



REPRESENTING SPORT & RECREATIONAL AVIATION IN THE SOUTHWEST  
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## DEVON STRUT NEWS, JANUARY 2007.

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### CO-ORDINATOR'S COMMENTS

by Christopher Howell

Well, Dear Members, I suppose one could say traditionally this time of year a few words of prose would be in order, detailing the year that is drawing to a close. Hey Ho, not me! I find this time of year, when the shortest day has passed by, is a great time to look forward.

The new flying season looks to be busier than ever. We kick off in April and continue all the way through to September and the content during the season is going to be outstanding. For the first time ever there will be Lands End fly-in combined with a fly out to the Scilly Isles, all on the same weekend. We have a regional rally at Dunkeswell, a Scout camp, a fly-a-teacher event and a Young Aviators day. FLY! - the show that has previously been at Earls Court has moved to Silverstone giving us the rare opportunity to fly in to this famous wartime airfield, more noted in recent times as a Grand Prix circuit!

Both the Auster Club and Aeronca Club have full lists of events and the Luscombe Club will also be organising a UK tour as well as the noted Luscombe event at Oaksey Park.

The Strut team is growing; we have a co-opted Safety Team now, not just one safety officer. The plan is that they will visit all of our venues and complete a risk assessment. The Strut hopes to carry its own Ground Risk Liability Cover, subject to final negotiations with Onrisk. It was agreed that for us to continue with the volume of events that we organise, we need to raise the bar and pay attention to any areas that may bite us. We also have committee members who attend the National Council meetings at HQ so we can all raise issues and have them aired at national level. With our very own Steve Robson on the Executive Committee looking after, amongst other things, PR, rest assured that Steve is looking out for us all who stay back here on the farm!

We also have a fly-in team headed by Pete White. How he has persuaded his good lady wife to display his home contact number on so many events is beyond me! Pete did comment that a titanium phone was to be installed at home. I know he is a wise old dog and hopefully he will continue to share his many years of experience on how to raise a family, continue flying *and* keep a lady wife happy. Keep at it, Pete!

January brings a very crucial Strut meeting; the Strut AGM on Thursday 11th. Part of the election of officers will be the choice of a new Co-Ordinator but I feel the highlight of the evening will be the slide show presented by Derek Boyce, taking us on a pictorial journey through our 2006 events. This is always a tonic on a gloomy winter's evening and will freshen us up and raise our spirits to carry through to the longer, finer dryer days.

Have a look at the closing credits on BBC Neighbours programme. It's worth it just to see that beautiful clear blue sunny sky.

Best wishes  
Chris Howell

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*Bill Tee of our twinned Toronto Region RAA in Canada has contributed the following article from the Brampton Flying Club newsletter.*

## The “Worlds Oldest Active Lancaster Pilot” Retires

By David A. Fisher

The Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum based in Hamilton, Ontario has operated their Avro Lancaster Mk. X since 1988. During most of its flying career Don Fisher has been at the helm. This year marks the end of that era with Fisher’s retirement as Chief Pilot and his decision to no longer fly the airplane. Don performed his last flight in the Lancaster on Remembrance Day, November 11, 2006. I would like to give a brief overview of Don’s career.

Don Fisher was born in Kingston, Ontario in 1931. Don’s father served, as a medical doctor during World War One and following the war became a pharmacist and operated Dr. Fishers Drug Store in downtown Kingston. Dr. Fishers is where Don received his first work experience as a boy. His brother Jack, who was fourteen years his senior, learned to fly at the Kingston Flying Club in 1941.



Young Don caught the flying bug when his brother began to give him rides in Piper J-3 Cubs and Taylorcrafts. Those flights with his brother sparked a life-long passion for aviation.

In 1948 Don was awarded a scholarship with the Air Cadets that provided him 17 hours of flight training. He also began working at the Kingston Flying Club as an apprentice aircraft mechanic. The scholarship and his apprenticeship allowed him to earn his pilot’s license. He continued to build up his flying hours and in 1951 was awarded the Webster Memorial Trophy as the “Top Amateur Pilot in Canada.” This award led him to an interview with Trans Canada Airlines (TCA), which later became Air Canada (AC).

Hired by TCA in December 1951, Don went on to a distinguished 40-year career with TCA/AC and flew numerous types, including the DC-3, DC-4M (Merlin powered and pressurized DC-4/6 built by Canadair), Super Constellation, Viscount, Vanguard, DC-9, DC-8 and finally the Boeing 747. He also flew a restored Lockheed 10A for Air Canada on his days off.

Apart from his airline career, he also kept busy on the general aviation front by becoming President of the Brampton Flying Club, which led to him becoming President of the Royal Canadian Flying Club’s Association (RCFCA) and Vice President of the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI). Throughout the years he has also owned numerous aircraft including a Cessna 170A, 180, 172, 177RG and 195A. His passion has always been vintage and warbird aircraft and in the early 1970s he became a founding member of the Ontario Aviation Historical Society (now known as the Great War Flying Museum) in Brampton, Ontario. His association with this group allowed him to log numerous hours in the SE5A, Nieuport 24, Fokker Dr.1 and Fokker D.VII. His association with the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum (CWH) began in 1987 when he began flying the Harvard, a type he had flown while receiving military training in Royal Canadian Naval Reserve Squadron VC921 from 1953-56.

His training on four engine transports was found to be valuable to the CWH. Don picks up the story. “It happened that the Lancaster was in the final stages of its lengthy restoration when I became involved with the CWH. I had flown the DC-4M North Star on Transatlantic operations with Trans Canada Airlines in the 1950’s and this, combined with, at the time, my 36 years of heavy aircraft experience plus my taildragger time, put me in a good position to be asked to fly the Lanc.”

The CWH Lancaster first flew in September 1988 under the command of Tony Banfield from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. In April 1989 Don received his checkout and has been flying it ever since, racking up about 400 hours while flying it as far west as Vancouver and Seattle, east to Halifax and trips through the United States to Midland, Texas and Oshkosh, Wisconsin among others.

As he approached the end of his Lancaster flying career, he shared some of his knowledge of how the airplane flies. “Our aircraft is a Canadian built Mark X, built in Malton (Toronto) powered by 4

Packard built Rolls Royce Merlin 224 engines. The Lanc is very stable in the sky, with heavy ailerons, common with large aircraft of that time, but can be a handful on the ground. This is mainly due to the fact that the tailwheel cannot be locked or steered. Directional control is maintained by differential braking and differential power of the outboard engines. Due to rotation of the props, on takeoff you may be required to lead your power application with number 1 engine until you have sufficient airflow over the rudders situated behind the inboard engines to give you directional control. The aircraft's rudders and elevators are actuated by push pull rods running down the inside of the fuselage resulting in good positive control. The aircraft performance is also very good mainly because our gross weight is only certified for 53,000 lbs at takeoff and we normally weigh about 48,000 lbs. During the war the Lancaster Mk. X Gross weight was 65,000 lbs capable of a 22,000 lb bomb load!"

Don sums up his Lancaster experience as follows, "It has been a great privilege and an honour to work with all the volunteers at CWHM and fly one of only two Lancasters left flying in the world, to meet the surviving veterans and see a tear come to their eye upon seeing and hearing the Lanc and to salute all those brave young men of Bomber Command who did not return". This will be Don's second retirement, the first after a 40-year career with TCA/AC in 1991 and now in 2007 he retires as the "Worlds oldest active Lancaster Pilot".

Don will continue to fly privately. Not a bad accomplishment for the young lad that starting at a small flying club in Kingston.



*Don Fisher's last flight in the Lanc over BFC, 11 November 2006*

Respectfully, David Fisher

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## **CAA Conference on General Aviation**

## **Report by Peter Gristwood**

A year or so ago, relations between the CAA and GA fell to a new low. One of the triggers for this was the CAA charging review, which was thought to show that airlines were cross-subsiding GA. This resulted in a hike in charges to GA which has been seen as indicating that the CAA was in league with the large commercial interests, supported by the fact that the CAA's remit does not mention GA at all.

In the past year a number of initiatives have taken place to investigate the GA sector and the CAA's attitude to it. In January 2006, the Transport Select Committee held a series of hearings to investigate the role of the CAA. There were two detailed investigations of GA – the Strategic Review and Regulatory Review of GA – which reported during the year.

In the light of this, the CAA called a conference of interested parties to discuss the findings of the various reviews and this was held in London on the 21<sup>st</sup> November. Places were limited to 150 and the conference was well-attended. There were a large number of representatives of the various interest groups (PFA, BGA, BMAA etc) as well as private pilots attending on their own account.

The conference took place in a very impressive conference hall at the Royal Society of Arts and was very well attended. Some senior members of the leading GA organisations were there, and I was able to put faces to a number of names only seen in the aviation press. Graham Newby, Roger Hopkinson, John Broad and John Brady were just a few of the PFA representatives, and Martin Robinson attended on behalf of AOPA.

### **Introduction**

Sir Roy McNulty started the event with a presentation explaining the reason for the conference. There was a recognition that GA had been under-represented in the corridors of power, and no-one had much of an idea as to its scope. It had come as something of a surprise to the CAA and DfT that GA was such a large

part of the aviation sector and contributed so much to the UK economy. In 2005, partly as a consequence of the CAA's review of charging, he had felt it necessary to set up two reviews to examine GA and these reported during 2006. There was also a Transport Select Committee examination of the CAA which had also raised concerns about the CAA's attitude to GA. However, he felt that the good work started in the past year was a stepping stone to a much better partnership between the CAA and GA. The conference was an opportunity to report on the findings of the reports.

### **GA Strategic Review**

The first session considered the GA Strategic Review and consisted of presentations from Alex Plant of the CAA, Roger Hopkinson, representing the GA Alliance and Ann Godfrey of the DfT. It dealt with the key issues affecting GA, not least the definition of what GA was, and the issues that caused concern over the future viability of the sector.

Much mention was made of the poor relationships between the powers-that-be and GA representatives. Ann Godfrey, in particular, described some of the responses and representations by GA in quite scathing terms. Government agencies found it hard to deal with groups who were not prepared to enter into negotiations in a spirit of compromise. GA reps are considered to be a difficult group of 'angry men', who would often start arguing with each other in meetings. She contrasted this with the representatives of airlines, who have a trade organisation that has learned to work with the political process. GA would have to start working in a professional manner and speak with a single voice.

She did recognise some issues that face GA; the difficulty of access to airspace and to airfields, being the most important. Ann did make the point that GA is almost unique in government circles, as an interest group now having a dedicated staff group within the DfT.

Roger Hopkinson then stood up and in a short but detailed presentation, showed that 2/3 of aircraft in the UK are subject not to CAA regulation, but are self-regulated by organisations such as the PFA and BGA. Their safety record is good by any standards. He made it clear that although much good work has gone on in the past year, the CAA still fails to fully appreciate the problems of GA, and there are still signs of the 'old' CAA, as shown in the Mode S consultation.

### **The GA Regulatory Review**

The second session looked at the regulatory regime affecting GA. As a result of the review, a number of recommendations have been made, including the CAA's model of cost recovery, access to MoD airfields and a proposal to devolve more powers from the CAA.

The CAA feels that further devolvement of powers is fraught with difficulty, as they are concerned about the risk to organisations in the event of an incident. David Roberts (BGA) acknowledged that the CAA had paid too much attention to commercial air transport. He looked at the need for regulation, taking as his model, sport gliding. Compared to other 'dangerous sports', GA is unique in the degree of regulation to which it is subject. It is necessary to stand back and consider the need and cost of this regulation and for it to be 'proportionate'. He felt that the regulations have been constructed to reduce risk to zero or to a pre-ordained level, but the rules themselves do not create safety.

During the questions, a worrying point was made by Ann Godfrey. The CAA is unique in Europe in devolving powers to the PFA and BGA. Other EU states dislike this approach and, when EASA harmonisation occurs, there is a real risk that such devolution will cease. It will be down to our representatives to fight to allow our current regulatory regime to continue. Other initiatives under consideration include a proposal to allow flight training to take place from unlicensed airfields, but the CAA will need to resolve the issue of safety and liabilities.

### **Hot Topics**

After an over-long lunch break, a session chaired by Martin Robinson (AOPA) started on a number of issues of current interest.

### **Airspace**

The context for this was the effect on the use of airspace of the Air Transport White Paper. The CAA's remit is to make airspace available to all users, but it is not possible to please all. The White Paper

concentrates on the future development of commercial air transport (CAT), but shows that the NATS infrastructure is not capable of handling the planned movements.

Studies have shown that the growth of low-cost airlines has not added to the growth in CAT but has spread the movements to regional airfields. Proposals for additional controlled airspace around these airports are at the highest level yet seen.

The CAA and NATS plan on more flexible use of existing airspace, which means that more CAT will be using Class G airspace. This will enable the CAA to minimise the creation of new controlled airspace, but will lead to GA and CAT (and military traffic) sharing the current airspace.

### **Light Aircraft Study Group Update**

This was a short item which went into the anomalies in the ANO and possible changes in the regulations concerning flight training at unlicensed airfields. It appears that more data is required, but representatives from the microlight community said that they had evidence that would support work on a detailed specification. There was some disappointment that little progress has happened on this issue.

### **Mode S**

This was a rather disappointing presentation by Group Captain Simon Wragg. He had little to say on the subject as the Mode S team are still working through the responses to the consultation which ended in August. The CAA has received around 3500 responses, some of which were duplicates. So far they had dealt with 2500 of the 3000 responses and anticipated completing the review in the New Year. They felt it inappropriate to say much on the subject until they had dealt with the responses.

Simon started by stating that the consultation process was not a referendum. The CAA are still of the view that Mode S is required, and is the best technology for the UK. However they are aware that cost is a major issue, as is the fact that no suitable transponder yet exists for the low-end GA user. It is clear that the CAA feels that they need to be proactive in this area, even if it means moving ahead of other EU states.

In questions at the end, the team looked very unhappy. They had failed to reassure many in the audience and some of their responses showed a lack of understanding of the reality of GA flight in the open FIR and of the proposal itself. To one question regarding a lack of a LARS at weekends, Group Captain Wragg suggested that if we were lost, we should call D & D. In any case it was good for us to be squawking Mode S to help TCAS/ACAS equipped aircraft.

Another questioner asked why it was that the CAA seemed keen to move ahead with the proposal before there was a marketable product. He responded by saying that this was normal – the CAA would create the regulation and the market would then develop the product. This caused a sharp intake of breath from the audience.

However, the CAA is convinced that a company is interested in producing a transponder at around 700 euros, although others have been told that the company is looking for a much higher price. Janet Hoare, on the panel suggested that the CAA should create the specification and ask ‘the Chinese to manufacture it at the right price’.

There was a hint that the March 2008 deadline for implementing Mode S will slip, as the current process is running late, and further work on the proposal is likely to be required in the New Year. However, at the moment, this is still the target date. The Mode S team stated that other EU states were showing great interest in the progress of this proposal, which could lead to a Europe-wide acceptance of the technology. However, a questioner then asked whether it might be better to wait for a Europe-wide approach and use the massive EU market to generate economies of scale. Martin Robinson then brought this session to a close, although it was clear that many participants wished to continue.

### **Europe and GA**

This session was quite technical in nature and concentrated on the structure and nature of EASA and the relationship with the NAAs, such as the CAA. However, the key point was that EASA would be taking on additional responsibilities and would need to look at its charging regime to deal with a serious budget issue.

## **Part M**

More important, but somewhat rushed, was Bill Taylor's presentation on the changes to the maintenance of our aircraft. It is now recognised that the Part M proposal is too onerous for small aircraft. This would place aircraft into either a controlled or uncontrolled maintenance environment with added bureaucracy and at much greater cost. For smaller aircraft, say sub-850kg, a Part M – Lite proposal is being considered, but there is no specification in place for this. However, the implementation date for Part M is set for Sept 2008 and needs an Act to be passed in Europe to delay it. There is some concern that our EU representatives need to be persuaded to make the necessary time for this to happen.

## **Speech by Gillian Merron**

Towards the end of the day, the Under-Secretary of State for Transport with responsibility for Aviation made a keynote speech.

She repeated the view that GA was an important sector which needed to be encouraged to thrive. Not only was it a sector that generated employment, but also played a part in educating the public about aviation. She quoted the 'Build a Plane' initiative as a prime example of this happening. She took the opportunity of announcing that the government had decided not to proceed with the contentious proposal on foreign registered aircraft, and said that the CAA would now wait until a Europe-wide approach was adopted. Although couched in politician-speak, it was felt that this was a welcome recognition that GA is now recognised as a sector that needs to be supported.

## **Closing Remarks**

Sir Roy McNulty reappeared to sum up the key issues of the conference. He repeated the need to GA and the CAA to work in partnership and welcomed the new GA Strategic Forum. GA needed to become more professional in its dealings with the CAA and to present a unified front in discussions. However, he departed from his prepared script by stating clearly that he and the CAA were aware of the concerns of many about the Mode S consultation. He wanted to reassure us that the CAA genuinely had not come to a decision on the issue and that they have an open mind on this.

## **So was it worth it?**

The event was certainly a well-planned exercise and lots of fine words were spoken about the new working relationship between GA and the CAA and this was welcome. However, there is still some concern that the CAA does not appreciate the complex nature of GA. They find it hard to understand that the various organisations representing GA do not speak with a single voice, and when their representatives do meet with the CAA, it is unclear as to whether they actually are able to speak for their membership.

My one complaint was that the event was too tightly scheduled. Coffee and lunch-breaks were almost sacrosanct and stopped discussions, especially the Mode S questions, which could have gone on longer. My overall impression of the conference was one of CAA and DfT speakers telling us how important it is to act in a professional way and to create a single point of contact, and for us to engage politically through this organisation, as do the airlines.

On the other hand, our GA spokespeople were saying that the CAA was improving, but needed to come to terms with our reality. GA is not about business jets and flight training, but extends to microlights, balloons and sailplanes. BGA members won't look to AOPA to deal with their issues, much as the CAA (and AOPA) would like. Personally, I will watch with interest developments on Mode S and Part M Lite, as these will show the CAA's true colours. If there is another event I would certainly make the effort to attend, as I met and spoke to a number of interesting aviators. There is a link to the PowerPoint presentations at <http://www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?categoryid=224&pagetype=90&pageid=6990>

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## **Build-a-Plane Two (BaP2) Youth Project Update**

Tim Gilmour-White from Thorverton, Exeter, is the generous benefactor who has offered to fund the purchase & construction of a new Build-a-Plane kit aircraft, (now confirmed as an X-Air Hawk) to be assembled by groups of youngsters in the Devon Strut area. It was recognised that managing the project was more practicable within a strut-based area than had been the case with BaP1 which was undertaken in four regions across the UK and, following Stewart Luck's leadership of the initial project, it is hoped that the

Devon project will encourage similar ventures in other strut regions. Jim Gale and Steve Robson have been working closely with Tim to sort out the fine detail of how the project is to be managed. It is hoped the kit's wings (x2!), the rear fuselage/tail and front fuselage/engine compartment will be assembled separately in South Devon, Branscombe, Belle Vue and at Tim's workshop in Thorverton. Volunteers and inspectors from within the Strut's ranks are invited to express an interest in providing practical help with the construction / assembly and should contact Jim Gale on 01363- 773767 or [jmgale@btinternet.com](mailto:jmgale@btinternet.com)

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## Trevor's Photo Quiz

Despite an overwhelming response, no one got the full answer correct. Most people correctly identified the aeroplane as a Pietentpol but I really wanted more. It was in fact the original Pietentpol Scout built by Bernie Pietentpol in 1932. It is model number B4A-1 registered as N12941 in the US. That number has been retained but it is also registered as VH-UCP whilst it is in Australia. It is a sweet machine that cruises at 55 – 60 mph on about 35hp. – *Trevor Reed.*



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## Members' News

**Jon Pote:** It was welcome news to hear from Lynette in New Zealand that Jonathan has survived a long and complicated heart operation and is now at home convalescing.

**Keith Munro,** who joined the Strut last month, has contributed photos of both his Cub and his Harvard, the latter being based at Falcon Field in Arizona.



Copyright © Paul Chandler  
*Cub photo acknowledgements to Paul Chandler & Airliners.net*

Keith bought her in the SAAF auctions a few years ago and has taken part in formation displays with her, including the 1998 and 2000 Oshkosh shows. Unfortunately, he's about to sell the aircraft as he says it's become too expensive to keep her on the other side of the pond without flying and way too expensive to fly her over here.

**Gordon Morris** has sold his ARV and part-exchanged his Falco project for the very smart Sipa 903 G-BBBO from George Brothwood in Liverpool. (See feature article in PF Sept. / Oct. 2001)



*Sipa Photo acknowledgements to Darren Wilson & Airliners.net*

As the temperature drops this January, here's a little "something" to raise it again, however momentarily!

**Steve Robson** recently mentioned needing to change his spark plugs, whereupon a far-away "SnF" look came into his eyes!



## FOR SALE

- **Aviation magazines.** A large collection of magazines including Flyfast, Aeroplane Monthly, Popular Flying, Aero Collector, Air Britain Archive, Air Britain Aeromilitaria, Air Britain Digest and Air Britain Aircraft Files. (highly detailed with individual histories of the Whitley, Washington, Typhoon, Stirling, Lancaster and Halifax). Contact Pete White 01752-406660 [pete@aeronca.co.uk](mailto:pete@aeronca.co.uk)
- **Trailer for sale.** Tailor made for an Easy Raider 3 axis microlight (now sold). Designed to ratchet up a taildragger plane backwards. The tailwheel is lifted up as it pulls up leaving the plane horizontal. Can take up to 350 kg. The tailwheel channel could be removed and the whole decked in ply to make a flat bed. It's very light being made of box section aluminium. New suspension units/bearings fitted this year. May suit lots of types like Kitfox etc. Also for sale **ASI** -PZL 0-200 kts in one and 3/4 turns. Expanded scale 0 to 90 kts. **Gascolator** ACS, new bale, viton seal, perfect. **Cumunica** intercom - fits on to the bottom of an Icom handheld in the place of the battery. Column PTT plus power cable. **Ign/mag switch** off/r/l/both (no start) 2 keys- new Continental p/n10-357290-1. **ASI-UMA** 2 1/4" 40-180mph (makes a good standby for a digital set up). New **Rotax** fuel pressure gauge Suit Jabiru/ Rotax 912/914. Offers to Stuart Chambers 01364-642475, 07941-277064 e-mail: [pastypants@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:pastypants@tiscali.co.uk)
- **Lynx Avionics Micro System items for sale.** Velcro mount PTT Switch (x2) £20.00 each; Switching Adaptor for Solo Operation £3.00; Headset Lead Splitter £30.00. Contact Bryan Harper Tel / Fax 01837-810562 [bryan.harper22@virgin.net](mailto:bryan.harper22@virgin.net)

- **Eurostar.** 450kg. microlight but easily converted at very low cost to 480kg. Group A, I am told. Carefully built, conscientiously maintained, consistently flown, summer and winter, but always hangared. 400hrs using 11litres/hour (yes, really!) at 95/100mph. One owner machine, widely seen at West Country fly-ins, in the Devon Strut Newsletter and in Popular Flying June 2006. Permit March 07. £33,000. Call John Holden on 01225-862101 (Not late Nov/early Dec.) or [holdenjandm@aol.com](mailto:holdenjandm@aol.com).
- **Pegasus Quantum 15 Lite G-BZSA** Rotax 503 with only 80 hrs. One meticulous owner from new (2001) and always professionally serviced by examiner / instructor and Pegasus dealer. Q2 blue, yellow & white wing. Carb heater. Road trailer. Fresh air fun flying for a bargain £7,000. Ashburton area. Contact David Melville 01364-631444
- **Kitfox**, Jabiru, £13,250, hangar at Halwell. Keith Wingate 01548-857513 [keithwinga@aol.com](mailto:keithwinga@aol.com)
- **Jodel Group at Plymouth.** Shares available in a group forming at Plymouth with a Jodel D120 Paris Nice. Cruises at 85 knots, 6 hours endurance, 120 litre tank, useful load of 570 lbs, i.e. full fuel and two people with weight for baggage. A joy to fly with superb visibility both on the ground and in the air. Based on four people the group shares @ £3,500, £56 per month & £27 per hour wet. Richard Walker 01752 407411 or [richardwalker123@onetel.com](mailto:richardwalker123@onetel.com)
- **Continental Cylinders** (x3) C90 or O-200 std size, as new, £450 each. Les Dray 01395-513031

## Going Solo, by Rhymair

Today the bird is different, unfamiliar.  
Time arrested thoughts dangle lifeless in a void of apprehension

Hands drilled to move in sequence,  
Those of an automaton

Then the same air I draw into lungs  
Stiff with self distrust, lifts me to the very vault of Heaven

Where the world revives,  
Time starts, a new reality,  
The glory of another life.

## New Web Links (highlighting new services and information posted on our links page)

Despite assurances to the contrary from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the final draft of the **government's new planning policy statement** (PPS3 – Housing) still classifies airfields as brownfield sites, thus making them very attractive to housing developers. If you would like to sign a petition against this policy, please go to <http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/Airfields/> and help to retain British airfields for GA and recreational flyers.

**Aerosaurus Balloons** Champagne balloon flights over the South West <http://www.ballooning.co.uk>

**Yet Another Weather Service - YAWS.** As described in the recent PF article <http://www.activitae.com>

**McMurdo Personal Locator Beacon (Fastfinder Plus)** This product was promoted at our recent CAA Safety Evening as being the latest technology for emergency radio location after ditching or forced landings in extreme terrain situations. These compact and light weight units will, when activated, transmit a distress signal on 406 MHz in addition to a 121.5MHz homing signal.

The Fastfinder Plus also incorporates a 12 channel GPS which will enable the beacon to transmit updated position information at regular intervals. New proposed regulations will require a/c flying over water to carry ELTs installed in the a/c. Whilst this is a "grey area", the portable / hand-held Fastfinder Plus was

described as exceeding the technical specification of ELTs and so represents a more efficient and economical alternative. <http://www.mcmurdo.co.uk> (follow links to *Aviation & PLB*).

### Need to lobby MPs on Avgas Tax.

On 30 November 2006 the European Commission decided not to propose to member states an extended exemption of aviation fuel used for private pleasure aviation. Without a Commission proposal on the extended exemption, member states have no means of granting such an extended exemption. The Commission decision means that as of 1 January 2007, all EU member states will be obliged to apply EU minimum excise duties on aviation fuel for private pleasure flying. Such minimum excise duties already today apply in 15 out of 25 member states, who in the past decided not to make use of the exemption granted until the end of the year. The Commission decision of 30 November 2006 does, however, allow member states, whose private pleasure flying sector will suffer difficulties from the end of the excise duty exemption, to adopt unspecified measures aimed at "alleviating or mitigating problems of transition to the regime of standard taxation". The key issue now is to ensure the UK adopts this decision sensibly, using the mitigations measures where possible. For instance the AVGAS duty today is only about 2p a litre below the EU minimum for unleaded motor fuel so there should not be a need to add the full 29p per litre difference between AVGAS and leaded motor fuel that exists today. For an example of a letter to send to your MP see <http://www.ukga.com/forum/viewthread.cfm?forumThreadId=5142#firstnew> and use the excellent <http://www.writetothem.com> .

### January Free Landings

Pilot: Andrewsfield, Old Buckenham, Panshanger, Shobdon, Weston (Ireland), White Waltham  
 Flyer: Sandtoft, Sheffield, Swansea and Tatenhill.  
 Today's Pilot: Campbeltown, Fishburn, Old Sarum and Sibson.

### Devon Strut Fly-Ins, 2007 - 'That's The Way We Do It'

DATE		LOCATION	HOST / ORGANISER	TELEPHONE FOR PPR
APRIL	29	Plymouth	Steve Leach John Kempton	01752-785452 01548-842057
MAY	5	Bodmin	Pete White	01752-406660, 01208-821419
	6	Bodmin Fly-a-Teacher / YA	Pete White	01752-406660
JUNE	8/9/10	Belle Vue Aerocamp	Strut Team	01805-623113, 01363-773767, 01752-406660
	16	Scillies Fly-Out	Jim Gale	01363-773767
	17	Lands End (TBC)	Lands End F/Club (Pete White)	01736-788944 01752-406660
	24	Halwell	Rod Ethrington Keith Wingate	01548-857513
	30/1	PFA SW Regional Rally - Dunkeswell	Dave Silsbury	01752-690358
JULY	1	Manstage	Richard Hulls	01837-871518
	7/8	Farway Common	Terry Case	01395-597535
	15	Lundy	Pete White	01752-406660
	29	Branscombe Air Day	Joe Thomas	01297-680259
AUG	5	Treborough	Mark Weatherlake	01984-641179
	18/19	Farway Common	Terry case	01395-597535
SEPT	8	Belle Vue	Don Easterbrook / Jim Gale	01805-623113 01363-773767
	9	Watchford Farm	Brian Anning	01823-601268
	29	Dunkeswell Young Aviators	Strut Team	

**Next Evening Meeting: Devon Strut AGM (& Slide Show by Derek Boyce),**  
Stowey Arms, Exminster, Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2007, 7.30 for 8.00 pm.

Nominations are formally invited for posts on the committee to cover the roles of Co-ordinator, Treasurer, National Council Representative and Fly-In Organiser. If you feel like serving the greater good, please contact any of the existing Strut committee members **in writing before 5<sup>th</sup> January**. (See details on Contacts page).

### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. Minutes of the last meeting.
3. Co-ordinators Report.
4. Treasurer's Report
5. National Council Report.
6. Election of Officers.
7. Presentation of Strut Cup & Les Dray Trophy
8. Any Other Business
9. Fly-In Report /Slide Show (Derek Boyce)

Please bring any spare southern England ½ mill maps for donation to the Scouts at the 2007 aerocamp. Volunteers are also requested to help with the organisation of the regional rally at Dunkeswell on 30<sup>th</sup> June / 1<sup>st</sup> July. Again, please contact any of the Committee members.

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### **Tailpiece**



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"It's desire, not ability, that determines your success. You can get anything; you can do anything if you really want to. The only limitation is what you put on yourself." - Peter Riggs

***Happy New Year to All Our Members!***

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