

DEVON STRUT NEWS

The Newsletter of the Devon Strut of the Popular Flying Association. March 2005.

CO-ORDINATOR'S COMMENTS

by Christopher Howell

We have launched into a new year for the Devon Strut. Our new website continues to be tweaked and improved and the move to the Buckerell Lodge appears to be in good favour.

There is ongoing research for improved speakers for our monthly winter meetings and I would hope to maintain an interesting selection of topics. When asked, "What do you get for your fifteen quid and Strut Membership" I would intend to reply "Good, well-balanced support to encourage and assist your chosen hobby of aviation". One example; a member called me one fine morning and asked "Where can I fly and get value for money when I land?" This remark got me thinking and since then I have been trying to formulate some good reasons to belong to our Strut and find interesting places to go. Having sent various e-mails to The Isle of Wight we now have it on good authority: Bembridge 5 quid landing fee. Call Bembridge on the radio when on approach and they can arrange a taxi to be waiting when you land. That sounds like good service to me and worth a nod. They have been busy over the winter and on May 1st the new grass runway 05/23 will be launched. This is a free landing offer with tea, coffee and hot food available on the day. Website www.eghj.com

Brendan Procter will continue to offer Devon Strut PFA aircraft a half price landing fee of £4.50 This is a very useful offer where we can make good use of the hard runway, restaurant and fuel - a welcome haven in these wet soggy winter days. Monitoring the free landing offers which are published in the various magazines each month is another benefit we will pass on to the membership. Cardiff and Popham will be two up for grabs during March as well as Bodmin and Lands End. (See Events below).

A new Student Membership will be a welcome addition for young Strut Members. Following the Scout Camp at Belle Vue in May it will be interesting to see how much we can offer potential students towards an aviation future.

The above will be some of the initiatives and benefits we can offer as part of being a member of The Devon Strut. The last few weeks have brought a mixed bag of weather. There are plenty of early spring flowers out and frog's spawn in the pond at Branscombe so I feel there is a sniff of Spring in the air!

Enjoy all parts of Aviation.

Christopher Howell. (Devon Strut Co-Ordinator).

Lost Flying Fields of Devon

by John Havers

A pair of photographs found at a Postcard Fair marked "Stoke Canon 1928" of Gipsy Moth G-EBVC in an unknown field gave birth to the idea of looking at some of the earlier sites, initially in East Devon, where flying has taken place. Some are, of course, fairly well known but if it is anything like research I did on similar locations in Surrey, then some surprises are in store!

Maudes Motors Ltd (Maudes Motor Mart) of Sidwell Street, Exeter purchased DH 60X Moth G-EBVC new in early 1928 and began using it for business purposes. By November they had obtained a sales agency from the manufacturers in an attempt to generate interest in the south west. A letter to the Express & Echo newspaper during November 1928, from F. N. Hughes, a representative of the company, stated "It may be of interest to local citizens to know that as England's first aeroplane agents

we have for some time past established an aerodrome at Stoke Canon, where flying takes place daily. Frequent flights have been made in our Moth aeroplane between London and Exeter, as well as repeated journeys to Cardiff. Although Devonshire is a most difficult county for flying, it is hoped that local authorities will not be behind the times, but will step into the breach and consider immediately the advisability of establishing an aerodrome for this most modern method of travel."

Evidently his pleas fell on deaf ears, for it would be another decade before Exeter proper had its own aerodrome. It seems likely that the location of the "aerodrome" was on the Exeter side of Stoke Canon. Travelling towards Tiverton from Exeter, you enter the village from the long and rather narrow bridge across a marshy area and the River Exe. On the left of the A396 is a lane, immediately on the end of the bridge (now Chestnut Crescent) where, some 35 to 40 years ago, a housing estate was built between the main road and the railway line. Very near to the bridge and the housing estate were garage premises, burnt down some years ago after being derelict. These had been run by a somewhat eccentric couple who may have had some connection with the flying activities. They had apparently lived for many years in some old Exeter tram bodies bought in August 1932.



DH 60X Moth G-EBVC at Stoke Canon in 1928 (Photo via John Havers)

Some interesting facts are coming to light of flying at Honiton, Sidmouth and possibly Otterton Point so hopefully, there'll be more on this in future Newsletters. I am most grateful to Maurice Wickstead for making his research available to me and also to John Gregory and Keith Saunders for their help.
John Havers

178 Seconds

[In April 2004, the Strut's guest speaker was Roger Henshaw, Head of Training at Ground Training Services, Bournemouth. His presentation focused on bad weather and instrument flying. His advice was that the combination of an aeroplane equipped with a limited panel, a pilot who is either untrained or not current on blind-flying (even with an IMC rating) and a lowering cloudbase, was a recipe for disaster. The following piece, with acknowledgements to Transport Canada's Take Five for Safety (5 minutes reading could save your life!) describes the consequences. -Ed]

If you're ever tempted to take off in marginal weather and have no instrument training, read this article before you go. If you decide to go anyway and lose visual contact, start counting down from 178 seconds. How long can a pilot who has no instrument training expect to live after he or she flies into bad weather and loses visual contact? Researchers at the University of Illinois found the answer to this question. Twenty student "guinea pigs" flew into simulated instrument weather, and all went into

graveyard spirals or roller-coasters. The outcome differed in only one respect: the time required until control was lost. The interval ranged from 480 seconds to 20 seconds. The average time was 178 seconds—2 seconds short of 3 minutes. Here's the fatal scenario:

The sky is overcast and the visibility poor. That reported five-mile, visibility looks more like two, and you can't judge the height of the overcast. Your altimeter says you're at 1500 but your map tells you there's local terrain as high as 1200 ft. There might even be a tower nearby because you're not sure just how far off course you are. But you've flown into worse weather than this, so you press on.

You find yourself unconsciously easing back just a bit on the controls to clear those non-too-imaginary towers. With no warning, you're in the soup. You peer so hard into the milky white mist that your eyes hurt. You fight the feeling in your stomach. You swallow, only to find your mouth dry. Now you realize you should have waited for better weather. The appointment was important—but not that important. Somewhere, a voice is saying "You've had it—it's all over!"

You now have 178 seconds to live. Your aircraft feels in an even keel but your compass turns slowly. You push a little rudder and add a little pressure on the controls to stop the turn but this feels unnatural and you return the controls to their original position. This feels better but your compass is now turning a little faster and your airspeed is increasing slightly. You scan your instrument panel for help but what you see looks somewhat unfamiliar. You're sure this is just a bad spot. You'll break out in a few minutes, but you don't have much time left.

You now have 100 seconds to live. You glance at your altimeter and are shocked to see it unwinding. You're already down to 1200 ft. Instinctively, you pull back on the controls but the altimeter still unwinds. The engine is into the red and the airspeed, nearly so.

You have 45 seconds to live. Now you're sweating and shaking. There must be something wrong with the controls; pulling back only moves that airspeed indicator further into the red. You can hear the wind tearing at the aircraft.

You have 10 seconds to live. Suddenly, you see the ground. The trees rush up at you. You can see the horizon if you turn your head far enough but it's at an unusual angle—you're almost inverted. You open your mouth to scream but. . . . you have no seconds left.

(The take-home message is to not get in this situation in the first place by always having escape options - alternative venues planned before you take-off, and if you do have an a/c equipped with gyro instruments ensure that they are serviceable and you are current by getting dual practice under the hood on a regular basis)

Members' News.

Welcome to New Members

Dave Brown, of Kings Tamerton, Plymouth. Dave flies X' Air 582 G-BZFF

Derek Boxell of Barnstaple flies Fournier RF3 G-BLXH

Ian Lewis, Woodbury, Exeter.

Maurice Wickstead, Chudleigh, Newton Abbot.

Mike Wells has bitten the bullet and has started to disassemble his Jodel D112 G-BHHX at Watchford prior to tackling its recover.



Terry Wilson has taken his recently completed Pi tenpol Air Camper from Dunkeswell to its new home at Bodmin. The ferry flight, accompanied by Pete White and Derek Boyce in Aeronca G-IVOR was captured by Derek's camera over Colliford Lake as the light was fading....



Brendon Procter has re-acquired the Sipa he owned over 10 years ago. G-ASXC is now registered G-DWEL and is receiving a recover job at Dunkeswell.

Peter Nelson is making good progress with his Dyn-Aero MCR01 CLUB G-CCPN. This is similar but not the same as John Flisher's a/c described in our December issue. John's is a microlight whereas Peter's is a light a/c with a higher mauw. The fuselages are the same but they have completely different wings. Peter's will be powered by a Rotax 912S with an Arplast CS prop. Fingers crossed, it should fly in the spring.



Richard Webber is also making good progress with his A61Terrier G-ARNO at Eggesford.

Events

March Free Landings

Flyer - Cardiff, Fishburn, Popham and Sheffield

Pilot – Bodmin, Cardiff, Huddersfield, Land’s End, Old Buckenham, Wolverhampton

The North Weald Airfield Users Group (NWAUG) is delighted to announce that **landing fees at North Weald are waived on Sunday 6 March!** The NWAUG invites everyone to fly to North Weald, on that day, and will be holding a workshop so that you can lodge your objections to RSS 14 (the East of England Plan) to build 6000 houses on the Airfield. All the forms will be completed in advance, so all you need to do is sign and submit them. We will even post them for you! NWAUG members will be in attendance from 11.00 onwards to offer advice and a briefing will be held at 14.00, for visitors and local residents, which will last approx. 30 mins. You are then free to enjoy your hamburgers! Please help the cause! We need as many as possible to attend and make their views known. Please come along in even if you have already made submitted your objections. Please Note – This invitation is for everyone – not just those with aircraft – so please join us however you wish to get here. PPR is not required!

Popham has published its event calendar for 2005, including a Jodel fly-in on 10th April and its Microlight Trade Fair on 31st April / 1st May.

The Aeronca Club of Great Britain has organised the following fly-ins for 2005, including a Fly out to France over the August Bank Holiday weekend. Camping is usually a good, social option and a lot of fun. Always check the venue before setting out and if your aircraft is unable to attend they are happy to see members arrive by any other form of transport that may take their fancy. Remember all events are PPR.

Date	Where	Information
April 30 (Saturday)*	Bodmin (Cornwall)	01208 821 419
June 4&5 (Sat & Sun) **	Tollerton (Nottingham)	0115 9811 327
July 1,2 & 3 ***	Kemble PFA-F4F (Glos)	01285 771 177
July 30 (Saturday) ****	Branscombe	01297 680 259
August 26,27,28&29 *****	France	01752 406 660
September 24 (Saturday)	Old Buckenham	01953 860 806

*This is their Cornish Picnic Weekend, with a tour of various local airstrips and Lundy Island on the Sunday (weather dependant).

** The US Classics Fly-in hosted by the Aeronca Club of Great Britain at ‘Today’s Pilot’s Tollerton Fly-in. Last year was very successful so spread the word to all the US types.

*** The PFA F4F - home to all Classics and the main GA event of the year. A Club presence will be in evidence in the Vintage Park and type club tent.

**** The Aeronca Club’s fly-in will be on the day before the famous Branscombe Air Day and Vintage Vehicle meet. The Club will be exhibiting and will need as many of their breed as they can muster for a grand Air Day line up.

*****The second Club visit to France and this time they’ll be visiting more historical sites and enjoying the hospitality and joys of French cuisine. More details will be available to Club members and friends at a later date.

Contact: Pete White 01752 406 660, mob. 07774 017 704 or pete@aeronca.co.uk

Bodmin 1940s Hangar Ball to raise funds for a new control tower (n.b. 18th June)



Welding Services

CKT Engineering, the Tiverton company that specialises in exhaust systems for Rotax 912 engines, have moved premises and can now be contacted at 4ab Hartnoll Business Centre, Post Hill, Tiverton, Devon EX16 4NG, E-mail: info@cktengineering.com , Tel: 01884 242211, Fax: 01884 250500 and website www.cktengineering.com

Another source of bespoke exhaust systems is Jon Hodson, also from Tiverton. Jon comes highly recommended, having made exhausts for several Watchford residents. Word of his skills is getting around with Cedric Nash from Salisbury having recently had a system from Jon for his O-200 powered Wittman Tailwind. Contact Jon on 01884-255921.

Invitation to Visit Hooegeveen in Holland

Chris Howell has received the following e.mail:

Hello,

We'd like to introduce our airfield to the strut flyers. Our airfield is a place where a lot of old aeroplanes have their home base. We have here for instance a Focke Wulff Stieglitz, Bücker Jungmann, Klemm 35, Fokker S-11, Piper J3, Piper Cubs, Fairchild Argus, Stinson L-5 etc. We are also restoring several aircraft this year: 2 Vultee aircrafts (BT - 13), a Piper Super Cub and a Bücker Bestmann. Our airfield has a grass runway of 1,100 meters. We have a camping-site on the field, with showers and toilets and also a restaurant is located on the airfield. When your members are flying to Germany or Denmark, make a stop-over in Hooegeveen. Landings and fuel are payable by credit card. Many greetings and we hope to see you. See website: www.vliegvelddhooegeveen.nl

Obituary: Rob Wrixon

by Steve Robson

It was with great sadness that we learned of the loss of Rob Wrixon on 1 February 2005 after a long struggle with cancer.

Rob was very well known to a great many strut members and farm strip flyers from around the region for many years. He was a very popular man who was held in high regard because of his knowledge

and skill as a pilot, routinely operating his Condor from his short aircraft carrier-like strip at Loaders Hill near Bridport. His association with his yellow Condor, G-AXGV lasted for 14 years from the early 1980's to the mid 1990's and they were both regularly seen at fly-ins as well as further a field. Sadly, ill health caused Rob to give up flying in the mid 1990s but not to be outdone he then embarked on a project to build an RV6A as well as maintaining a keen interest in vintage motorcycle restoration.

In many ways he was the embodiment and epitome of the farm strip flyer. As well as a capable pilot Rob was always kind, hospitable and patient. He always took the time and trouble to explain to others and pass on his experience as well as possessing a great sense of humour. He will be greatly missed and fondly remembered.



Rob and Di with their Condor at Compton Abbas

Next Meeting –

Thursday 10th March, 7.30, Buckerell Lodge Hotel, Exeter

Guest Speakers: Ken Craigie (Chief Inspector) & Francis Donaldson (Chief Engineer)

Membership Renewal Reminder

For the few members who have not already renewed their subscriptions, this will be your last newsletter. Membership forms were sent out with the January newsletter or can be downloaded from the strut website.
