

DEVON STRUT NEWS

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

CO-ORDINATOR'S COMMENTS

by Christopher Howell

Good News abounds this month! Plymouth City Airport is once again GA-friendly. Plymouth has a lot to offer with two directional runways - 13/31 and 24/06, avgas, a GA entrance and car parking. [*And in Strut member Dave Storey, there is a resident PFA Inspector & CAA Engineer-Ed*]. Gordon Morris and Steve Leach have held several meetings with the new General Manager of Plymouth City Airport, Terry Linge. Progress to date: Hangar space available at £117.50 monthly, 499kgs landing charge £5.87. Block landing bookings are under consideration along with grass runways and back track routes for runway 31. There is the slim possibility of a Fly-In there this season and Terry has agreed to free landings for aircraft owners who fly in for a look around. There are many issues still to be discussed and over the next few months we should look upon it as "Use it or lose it". Further information can be obtained from Terry, Tel. 07884492671 and see the website www.plymouthairport.com. Reg McComish has already set up home at Plymouth for a trial period with his Aeronca Super Chief and he will report in next month's newsletter about operating there. Stuart Chambers is forming a group around a PFA Permit type aircraft and also intends to base it at Plymouth. More details in our For Sale section.

At Dunkeswell Aerodrome, Devon and Somerset Flight Training continues to flourish. Brendan Proctor has a firm grip on the helm and there are many events planned for this coming season. On June 11th half price landings and free cream teas sound like a bargain to me. With Terry Case holding the first of his events on the 11th and 12th June, it will be a busy weekend.

The Scout Camp planned for the 7th and 8th May has been a massive logistical challenge and with Belle Vue becoming the base for the second Devon Air Ambulance it will be a sure-fire hive of activity that weekend. 22 Sqdn at Chivenor has been invited to drop in with a Sea King if logistics permit and there might also be visits from the Chivenor's Grob motor gliders. Any members willing to fly the Scouts around a 30 minute navex, please contact Pete White or Jim Gale.

Buzzing is the operative word for Branscombe at the moment. The Dyn Aero Banbis belonging to John Flisher and Peter Nelson keep bursting out of the main hangar to carry out various checks. After the first flight of John Flisher's ULA version, Jim Greenshields proclaimed it to be second only to the Extra 300 for fun and performance. Peter Nelson awaits the return of old father time from the USA to carry out the test flight on his Dyna Rod. Two old timers got back together at Branscombe when Zak Rockey trailered in his DH82 Tiger Moth for Mike King to re-build. The old Dawn Patrol Stampe is now very near completion with a new Gipsy Major from Vintech Engineering. The new engine is a ten-series while the previous engine was a seven-series. This has created much extra work to create a snug fit. However, the aircraft is due for rigging and should be up and flying very soon.

Many thanks to Mike Rolffe of HM Customs and Excise for a most interesting talk at our April meeting on the law enforcement of illegal substances imported into the UK. Thanks also to Chris Bowden of Devon and Cornwall Police for his talk on travelling to non-EU countries and the various procedures that pilots should follow.

Much flying to do during May - please look at our Events page for full details.

Puffy Clouds and Blue Skies - Christopher Howell.

Sun 'n' Fun is always a good event to start the flying season, with consistently warm weather and a huge array of aircraft, educational forums and personalities. This year Steve Robson and I travelled up to Gatwick from Devon via the London Air Show at Earls Court where exhibitors ranged from paragliders to corporate helicopters. The PFA had a dual presence with Graham Newby manning the Association's stand and Stuart Luck promoting the Build-a-Plane Rans S6. This is a project that Stuart financed himself with the assembly of the major kit components being undertaken by groups of youngsters across the UK, under the supervision of various PFA inspectors. The aircraft is due to fly soon, with only minor tweaks outstanding. The surprise for Steve and I was being roped-in to de-rig the aircraft and help load it into its modified single-decker bus before Stuart drove it back to its home base at Barton, Manchester, at the end of the day!

It was also a real pleasure to meet up with ex-Devonian Noel Collier, now resident in Germany, and his nephew Barry Davies. They were there to promote the aircraft models built by Barry's company, Bravo Delta Models. These are exceptional desktop personalised replicas, hand carved by master craftsmen in fine detail from kiln-dried mahogany. Les Dray has recently taken delivery of one of his Condor and Trevor Reed has one of his Jungmann nearing completion. The models cost in the region of £180 to £200 and Barry can be contacted at Bravo Delta Models Ltd, Cedar Cottage, Watts Road, Thames Ditton, Surrey, KT7 0BX. Tel. 020 8224 9910, Fax . 9733, mobile 07745 045882 and e.mail barry@bravodeltamodels.co.uk .

Steve and I stayed at an excellent B&B near Gatwick (see recommendation below) before meeting up with Brian Hope and John Dean from the Mid Kent Strut (who both have Jodels) and flying out with Delta Airlines to Orlando via Cincinnati. We hired a 7-seat people carrier for the week and shared a villa west of Orlando with Bob Hallam (who has a Fred, a C172, Sonerai 2, Europa and Murphy Rebel project!) and Irishmen Karl Martin and Peter Gorman (D112) who co-own an RV6. There will be a comprehensive write-up of Sun 'n' Fun in Popular Flying but my personal highlights are illustrated below and include seeing further developments and new installations of the 100 hp Corvair auto engine conversion, the delightful new VW-powered Thatcher CX4 all metal single seater, a guided tour round the Sensenich Wood Prop factory, the P38 *Glacier Girl* and coincidental meetings with some interesting people.

Arthur Muka is a retired entomologist from Cornell University, NY and is a fellow member of EAA Chapter 486 and friend of Chuck Burtch, whom I met at Oshkosh in 2000. Art is building a Jodel D11 and wanted to meet up with fellow Jodellers at S'n'F. Despite the collective expertise of Jim Gale, Brian Hope, and John Dean in the same beer tent, our conversation turned to bugs (my professional background too!). Art lectured at Cornell, specializing in pest control in forestry. Following his organising a conference on the subject, he was able to co-ordinate many of the major crop sprayers in the USA (including owners of several old bombers) to mount a mass aerial spraying operation to control pine weevils and by so doing, saved many hundreds of square miles of North American forest that would otherwise have been decimated.

Corvair.

Bill Clapp of Valdosta, Georgia, won the Best Wood a/c award for his Corvair-powered KR2S. This was one of 6 aircraft present at the show with Corvairs, the others being 2 KR2's, a Dragonfly, a Sky Coupe with a turbo conversion and a Zenair 601XL. The Corvair engine was used in the 1960s Chevrolet Corvair car, which still has a great following across America but gained a reputation as a prolific 180 hp oil-leaker, albeit before the development of Viton oil seals and O-rings. The application of the Corvair as a robust aircraft powerplant was first recognised by Bernie Pietenpol for his Cub and subsequently his Air Camper. Since then thousands of hours have been flown behind Corvairs, with the latest conversions of the engine being developed and championed by William Wynne of Massey Air Ranch, Edgewater on Florida's east coast. William's unquestioned expertise (graduate of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, A&P and 16 years experience in developing the 'vair by systematic research and flight testing) and his unbounding encouragement, conversion manual and components enable core engines, still widely available in the USA for a few hundred dollars, to be built up with additional off-the-shelf, "after market" components to produce zero-hour engines of 100 hp. This is developed at 3200 rpm. Cruising at 3,000 uses 4-5 Imp. gallons per hour and at an installed weight of 230 lbs is similar to an O-200, but at a fraction of the cost.



Bill Clapp's award-winning Corvair KR2S



William Wynne's 601 endorsed at the Zenith stand

PFA is currently monitoring the conversion of 2 Corvairs being built for Pietenpol projects by Paul Shenton and Steve Bryant near Turweston, one of which is hoped to be running on a test stand at FFF in July. Other UK project applications for the Corvair include the Flitzer Falke design of Lynn Williams and the Jodel D11 series but builders / restorers of these types have been advised by PFA to wait until the performance of current Pietenpol conversions have been established. William Wynne has declared his support for PFA members and has agreed to provide the relevant information from his experience to help the PFA approval process.

Thatcher CX4

If the designer's figures are accurate then the old adage about an aeroplane probably "flying right if it looks right" will be true for the Thatcher CX4. David Thatcher has 30 years experience as an A&P, aircraft restorer and aviation artist so when he drafted the lines of his perfect aeroplane on a paper napkin, the aesthetics of the design were an important consideration. The outcome is a delightful single seat, VW-powered, simple to build, all-metal low wing monoplane for which David has drawn up plans in response to requests from aspiring builders from all over the USA. The CX4 has been listed by PFA Engineering as one of the designs to be considered for its approval this year and if successful then Steve Robson's name may be being added to the list of builders.



Thatcher CX4



Steve Robson's smile says it all!

The CX4 specs & performance include: length 18' 3", span 24', wing area 84.4sq ft, fuel cap. 7.5 Imp gals, gross weight 850 lbs, empty weight ca. 520 lbs, Engine VW 1700 – 2180 cc, all metal construction 6061-T6, design load 3.8G, Ult. 5.7G, Performance with 1700 VW: Cruise speed 125mph at 3,000 rpm, stall 40mph, rate of climb 825 fpm at 75mph, Vne 160 mph, t/o roll 700ft, Cost of materials incl. engine ca \$9,000. Plans \$325 and various components e.g. canopy, cowlings, engine mount, welded parts of the control systems, wing & elevator tips, etc will be available from the designer. see www.thatchercx4.com

Sensenich Wood Propeller Company

Bob Hallam is an experienced aircraft builder and restorer. His most recently completed project is a Jabiru-powered Europa and he has just placed an order for a Murphy Rebel kit. Both of these aircraft are to be powered by wooden Sensenich propellers and as the factory at Plant City is relatively close to Lakeland, we were fortunate to coincide Bob's visit to inspect his two 62" "wood carvings" with a guided tour of the factory and witness the quality controlled, step-by-step transition from the raw materials - rough planks of yellow birch, to final product. Steve Robson will be producing a more in-depth article for a future issue of PF so the following pictures will just give a flavour of what we were privileged to witness.



Laminations clamped & glued



Machine carving the blank from reference profile



Hand carving to adjust for minor profile errors



Varnished props awaiting leading edges

P38 Glacier Girl

Strange things happen when you hang around the portaloos, not least being consumed by the malodours that emanate from the gully-sucker when the tanks start to fill up! On leaving one of the afore-mentioned facilities I found Steve in conversation with a bloke enthusing about the airshow. I joined in with my appreciation of having seen a recent Channel 4 documentary about the raising of a WW2 P38 from 250 ft below the Greenland ice and its protracted rebuild, and then finding it parked in the S'n'F warbird display

area and subsequently participating in the daily airshow. Some coincidence then, to find that our co-enthusiast was non-other than Neil Estes from Georgia, an American restorer of British vintage cars but who, with his photographer brother Tom, was part of the team that raised Glacier Girl from the ice! The story is told on the Greenland Expedition's website www.thelostsquadron.com.



P38 Glacier Girl



Tom Estes, Steve Robson & Neil Estes

Marya Hendrix

It took some debate to agree that the night airshow was something that might be worth seeing. After a minor delay in proceedings to allow darkness to fall, a tight 4-ship formation of Harvards performed a series of loops and barrel rolls illuminated by strobe nav. lights and smoke. This was followed by a succession of displays by a variety of types, including a helicopter and a glider, that were not immediately recognizable in the dark, save for their common theme of being festooned in pyrotechnics that they disgorged all over the sky to the accompaniment of stirring patriotic North American music and a PA commentator's script that fittingly should have gone up in flames! Following a balmy day in the low 70's / high 80's, much of the entertainment value of the night display was lost on us as the wind got up and the temperature plummeted. In tea-shirts that a few hours earlier had made us feel over-dressed, Brian Hope and I took turns at huddling out of the wind in one of the security cabins at the entrance to the homebuilt park. We became aware that we were not alone as, out of the darkness, two female voices, one in English, enquired where we were from. The English voice belonged to Marya Hendrix, a lady of mature years, who was a pilot and an A&P engineer living near Tampa and who was a friend of Joe Thomas from Branscombe! Her friend was also a pilot and had won the trans-continental race for women pilots (Powder-Puff Derby) for 4 years running! They send their best wishes to friends in the UK.

More of Sun 'n' Fun will be written, depicted and done justice to in the forthcoming monthly glossies. What won't be included is the interrogation Brian received at Orlando airport when his hand baggage was found to be over-weight. I didn't think a crank weighed that much! Or the brainwashing Steve had to give Bob to avoid him making any reference at the airport to "bullets" after this term had been adopted throughout the week to describe the 800 clecos in which Bob had invested. (Think "industrial fasteners, industrial fasteners, industrial.. & don't tell 'em about the bullets, Pike"). Despite the discomfort of the night show, it was a pleasure to enjoy the hospitality of Lakeland again.

Where to Stay at Gatwick

The Lawn Guest House, 30 Massetts Rd, Horley, Surrey, RH6 7DF is run by Carole & Adrian Grinstead. Advertised as "everything for the Gatwick Traveller", The Lawn is about 5 minutes away from the North terminal and also provides secure car parking and transport to & from the airport. Contact them on 01293-775751 or via www.lawnguesthouse.co.uk

Free Landings – May

Pilot: Enstone, Eshott, Fair Isle, Full Sutton, Newtownards and Panshangar

Flyer: Beccles, Gigha Island, Kilkenny and Lands End

Today's Pilot: details outstanding

Members' News

Keith Wingate's Taylor Titch is airborne again after a weight-reduction exercise (to the aeroplane!).

Steve Cole has recently purchased a Fuji FA 200, a four seater with aerobatic capabilities. The aircraft will be based at Exeter and shares will be available (See For Sale section for initial details. Photos to follow).

Congratulations to John Flisher who's Banbi, as reported by Chris Howell above, has now flown and is being tested by Jim Greenshields.

Derek Boyce has written "Went solo in the Champ today, (10th April)....Magic! Conditions were perfect this afternoon and the Champ was really gleaming in the sunshine. The couple of weeks spent cleaning and polishing inside and out during my Easter Break have proved very worthwhile." Derek has also been checked out by Bodmin's instructor Phil Cardew and now awaits only the clear blue yonder to fly into!
[Congratulations Derek]

Members' Aircraft



Cessna 172 G-BJVH Richard Cuming



Cessna 182 G-BHUG Fred Baulch

Life at Halwell

by Stuart Chambers

The major change that has taken place at the South Hams Flying Club is that Keith Wingate, who for so many years held the Club together, has reluctantly stood down as Chairman. It's been said to me that his efforts rather saved the Club from extinction. He has been a leading influence at the Club and despite major changes in private life he still finds time to support sport flying at Halwell and at the Strut and instruct as well. Hard act to follow but thanks Keith. Pete Callis takes on the task of interim chairman. Paul Aston is now a full microlight QFI able to sign logbooks and conduct ground exams as well. Paul is organising our first trial flyout for those a bit nervous of attending Strut fly-ins. We have 2 BMAA inspectors also. We are still talking about hangars but things are going forward at least, so watch this space as they say.

Our other big change was to become a Community Amateur Sports Club. This has changed the way we charge. We expect a "gift" now and so get the tax back. For Strut members, you are all welcome BUT please PPR (see the website) and please, please use the NW lane when arriving and departing the field. Oh, and don't forget we have a new runway slightly to the north of the old (closer to the road) 480 mts long and all circuits tight to the North. Silage is being grown either side of the runway so please don't land or taxi in it. We have had long discussions regarding the new SafetyCom freq and have decided for the time being to use the microlight freq of 129.825 Mhz as we have always done. The caravan has a loo and help yourself to tea and coffee. The outer gate will be locked but the code is easily obtained by asking any member.

Microlighting [*A personal View* –Ed].

A large part of our membership at Halwell is in the BMAA since the club is heavily (is that the right word?) microlight orientated. So it might be interesting to let Strut members who aren't involved in the lighter side of GA see what life is like on the other side. I know that the PFA covers some micro 3-axis machines (funny thing to call a light aircraft!) but there really is a difference. My whole background has been with the airlines and GA, sharing my half of a Jodel 117 and being a long-time PFA member. Looking for a retirement project and fed up with hangarage costs, a hundred mile round trip and the inconvenience of shifting 4 planes, then putting them back before going flying I was attracted to a 3 axis folding wing Easy Raider kit. What was strange was that I would have to join this lot called the BMAA. Probably just like the PFA so no problem I thought!

So, I was thrown into the world of wobbly wings and microlighters. The first thing I noticed was that apart from those individuals that progressed on to group "A" (OK, its called SSEA in Euro garbage-speak!) some microlighters have honed flying skills by looking at a landing site every few yards while the 2 stroke over their heads thrashes its life out or doesn't! New term – it's called outlandings. Low hours micro PPLs will probably have done lots of dead-stick field landings. Some will have a restricted PPL which means their actual flying time will be minimal, along with a restriction of not wandering far from home. It seemed to me that some have a very limited idea of Notams, restricted airspace or sometimes the weather. Any sort of convective cumulus means the lightly loaded machine will be hard to fly and uncomfortable and so generally don't fly. Radio is far too complicated so best avoided. Lots buy radios but use them to chat to mates. A well planned trip is more to do with carrying a spare can of petrol and does the arrival field have lift to get some unleaded. The language is different- they "bimble" (or is it bumble!) around. When the background to the sport started by throwing yourself off a cliff, a beer at the end was all one needed. Hell, even their machines don't work properly. Some have engines at the back, push your right foot to go left, no rudder, pull to go down-its - all wrong I tell you!

That's all folks!

Stuart Chambers (Sec. SHFC)

HM Customs & Police Contacts.

Following the interesting April meeting enquiries have been invited via the following contact:

HM Customs and Excise. Mike Rolffe 01752-275516

Devon and Cornwall Police. Chris Bowden 01392-452846 Ian Tyers 01392-452697

New Low Flying Rule

The CAA has announced a major revision of the Low Flying Rule (Rule 5). Although flight is now permissible down to 1,000 feet above the highest fixed object over congested areas, the requirements to glide clear and to alight without danger to persons or property on the surface remain in place. Pilots no longer need apply to the CAA for permission to land or take-off at an organised open-air assembly. However, for such flights to be legal they must be conducted in accordance with procedures notified by the

CAA, including the requirement for obtaining written permission from the event organiser.

The new Low Flying Rule has been introduced following consultation with interested parties. Pilots must be careful not to abuse these new provisions as there is a fine balance between safety and protection of the environment.

Aerosaurus Balloons

There is a possibility that Aerosaurus Balloons (<http://www.ballooning.co.uk>) will launch from some of our events this year. Locations on the list are Farway, Halwell and Manstage and with launch times of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. there will be no conflict with fixed wing aircraft. The price per person per flight is £130 for a 3 hour air experience but the company is prepared to pay a commission of £29.00 per ticket for any sales. Aerosaurus's Arthur Street has contacted the strip owners for their permission so hopefully all will run smoothly and it will be an added interest for early and late/overnight visitors.

Heard on the Frequency

Tower: "Delta 351, you have traffic at 10 o'clock, 6 miles!"

Delta 351: "Give us another hint! We have digital watches!"

"TWA 2341, for noise abatement turn right 45 Degrees."

"Centre, we are at 35,000 feet. How much noise can we make up here?"

"Sir, have you ever heard the noise a 747 makes when it hits a 727?"

The other day a man came home and was greeted by his wife in a very sexy nightie. "Tie me up," she purred, "and you can do anything you want." So he tied her up and went flying!
