FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION



Newsletter No. 86 *August 2004*

Opening Thoughts

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Cover photograph;

The Flying Farmers were let loose with some very expensive machinery at Langar.

Chairman's Message

I admit to feeling incomplete at the moment, as though missing a toe or a finger. This is because my aircraft is away on C of A, and has been for many weeks. Amongst other things, both props have been on six-yearly inspections. I hope that harvest is good to pay for it all!

I recently read an article in an Australian flying magazine about CASA, the aviation regulatory body in Oz. I quote a paragraph from it:

"There appear to be two categories of people working for CASA. Most want to restore the industry's trust and respect by delivering efficient, effective, competent and prompt regulatory services, and to comply with their guidelines in respect of procedural fairness and priorities. Others identify themselves by their actions, which often seem capable of the interpretation that they're driven by contempt for general aviation and its participants, and that in some cases this results in unreasoned and malevolent actions."

We recognise these as familiar sentiments, and as we see the change of aircraft certification from the CAA to the new EASA we can only hope that the news will be positive and good. Some early indications are that we may be moving a little closer to the American system.

The Association has organised some excellent and interesting events this year. Our thanks go to Mike Cuttell and all those who have worked so hard and generously to make them possible. Unfortunately the weather plays its part, and at the Somerset event last week not a single participant arrived by air, and not everyone was able to come instead by road. A shame, because it was a most interesting and enjoyable day.

My thanks to all those who took the time and trouble to complete the questionnaire. Some of the findings are reported in this newsletter.

My hopes and best wishes for a good harvest, good health and good flying.

John Golden

Editor's Note (Or in this case—Soapbox)

I read with interest John's comment above, that his aeroplane has been away for many weeks. I hear this story so many times from members, saying that maintenance units are taking weeks and weeks to complete annuals and C of A's.

Why oh why do aircraft engineers think that aeroplanes are there to be serviced? They are there to be flown and if aeroplanes take all this time to be attended to, it only tells me that some engineers and the people they use to do further work are inefficient and disorganised.

I have used two different outfits recently and found both to be just the opposite. A 50 hr check is done while you wait and an annual or C of A only takes 3 or 4 days. Admittedly this is for a simple fixed undercarriage aeroplane, but so are many others that are pushed to the back of a hangar and worked on spasmodically.

Another thing that engineers do is to hide behind possible liability claims and consequently over maintain, running up time and the bill. I'm sure a bit more discretion could be used. Probably best to choose an engineer with a small hangar so he has to finish one aircraft before he starts another.

Some of you will probably have read an article featuring one of our members who has a maintenance unit. He points out that the onus is on the engineer to do a thorough job. Fair enough, but does it have to take weeks to do it? After all, a car that bumps and bangs down the road, breaking and accelerating, with suspension moving all the time and often operating in dirty, salty conditions doesn't have to have an hour's servicing for every hour's motoring like an aircraft. Once an aeroplane is airborne, it has a pretty easy life.

I would welcome comments from any members who have opinions on this. Perhaps views from both sides for the December newsletter?

Paul Stephens

Committee Members

Dick Walgate	President	01472 371203
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Paul Stephens	Secretary	01944 738281
David Corbett	Treasurer	01568 708351
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Committee Deliberations

The FFA Committee met at Nottingham on 1st July 2004 with a very full agenda. Matters discussed were;

- Results of the questionnaire—see page 5.
- Proposed Associate membership status. A proposal will be put to the membership to alter the Articles to form a new class of membership for those that don't fully qualify for full membership status. It will be strictly controlled.
- The updated website—See the notes below.
- The AGM—details on page 6.
- Events for 2005. Mike Cuttell is bringing a programme together for 2005 which will probably include a Velcourt visit, an Amazone visit in Germany which might be extended to a full Study Tour in Germany. Other suggestions are a visit to Brize Norton, a visit to some rural businesses in Essex, a windfarm, and a possible visit to the AAIB at Farnborough. Anybody with contacts that could help at any of these locations, please contact Mike Cuttell, 01242 236770.
- Following the Irish tour this year, one member wrote in expressing his concerns of safety on study tours. His letter was circulated round the Committee prior to the meeting and was taken very seriously. Organisers of any meeting or tour have to consider their responsibilities and conduct the flying part in particular with all care. However, as is now stressed in the information given prior to a tour, the ultimate flying decisions must be the responsibility of the individual pilot who must stay within the ANO. This member's main concern was that 'group pressure' can lead pilots into situations beyond their means. All pilots have different levels where they feel happy; even VFR is allowed down to levels where most pilots would not want to fly. The organisers will always provide weather forecasts to pilots on the morning of a flight but cannot be held responsible if the actual weather is not as given. In future if weather is less than perfect but legally and sensibly flyable and if the flying is to go ahead, they will stress that there is no pressure on anyone to partake if they aren't comfortable. There is never any shame in deciding not to fly or turning back. In fact these pilots are always admired for staying in their comfort zone, being a good pilot and making a sensible decision.
- Other matters on the agenda were the usual Treasurer's report and matters that will be published when fully approved.

Websites & Downloads

One of the points arising from the FFA Questionnaire was that members want to see an FFA website, but were disappointed with it's quality.

This is largely due to it originally just being a trial and secondly not being kept up to date, so not worth revisiting. Paul Stephens will now attempt to keep information flowing onto the website and hopefully make it more interesting. What is needed is input from members - information of interest to other members, advertisements, notice of flying events in your area etc.

You will also find on the site, a flight plan form that can filled in on screen then printed out and the blank GAR form for your foreign flights.

Please email information for publication to chix@farmline.com In the meantime, try the new look site with new address at www.ffa.org.uk

For a general 15 day forecast which you can tailor to any destination in the world, including one not many miles from your own address, try AccuWeather.com It's especially useful for planning a European trip or predicting harvest weather.

To follow the progress of WO1 Barry Jones on his round the world gyrocopter flight, look up www.globaleagle.com

If you want a very good pictorial view of the NOTAMs, try www.notamcheck.com Follow the direction to download a free trial version for 30 days where you can not only put in a route, but it will depict all the relevant notams on a map of the UK and decode the TAFs and METARs from the met office at the same time. If you decide to buy, it will only cost £20 for the program and you will have no excuse for not checking the notams at the same time as you get the weather.

A similar program for your French flights is http://olivia.aviation-civile.gouv.fr/index.php?lang=en&ref=http://www.sia.aviation-civile.gouv.fr/html/vols-uk.htm This will take you straight to the English version.

If you don't fancy typing in any of these websites, go to the FFA site, then to Links, then click on the relative address.

Miscanthus

Following on from last year's Flying Farmers visit to Shobdon, David and Richard Corbett are pleased to report that the miscanthus crops are going from strength to strength. After the decidedly difficult lifting and planting weather conditions this spring, another successful establishment of miscanthus has been achieved. The crops that you saw last year have grown apace as can be seen from the 'then' and 'now' photos below.

The interest in growing Energy Crops continues to grow apace. John Amos & Company working in conjunction with Lugg Valley Growers are currently involved with several projects that include;

- On farm heat and power generators that enable the production of electricity to be sold to the national grid for a premium price, whilst the by-product is heat - for livestock, domestic or small scale commercial heating;
- Larger scale power schemes (enough electricity to supply a small town or large factory) which also produce enough heat for large industrial applications;
- Medium scale "heat only" plants suitable for local authority schools / hospitals etc.

For more information please contact John Amos on 01568 610007, or the Corbett's on 01568 708351.





Safetycom

Members will be aware that the CAA have consulted industry about the possible introduction of a "Shared frequency for use at UK aerodromes without an allocated frequency". FFA have been active in the consultation process for "Safetycom" as this frequency is to be called; it will be a great help, when available, for FFA fly-ins at members' strips, etc. All the legal paperwork is now in place but, as at 14 July, NATS were having to look for a new frequency suitable for overall UK use - the expected frequency having proved unsuitable. The CAA hope that this matter will be finalised within 2 months.

Insurance

Regulation (EC) no 785/2004 was published on 29 April 2004, and therefore the EC's ruling on "insurance requirements for air carriers and aircraft operators" will come into effect on 30 April 2005. All aircraft, including most of the GA fleet, will be effected by the new regulation, if they are flying within, into or out of the territory of member states. The exceptions to the regulation are not likely to include any of the categories flown by FFA members. The rates that will affect FFA members are quoted in SDR (where 1 SDR is approximately equal to £0.85) and are:

for third party insurance;

- < 500 kg MTOM 0.75m SDR
- < 1000 kg MTOM 1.5m SDR
- < 2700 kg MTOM 3.0m SDR

and for passengers in a/c;

- < 2700 kg, 100,000 SDR per px.

Any member wishing to have a copy of the actual regulation should either get it from the EC website, or ask David Corbett, your GACC representative. Aircraft owners/operators will be required by the DTI (the responsible government department) to prove on an annual basis that this cover is in place. The DTI may delegate this to CAA, or even to GA trade organisations (but which GA organisations have complete coverage of their GA fleets, other than BGA, BMAA and PFA?).

Mode S Transponders

Debate about this matter is very much ongoing, and it is proposed to put a more definitive article into the December FFA newsletter; in the meanwhile, members should not invest in new transponder equipment unless and until they are certain how the relevant regulations will affect them when they are published. To date, second stage CAA consultation has taken place, and a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) has been completed. A second RIA will be carried out in May 2005. Of more practical use to us, the CAA (Directorate of Airspace Policy) are currently drafting a revised AIC on this subject, and it is that document that will provide useful - but not necessarily definitive - information for UK GA. Research into a lightweight transponder is still ongoing; and it was pointed out to GACC that an ICAO document states that it is up to individual States to determine which types of airspace will require carriage of Mode S. The Chairman of GASCo - who is also a member of PPL/IR - has written a very comprehensive paper as GASCo' reply to the consultation on the subject of carriage of Mode S. David Corbett has a copy of this paper.

EASA Airworthiness certification

The process of transferring airworthiness certification of aircraft from CAA management to that of EASA is now under way. A gradual process of change will be completed by September 2008, by which time all aircraft with C's of A will have an EASA non-expiring Certificate of Airworthiness, supported by an Annual Airworthiness Review Certificate. EASA are already the certification authority, and current certificates issued by member States are deemed to be EASA certificates. Any certificates issued on or after 28 September 2004 will be EASA certificates, either for 24 or 36 months, depending on the cycle of change over timings. Both the Air Navigation Order (2000) and LAMS are currently being amended to address the changes needed for EASA certification. The Permit to Fly system will continue - part of the wording states "...when it is shown that the aircraft is capable of performing a basic flight." Lots of change in the system (and certainly extra expense) for us all - so "Watch this (and other) space...!"

Europe Airsports

FFA has recently rejoined the Royal Aero Club as an Associate Member, in order that we can keep abreast of the work of the UK representatives on Europe Airsports, which is the body with responsibility for all GA input into EASA. Members who are interested can visit the Europe Airsports website; your committee will be receiving copies of the relevant minutes of that organisation. Your committee may well ask for members with specialist knowledge relevant to EASA matters to come forward to help to keep members up-to-date with ongoing matters of change.

And Finally!

It was drawn to our attention at the GACC meeting on 14 July by Martin Robinson of AOPA (UK) that he had that day been notified by his opposite number at AOPA (Germany) that ICAO are apparently going to require pilots to be certified competent in the language of any foreign state into or over which they intend to fly with effect from 2006. We cannot imagine that this will be practical, but you have been warned!

David Corbett (Our GACC Representative)

For those who are unsure what GACC is and the role of the FFA at GACC.

The General Aviation Consultative Committee is a CAA committee set up and hosted by the General Aviation Division of the Safety Regulation Group of the CAA. GACC was initiated in 1997 and now meets 3 times per year at Gatwick; FFA is one of 23 GA representative organisations that are invited to take part in this forum. There are normally about 15 CAA personnel present from relevant departments, and speakers from outside bodies, such as DTI, Defence Aviation Safety Centre, NATS, FlyOnTrack and other organisations are invited to make presentations at appropriate times. FFA is represented at GACC by David Corbett who reports that there is an accepted feeling amongst GA organisations that GACC is an extremely valuable forum.

The 2004 Questionnaire

Returned forms 213, percentage of current membership (350) = 61%

As we anticipated not all members answered all the questions, only three remained completely anonymous. A few were coy about their age.

♦ **Question 1, About You:** Age fell into the following decades:-

Born 1920's	8
1930's	35
1940's	70
1950's	47
1960's	16
1970's	4

88% of those that filled the age box are 45+.
62% of those that filled the age box are 55+.

For the occupation box we included part-time farmers with full timers, 71% who answered the question are in this category.

Full & Part-Time Farmer/Forester	140
Hobby Farmer	15
Retired	17
Other	26

♦ **Question 5, Do You Own?:**

Aircraft Ownership	128
Aircraft Part Ownership	43

♦ **Question 6, Do You?:**

Strip Ownership & Operation	139

♦ **Questions 7 & 8:**

We are keeping the answers confidential.

♦ **Question 9, What Other Organisations Do You Belong?:**

AOPA	71
PFA	79
Local Club	74
Royal Aero Club	5
Other	40

♦ **Question 10, Importance & Quality FFA Services & Activities:**

On our services, we counted a score of 2 or 3 as important to our members and the quality satisfactory.

	Importance	Quality
Flyouts	146 (69%)	117
Overseas Tours	71 (33%)	61
Annual Dinner	38 (18%)	40
Newsletter	199 (94%)	134
Membership List	185 (87%)	137
Insurance Scheme	72 (33%)	45
Non-Flying Meetings	63 (30%)	49
Website	90 (42%)	46
Representational	134 (63%)	54

♦ **Question 11, Subscription Good Value?:**

The best response was for the subs question, 210 (99%) felt that the subs were good value for money.

♦ **Question 12, Other Members' Strips:**

59 have not visited another member's strip in 3 years.
92 had visited up to 5 times.
34 had visited up to 10 times.
8 had visited up to 20 times.
8 had visited over 20 times.

♦ **Question 13, FFA's Financial Contribution To Representational Bodies:**

170 (80%) felt it was about right.
20 felt it was too little.
3 felt it was too much.

♦ **Question 14, Size Of Membership:**

152 (77%) felt it was about right.
31 felt it was too small.
3 felt it was too large.

It can be assumed from the exercise that the Committee are delivering what the members require, and in most areas they are satisfied with the quality of the service. There were no negative comments but many positive ones.

Based on this survey the newsletter is the most important service to members, followed by the membership list, both with high quality ranking.

Flyouts rank third with very high ranking.

Representational is fourth with a low mark on quality. There is also ambiguity in that although it ranks highly on members importance, they do not vote to add more resources. Only 20 (9%) wish to increase our spending.

This might be explained by a much higher figure than we had expected of membership of other bodies. It does mean that a lot of members are contributing via other organisations for representative benefits.

The website appears to be important but has low ranking on quality.

Overseas tours are important for a minority and received high quality marking - likewise dinners and non-flying outings.

As yet we have not analysed the pilots' details but it was obvious that our members fly considerably more hours per year than the average PPL.

There does not appear to be a desire to expand the current membership, 77% voting to maintain the status quo.

Your committee feel the results are a vote of confidence. We had already taken on board improvements on the website, we hope you have already noticed, and we promise to do better on the representational front.

Our thanks to all those that participated, and particularly the many who added complementary remarks.

Mike Ashmole

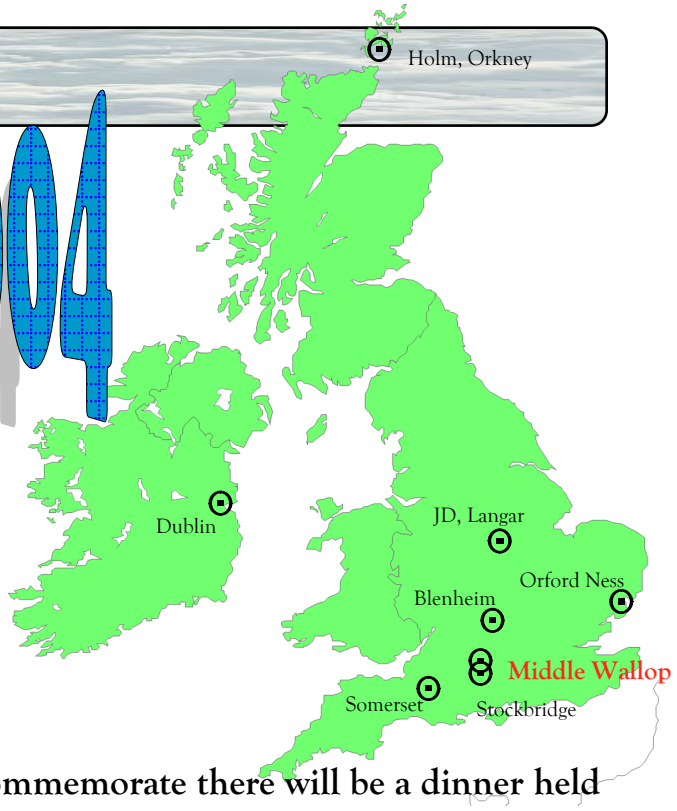
Recommendation

Do you ever wish you could speak to a forecaster but are unwilling to pay the CAA £17?

Try Flying High on 09061 99189. It costs £1.50 / min on your bill. I telephoned them at 09:00 from Plymouth which was in solid fog. He told me it would clear at 17:00. Still in fog at 15:00, I telephoned him again and he insisted that it would clear at 17:00. At 17:15 it did! We then had a beautiful flight back to Cheltenham.

Mike Cuttell

Programme 2004



October 7th 2004	30th Anniversary Dinner
October 8th 2004	AGM, Middle Wallop

This year is the 30th Anniversary of the FFA. To commemorate there will be a dinner held on the evening of Thursday 7th October in the vicinity of Thruxton / Middle Wallop.

Details are yet to arranged, but we will be holding this anniversary dinner with a speaker on the night prior to the AGM in the Thruxton / Middle Wallop area. Details will be sent to those applying. Transport and accommodation can be arranged. Please indicate on the reply slip if you wish to attend the dinner and / or if you will be needing accommodation prior to the AGM.

The 2004 AGM will be held at Middle Wallop on Friday 8th October, by kind permission of Brigadier Richard Folkes OBE, ADC, Director Army Aviation.

The detail of the programme has not yet been finalised, but the day will include, in no particular order:

- ◊ The AGM
- ◊ An update on Army Aviation matters by DAA himself
- ◊ Static viewing of the Apache Longbow helicopter, now in squadron service with AAC
- ◊ A visit to the civilian run Apache Helicopter Training facility (this may be limited in numbers)
- ◊ Lunch in the Museum of Army Flying
- ◊ And (optimistically!) time to tour the Museum.

It is likely that those members flying in will land at Thruxton and transfer to Middle Wallop by bus, in order to keep disruption to the AAC flying programme to a minimum. Further details of this visit will only be sent to those members who return the tear-off slip to the organiser (David Corbett) by Monday 9th August.

Mike Cuttell needs more venues for the events diary. If you have something worth seeing and a farm strip of at least 600 metres that the FFA could use for one event, we would consider paying your annual liability premium up to £150.
Ring Mike on 01242 236770

Events such as these set above are arranged by FFA members on a voluntary basis. It is accepted by those who participate that nothing undertaken by the FFA collectively or members individually shall be construed as establishing a duty of care nor in any way removing or modifying the duties, responsibilities or obligations of pilots or land owners in relation to any event and attendance thereat. All information provided in these programmes is purely advisory and should ALWAYS be verified from official sources.

Welcome to New Members

Since 1st April 2004, the following have joined the FFA

759	Simon Thomas, Naughton, Suffolk
760	Stephen Miles, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk
761	Ken Kelso, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire
762	Guy Holland-Bosworth, Newmarket, Suffolk
393	Andrew Lawson-Tancred, Boroughbridge, N.Yorks (re-joined)

The total membership now stands at 368



John Deere Ltd at Langar, April 21st 2004

Many of us from the south of the country had seen the forecasts for Wednesday mid-day, and decided that driving to Langar was probably the best bet. Four aircraft, one helicopter and many cars with around 40 members made it to Langar by 10am, where after a photo call with aircraft and John Deere tractors as a backdrop, we were introduced to our hosts.

After coffee in the recently opened office and training centre building, the Chief Executive of John Deere U.K. met us in the boardroom. He told us that he had been in America for part of his career with John Deere and had learnt to fly whilst there. He told some of his more interesting experiences whilst training and had, after a spell in Russia, let his licence lapse. He then handed us back to his team who would look after us for the rest of the day.

We were given a presentation which demonstrated what a vast company John Deere has become. It produces high tech machinery for all areas of agriculture, construction, forestry and groundscare, together with John Deere Credit. They employ 43,000 people, and have a turnover of 13.4 billion dollars – not bad for a village blacksmith making ploughs in the late 1800's.

With some of these statistics fresh in our minds, we were split into small groups and given a guided tour of the premises at Langar. The training and workshop facilities are state of the art and it is here that JD staff, dealers and customers are trained each year over 5000 training days covering 40 different courses. Also at Langar are the U.K. Spares Centre, U.K. Head Office and the demonstration teams for agriculture and groundscare, which were all very impressive.

We had lunch in the canteen, courtesy of JD and were then taken out onto the airfield where a vast range of tractors and loaders were lined up for us to try. Tractors from 80 to 500 horse power were heading off in all different directions. The GPS tracking system installed on one of these machines was quite an eye-opener for many of us. All in-work steering and bout matching being automatic and accurate to fractions of an inch and only needing an input from the driver on the headland. With a £10,000 price tag I don't think all tractors will be fitted just yet!

With rain now falling, some of those that flew in decided time had come to make a quick move, whilst the rest returned to the Boardroom for tea, a presentation of John Deere mugs and a vote of thanks from Mike Cuttell to John Deere and to Bob Beard for organizing a very interesting day.

The heavy rain moved in so fast that Bob Beard and Richard Howard, the two based nearest to Langar (in fact Bob's strip is only 15 miles away), had to leave their aeroplanes and recover them the next day.

Thanks again to Bob and his helpers for a very interesting visit and thanks to JD for the free day.

William Procter





Leckford Estate, Hampshire

Now, I often think that some of the best Flying Farmers day trips combine flying, farming and fun: and the visit on 26th May to Leckford Estate in the famous Test Valley, with it's well known trout fishing, did just that for some of the more daring (some would say foolhardy) of our members. But more of the fun later.

The flying destination was to be Thruxton airfield. Perhaps, on first sight of the ½ mil chart, it may seem to be one of the more difficult destinations; being located within the combined MATZ of Boscome Down and Middle Wallop. These are both very active areas with army helicopter training taking place at Middle Wallop, and all sorts of fast stuff whizzing around at Boscombe, which is of course home to the "Empire Test Pilots School" as well as part co-ordinators for the bombing runs in and around the Salisbury Plain Danger areas. With all that going on it's a wonder that anyone plucked up the courage to get there at all. But those of us who fly here know that most of the time ATC are really pussycats and most helpful.

Anyhow, get there most of us did, resulting in a fine turn-out of aircraft with types varying widely from a vintage Stearman to twins. The weather had been kind to us, at least at the destination, and for the most part, the flying had been pleasant.

John Milne had worked very hard organising the day and it seemed had left no stone unturned to ensure things went very smoothly. Arrivals had been from about 10.30 and morning coffee had been organised in the Jackaroo restaurant on the airfield for anyone wishing to partake. Arrivals continued until just before lunch which allowed those who had arrived early to have a relaxing chinwag or to partake of the fun part of the visit. But more of that later!

As if the coffee and biscuits weren't enough, a huge amount of food turned up in the form of a homemade lasagne lunch with trimmings, followed by strawberries. "Let's just nod off and fly back later" some were heard to say after lunch: but no, this was to be a visit, and so two coaches turned up on time for the 25 minute drive to the Leckford Estate.

Now Leckford Estate is about 13,500 hectares on chalk, with the river Test running through the middle, and is situated near to the township of Stockbridge, not far from Andover, Hants.. It is now owned (since August 2001) by Waitrose Limited. Waitrose is, of course, part of the John Lewis partnership, but the Estate itself has been part of the organisation longer than Waitrose itself. It was bought by John Lewis, the founder, in 1928 as his private estate, and became a limited company in 1929.



Carol Harrison

For those who might not have heard of John Lewis, the organisation now owns 26 department stores (Debbenhams) and, until recently, 144 supermarkets with 59,00 employees. It currently has a turnover of just over £5Bn. It has no ordinary shareholders and profits are divided up amongst members. It has recently purchased furthers stores from Safeway (23) and Morrison's (1).

So what goes on at the estate? The main activity is to provide home produce for it's outlets via it's farming activities but it has always provided leisure facilities for John Lewis members and partners. These include Tennis, swimming pools, cricket, fishing, golf and bowling, plus residential facilities in the form of 2 country house hotels and a holiday camp for ordinary staff. The fishing is some of the best around, in the south with 16 beats over 11 miles of the river Test. Two thirds of this is let to outside fishermen and it is stocked with Estate reared brown and rainbow trout.

As our coached took us around the Estate we were told a little about the farming activities. These include:

ARABLE

445 hectares	winter wheat
	winter oats
	spring barley
70 hectares	oil seed rape
60 acres	white poppies on set aside
124 hectares	herbage seed
30 hectares	crambe on set aside

GRASSLAND AND FORAGE

240 hectares including grazing for dairy cows and forage maize.

FRUIT

93 hectares fruit including pears and Cox's apples. These are excellent quality although on chalk, with 85% for Waitrose and the rest for the farm shop.

DAIRY CATTLE

A herd of 200 Holstein x Friesians is kept at Leckford with another herd of 140 Friesians down the road at Longstock. It is expected that there will be continued expansion of the herd with perhaps another 200 H x F. But an ongoing problem with planning permission has put a pause into the development.

A milk processing dairy is also established to add value for retail and this facility is also used to process milk supplied to Waitrose by it's main supplier.

POULTRY

Leckford estate also keeps about 15,000 free range broilers in 13 houses of 1,250 birds with one house being rested in rotation each week. The birds arrive as day old chicks and are reared on a maize diet for 12 weeks. A staff of 2 run this enterprise. The birds weigh on average 3 kg on the shelf and sell for around £14 - £15 each.

As we drove round we were able to see the various parts of the estate and it was quite interesting to see, that, although the poultry could roam outside their houses, for the most part the birds chose not to venture outside too much!!



Part of the group at the Water Gardens reflecting on what they had seen

It was impressive to learn that the estate takes its countryside stewardship seriously and has entered into a 10 year agreement covering tree and hedge planting, chalkland, pasture management (56 hectares), grassland regeneration (31 hectares), stone curlew plots (6 hectares) and 6m. arable margins amounting to some 31.5 km.

Our coaches took us on to their mushroom farm for a guided tour around this high tech "production line" which is established in what appeared to be a large factory unit. The mushrooms are grown from a mycelium culture, which is sown into a high nutrient compost in large trays which are stored in a racking system. The compost is covered with peat and chalk and, in a carefully controlled environment of temperature and humidity, the mould spreads very quickly throughout the compost. At the right time the ambient conditions are changed slightly and suddenly it seems thousands of mushrooms appear. These are picked by hand and put into trays. The mushrooms are picked in 3 flushes before the compost is discarded and it is interesting to note that, whether you buy button or flats, they are still just the same high yield variety – just older. (Also spent mushroom compost as you might buy for the garden has virtually no nitrogen left!)

In all, this huge facility produces some 20 tones of mushrooms per week!!

After the farm visit we were driven to their ornamental water gardens. This area of large ponds and parkland covers 60.7 hectares and is made open to the public twice a month from April to September, with the entry proceeds going towards local charities.

The Water Gardens gave us a wonderful opportunity to relax among the plants – too many to name (even if I did know what they were called), but including Water Lilies, Gunnera, Hostas, and many trees. We were also impressed by the large if somewhat lethargic Koi Carp in the ponds.

The visit concluded with yet more food: delicious afternoon tea and cake, efficiently supervised by the Milnes in the plant nursery and garden centre, where we also had an opportunity to look round and buy.

I think it was around 5pm when we were finally back at Thruxton and preparing for departure.

And the fun bit? Oh yes I nearly forgot. At Thruxton they have a superb outdoor Kart track. This is quite competitive and great fun, and a number of our more intrepid members had the opportunity to do their Michael Schumacher bit around the track before lunch. But I've since heard that more than a few of them were nursing aching muscles from the experience for days afterwards and maybe one was even put off his lunch. Apparently it was very hard work and they were not as fit as they might have been!

Our thanks to John Milne and his wife, Boo for a varied interesting and memorable day.

Ray Friedlander

Ireland & The Orkneys 2004

The weather outlook for the week of this year's study tour looked as though it may have been on our side, and indeed it was – in parts!

46 people in 22 aircraft were the original participants booked for the tour, but about three weeks before the start, four people in one aircraft had to cancel for business reasons and another two for health reasons. On the evening before the 'off', one more aircraft was not back from a Notice 75, and then on the day of the start another could not get through the clag sitting over Leeds, returned to base to try again the next day, and, in almost the same place in the Leeds area as the day before, had a zero oil pressure indication, requiring a careful return to base again. This indication fortunately turned out to be nothing more than a bad earth on the sender unit, but at the time caused understandable stress to the pilot until he was safely back on the ground. As it was now a bank holiday weekend, no engineer was available until the Tuesday, and by the time the problem had been identified and a part ordered, it was no longer viable to join the tour.

So the final list was made up of 37 participants in 18 aircraft, who all arrived in good time at Weston airfield to be taken to the hotel Harcourt in the centre of Dublin to meet up officially with a welcome dinner at the hotel. Much chatting disguised the consternation and fury of the organisers when the wine failed to turn up until half way through the main course, due to the hotel manager failing to tell the catering staff to order it!!

Sunday dawned as a good flyable day, but where was the coach that was ordered for 8.30 for the ½ hour drive to the airport? This trip was already beginning to be an organiser's nightmare and so a call to the local taxi company to order 6 taxis to get everybody to the airport seemed in order – and as soon as the first one arrived – so did the coach! Dublin has for the past two years or so been installing a tram system within the city roads, and the traffic chaos has to be experienced to be believed. In solid traffic, the coach took 15 minutes to get to the bottom of the first street! With this in mind for the next two days, the coach was ordered ¼ hour earlier to compensate - and thereafter things got better.

Weston had all the aircraft airborne in very quick order, allocating a squawk to each one for Dublin to monitor, and the flight to Eglinton airport in Londonderry was most efficiently handled by Dublin ATC, then Belfast and finally Derry, who had opened the airport at 10am to accommodate us, when they usually open at 12.30 on a Sunday.



"It was that big, said the one armed fisherman!"
Martin, the tour organiser

First stop was to Bushmills, the world famous whiskey distillery, where after a quick lunch in the café, a most efficient and informative tour of the whole business was given, followed by the traditional tasting session. Everyone had the option of one product to taste, but 4 volunteers were selected to have a tasting of all the products – trying to guess which was what!

Back into the coach for the next stop which was the Giants Causeway. Said to be "Worth seeing, but not worth going to see", it was in fact a most fascinating geological phenomenon – a large expanse of interlocking hexagonal blocks of stone, made all the more interesting in that everyone was free to walk all over them. An audio/visual presentation gave an excellent explanation of how they were formed, with an alternative mythical option for those that preferred make-believe!!

Back on the coach for a quick 5 minute drive to the Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge, a bridge spanning around 50 metres to the adjacent island over a considerable drop into the water. About half the party decided that they couldn't face that challenge, so remained on the mainland until joined by the braver half for the journey back to the airport for the return flight to Weston. A latish return with a scheduled dinner at the Leixlip hotel meant no return to the city for a wash and brush up, but straight off for dinner, where we had an excellent meal to round off the first day.

Day two was to visit our most westerly member. Gerry Humphries, near Limmerick. A phone call to him at 7:30 gave a surprisingly optimistic forecast, and armed with this information, 15 aircraft departed Weston into what turned out to be


The Causeway




The Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge



Gerry's hangar at Brittas House

a progressively lowering cloud base, albeit with reasonable viz: beneath. Two aircraft decided it wasn't for them and returned to Weston while the remainder continued to Brittas House where we arrived in fairly substantial rain. Gerry and his wife Vicky had laid on a great reception for us, turning their hangar into a large dining room with an enormous 'welcome' banner spread along the back.

Introductions over, we embussed for a short journey to a neighbour, Owen O'Neill, who runs one of the largest and most successful Bovine Genetic businesses in the country. Trained as a vet, Owen tried long and hard to enter the genetics field, providing a private AI service, but he was blocked at every turn by the Irish government who wanted to retain the monopoly. Despite repeated attempts to overthrow this decision through the courts, it was rejected every time. With dwindling resources and the full support of his whole family, he put everything on the line, risking complete bankruptcy, and took it to the European court – where he won. He now has a network of over a hundred technicians providing a top class genetics service to Beef & Dairy farmers.

With the visit over, and the rain continuous, we returned to Brittas House for a magnificent lunch of enormous choice laid on with the help of Geraldine, a family friend, and their lovely young children. The noise became ever greater in competition with the rain, and it was with great reluctance that we got back on the bus to go another short distance to Glenstal Abbey – a Benedictine Monastery with a boarding school, where Vicky taught until last year.



Roo Wynne tying down

The Monastery is set in beautiful grounds, and we were taken around the gardens by a most enthusiastic Father Brian who single handedly is transforming these terraced gardens into sections representing Biblical periods – trying hard to retain authentic plants of the period. The only help he has in this mammoth task, is from the occasional 'man of the road' who comes to the Abbey looking for a job!

After some quick refreshment in the school dining room (memories, memories!!) we were extremely privileged to be taken to a darkened vault displaying a priceless collection of Russian icons – something that few outsiders have been allowed to see.

We now returned to Brittas House, and as it was **still** raining, all the pilots crowded into Gerry's office to pore over all the available forecasts for our flight home. The suggestion was that it was probably OK if we left now, but a deterioration was likely as the evening progressed. Gerry made it quite clear that beds were available for anyone that didn't like the look of it. All aircraft set off into the gloom, but three decided that discretion was best and returned, while the remainder continued back to Weston to find much improved conditions in the last 15 miles. One aircraft put down for a precautionary landing at a small airfield on the way to await better weather, and then set out to continue about an hour later. As he was at low level and we at Weston were unable to locate him, the airfield manager in the tower suddenly picked up the phone and called a mate of his in Dublin ATC and asked him to give him an airliner for a relay to update our latecomer with the latest airfield info. This worked a treat and was an example of the extraordinary service we got from Weston while we were there. Another example was that one of the aircraft that returned to Weston in the morning, suffered a Gyro failure on his way back. Before the remainder of us had returned in the evening, the manager had organised a replacement Gyro to be removed from one of the school aircraft and refitted into the problem aircraft with the words 'don't worry about it; just send it back to us when your own engineer has sorted you out another one'

A free evening for everyone helped to calm the nerves before

Ireland / Orkneys contd...



A good night out at Taylor's

the Tuesday visit to Galway.

Tuesday was a much better day weather wise, and those that were participating arrived at Galway where we met up with the three aircraft that had spent the night at Brittas House (and had a bit of a ball out with Gerry in the evening, by all accounts!)

A longish coach journey over less than level roads took us along the most beautiful Connemara coastline until we arrived at the Arramara Teo seaweed factory. This factory is a very small operation that processes seaweed into fertiliser of varying grades. Much of the marketing is done to the organic farming trade and garden centres. It is one of only two operations remaining in Europe – the other being in Sweden.

The seaweed is harvested entirely by hand by a network of 600 people mostly working by themselves in various locations. Working only at low tide, it is cut and gathered into 1 tonne bundles which are tethered in position until the high tide when the whole bundle floats and is then towed to shore by a little boat where it is beached and awaits collection by factory lorries. Once each area is cut, it is four years before it grows enough to be allowed to be harvested again.

Having been taken to the factory it is forklifted into elevators that take it into rotating drums that wash it before it tumbles through a drying process, and 80 tonnes of seaweed are required for a day's production. It is then ground up into the various grades before being bagged for transport and sale.

An excellent sandwich lunch at a local hotel preceded another rapid bus drive back to Galway by an alternative route to ensure that we all departed the airfield by 5pm as it inexplicably closes between 5pm and 6pm.

Returning to our hotel rooms, we had just enough time for a quick wash & brush up before an evening out for a typical Irish evening at The Taylor's Rock Bar. This was a wonderfully enjoyable evening that started with an in-house dinner, and, while we were still eating and drinking, The Merry Ploughboys began their evening of Irish folksongs which involved much hilarity and audience participation. At the halfway stage, an excellent group of boys and girls gave a superb and very energetic display of Irish dancing. This was a great finale to the Irish part of the tour as we were now about to depart for the Orkneys.

Probably more than any other day of the tour, it was important that Wednesday was a good flying day for our transit North – and so it turned out to be. In fact it was a magical flight with unbroken sunshine and unlimited visibility.

Dropping into Oban for a bite to eat and refuelling with discounted fuel broke the journey. The arrival wasn't made totally straightforward for everybody, as Paul Keegan, the airfield owner had cunningly laid on a spot landing competition, followed by a spot parking competition for all – neither of which were anywhere near as straightforward as it first appeared. He kindly presented the winner of the combined results with a bottle of 12-year old malt whiskey. The final part of the journey was, for most, by way of The Great Glen (Loch Ness), and caused much consternation to Lossiemouth's tornados who felt that it was their exclusive playground, and were most surprised to find lots of puddle-jumpers working their way up the loch at varying levels when they wanted to play!!

All arrivals were on time at Lamb Holm airstrip – owned by our most northerly member, Tommy Sinclair, and the final reporting point before joining the circuit for Kirkwall. The spring and summer has been a disaster weather-wise in the Orkneys, and there was doubt as to whether the strip would be dry enough for us, or whether we would have to use Kirkwall main airport. In the event the week before our visit, there was enough dry weather to enable it to be cut a couple of times and to be declared fit to use. The party had to be split into two hotels for our stay as accommodation is at a premium, and this was decided by drawing names out of a hat to ensure the organisers showed no favouritism! Dinner was for all in one of the hotels – The Albert, and an enjoyable evening was had.

Wednesday dawned grey, miserable and, of course, raining! For the day's programme that was not too much of a drama as no flying was scheduled, and so we all boarded a bus for a day in the Orkneys. The trip started with a stop at Corrigall Farm Museum – a fascinating reminder of how farming life was lived in the Orkneys in past centuries. Although it was undoubtedly an incredibly tough life with few creature comforts, it served to remind us of the luxury we now live in, and what an appalling 'throw-away' society we have become. In those early days nothing was wasted – indeed it couldn't afford be if survival was to be assured.

Garston Farm was the next stop where Stewart and Wilma



Making a straw rope

Wood had a cattle herd and had got together with other producers to fill a niche market in dairy related Orkney products. We wondered whether the costly production methods would ensure survival in the long term, but the Woods were full of confidence.

Our guide took us to a soup and sandwich lunch before arriving at 'The Rings'. This is a mini-Stonehenge and consists of 60 large stone slabs set vertically in a perfect circle of about 100 metres diameter. Like Stonehenge, no one knows how on earth the slabs were erected, how they got them to the site from so far afield, why that site, and what the purpose was.



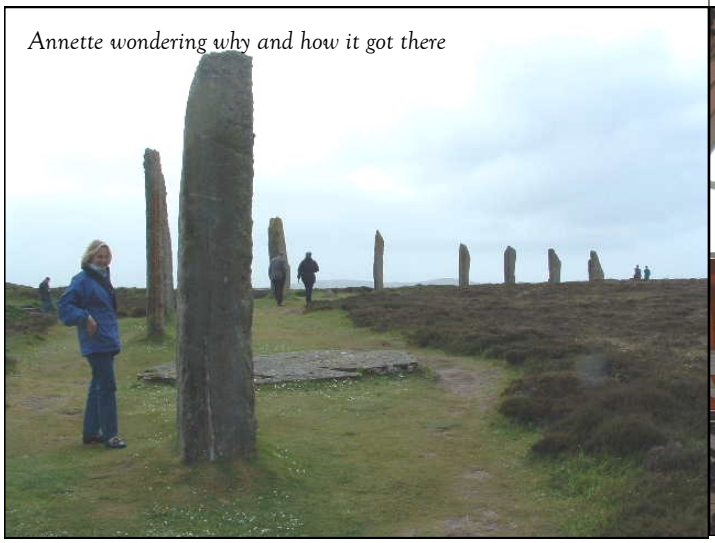
Lamb Holm's cross runways in the foreground

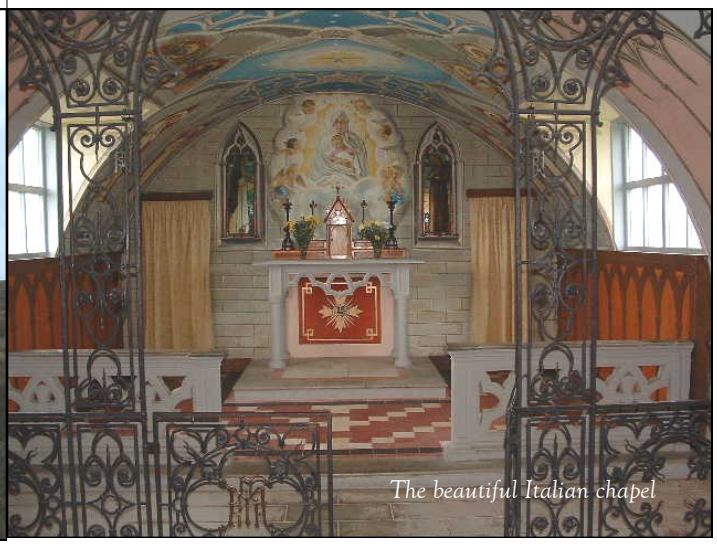
From there we went to Skara Brae – a Neolithic village thought to be between 3000 – 4000 years old that had lain undiscovered at the edge of the sea until a violent storm removed the sand which had been covering it in 1850. Painstaking clearance of all the sand and detritus has returned it to exactly how it was all those years ago and gives a fascinating insight of how village family life was structured so long ago. From there a short walk to Skaill House, an important 17th century mansion house with many items on display – the most notable of which was Captain Cook's dinner service from his ship the 'Resolution'.

After this busy day discovering much of the history of The Orkneys, a free night for everybody was in order before starting another day of more discovery.

For the last two days on Orkney, participants were split into two groups because the events could not take large numbers. The first group were taken to a quay on the shore of Scapa Flow to embark on a boat trip that was to anchor over a German warship that was one of 74 scuttled by the Germans after they had surrendered to us at the end of the 1st World War, and which had been taken for supposed safe-keeping in to the waters of Scapa Flow. Over the years after the scuttling, the great majority of the warships were salvaged for scrap, but 8 remain to this day as being uneconomic to salvage. It was over one of these, the German light cruiser Dresden, that a £40,000 submersible camera was lowered and pictures of all sections of the remains of the ship were transmitted with astonishing clarity to TV screens for us all to watch in awe. Our boat then moved on to the visitor centre to see the museum artefacts and read of the story of Scapa Flow. Returning to Kirkwall, the afternoon was supposed to be free for those that wanted to fly around the island or do their own thing. Unfortunately the weather was again against us and was too poor for flying on both days.

The second group was taken to visit the small Italian Chapel on the island of Land Holm (where we had all landed). This Chapel is an extraordinary building built by Italian prisoners of war from the North Africa campaign whilst they were in captivity. The building began as two Nissen huts placed end to end, and were to be used as an education building for the prisoners. One of the prisoners was a sculptor and artist, and he was instrumental in turning the building into a most remarkable symbol of peace and reconciliation, complete with altar, stained


Annette wondering why and how it got there


The beautiful Italian chapel

Ireland / Orkneys contd...



A breeding female full of roe



Bill and Jim, two happy customers

glass windows, beautifully painted ceiling and a mural behind the altar of the Madonna and Child. Outside an impressive façade with a belfry was built to disguise the Nissen hut. The whole is overseen externally by a statue of St George slaying the dragon. Created entirely out of scrap material sourced from their labours as prisoners of war, the result is too beautiful to begin to do justice to with this brief description. For anyone visiting the Orkneys it is a must to see.

We then went around the other side of the airfield to visit the Lobster hatchery. Set into the remains of the quarry that was used to create the Churchill barriers for the 2nd World War protection of Scapa Flow, this hatchery gives a great service to the Lobster industry. Pregnant female lobsters that are caught are donated to the hatchery, the eggs hatched and the babies grown on for about 6 weeks when they are given back to the fishermen to take back out to the lobster grounds. This may seem pointless until one realises that in the wild it is reckoned that maybe only one hatched egg will survive to maturity out of around 10,000 per female, whereas probably 50% or more will survive by being grown on in the hatchery. This is because at 6 weeks old they become bottom feeders and are relatively safe from scavengers, but when they are born in the wild they drift about on the surface like plankton and get scooped up wholesale by anything that passes by.

This group was then due to fly to Westray for lunch, but due to marginal weather, only two took off immediately, followed by another four about an hour later. A massive plate of fruits de mer was enjoyed by these intrepid few before returning in various directions for Lamb Holm. Three aircraft tried the 'Westray-Papa Westray challenge' to see how quickly they could undertake the shortest commercial flight in the world – but sadly none of them could get anywhere near the record set by Loganair of around 55 seconds! Two of these aircraft then went on to land at all the island airfields in the Orkney group before returning to base for the end of the tour activities.

The finale to the tour was the farewell dinner in the Kirkwall Hotel with entertainment by talented young local musicians. At this dinner many thanks were said, particularly to Tommy Sinclair who did so much for the arrangements at the Orkney end, and a presentation was made to the organisers, with a gift of the most beautiful book 'The Orcadian Book of the Twentieth Century', and a signed limited edition of a painting of the Italian Chapel. Both these gifts are treasured memories of a very enjoyable tour. Annette and I thank everyone most sincerely.

The weather played ball for everybody's journey home, four aircraft dropping in to Strathallen to be greeted by another member, Boyd Munro, for a pie and a cup of tea on the way.

Martin & Annette Gosling



Heading towards Papa Westray



The remote controlled camera

A typical Flying Farmers weather day with the usual amount of pre-flight will we/won't we make it. However, remembering the words of President Dick and his motto "You've got to give it a go whatever", the decision was made. Shortly afterwards Cessna G-ABHD lifted into a grey wintry sky and was pointed in a vague south-easterly direction towards Bentwaters, hoping for the forecast weather improvement.

Flying over the Fens with a groundspeed of a military jet we took note of the windspeed and hoped that it would drop for the journey home. Fifteen minutes from arrival we began to hear the other aircraft calling Bentwaters, but one in particular began to cause concern as whenever we reported our position he also reported that position. All aviators know the feeling that begins to affect a particular sphincter muscle when two aircraft are in the same area and neither has the other visual.

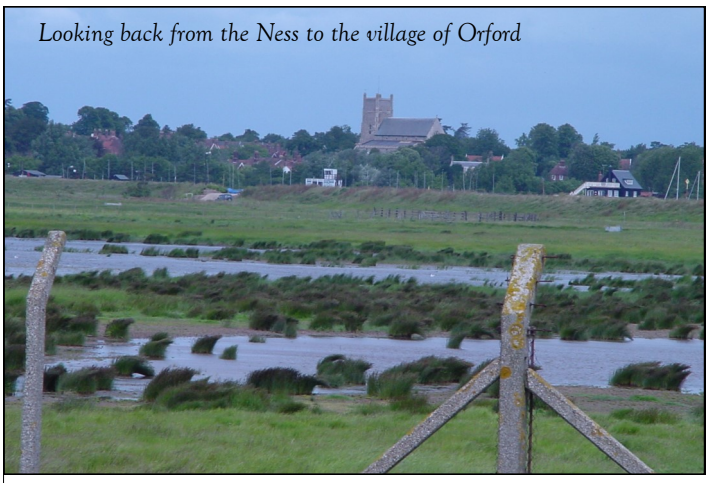
Nearer and nearer the airfield we came until both aircraft were apparently downwind in the same place, when the other aircraft called he would orbit until we had landed. At a later stage in the day we enquired as to whether he had seen us? He replied, "Not really because I was at another aerodrome by mistake!" We have obviously forgotten the chaps name but we do know there was a Robin strapped to his bottom!

On taxiing in we realized the high winds were still with us, as at slow taxi the ASI read 65 knots. Several people elected to tie their aircraft down.

To meet us was a splendid old 60`s coach driven by Tony Buckland of the Buckland Omnibus Company Ltd. The 1966 Bristol 39 seater started life as an Express coach operated by United Counties between Peterborough and Cheltenham. Powered by a Gardner 8.4 litre 6 cylinder diesel delivering 102 bhp, it gave a very lively performance delivering us to Orford Quay in rapid time.

We were then ferried over to Orford Ness by a WW2 landing craft which was only allowed to carry 12 passengers because of insurance limitations – no doubt it carried far more people in June1944!

Waiting to greet us aboard an open sided trailer was Paddy Heazell, a retired teacher, now a volunteer with the National Trust, who was to be our guide for the day. Struggling to make himself heard above the howling wind, he briefed us with the past history of the Ness, which started life as a military aerodrome during WW1. Between the wars it was used for all types of military research and trials, culminating with the construction of supposedly indestructible bunkers for testing the stability of H Bomb detonator triggers. Since all of the buildings are still standing it is to assumed that none ever went off.



Looking back from the Ness to the village of Orford

Packed lunches were then eaten wherever people could get out of the wind, rather like being beaters on a shooting day!.

Once more unto the beaches once more, this time heading for the Cobramist building now owned by VT Merlin Communications (purchased for #1) and used as a transmitting station for the BBC World Service.

On route Paddy stopped the trailer to shout more history to us when a voice came from the ranks "Take us out of this wind please". Paddy apologized shouting "Sorry, us Nessians are used to it", Whereupon the voice retorted; "So are we professionals, but we still want to get out of it!"

Very quickly thereafter we were inside the building, the enormity of its size quite outstanding. Built by the Americans during the Cold War, its purpose being to have radar which could see around the earth`s curvature. Apparently it was never very successful, particularly when fleets of Russian trawlers with lots of funny masts moored offshore!

Never having worked as required, the site was closed down as part of decommissioning trade offs between Russia and the USA with the easing of the Cold War. From the many of hundreds of people who crossed on three small ferries daily, the site is now run by three technicians and 2 support staff who work 9am to 5pm. Only a small area in the building is occupied by the transmission equipment but our guides gave us a good impression of what the areas would have contained when operational. We were shown one of the working transmitter valves which was the size of a dustbin and had to be water cooled when operating. The steam generated by this cooling was sufficient to heat the whole building – hence good old steam radio.

Back then to Orford Quay for tea and cake, having thanked our hosts The National Trust for a splendid day (due to maximum numbers attending, they benefited by over £1000)

Returning to the airfield by omnibus we were surprised to find that all of the aircraft were still in place and sadly the wind was still as strong.

There was plenty of time on the way home, into wind, to study agriculture!!

Thanks to Paul Coulten and all concerned with the days' organization.

Richard Blant



About to return to Bentwaters after a wind blown day

Barber's Cheese & Paul Nicholls Stables

Careful and detailed arrangements were made for us all to land at Henstridge on the morning of Wednesday 14th July, where the weather was generally 1500' base and visibility exceeding 10 miles.

At one stage we were anticipating 26 aircraft and 61 members. Unfortunately the weather around the whole country was so bad that not one single aircraft arrived and we ended up with just 26 people, all of whom had driven.

A coach took us to Maryland Farm, Ditcheat near Shepton Mallet which is the manufacturing base for Barber's cheese. The company has been the hub of the village since the 1800's. 2500 acres of the land surrounding the processing plant is also owned and farmed by the Barber family.

We were greeted by Anthony Barber and once we had donned our white caps, washed our hands and dipped our feet we were conducted around the plant.

Barbers produce 10,000 tons of cheese per year (roughly 42 tons per day) and about 600 tons of butter, with whey and pure water the resulting by-products. Much of the whey is consumed by their own herd of 12,000 pigs and the water is used through an irrigation system on the grass leys. It is estimated that it saves them the equivalent of half a bag of fertilizer per acre.



When I report that the incoming milk, having been checked for quality has to be heated to 72.5 deg C. for just 19 seconds before being cooled to 32 deg. C. you will realize that there is a lot of science involved in producing the correct product.

They sell very little mild cheese, the best money comes from the mature. 8000 tons of the finished product was in their giant warehouse where it remains for up to 18 months with regular samples taken every three months so as to monitor the quality.

We watched large slabs of cheese being pulled out of store and fed into a machine which cut, weighed, packed and labelled it with Sainsburys bar code and price.

You may be surprised to know that they do not have a contract with Sainsburys, their main customer, and should the temperature of the cheese be as little as 3 deg higher than it should be it is sent straight back to Barbers. It keeps them on their toes.

It was a fascinating tour and we over ran our time to such an extent that only half of our group were able to visit the Barbers shop.

Our coach took us to The Queens Arms, Wraxall where despite arriving after 2pm an excellent lunch was provided.



It was a short journey to Paul Nicholls' racing stables. The weather remained dry and warm as we were introduced to some simply magnificent animals which were paraded and even weighed for our benefit. Paul normally has 100 horses there at a cost to the owners of about £250 per week. All the horses are fed haylage and didn't they look well, and the yard was absolutely pristine.

Over lunch we had met Chris Barber whose responsibility was the management of 4-5 farms owned by the family and encompassing 2500 acres. They grow only grass with some of the leys in excess of 30 years old. The 2400 milking cows supply 20% of their needs for cheese making. None of their own calves are kept so all replacements must be bought in.

We were taken to a massive milking complex and we watched afternoon milking where 60 cows at any one time went full circle on the carousel monitored by just 2 staff. The capital investment and general responsibility was, I suspect, not one that many people would be keen to shoulder.

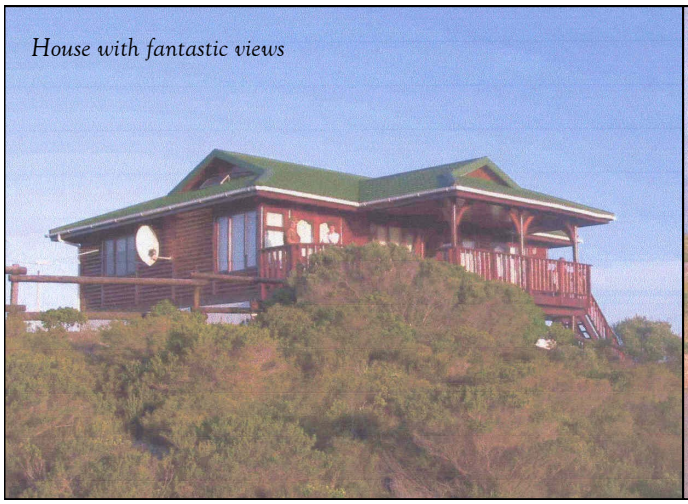
In a short space of time we had a glimpse of 3 enterprises where management needed to be at the highest possible level. It was unfortunate that so few of our members had been able to attend.

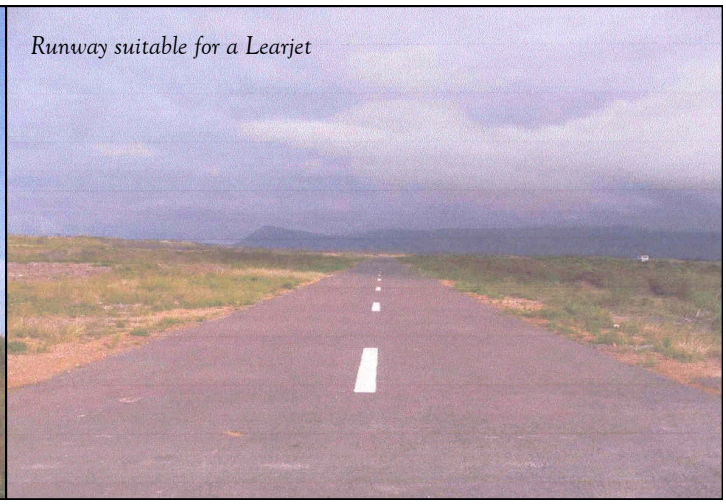
Our thanks go especially to David Stokes for this event.

Through Joe Williams, the owner of Henstridge, we were able to make a donation to Devon Air Ambulance, in lieu of landing fees, fuel and his coffee which he so kindly provided.

Mike Cuttell




House with fantastic views


Runway suitable for a Learjet

Sick of European / Uk bureaucracy? Fed up with the prospects at home? Fancy a clean break?
Dick Walgate (our President) has just returned from South Africa, full of enthusiasm for buying an estate out there, but sadly he admits to being a few years too old to take the plunge. The property detailed below is on the market for R6.5m (approx £600,000). He thought this might just spark your imagination!

Two hours drive from Cape Town in a prime position with a breathtaking view of Dyer island, Franskraal and Pearly Beach as well a glorious mountain views. It offers the following;

1030 ha of beautiful land, mostly fynbos. Property fenced and protected by adequate firebreaks. Land cleared of all alien plants. 70 ha of Rooikrans can be cut for firewood.

Water reserves; 2 dams on the upper part of the farm. Borehole with windmill. Fountain, on neighbouring farm, feeds the one dam and the owner has servitude water rights.

Main House; Fully equipped double storey log house with uninterrupted views. 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 4 garages, separate toilet, flatlet.

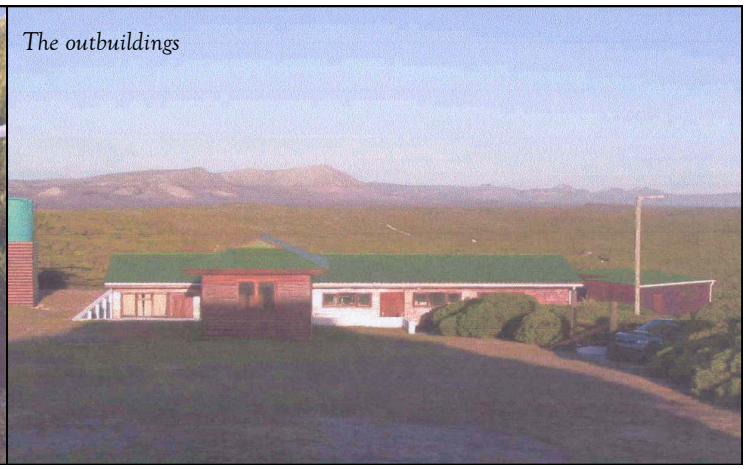
Outbuildings; Approved plans for a hanger (Gansbaai flying club building a hangar at their own cost), stables, big barn, labourer's cottage.

Income potential; 930m x 7.8 m hard runway (suitable for a Learjet), farming with bees, flowers, mulcher machine (R1500 per hour—working rate 10 ha per day), Ostrich farming.

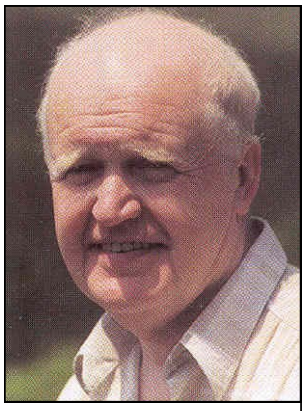
Implements and equipment included; Mulcher (attached to 350hp Caterpillar), Landrover, 2 Fiat tractors, trailer, farming implements, 2 crop sprayers, one way plough, 2000lt diesel tank.
Power supply; 5 kw diesel Lister power plant.

For any more information and details of other properties, contact Dick on 01472 371203 or email him at jrw@aiw.me.uk


The Mulcher


The outbuildings

Keith Woodcock



Keith Woodcock, whose work you see displayed here, has been a professional aviation artist for almost 25 years, during which time he has produced literally thousands of aircraft paintings, most of them specially commissioned.

Virtually all his output is now painted to order for clients such as Boeing, BAE Systems, the Royal Air Force, the German Luftwaffe, the Post Office and publishers of prints, calendars, books, cards and ceramic collectables. However, he also undertakes a considerable amount of work for private clients who perhaps wish to display a painting on their wall showing their current or previously owned aircraft. Often, requests are made for portrayals of their own personal flying experiences with either the RAF or airline, and sometimes even to have a painting of an aircraft their father flew in WW2. This latter example is not as rare as one would think!

As the examples here show, Keith is equally adept at painting aircraft over specific areas or in dramatic cloudscapes. Living in Lincolnshire, he is of course, influenced by that county's wonderful skies and his work can often be recognised by his characteristic use of light and clouds to enhance the subject.

Although not a pilot, he enjoys getting his feet off the ground as often as possible, and his vocation allows him to have flying time with the services, airlines and private owners. A perk of the job, you might say! As part of the commissioning process, it is obviously preferable to have references if a specific location is to be shown in the background, but if these are not available, it may be necessary for him to get aloft and wield a camera himself. If a different era is required (for example he has just produced an early scene of an aircraft over Southend Pier), some research will be required to ensure the authenticity of the landscape. Paris in 1909 and New York in 1945 have certainly provided some interesting research problems!

A former Chairman of the Guild of Aviation Artists and a Fellow of the American Society of Aviation Artists, Keith is now one of this country's foremost exponents of aviation art, having won numerous awards for his work on both sides of the Atlantic, including "Best of Show" in both the UK and USA.

If you would like to have further information on his services or would like to see some more examples of his work, please contact him on 01652 660601, or email him at keithwoodcock@btopenworld.com. He is, of course, willing to travel to any reasonably local airfield to meet interested owners/pilots and discuss their requirements without obligation.

Dick Walgate can recommend Keith's work having done a painting of his Cessna 206.



Cessna 310 over the South Coast



Boeing C-17 over the Needles



Lockheed Super Constellation over New York in the 1950's



Beagle Terrier over Southend Pier



Adrian Starling

Adrian was born into a farming family in the eastern lowveld of South Africa where his father was a sugar farmer. Adrian's father had his own aircraft (Piper Cherokee 180) as distances to main centres were very large so flying became a major part of Adrian's life and the aircraft bug bit early.

Having completed his secondary education at Michaelhouse in Kwazulu Natal, Adrian was drafted into the South African Airforce where he did two years compulsory national service. During this time Adrian played cricket for South West Africa and the South African Defence Force. He then spent a season playing county cricket in England before returning to South Africa to study Industrial Design. On completion he began his career as a Design Stylist for Volkswagen South Africa.

After six years in a corporate environment, Adrian had the opportunity of opening his own airline refurbishing facility which he did in 1996. During this time he officially did his private pilots licence and acquired a Cessna T210K Centurion. His love of aviation has taken Adrian and his wife on journeys around the world to places like Oshkosh and many of the manufacturers in the USA like Beechcraft, Bell and the New Piper Company.

In the past two years Adrian has specialised in General Aviation art and is fulfilling a life long ambition to portray aircraft in a simple yet detailed manner by means of using the aircraft as the subject with a plain backdrop allowing the viewer the privilege of admiring one of mans great accomplishments - "The Flying Machine"





It's interesting to see the contrasting styles of these two artistes. Keith works mainly in oils and Adrian in pastel and crayon. Keith prefers to set his subject in an authentic scene, where Adrian prefers a plain background, so that the aircraft stands out.

Dick Walgate personally recommends Keith's work and I can give a recommendation for Adrian's work, as he did my Robin shown above. Adrian can be contacted on 0207 603 7318 or email adrian-starling@aol.com or see his website at www.aero-art.net

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The FFA in association with M. P. Bolshaw & Co. Ltd, a specialist in aviation insurance, have created the Flying Farmers Association Airfield Owners and Operators Scheme. The basic policy is available in two parts. The first part covers the premises liability and there are two choices of cover limits available. The premium is determined by the **estimated third party aircraft movements each year** and by the limit of liability chosen by you.

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up to 1000	£300.00	£375.00
up to 2000	£375.00	£425.00
over 2000	to be agreed	to be agreed

In addition to premises liability and if hangarage is provided, or if aircraft are kept in your care, custody and control, or where aircraft are moved by you or your employees, then you should include Hangarkeeper's liability for an additional 20% of the applicable premium. There is a £50,000 limit on this section and insurance premium tax will be charged at 5% of the final premium.

If the aircraft movements at your strip exceed 200 p.a. or if £50,000 any one hangarkeeper's liability is insufficient, or if you have any queries whatsoever, contact **Darren Smith at M. P. Bolshaw & Co. Ltd on 020 8953 8033** or fax 020 8207 4007 or email dns@mpbolshaw.co.uk This is also the contact should you wish to purchase cover.

Finally it is worth noting that the FFA are so concerned about this problem that they will be unable to organise an event at any strip that does not have this, or similar cover, for fear of exposing itself and in turn it's members.

On contacting Bolsahws, please tell them that you are an FFA member and quote your membership number.

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