks
Nigel Everett

If you are willing to join in the consultation, and have internet access:

1. Complete and return the necessary form to Eurocontrol by e mail, post or fax.
2. Graham Newby, PFA's CEO, has already prepared a response which has been posted on the PFA's internet homepage. <http://www.pfa.org.uk>
3. Individual responses are more effective than just repeating other people's views.
4. If you can also find the time to copy your objections to your MEPs and MP, so much the better.
5. Contact as many GA colleagues as possible. Ask them to object and to distribute the information and a similar request to all of their contacts. An avalanche of objections from all over Europe would give Eurocontrol a lot to think about.
6. Please remember that time is desperately short and immediate action is needed.

P.S. From Graham Newby (PFA Chief Exec)

Dear Member

We have recently been made aware of a proposal from Eurocontrol to charge users of all air navigation services. As written there is no exemption for VFR flight in any category of aircraft, so this applies to all of us. I urge you to read the proposals and make your feelings known. Please respond to Eurocontrol on this as I believe that, coupled with Mode S, this is a real threat. We have emailed all our members that we have email addresses for and I have put a couple of suggestions for replies on the homepage. Don't forget the response must be in by Sept 17th and on the correct form.

Graham

Roserrow, 7th August

by Mike Mold

With the met. forecast for our planned fly-in at Roserrow on Sunday 8th August being so dire, the Watchford trio of Messrs Dray, Reed & Mold set off a day early in warm, wall-to-wall sunshine on the 70 mile flight to a strip none of us had previously visited. Being the slowest in the D9, I was given a charitable 15 minute head start and tracked over Cullompton and Crediton before passing the strut's recent venues of Taw Mill and Manstage near Okehampton, and on to Launceston and over the wind farms near Davidstow. I was eventually overtaken by Trevor in the Jungmann (bounced again!) as we passed Roadford Reservoir and was caught by Les in his Condor as we arrived overhead Roserrow, after an hour and ten minutes. There had been a steady south-easterly with occasional turbulence as we passed Dartmoor & Bodmin Moor but these tell-tale signs had not prepared us for the vicious cross-wind that awaited us at Roserrow.

Trevor, being the first to arrive, had the privilege of the first approach whilst I circled overhead to watch the entertainment. He radioed to say that there was no sign of a windsock but an approach from the seaside looked best! Even his newly installed u/c springs couldn't disguise the touch-down! I watched with some trepidation as those Jungmann wings rocked like hell and the strengthening and gusty x/w taxed his co-ordination! Les had a close look and went around before I crabbed-in, poling the stick round the extremities of the cockpit before magically finding some smoother air in the lee of the bushes that line the south side of the threshold! Les was equally exercised on his approach! The ground handling was something else and we knew we'd have a challenge when the time eventually came for departure.

A short walk along a footpath that crosses the golf course brought us to the smart club house and busy restaurant. Pints of iced fruit juice and three lunches were ordered – 2 bowls of pasta with herbed salmon and a cheeseburger with added bacon and chips. I'll leave you guess who ate what! The comfortable and relaxed atmosphere of the clubhouse was conducive to the usual session of putting the world – and the PFA in particular- to rights, but we all had the wind on our minds (I

believe Les has since seen a specialist!) and after a couple of hours we reluctantly set off, back to the strip. Whilst Roserrow's runway is 800 m long it is also about 60m wide, which from the air, can give the misleading impression of it being shorter than it is. Its width was now going to be useful. I knew that taxiing the D9 with any downwind component in what was by now a gusting 20-25kts was going to be a no-no so decided to walk the a/c to the downwind side of the runway and to use as much in-to-wind component of the runway's width as I could. It must have sounded like a good idea as all 3 a/c, after much huffing and puffing, were transferred to the opposite side of the runway, before being subjected to the second episode of the roller-coaster ride! The return trip was marginally more bone-shaking than a glider decent I made through rotor in the Brecon Beacons some years ago. There were the same tell-tale lenticulars marking the high points of the lee wave whilst we rode the serpent's tail below. This was the roughest flight I've ever experienced in the D9, and whilst probably tired from a heavy week in work and a little dehydrated, it left me surprised at feeling so exhausted. The day had been thoroughly enjoyable, in that we had made the decision to go west suitably ahead of a clearly deteriorating weather pattern but the learning point was about anticipating the consequences of the conditions and ensuring you're fit to cope with them!

And the wind-sock? It was there but only a foot long and shredded!



British Airfields Book Project

As publicised in PF, Dick Flute – a pilot who, through his family haulage business, offers PFA members an aircraft delivery service, has embarked on a mammoth project to document the airfields of Britain. Dick has written to the strut with specific requests about some of the airfields in the south-west about which he has discovered records that need clarifying. He writes: Is it possible the Devon Strut members can help me here? Trying to determine even basic 'facts' about the history of flying sites is fraught with difficulties and I am simply astonished how accounts so often vary. To date I have 75 flying sites listed under Devon, (I'm expecting to end up with at least 85), but it is of course possible just a few have been doubled up due to a change in name over the years.

The venue for Alan Cobham's No.1 Tour on 27/08/1935 was Belle Vue, Torrington. Was this the same site as used today?. Others in the list include Branscome, Farway, Watchford, Halwell, Pete Bridges' old strip near Okehampton, Bailey's Farm, Beacon View Farm, Dowland, Gorrel Farm, Henscott Farm, Luke's Farm, Roserrow, Taw Mill, Teignmouth and Plymouth Sound!

In response, we've directed him to a variety of sources of information, including the strut website, Lockyer's strip guide, Pete White & Dennis Teague's "Guide to the Airfields of South West England" and Keith A Saunders' 1999 Monograph on Haldon Aerodrome. Pete has also accumulated a great deal of information for an update of his book so has offered some collaboration. Individual owners might like to enlighten Dick about their strips on 0208-997-8100 or richardjohn@flute.co.uk

Welcome to New Members

Peter Gibbs of Zelah near Truro, peter@petergibbs.wanadoo.co.uk, owns Kitfox Mk.3 G-BTOL, Murphy Rebel G-CBFK & is building a Boredom Fighter.

Stuart Groot of Ermelo in the Netherlands, sgroot.2@hccnet.nl, owns Technam P92-E PH-2X9 (our first foreign member!).

Max Robinson of St. Mary Bourne near Andover, max@ashhouse.wanadoo.co.uk, owns Luscombe 8E/F G-LUSI.

EVENTS

(N.B. All pilots and aircraft must carry a minimum £500,000 Third Party Liability Insurance when attending Devon Strut Fly In's in order to comply with the PFA Requirements)

DATE	AIRFIELD	CONTACT NUMBER
4th Sept	Bellevue	01805-623113 or 07971-278984
5th Sept	Halwell	01548-857513 or 07971-480078
12th Sept	Watchford	01823-601268 or 07779-143439

Halwell Info: 129.825 on the day. All ccts. tight to the north. Avoid flying over Halwell village. New runway to north of old one (480 mts hedge to hedge). Slight uphill to the east. Camping on field, garage and pub within staggering distance. Food available. PPR by self brief from website or call nos. listed. Check Notams. Thanks, Stuart Chambers, Sec. SHFC

Watchford: This year's charity, at Margaret Anning's suggestion, is Kidney Research which raises funds for dialysis machines. A cousin of Brian's has had a kidney transplant so there is a family reason for this choice of charity. Margaret herself has been unwell recently so we wish her a sincere "Get well soon". Margaret – we need you there at the bbq!

Stop Press!

Robert & Nigel Nicholson have just completed their Eurostar kit G-CDCC. It's been inspected and they're awaiting clearance for its first flight. More info next month.