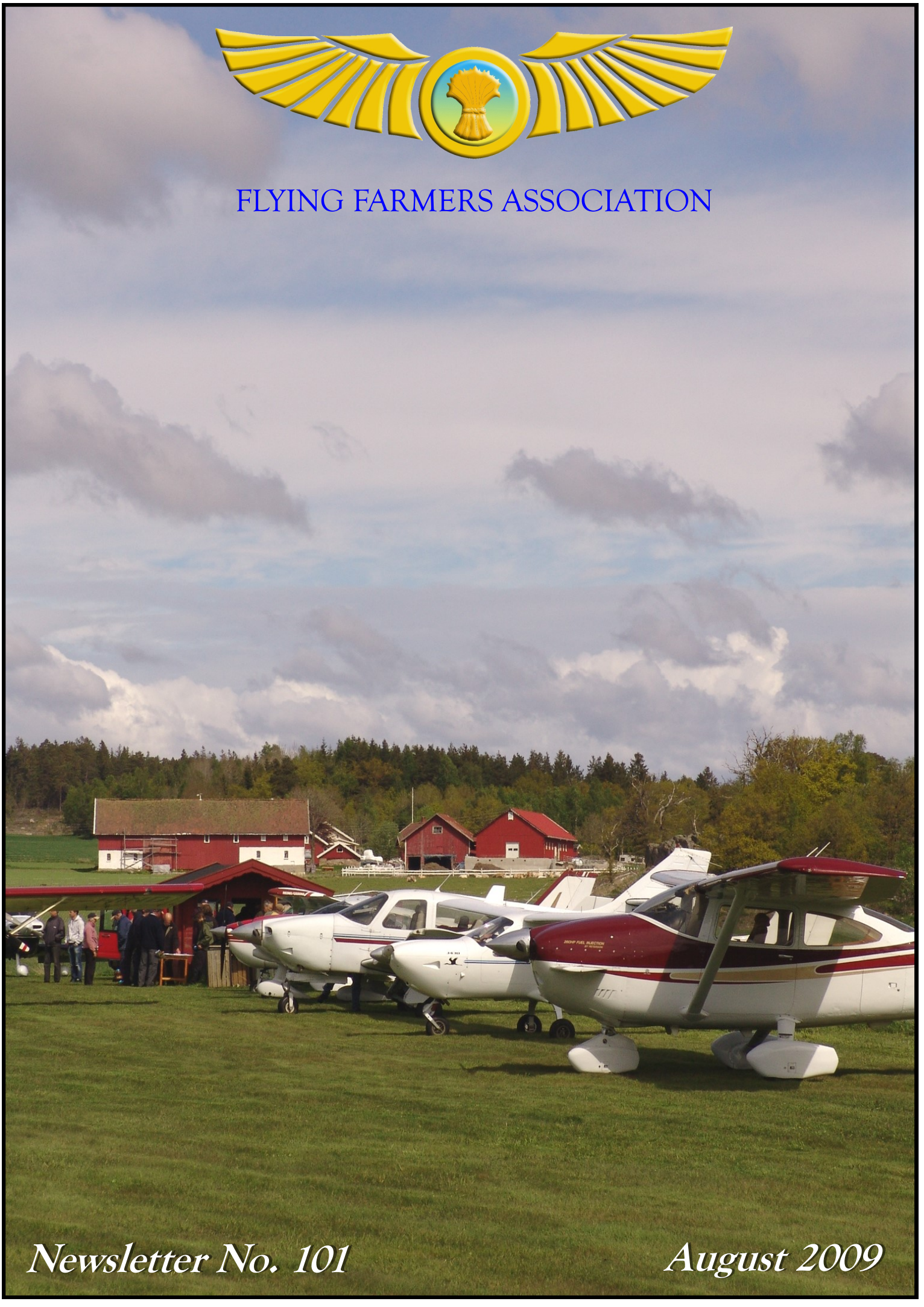
FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION



Newsletter No. 101 *August 2009*

Opening Thoughts

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New Members

Since 31st March 2009

Peter Vergette, Grimsby
Edward Painter, Stockbridge
Henry & Elizabeth Pelham, Salisbury
David Cyster, Fife
William Greenwood, Lewes, East Sussex

The total membership is now 392

Committee Members

Dick Walgate	President	01472 371203
John Golden	Chairman	01725 552384
Paul Stephens	Secretary	01944 738281
Andrew Cragg	Treasurer	01303 874251
Mike Cuttell	Events Secretary	01242 236770
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Rick Holt	Committee Member	01386 761816

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Chairman's Message

As I write this in the latter half of July harvest has started. Some have cut winter barley and rape with varying yields, but the weather is more indifferent than the yields and many farmers who would like to be harvesting this week will not be able to do so. The current weather pattern is very similar to last year's which was caused by the position of the jet stream – which if you haven't guessed is the same as it was last year.

The good news for aviation is that the European Parliament has passed a resolution (by a huge margin – 524 votes in favour (!) and 74 against, with six abstentions) agreeing to adopt a raft of principles which would preserve, foster and promote General Aviation across Europe. Let's hope it translates into reality, but be warned that the CAA and NATS are both desperate for our money and their jobs.

The AGM is the next event – details elsewhere in this newsletter. We hope that as many of you as possible can get to it. I look forward to meeting you there and sharing with you the success of the FFA.

John Golden

Editor's Notes

You will find an updated membership list enclosed with this newsletter. The original intention was to update it every year, but costs won't allow, so it will be done every second year. If you do spot any mistakes, please let me know.

The FFA e-news has been active again lately with lively emails regarding the Vulcan appeal, Game Fair landing sites, ELTs, round the world tour, AFPEx, David Keene's progress etc. If you don't receive this information, please send me an email (chix@farmline.com) as I do notice some emails being returned due to address changes which I am not updated with.

Paul Stephens

Committee Meeting, July 19th 2009.

The committee were invited to the Chairman's French cottage in Normandy for his last committee meeting as Chairman. John had already announced to the committee that he wouldn't be standing for re-election at the forthcoming AGM. So our third Chairman in the FFA's 35 year history is retiring from the committee and his calm and diplomatic ways will be missed by all. John has been on the committee for 23 years and Chairman since Dick Walgate stood down 10 years ago.

After the AGM, Martin Gosling will take over the Chairman's position, after not a little persuasion from other committee members. I'm sure we all wish Martin the best. Since becoming a member in the early eighties, Martin has been one of the most active FFA members and has been on the committee for the last 10 years.

Our Events Secretary had already handed his notice in at the 2008 AGM. After advertising for volunteers in the newsletter, there have been no takers, so our newest committee member, Rick Holt will take the job on, no doubt with a little help from Laura, his wife. I'm sure they will do their best to carry on where Mike Cuttell is leaving off. It will be a hard act to follow! Mike has been an FFA member from the very start and has been on the committee since 1977, serving 32 years.

It was disappointing to have to remove several members from the membership list due to their subscriptions either not being paid or not being the correct amount. Our Treasurer has chased some of these for the last three years, but has now given up with them. It is unfortunate that some of these are recently joined members who just can't get their standing orders sorted out.

By the way - if you have received this newsletter, you are still on the list!

General Aviation Consultative Committee meeting – July 2009

At the GACC meeting on 14 July, there were a few matters of direct interest to members;

Everyone present, including the CAA representatives, expressed their increasing frustration at the inability, or unwillingness, of NATS/AIS to improve the presentation of NOTAMS, etc – particularly by making it possible to get a visual presentation of where and what NOTAMS are covering. The RIAT (Fairford) NOTAM for that week was a good example – just the dates, times, and a long string of lat/longs. Who had the will or the patience to plot those onto a chart? It was pointed out that those commercial sites that do offer better presentation all have a disclaimer. This is an ongoing scenario...

Discussions about the Part M regulations for C of A aircraft mainly concerned the problems being experienced by maintenance organisations, both achieving the approvals and the various costs involved. However, a number of the senior CAA personnel present at the meeting stressed that they are themselves PPL holders, some with their own Group A aircraft, so the extra costs involved for owners are affecting them as well as those of us whom they regulate. Transition to the new Part M system is due to be completed by the end of September 2009. Once again, plenty more frustration...

Planning for the aviation aspects of the 2012 Olympics is now beginning in earnest. Not only will there be a lot of extra aircraft movements in the south east of UK – there will also need to be a significant amount of extra GA aircraft parking – mainly bizjets. However, the message that came through loud and clear is that all the relevant parties realise that those with GA businesses in SE England must be able to continue with minimum disruption, and there is no intention whatsoever to impose an overall no-go zone.

General Aviation Awareness Council (GAAC) – meeting 17 July 2009

The General Aviation Awareness Council (GAAC) is setting up a working group to consider the implications, from an aviation point of view, of the White Paper published 15 July 2009 about Energy, and in particular the planned expansion in the number of wind turbines. FFA has been invited to nominate a representative to sit on this working group, which is being supported by all the principal GA organizations. The first meeting will take place at Turweston on 25 August. If any member with experience of the wind power industry can offer to represent FAA on this working group, could you please contact David Corbett initially.

Please note that David's e-mail address has changed to dcorbett@corbettfarms.co.uk

David Corbett

AFPEx

You will probably be aware that the Assisted Flight Plan Exchange (AFPEx) is now the only way that pilots from private strips will be able to file flight plans. The old fax numbers at Manchester and Heathrow no longer exist. There is a fax number - 01489 612793 at Swanwick which is available if a computer isn't available, but they don't really like it being done this way.

My own experience of the new system so far, is that it is not user friendly, even to get to the flight planning page. An application has to be downloaded each time you want to file a flight plan. This can take some considerable time, especially for those like Flying Farmers who live out in the country with slow broadband.

Once on the system, the FPL is reasonably easy to complete, except we are not used to having to fill in the addressees at the top of the page. I'm sure mistakes will be made there.

The consensus of opinion on the FFA e-news was that it is cumbersome, unfriendly and there are better systems available such as Homebriefing (an Austro/Swiss website).

Immigration, Customs & Special Branch

If you are a strip owner, you will probably get annual visits from the three bodies who keep an eye on us - Immigration, Customs and Special Branch.

A few years ago, things were simplified if you wanted to return from abroad directly to your strip, by having a General Aviation Report (GAR) form to fill in, which you send to the National Coordination Unit (NCU) by fax or by giving your details on the telephone. They then forward the form to the relevant local units. Some pilots contact their local offices directly.

The GAR covers flights from EU countries and also flights to and from the Channel Isles and non EU countries. For the Common Travel Area (CTA) comprising Channel Isles, Isle of Man, Northern Island and Eire, it is necessary to copy this GAR form to the local Special Branch Police Force with 12 hours notice for both outbound and inbound flights.

The three separate bodies have not cooperated very well with each other in the past and all three have amassed their own databases of our strips. Immigration and Customs are now working more closely together and call themselves the UK Border Agency.

Unfortunately, for all those in Yorkshire, Humberside and Lincolnshire, it appears that the overall boss of this new agency isn't happy with the NCU in that the GAR forms are being sent to Heathrow and disappearing down a big hole and not reaching the local units. So the rules have changed for these counties and we now have a separate FAX number to send the forms to - 01302 522314, at Doncaster (Robin Hood) Airport

I have put a link on the website to Eddsfield where Ed has the GAR online. You can download it to your own computer, fill it in on screen and save for future use, which saves looking up all those passport numbers. Forms can then be printed out and sent to the Doncaster number if returning to strips in Yorks. and Lincs. or the NCU for other areas. You will find it at www.ffa.org.uk under LINKS then OTHER.

The FFA's policy has always been to cooperate with the Customs, and it is in our interest to do so in order to maintain our right to operate from private strips. But for pilots to fully comply, we need things to be simple so I have expressed my feelings to the Border Agency suggesting that they put the forms online so that they can be done electronically, as this is the way flight plans are being done.

Next we need NOTAMS in pictorial form, then have FPLs, GARs, NOTAMs and MET on one site and interconnected, a bit like Olivia, the French system - why are we so slow!

Paul Stephens

Programme 2009

February 16th	Carno, Welshpool
February 20th	Houses of Parliament, London
March 20th	Isle of Wight
April 22nd or 29th	RAF Cosford
May 9th-16th	FFA Tour of the Netherlands & Norway
May 27th	Harewood House, Leeds
June 3rd	West Tisted Manor Estate, Wiltshire
June 5th	Red Arrows and Asparagus, Wickenby
June 22nd/24th	Scottish Borders (Cancelled)
July 1st	Beachy Head, East Sussex
September	Jodrel Bank (Cancelled)
October 9th	AGM, Sywell
November 11th	Rolls Royce, Derby



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.

Please note - The Jodrel Bank meeting was cancelled as we wouldn't have been allowed to see the telescope itself, only shown a video!

The AGM, Sywell, Friday 9th October 2009

Mike Cuttell tried his best to get a meeting at the Rolls Roce Heritage Collection in Derby, but they weren't the most cooperative of people and we would have had to have landed at Tollerton involving a longish bus journey. By the time we had carried out the AGM, there wouldn't have been a lot of time to do the Collection justice.

So, we are returning to Sywell. The AGM will start at midday, allowing a bit of time for the usual early morning mist to clear. Mike will do his best to put on an interesting speaker and or possibly arrange a conducted tour of the small Sywell Aviation Museum, opened by Alex Henshaw MBE in 2001.

At the AGM, two new committee members will be required to replace our Chairman, John Golden and our Events Secretary, Mike Cuttell who are both retiring from committee duties after serving for 23 and 32 years respectively.

Please send any nominations to Paul Stephens on the reply slip before 30th September. Only fully completed forms will be accepted. In order to maintain the spirit of the Flying Farmers, prospective committee members should be genuine farmers who fly.

The AGM and the light lunch are funded by the FFA, so any non member guests are asked to contribute £10. The AGM itself is only open to fully paid up members. Please indicate on the reply slip if you are bringing any non members.

Mike Cuttell will need the reply slips returning by September the 30th at the very latest in order to finalise arrangements.

There will be drinks available before the AGM for those arriving in good time.

Rolls Royce Heritage Trust, Derby, Wednesday 11th November 2009

There are no formal arrangements for flying into this event. Lunch will be in a nearby hotel which will probably be the meeting point. All details will be sent to applicants by our new Events Secretary, Rick Holt.

The Derby collection is housed in the RR Trust Heritage Centre in Derby, and contains a representative selection of Rolls-Royce Limited aero-engines and sectioned parts, from the formation of the Company to the present day. Currently are included Eagle, Hawk, Kestrel, Merlin, Griffon and early gas turbines such as Welland and Derwent.

There are also some early cars, oil paintings and other aviation artefacts.

Please return the reply slip to Rick Holt with a contribution of £10 per head to cover lunch.

David Keene and Keith Houldcroft

Just a note to wish these two members a speedy recovery.

Keith thought he was a teenager and jumped out the back of a pickup on the Isle of Wight meeting in March. He managed to break his hip and leg in quite a bad way by doing so.

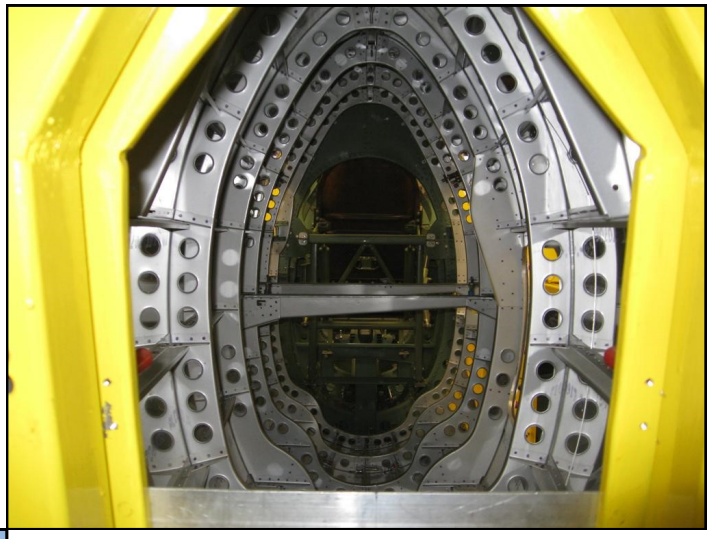
David fell off a ladder and has injured some vertebrae in his back. He is currently in Stoke Mandeville hospital and will be there for several months. His neighbours are helping out with harvest.

Isle of Wight, 20th & 21st March 2009

The Friday dawned sunny but with a good deal of fog and mist across the country. Eventually eighteen planes made Sandown and a total of 39 members and guests were on the Island, some having come by car and ferry.

All assembled at the Garlic Farm at New Church, the earlier arrivals enjoying coffee in the sun. The owner, Colin Boswell gave a fascinating introduction to Garlic and his frequent travels through Kazakhstan and Central Asia to source new varieties.

The Garlic Festivals, started in 1976, have now raised over £1million for the local community. The Farm currently only sells to Farm Shops and delicatessens and supports many Farmers' Markets. Their success in cultivating the garlic bulb has earned them RHS Gold medals and the coveted Award of Gardening merit (AGM) and they are now known countrywide.





After lunch, in the sun for some, (and that inevitably included garlic) the garlic fields were visited. We saw the various types and learnt their differing needs. All planting and picking is done by hand using some 25-30 European labourers with and additional 15-20 in the summer months. The fields cannot be reused for garlic for 5 years and the ones we toured had not been used for 10 years; the farm therefore rents most of its land. The Farm also grows asparagus another very labour intensive crop and we visited the fields, which were just about to be picked, covered with tunnels. There is not a watering problem as the roots of asparagus go some 20 feet deep. All in all a most interesting visit with Colin Boswell's enthusiasm for garlic very apparent.

The only blot to the morning was one of our members, forgetting his age, on arrival at the garlic fields vaulted over the side of a pickup , caught his clothing, and fell heavily breaking his leg in two places. The Ambulance was swift in arriving and we wish him a very speedy recovery.

The group stayed the night on the Sandown seafront with views out to sea. The evening was enlivened with a dissertation from Syd Bowsher on his flying adventures both in the RAF as a Chinook pilot and as a training captain for a civil airline. He finished with a fascinating résumé of the humanitarian operation in support of the Kurds after the Afghanistan war.

The Saturday was a visit to Airframe Assemblies at Sandown airfield that rebuilds, mainly, Spitfires. With a workforce of fifteen they refurbish airframes only. This is laborious, time-consuming work; a small metal frame takes some 7-8 hours to make. While a fuselage will take two fitters and a sheet metal-worker one year to complete and cost the owner between £300-400k then the additional cost of rebuilding the wings has to be added. It was fascinating to learn that the Messerschmitt is very much easier to rebuild with only 20 - 30 pieces in a fuselage compared with 300 in a Spitfire!

The dedication of the workforce was heartening, apart from some of them giving up their Saturday morning to show us, with pride, their work, there are no original tools all have to be hand made by trial and error. A young man, just completed his apprenticeship, was intensely proud of what he did. So there is hope that our heritage will survive due to the skills of young men like him.

The Members left in their own time having enjoyed an excellent and informative visit.

Ian Weston

RAF Cosford, 22nd April 2009

It is some years since the FFA visited the Royal Air Force museum at Cosford – it was impressive then, but now we were to see the new Cold War display. The morning started with a good weather forecast which turned out not to be entirely accurate since early morning mist had formed in the Gloucestershire vale with tops of about 700' resulting in one or two members having to delay their take off and one landing in a meadow near Pershore whilst it cleared

Halfpenny Green were most welcoming and 13 fixed wing and 2 helis landed and our coach was ready and waiting to take



us on our 30 minute transfer to Cosford.

The museum is run on a very informal basis, it comprised a reception area complete with restaurant, 3 WW2 hangars and the new £13 million cold war hangar which is described by them as 'two triangles divided by a central walkway representing a world divided by ideology'.

Personally I didn't see it in that way. Certainly the hangar was unlike any other. It was as if a group of aircraft had been brought together in various configurations and enveloped in a sort of metal stockinet which stretched over them almost hugging the display. It was dramatic, extremely clever and a joy to see. How they designed it and arranged the display heavens only knows.

In the fourth hangar was a complete De Havilland Comet which, I am sure you will remember, was the worlds first commercial jet airliner. It remains the most elegant beautiful airliner that the world has ever seen only matched perhaps by the Saunders Roe Princess flying boat which, unlike the Comet, was scrapped. It was a reminder that years ago Britain led the world.



Other examples of world leading technology were also on display and notable among them were the awesome German V2 and the diminutive V1.

If my records are correct 37 members attended and we had 5 cancellations.'

Mike Cuttell

FFA European Tour to The Netherlands and Norway, 9th to 17th May 2009

This year's tour was a combined effort by Rick & Laura Holt and Mike & Jean Ashmole. The Holts concentrating on The Netherlands and the Ashmoles organising Norway.

Before setting off, there was much confusion about the requirements for Mode S in the Netherlands and the need for a fixed ELT. The debate about both these subjects carries on and probably will do for some time. However, despite some being fully equipped and others not being equipped at all, the group didn't have any problems.

David Corbett gives the first report;

16 aircraft – one short of the full team – arrived at Lelystad on Saturday 9th May for our annual Study Tour, which this year was to visit Holland and Norway. We had enjoyed a fine weather flight with good following winds, but we had all been required to turn our transponders to "Standby" whilst flying under the Schipol TMA – much to the chagrin of those members who had fitted Mode S transponders specially for this trip.

At the duly appointed time, we were all taken by luxury double decker coach to our hotel in the nearby town of Harderwijk; the centre of this town is a traffic free zone, so we had to be met by the hotel manager, who lowered the bollards and then ran in front of the coach to lead us into the town square.

After pre-dinner drinks in one (or more) of the many open-air bars in the square, we walked a few hundred metres to another hotel for our first dinner, where Rick and Laura Holt, and Mike Ashmole, set the scene for the next few days. On the way back from dinner, a few of us walked past the very large town church in which we heard wonderful music. We walked in and were privileged to watch and listen to the last 10 minutes or so of an excellent choral concert, sung by a choir who visit the town once a year.

On Sunday morning, we all gathered in the square to wait the arrival of our coach – this time a bright orange single decker. There were quite a few very tired members, whose rooms had overlooked the square itself; apparently one of the bars had kept their music going until about 0400 – at full volume!

The coach delivered us to Amsterdam, dropping us off opposite the Rijksmuseum, where we boarded the chartered river boat for a one and a half hour's guided tour through Amsterdam's river and canal system. We began by going south, away from the city centre, and after passing – amongst other attractions, a suburban red-light district, where we waved to the girls in their windows – we joined the Amstel River and turned towards the city centre. Whilst we drank very welcome coffee, our excellent guide described the highlights of the city's history, and pointed out significant buildings and told us other fascinating facts as we glided almost silently along. Further in towards the city centre, we turned left into the semi-circular canal system that makes Amsterdam so unique, and wended our way under low bridges and through some very narrow "side" canals,



effectively covering a figure-of-eight before arriving back at the Rijksmuseum pier.

The party then split up – some finding their way into the Rijksmuseum through all the building works going on around the building itself; others went all the way to the National Maritime Museum, only to find it closed; yet others wandered (accidentally, we were assured) through the main red light district; and others went their own ways. I was joined by Marion and Ian Weston and, after a quick lunch outside a Guinness bar that we had spotted from our boat (we handed over our table to Rick and Laura, who turned up at exactly the right moment!), we wandered towards the city centre, passing amongst other things a pavement chess match, the Barge Life

Museum (which we visited) and one of the largest churches – seen and pointed out from our boat – which was closed. We then proceeded to the main square, where we went into another large church, before adjourning for a drink. We then went to the War Memorial in the square, where we found Rick and Laura again, and where – behind low barriers – we saw the wreaths laid a few days earlier by the Royal Family and other Service organisations to mark the 64th anniversary of VE day in 1945. (A few days before the Amsterdam ceremony, a disgruntled Dutchman had driven his car into the crowd watching a similar wreath laying ceremony attended by the Royal Family at another town; sadly, there were some deaths as a result of his action).

From the main square we then found our way to the restaurant at which we had been booked in for dinner; here we were joined by Mike Rowland and Peter Gale (the missing crew) who had stayed behind for Mike's family reasons. After a very good meal, yet a different coach arrived to take us back to Harderwijk.

I have posted 21 photos taken in Amsterdam on 10th May on the FFA website.

Rick and Laura had a very full day of Glass House visits for us on Day 3. Our first stop was to a research place that are looking at the latest state of the art techniques in Glass House plant production followed by a visit to Tomato World to bring the Flying Farmers up to speed on tomatoes. Ian Weston reports:

TOMATO WORLD - all you ever wanted to know about tomatoes and more, was set up by tomato growers to inform and educate the public. Mirani, the wife of the grower who first thought up the idea was a mine of information.

Holland is the largest player in the world for Horticulture with a 14 bn export value. 75% of Holland's water is for agriculture and just 10% for people. A 10 hectare glass house will cost €12million and last 10 years. 30 years ago there were 3million glass houses today there are 8 million. 30 years ago a husband and wife would control one hectare, today large multi national companies have 10 hectares and land changes hands at €100,000 per hector. 500,000 people are employed in horticulture in Holland.

A 1500 sq meter glass house and 50 varieties of tomato are exhibited and the methods of growing them shown, including all the problems associated with the cultivation. Of note was the boxes of bumble bees for pollination, changed every 2 weeks, and the wheat bunches housing 'friendly bugs' used to destroy the pests. The tomatoes are grown in hanging gutters in a medium of rockwool with water full of minerals piped through it. Forced ventilation, the use of lights and CO2 all improve production. The CO2 is piped from the refinery at Antwerp (the crop is 30% less without it). The Tomatoes range in colour from red, orange, yellow, black, brown, stripped, green and pink. Japanese prefer pink, the Dutch red!

All energy is used and waste recycled. Gas drives the generator which supplies heating and in some cases CO2 and surplus electricity is sold to the national grid. The rockwool, derived from larva rock is recycled into bricks or used in roads.

An immensely interesting visit.



After a tasty lunch at a museum, we were moved onto to a high tech nursery. Gordon Bellerby reports:

After a morning of hi–tech overload, seeing the latest research into tomato growing, we arrived at the Zuydgeest De Lier, a nursery of breath taking scale and magnitude.



John, the project manager for the machinery system, which is designed to effectively run the site, was our guide and went on to explain how the nursery grew only one type of plant the Calandiva, (house plant with attractive rose shaped flower heads in a variety of colours)

At anyone time, there are approximately 1.8 million plants in the nursery, with daily plant sales totalling 35,000, to customers worldwide.

The entire nursery is almost fully automated and requires only 12 employees. The process begins with cuttings arriving from South America, which are placed by hand into a pot of substrate (it is interesting to note that at this stage, this is the only contact the plants will have with the human hand).

Once potted the plants travel along a conveyor belt, and are automatically loaded on to large truck like containers each ca-

pable of holding 350 pots. Robotically the containers are moved to areas within the green house where the environment is favourable for young plants.

The growing cycle for the plants is 95 days and 135 days during the winter months. Throughout the growing cycle the plants are again robotically moved around the nursery and placed in areas that are environmentally suitable for each growing stage.

The plants are watered from 3 tanks sited under the nursery, each tank containing one million gallons of rainwater collected from the roofs.

Co2, which is an important ingredient for the plants, is taken from a pipeline fed directly from the oil refineries in nearby Rotterdam and then pumped into the green house atmosphere. This practice is also used for tomato growing and increases their yield by up to 30%.

John informed us that the owners of the nursery hardly ever get to see or handle the plants, as their time is spent conducting business in front of computer screens

On a personal note, one could not help but be impressed by the scale and efficiency of the operation, whilst at the same time sadden by mans quest to interfere with nature on such a large scale.

Moving on, our last visit of the day was to another experimental organisation. Bill Burton took the notes:

We were split into two groups to be shown around the Improvement Centre which was part financed by industry and part by government. Five government supported trials in glasshouses were on public view and six trade supported ones were confidential even to us.

Trial 1:- Tomatoes - 40 cu m of gas are needed to grow the crop; by screening, cooling and fogging aiming to reduce to 25 cu m. By 2020 new glass houses will not be allowed to use fossil fuel.

TriaI 2:- Cucumbers - three crops a year. The aim is to reduce energy by 40%.

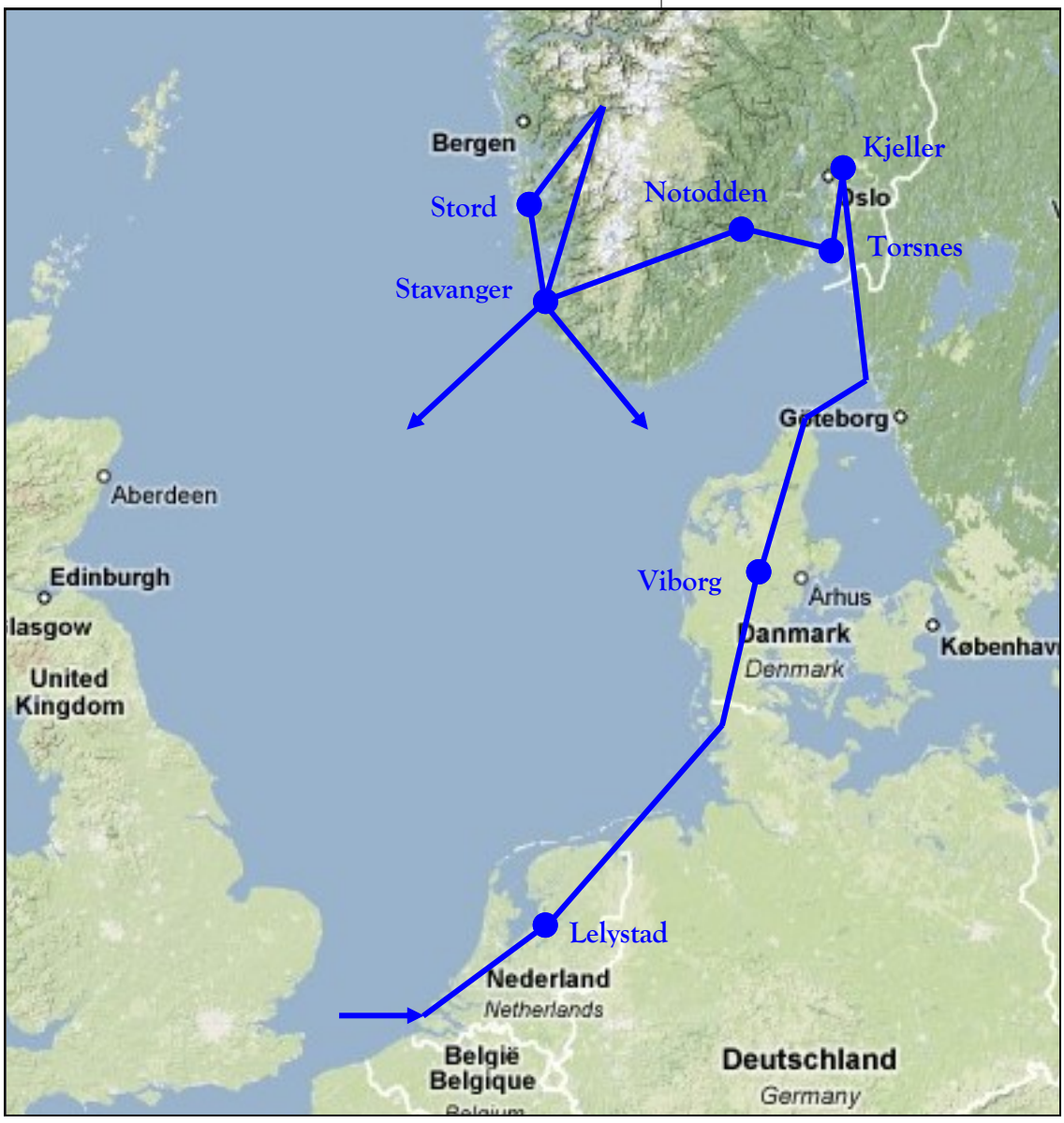
TriaI 3:- Cucumbers - high wire system - never trimmed. Heat pump, pumping summer heat into artesian basin 40 - 50m deep, for winter abstraction to heat house.

TriaI 4:- Peppers - normal crop 32 kg sq.m - hoping for 40 by altering spacing and light throughout growing season. Government order says no visible light to be seen at night so screens are used to avoid big fines.

After an extremely good meal at the Schiphol airport hotel, we were fit for bed after a busy day.

Day 4 was changeover day and now Mike Ashmole was in charge with his strict and uncompromising manner. We were to leave Lelystad and fly to a GA airfield near Oslo.

The weather forecast was good for this flight of almost 500 nm. Once the shock of the fuel and landing charges (around 2.24 Euros per litre and £70 - £100 for landing and parking depending on weight) the next problem was a very brisk headwind. David Soul, in his normally very fast Commander 114 was so frustrated with his groundspeed, having tried different levels and altering all his settings that he could do no other than blame his wife Lavinia!



The flight information controllers all seemed to be in good humour and we heard Anthony Kedros In G-OBBO talking to Bremen Info who was having a bit of a chuckle about his registration; so when he handed him over to Copenhagen he just said gobbo, it's time to go!

On this flight we actually flew in 5 different countries - Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Norway. Most elected to stop off in various places in Denmark and a few went



direct. Those that stopped at the recommended Viborg were treated very well with drinks and Smorgasbord laid on by the locals - a place for a future visit.

Kjeller, our destination near Oslo, is a semi military, and semi club airfield. Our hotel for the next couple of nights was originally built as a prison, then became a women's nuthouse and now converted to a hotel, but still retaining the prison atmosphere with two cells knocked into one complete with the original doors.

Dinner was very basic and we got our first taste of alcohol prices. A litre of beer being £6 and a bottle of was £30.

For day 5, we were to visit The Agricultural University of Norway or to give it it's new title, the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, near Oslo. Peter Gale was the reporter today:

We were welcomed by the Head of Culture Division, Dag Guttormsen. There was no agricultural education in Norway until the University was set up in 1854 with two year courses of practical farming for 30 students. Within 40 years science studies were set up with the help of Swedish scientists. They now have 3100 students from 8 countries. The education is free but the cost of living is high.

Agricultural Education has the same problems as the rest of the EU so they have diversified into Ag related subjects. They even run courses in English if required.

The farm is 100ha with a milking herd of 80 cows and some arable; being one of the largest farms in Norway. The average herd size in Norway is 20 – 25 cows. There are farms in the mountains up to 1000 metres. Cows graze the high grass in the summer while the lower grass is conserved for the winter.

We were then introduced to the Farms Director Trygve Skfeldal.

The highlight of the day was the cows going out to grass after the long winter inside and the Fire Brigade arriving to smoke the cows out!!! Apparently there had been many mysterious fires in cattle sheds and they wanted to see the cows reaction to smoke! The local school children and their mothers turned out to see the cows frisky advance into sunlight.

The farm herd of Norwegian Reds and Blacks were producing 8400 litres / cow / year using selective breeding and embryo technology.

Research was being done on milk quality, cow comfort and husbandry. Farmers are not allowed to inject or dehorn their cattle, the work all having to be carried out by vets.

We then walked around the campus. They have a Dept of Horticulture specialising in fruit and veg.

Apparently Norwegian buildings are painted white on the front but red at the back because red paint is cheaper.

A Lunch of a Salmon wrap and strudel was then enjoyed which was surprisingly filling.

Next was a look around a small museum of 1930's –1950's artefacts which included a hen with chicks for the children.

Finally we were seated in the old conference hall which was a beautiful character wooden construction with a large central chandelier hung from the ceiling. (we were hoping Rodney was not above with a hammer!)

Dag gave us an interesting question and answer session. Grain growing was confined to the flatter Southeast of the country while milk production was in the cold and wetter Northwest.

Traditionally the farmer's wives milked the cows, the men made hay and food in the summer and went hunting and fishing in the winter.

Milk prices are decided by the government and quota's. When the quota level is reached the milk price reduces.

It's difficult to buy a farm in Norway as the eldest son always inherits. As with us, many of the sons now want to work outside agriculture for a better income so the law is to be changed so the son must live on the farm to inherit or it passes to the one who does.

The credit crunch has not really affected Norway yet and they only have 2% unemployment.

Thanks were given by Mike Ashmole for a very interesting visit.

For the remainder of the day, we were dropped off in Oslo to do as we wished. After the Prison's dinner the night before, we all elected to try the delights of Oslo. My conclusion was that the Norwegians must earn a fair bit more than us as the restaurants were fairly full and the prices higher than I've ever paid before.

Day 6 entailed two flight, the first to one of only 3 flying farmers in Norway - Rolf Mikkelsen. Chris Moore reports from Torsnes:

After a short flight south from Oslo we landed at the grass strip at Torsness. After some interviewing by a local film crew we walked into the village.

Mike had cleverly arranged for Peter Bowles to make a guest appearance as our first local farmer, appropriately dressed in a blue blazer and slacks. He gave a brief talk, stating that he farmed chickens, but that his main interest was ship owning. Up till recently he owned 15 ships of between 10 and 15 thousand tons. He now has only 3 ships, having sold 6 ships at the top of the market, but with some of the last sales resulting in his ships going for scrap because of the recession. This cameo performance did, however, reinforce what we had been told the day before, namely that most Norwegian farms are very small,





and farmers diversify whenever possible.

Rolf, our host, then told us about his farm. He has 30 hectares of arable, on which he grows mainly wheat and barley, and 70 hectares of forest. Diversification for him includes vending machines, firewood, and a marina.

His firewood operation is centred round a Polish operator who has for many years commuted from Poland to work six months each year on Rolf's farm. He was operating a splendid Fordson Dexta tractor which appeared to be giving excellent service.

The group then walked on to the marina. This has berths for 300 boats, and the charge rate is 1802 kroners per metre per year. Marinas are a great business and this one probably helps the overall cash-flow position very considerably. Thieving is a problem, stated to be from East Europeans or Russians, so a full 24 hour security system is in operation. We were told the estuary water gets up to 20ºC in summer; in winter it is close to freezing, but as there is a current so it does not freeze over.

Pilots then enjoyed a further flight to Notodden, climbing over hills capped with low cloud before a 2,500 descent to the airport on the valley floor.

Edward Woods carries on the report from the Telemark area:

The approach to Notoddon had been made interesting by squally weather on the high ground to the east of the field. It was concern about this weather that had made us already two hours late. Into the bus with Rolf and a very voluble guide who luckily started by handing out ham and cheese rolls & tins of lager – most welcome by then (3.30pm). Off to see a fruit farm, but on the way we picked up its owner who also had a lakeside holiday resort. He was a character! Called himself Johnny Cash, told some amusing stories and was really more interested in his resort than his fruit trees (I'm sure he made much more money from the holiday makers). Apples (the most northerly in Europe) cherries & plums are on a very small scale but in this wonderful Alpine position. Another violent squall had us hiding in his church – a fascinating 12th Century gem.

Then on to a small living farm museum. We were greeted by a formidable songstress in national costume and given a delicious lunch in her old farmhouse – it was by now 5.30pm. There was no time to see the museum, which I don't think amounted to more than a few goats etc, before we were back on the bus in a hurry to beat the closure of the road for overnight road works.

So north, back through Notodden and on up the side of the famous Tinnsja Lake – it was crossing this that the ferry carrying heavy water for the Germans in 1944 was blown up. Turning west at the north end of the lake took us up a valley to Rjukan. This was where, in 1907 Norsk Hydro had built the first industrial scale hydroelectric station and had used the power to make nitrogen fertiliser – all in a big industrial complex – but that is all for tomorrow .

We turned left up a steep, narrow, hair-pinned road and crawled past road works, which was by blasting, widening the road – all rather hair-raising. Out onto the top we had this fantastic view of Gaustastoppen, a kind of table mountain of around 7000ft, regarded by most Norwegians as the most beautiful of all their mountains. A breathtaking sight. We were now into snow patches left over from the winter and in a ski resort, our modern, bold, large hotel was at the centre of this. Very comfortable, lovely walks and a delicious dinner, only marginally ruined by the cheapest bottle of wine being over £40!



Roger Taylor takes over from Hotel Gaustablikk and onto Day 7:

We stayed the night in the resort of Gaustablikk, overlooking Mount Gaustatoppen high above the town of Rjukan; the narrow mountain road which we had travelled up the afternoon before seemed even steeper and narrower on the trip down.

The town of Rjukan is where Sam Ejde realised his dream of developing enough hydro electric power to produce fertiliser "to feed the world". In 1911 Vemork, at the time the largest power station in the world, was built. The town of Rjukan, built to house the 9000 inhabitants needed to operate the hydro electric plant and factory was completed in 1920, at the same time the railway and ferry across Lake Tinnsjo was built to transport the fertiliser to the coast.

During the Second World War the race was on to





produce the first Atom bomb. The only place where "heavy water" was produced in quantity was here at Vemork near Rjukan, and by now occupied by the Germans. Winston Churchill foresaw the threat in time and the Norwegian resistance managed to blow up the plant in February 1943, alas not enough damage was done and production soon increased. We as a group crossed the suspension bridge over the gorge that separated the plant from the town, I am sure we were all very grateful not to have to climb down and up the snow and ice covered sides of the gorge in the dark, as the resistance fighters had done all those years ago.

In the power station, now a museum, there are graphic accounts of all the attempts on the plant including a combined glider operation by British and Norwegian troops, most of whom were either killed in the resulting air crash or shot after capture. Recorded interviews with some of those involved in more than one attempt to destroy the plant really brought it home what these men went through. It was the Americans who next had a go, plastering the area with bombs but doing little or no damage to the plant. By now the Germans realised that the Heavy Water would be safer in Hitler's Germany and organised for it to be rail freighted. Amazingly enough the ferry, needed to cross the lake was left unguarded; three resistance fighters placed charges with timers. They knew that some of their own countrymen, women and children would die in the attempt; and about 30 did perish on the sinking ferry. However the ferry and its cargo sank in over 400metres of water where it is still today. We had experienced the "Heroes of Telemark" as well as seeing the original home of Norsk Hydro, the fertiliser manufacturer.

We were back in time to Notodden for our evening flight to Stavanger. This lasted about an hour and was breathtakingly spectacular. The locals at Notodden were a little surprised that we weren't routing south and following lower ground, but we all routed direct over the mountains.

Climbing out of Notodden required a steep ascent as we were climbing out of a valley with the ground either side rising to 2500 feet and soon enroute to 5000 feet. The snow line was at around 3000 feet, and above that all that was to be seen was this plateau of very inhospitable ground with frozen lakes. I could see why the British army send their troops here for survival training as it is soon extremely remote with no signs of civilisation.

As we neared the west coast of Norway, the fjords became evident. Approaching Stavanger, we followed a fjord with vertical 3000 feet cliff sides - Spectacular.

Mike had briefed us that Stavanger is quite a busy airport, but the Flying Farmers followed his instructions and all went smoothly.

Some flying club members were there to greet us and were soon telling tales of their North Sea crossings to Shetland and Iceland, which made me a little less nervous of our planned long crossing straight back to the UK across the North sea.

We were to have the last two nights at the Quality Airport Hotel on the airfield. Paul Stephens writes the final report;

Our last full day was to be yet another spectacular flying day.



Our destination was 56 nm north, landing at Stord. This strip was perched on top of an island - a bit like a carrier landing with approaches over the sea. A bus was waiting to take us to a nearby harbour where we boarded a boat to take us to a salmon fish farming operation.

After about 20 minutes on the boat heading down a fyord, we came across something that looked like a floating control tower. We were welcomed on board by Geir Mange Knutsen who is the manager of Bremnes Seashore AS, a very turned on salmon farming operation.

Unfortunately, I wasn't taking notes for this visit, but basically they have massive round cages for the salmon with feed being pneumatically conveyed from hoppers on the "control tower". In the centre of each cage is a spinning distributer which throws the feed round the pen.

Inside the control tower were a couple of men sat in front of very large computer screens watching the underwater cameras to monitor the activity of the fish. If they are feeding near the surface, this indicates that they are hungry, If the feed is drop-





ping down towards the bottom of the net, then the feed will soon get wasted. The feed is based on fish meal and therefore very expensive - around £1000 per tonne.

From this central control, they were also managing other pens further up the fjord.

Lepeophtheirus salmonis (salmon lice) can be a major problem, but Geir explained that they are keeping the problems down by stocking at much lower levels than other fish farms.

We were soon back on our boat to return to Stord and on arrival back at the airport we were delighted by the airport's hospitality as they had made the Flying Farmers a large cake, which was soon devoured.

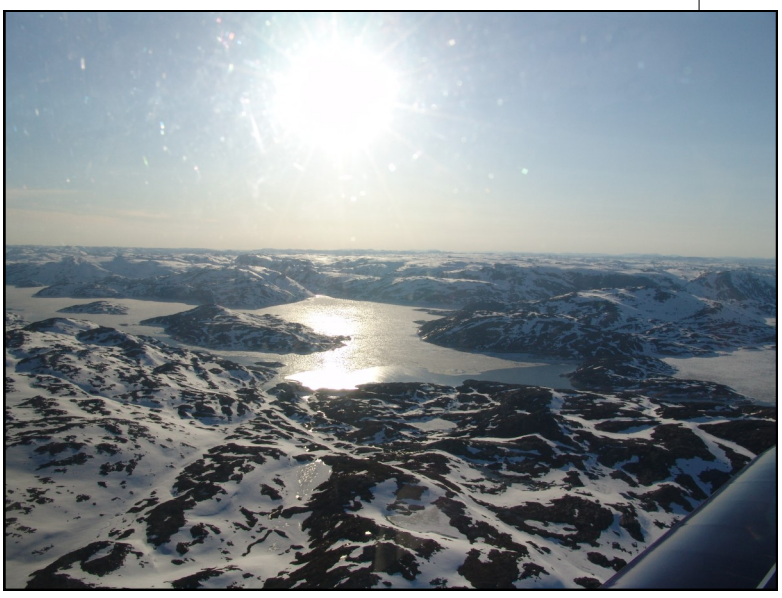
The remainder of the day was free for us to explore the fjords. Roz and I flew right to the top of Hardangerfyorden where the cliff faces rose to 5000 feet above the water. As we neared the far end, the turbulence was increasing, so we quickly had to climb to 6500 feet to get out of the fjord. We were enjoying ourselves so much, we forgot about time and realised we were now 120 nm away from Stavanger so we came back down another fyord. It was very scenic and a beautiful flight to finish off our stay in Norway.

The museum at Stavanger was opened especially for us to see both British and German aircraft. Also interesting was the wooden hanger constructed during the war by Germans and still in first class condition with some of the longest wooden spans to be seen.

That night was the traditional last meal on the Flying Farmers tour and as we went to bed, thoughts of the 300 mile North Sea crossing starting going through my mind. To return to Yorkshire was going to be around 3 hours 30 minutes heading south west. If we went south east to Denmark and round by the Netherlands it would take 7 hours and probably 8 with the forecast headwinds. The total time spent over water would be about the same if we cut the corner from Texel to Norwich.

Next morning, the forecast for the North Sea route looked pretty good apart from an occluded front lying across our path. Around half the participants were doing this crossing and the others, especially those in Southern England took the long route. We took off and set the GPS and VOR to St Abbs in Berwickshire. The occluded front was benign and when we broke out the other side we had a bit of tailwind and fantastic visibility. Stavanger Radar watched us to about half way, then handed us over to Aberdeen Offshore. We were out of radar range for about 20 minutes and they got us to report every ten minutes to make sure we were still around.

I can honestly say that I felt less remote crossing the North Sea than crossing the plateau in Norway where a forced landing would have been very difficult. Crossing the sea, we were never out of sight of oil rigs or ships and there were plenty of helicopters flying to the rigs. If the worst had happened, I think we would have been picked up quicker than over those remote mountains!



As we neared St Abbs, I turned left and flew off shore passed Newcastle and Teeside and coasted in after 3 hours across water, landing at our strip just 3 hours 20 minutes from Norway.

On reflection, this was a tour of contrasts: From the flat land below sea level in the Netherlands to the barren mountains of Norway. From the state of the art multi million Euro glasshouses to the family farmed Christmas trees. Fuel at over £2 a litre in Lelystad to £1 a litre in Stavanger. Wine at £3 a glass in Amsterdam to £6 a glass in Norway.

Norway is an extremely expensive place to be (apart from the Avgas), but the people are very friendly and all speak excellent English. We only touched on a small part of this long country. When in Stavanger it was as far to the northern tip as it was to Rome!

Many thanks from all of us to Mike & Jean and Rick & Laura for yet another very successful FFA Tour. Now, where

Harewood House and Estate, 27th May 2009



The last week of May was a beautiful week as far as the weather went - with the exception of this day. A front lay across the country bringing low cloud, heavy rain and showers to much of the country. 22 aircraft were booked in for the event, but only 10 arrived. In fact there were more driving farmers than flying farmers.

This didn't upset the welcome that Chris Ussher extended to us all on arrival. As his strip is within the Leeds zone, Chris had collaborated with ATC and smoothed our arrival with them. They were most helpful, guiding some over the last few miles until they were visual with the narrow strip, which was made more for Chris's Reims Rocket than the likes of Bill Burton's twin, or Philip Huxham's Falco.

Two shooting transporters were laid on for a short journey down the Estate roads to the Emmerdale film set operated by Yorkshire Television. I asked quite a few members if they watched the programme, but no one admitted to it. However, I am a follower of the soap, so I was very interested in this little village which was built especially for the series. The houses, chapel and village hall were all built in traditional stone of the area, but they don't have true foundations, just built on concrete slabs. Probably planning conditions wouldn't allow this. Having said that, they are all heated and have electrical supplies. Some are fitted out, as seen on the TV, whilst most are just shells with furnishings as the door opens, so that continuity isn't interrupted when the scenes are transferred to the Leeds studios.



The whole set seemed much smaller than on TV and I think very wide angle lenses must be used. On the Windsor and Dingle garage workshop was a telephone number, so for a bit of fun I tried calling Debbie Dingle, the proprietor, but of course there was no reply!

Another interesting aspect was the graveyard. For all the world it felt genuine, with a lot of reclaimed gravestones and all the recent deaths marked with new stones – some made of plastic, but very realistic.

We moved on from here to have lunch at the Hovels – a little shooting lodge where we were given a superb light lunch. We had time to talk to the farm manager who explained that the 2000 acres of farmed landed hadn't been viable in the past, which I found very surprising. The land had been put out to contractors and shared farming. He was gradually redeeming the situation and bringing more of the land back under their own stricter financial control.

After passing through a Red Deer park, seeing some Highland cattle and going through a farmyard converted to industrial units, we arrived at Harewood House, the home of the Queen's cousin, the 7th Earl of Harewood, George Lascelles. His ancestors made a fortune in the West Indies in the late 1700s through customs positions, the sugar trade and slavery. Harewood House was built between 1759 and 1771. It was designed by John Carr and Robert Adam. Much of the furniture was made by Thomas Chippendale and the gardens by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown.

Unfortunately, in 1947 much of the estate and some of the treasures were sold off due to 70% death duties and the house is now in the hands of Harewood House Trust - but still the family home of George Lascelles, whose mother was Princess Mary, the only daughter of King George Vth.



We were conducted round all the open rooms including the old kitchens downstairs, by a very good guide, .

It was soon approaching 16:00 and time to depart. The weather hadn't improved a great deal with a strong westerly wind blowing, which helped the take off on the uphill slope of 26.



A very good day, made quite special by the hospitality of Chris Ussher and his team.

Paul Stephens

West Tisted Manor Estate, 3rd June 2009

There is no mistaking West Tisted airstrip from above. Not only is it very long it has deformable white dome markers down each side, a signals square and a windsock.

All arrivals were shepherded through the trees by an army of fluorescent clad marshallers to a grass woodland glade of about 15 acres adjoining Ashwins' hangar. To one side were parked a most wonderful collection of pre-war aeroplanes which had been produced by De Havilland, Miles, Piper, Auster, Boeing, Luscome and others. They had that unforgettable smell of fuel and leather. It was apparent that these were all owned by people who cared a great deal for their aeroplanes. There were also some new generation kit planes with Rotax engines and glass cockpits which, by all accounts, produced cruise speeds exceeding 120 knots. One unusual example was a homebuilt (wooden) 75% scale Mustang with a 6 cylinder Potez engine which produced a 75% realistic noise too, and it gave us a very spirited display prior to departure in the afternoon.

Lunch was served in the hangar and was a very generous affair.

Following lunch, tractors and trailers arrived to transport anyone who jumped on board for a conducted tour of the farm.

West Tisted Manor Estate was purchased by William and Ashwin Hill in 1992. The main part of the Estate land is situated at West Tisted, near Alresford, Hampshire, and is approx 600ft above sea level, of medium clay soil with some fields running into chalk.

The total land farmed is 1064 hectares including 305 hectares of arable land on the Hampshire Downs at Longwood near Winchester. In contrast to West Tisted, this land is very light chalk.

The estate consists of thirty five houses of which a proportion are occupied by estate staff and the remainder are let to private tenants.

The cropping of the estate is made up of winter wheat, winter barley, spring barley and winter oilseed rate. About 100 hectares is into grass along with 60 hectares of forage maize to support approximately 170 dairy cows.

A beef unit has recently been established in converted buildings vacated by the pig enterprise which has now been closed.

The estate has been taking part in the ELS Countryside Stewardship Scheme for the last three years and has now been accepted for the Higher Level Scheme, and many of the features under this higher scheme are currently being established.

The estate has 75 hectares of woodland, much of which is scheduled as SINC's (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation).

The estate enjoys the benefit of a shoot, both pheasants and partridge, the partridge shoot being on the downland at Longwood. The shooting on the estate is privately run, not a commercial enterprise.

Behind the scenes a lot of hard work went into making this event the success that it was. Libby and Ashwin Hill declared their intention to make this a fundraising day for Cancer Research and I am glad to report that over £2,500 was raised.

I end by recording thanks to The Hill family and our own






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John Milne and Steve Jackson who did a lot of the forward planning.

Mike Cuttell

RAF Scampton and Kitchen Garden Produce, 5th June 2009

Having the chance to meet the Red Arrows team, sit in on their pre flight briefing, watch an in season practice display, attend their debrief and visit their engineering facilities was just too tempting for 80 of our members who completed their entry forms.

Dick Walgate, our President, keeps a close connection with the Red Arrows through judicious use of shooting and golfing days and manages to pull off some unique events on our behalf. The last being a ride for four lucky members with The Blades team in Extras piloted by ex Red Arrow pilots. The last time Dick arranged an RAF Scampton visit was April 25th 1985, so we were well overdue for a revisit.

When he first announced the day out, Dick was going to restrict entries to 40. But he was soon overwhelmed with entries, so with careful management, staggering the arrivals, the bus journeys and the briefings, he gave all applicants a chance to attend this exceptionally privileged day out.

After a spell of superb weather, the forecasters were threatening to spoil our fun, but the rain and cloud managed to hold off just long enough to allow everyone to land at Wickenby. A short bus journey for the first 40 members arrived at RAF Scampton near Lincoln in good time for us to be met by Squadron Leader Jon Trott, Red Arrows Team Manager, who looked after us for the day. He passed us on to a well briefed fitter who showed us round a Red Arrow Hawk in the engineering hangar.

20 pilots from the first group were allowed to sit in on the pre flight briefing where we had to be seated by 10:20 and we immediately recognised the professionalism and punctuality of the team as the pilots took their places on time. Red 1 – Wing Commander Jas Hawker, stood at the front and counted down "3 – 2 – 1, 10:25 briefing started". For the next 20 minutes, he went through every step of the display at 350 kts, using code and expressions that even the 20 FFA pilots found hard to follow. The other 8 Reds sat there relaxed and attentive absorbing this alien language and occasionally replying in similar code. Briefing over, the Reds donned their g suits and went to their respective aircraft.

The Hawks were lined up outside and looked magnificent in their red livery. Without wasting any time, Red 1 started taxying with his gang following in precise order. They took off and quickly disappeared low level behind the large hangers. Suddenly, at precisely 11:00, they appeared out of nowhere from behind us in tight formation with their tricolour smoke on. They went through their immaculate display and we could hear on a handheld radio the sharp code language of Red 1 as he cued the start of turns and manoeuvres. Typical formations performed were the 9 Arrow Roll, Concorde, the Vixen Break and Python. My horse orientated daughter described the display as being far better than pure dressage.

Half way through the display the team split into a 5 and a 4 who gave their own sequences of Gypo Pass, Opposition Barrel Roll, and the famous Heart. Having two groups meant that as soon as one team completed a move, the others were coming out of nowhere to perform yet another breath taking sequence.

The display lasted about 20 minutes and finished by them flying towards us in a Diamond Nine and doing a Vertical Break right overhead which was stunning. It's fair to say that even though everyone there had probably seen the Reds per-


Crown copyright





form several times, this performance seemed to be especially for this private audience of Flying Farmers and we stood in awe at the breathtaking display. They are the worlds best; at least that's my opinion.

We had a few minutes for a couple of group photos with the pilots and chance to have a few words with the Reds, before another group of 20 FFA pilots attended the de-brief. As I wasn't at the de-brief, David Keene sent this:-

All displays and display practices are recorded onto video tape and no sortie is flown before the previous sortie has been fully debriefed. Witnessing a display debrief was a very rare privilege.

The team leader (The Boss) helpfully started his de-brief by addressing us, the flying farmers, carefully explaining the terminology used to describe aircraft positional errors, both in terms of the three planes of movement and the timing of formation changes.

The debrief commenced with the standard question 'Safety Points?' Team members were addressed individually, by number, to ensure that any safety issues were discussed before proceeding. Several minor issues were raised.

The whole sortie was then talked through, manoeuvre by manoeuvre, formation change by formation change. Rather than the boss pointing out errors, all team members participating, calling out their own errors, however small. All the pilots are highly experienced and all are familiar with the standard required, which is, of course, perfection! Next, the video tape was played back. The image was 'frozen' each time the formation passed crowd centre. Again, team members called out their errors, the majority of which were not detectable by our less critical eyes.

Finally, each team member was asked directly if he had any other points for discussion from the sortie, so ensuring that all leaning points and issues had been raised before another display was planned.

I believe that we all learned from the thoroughness of this very professional approach to sortie debriefing. Perhaps we should all try a similar process after each of our flights?

Meanwhile, Dick's logistics were working well as the first 40 were whisked off to meet FFA members Chris and Ann Kitchen at nearby Owmby. Their business, Kitchen Garden Produce, grows and packs 200 acres of Asparagus and 280 acres of Shallots for Tesco, Sainsbury and Morrison. Chris said that although the retailers can be a pain to deal with, they pay on time and sell his produce consistently. Surprisingly he said Tesco pay in 14 to 20 days, the others taking a little longer.

He took us round his packing sheds where he employs 80 plus staff including the field operators. These mainly Eastern European workers are housed in mobile homes on site. I watched one particular girl sorting asparagus into 450 gram bunches and thought how tedious and mind numbing a job like that must be. But I have to remember how lucky I am, like all my colleagues that day, to have flown into Wickenby in my own aeroplane, spend the morning with the Red Arrows and return home to a comfortable existence. She will still be there sorting and putting elastic bands round asparagus, the only variation being that they might now be in 250 gram bunches.



She will return to a caravan at night and start bunching asparagus again in the morning. Let's hope that she is as happy in her work as we are in ours and she can return to her own country with plenty of hard earned dosh.

Ann Kitchen had been busy behind the scenes, preparing lunch for us all, using their own products and other Lincolnshire delights. It was ideal for the Flying Farmers who appreciated the Kitchens' time showing us their successful and very well managed operation. We are indebted to them.

Dick kept us moving and we were on the bus again to return to Wickenby where we had the chance to see some of the Wickenby Memorial Collection in the original control tower and some of the historic privately owned aircraft.

Wow – what a spectacular day! Many thanks to Dick, The Red Arrows team, Chris and Ann Kitchen and the staff at Wickenby. A brilliant day and I know from emails received that

FFA visit to Beachy Head Farm – 1st July 2009

It was a most unusual start to an FFA event. A small drift of quickly dispersing mist on the East coast, and clear blue skies with unlimited visibility over the rest of the UK, enabled a full turn-out of 33 participants and allowed the coach to depart Deanland airfield for Charlie Davies-Gilbert's farm exactly on schedule. Deanland is quite a challenging airfield, being only 460 metres long but all pilots coped in exemplary fashion – as one would expect from seasoned farm strip operators.

On arrival at East Dean village, 20 minutes was given to the participants to wander around the farmers market and have a cup of coffee before meeting up with our host, who began by giving a power point presentation of his background and his achievements, which gave us all an excellent insight into the day to come. The main thrust of his presentation was that farming as in the good old days was no longer viable on their very marginal soil. The local chamber of trade reckoned that there were a million 'footfalls' a year in the area and with the many footpaths that crossed the land these visitors should be harnessed. Maybe the seeds of this idea were sown when Charlie and his sister were teenagers and they noticed that people on the footpaths were stopping by the gate, which led to the lambing pens. They offered to show these people around the pens for £1/head, and in those holidays they took £1,000 (which didn't go down well with the shepherd – so they had to give him a cut of the takings!). An important part of his business has been securing the 'Beachy Head' trademark, which is applied to all aspects of his business (and which rankles with the local council who didn't think of it first!).

Presentation over, we were taken on a walking tour to the downs overlooking the village, which showed why agriculture is no longer viable in this area. The thin chalkland supports poor growth, particularly in dry times, and the grassland was already showing signs of distress. The grass had been given over to the local sheep farmer for grazing at no cost – thus giving the business a net cash benefit by no longer having to top the grassland two or three times a year.

Tour over we returned to the village centre where we looked round his next enterprise of holiday-let cottages. Redundant barns very tastefully converted to three family lets are fully booked at least 6 months in advance. So successful has this been that planning permission is being sought for the building of three more in an adjacent derelict walled in kitchen garden area.

The local pub – The Tiger Inn – had laid on a substantial lunch for us. This pub is another of Charlie's' diversification enterprises. In a run-down state for some years, he took it on and re-vamped it, and now it is a very busy unit complementary to the adjacent Farmer's market.





Continuing after lunch we boarded the bus to visit the family home where we were introduced to Charlie's father who had turned a lovely beamed barn and gardens into a wedding venue. This was run on slightly different lines to the more common venue where the event organiser lays everything on, in that the wedding participants have carte blanche to set the event up in their own style with local suppliers of catering, drink, flowers and all necessary ancillaries.

We then walked a couple of hundred yards to some old buildings where Terry, who was the farm shepherd in the days that they still had sheep, had set up his own business with the help of Charlie. Based around a rare breeds enterprise, (of which he has 55 examples) it also includes associated activities and a mini adventure playground. Very popular with the local schools, he has recently started to take the sheep to the schools rather that the schools to the sheep – the reason being the ever-present nightmare of economy cuts in the schools – in this instance due to the high cost of coach hire. He has also started visiting care homes giving great therapeutic value to the residents.

A most amusing character and raconteur, Terry kept us amused for three quarters of an hour before we moved on to the farm grain store, which had been turned into a micro brewery and has subsequently won awards for its produce in various beer festivals. Everyone was generously given a bottle of his Beachy Head ale to take home (well, they wouldn't drink it before flying, would they!)

Time was getting on and slippage was beginning to occur, so we boarded the coach for the obligatory visit to the heads where the bad reputation as the suicide capital of the country had been gained, and which Charlie with his Beachy Head branding is doing so much to alleviate. Much peeping over the edge took place, which confirmed why survival by those who choose to jump over is simply not an option. On our way back to the village we stopped briefly at the local café and car park which is on a another cliff edge and which is eroding in excess of a metre a year. Realising this, Charlie has secured planning permission for a car parking area on the other side of the road, which will be a legacy for his children when the existing car park finally falls into the sea! Within this car park he has rented out a plot for an Ice Cream van for which he takes £20,000/year rental!! (you did read that figure right; how many of us might have said to an ice cream vendor 'Oh, give me 500 quid and you can park your van here for the year'). Now that is a seriously good per-acre income.

These are all the reasons why Charlie has been so successful in all that he does – so much forward thinking. Then we were back to the village for our thanks and farewells for a most interesting visit enhanced by beautiful weather – everyone getting airborne for their journeys home from a none-too-long strip without drama.

Martin Gosling

Recent Avionics Developments concerning Flying Farmers & Pilots.

In the last few years a number of avionic improvements have been made which are designed to reduce the risk of mid air collisions (or close airmisses or Airprox's) and "Controlled Flight into Terrain" (CFIT). The use of enhanced Mode A/C and S Transponders is utilized to give warnings and avoidance of possible airborne collisions, while an internal terrain database and the use of live GPS signals is used to help prevent aircraft hitting high ground or an obstruction during any stage of the flight or during an approach to land or just after take off.

The Terminal Collision Avoidance System (TCAS) relies on all aircraft carrying either a Mode A/C or S Transponder. TCAS has been fitted to all commercial aircraft above a certain weight and has been fitted in the UK to all RAF Tucano trainers and the newer Hawk Aircraft.

Those aircraft without a transponder at all will **NOT** be tracked and light aircraft with only a basic Mode A transponder will not provide complete protection due to a lack of any altitude reporting data. These aircraft will be **assumed** to be at the same altitude as the other aircraft and a traffic advisory (TA) warning will be issued

Without becoming too technical, the transponders of all aircraft within a twelve or six nautical mile range will "talk" electronically to each other and the relative positions and any vertical movement of each will be given on a pictorial display within the cockpit, usually as part of the Vertical Speed Indicator (VSI) presentation. Should a risk of a collision or airmiss be determined a 25 second warning of the Closest Point of Approach (CPA) will be given with a Resolution Advisory (RA) command in the **Vertical Plane** only to remove the risk. One aircraft may be told to climb whilst the other may be told to descend or remain in level flight. When another aircraft is in close proximity but not an immediate risk, a Traffic Advisory (TA) will be given allowing the pilot or crew time to alter course, or seek a visual confirmation.

When light aircraft with a basic Mode A transponder is detected, it is assumed the aircraft is at the SAME altitude and only a TA can be given. Hence the aircraft could be well above or below the other aircraft with a TCAS alerting system. False



TA alerts may result.

It is clear therefore that to enhance flight safety for all aircraft, especially in very busy airspace areas such as around major airfields, it is vital that an improved, more modern transponder is carried. This is the main reason why the various national aviation authorities are requiring Mode S transponders to be fitted in the years ahead. They are already mandatory is some areas of airspace, especially in parts of Europe.

TAWS, or "Terrain Avoidance Warning System" is designed to prevent any Controlled Flight into Terrain (CFIT) accidents. This is a much improved Ground Proximity Warning System (GPWS) which used to give warning based solely on the vertical clearance to terrain directly below the aircraft. This meant that an aircraft flying directly towards a vertical cliff face would receive NO warning at all.

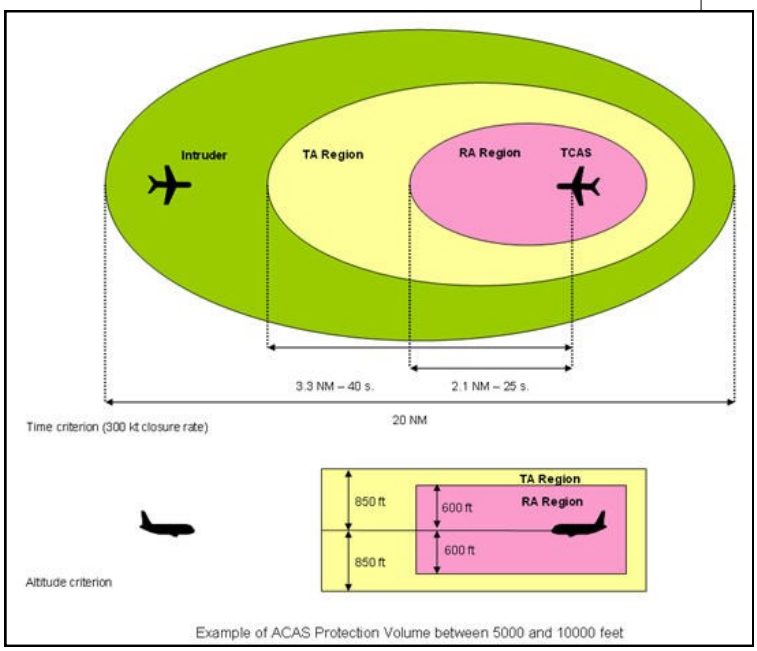
The new improved TAWS utilises an internal terrain database and the aircrafts actual GPS position to warn and show terrain and obstacles ahead of the aircraft. The presentation is usually shown on the aircraft's weather radar or as part of the display on the modern Horizontal Systems Indicator (HSI). Various colours are used to indicate the severity of the threat from Red for terrain well above the aircraft, to Yellow for terrain just above the aircraft's current altitude and Green or Blue for safe ground or sea below the aircraft.

Various warnings are issued as an aircraft approaches any threatening terrain telling the pilot to either climb, pull up, or reduce descent etc. The database contains details or all known airfields so that within certain parameters, no warning is given whilst approaching to land or just after take off. The newer more modern glass cockpit types of light aircraft may well have a TAWS system incorporated into their avionics, so it is worth being aware of the details. You may one day fly one yourself?

However, it is important for ALL light aircraft to have modern Mode S or Mode A/C transponders fitted to enhance flight safety and to help in the prevention of possible mid air collisions.

It could be argued that having all these modern warning aids will reduce the level of lookout and overall awareness of pilots, but in the crowded airspace around the major airports and in mountainous country, prevention of any accident is a positive safety development.

Hugh Thompson



Example of ACAS Protection Volume between 5000 and 10000 feet

Detailed Income and Expenditure Account March 31st 2008 to March 31st 2009

		2009		2008
INCOME				
Subscription & Entrance Fees		10260		10030
Surplus on sale of stock of clothing		39		25
Interest earned		791		1205
		11090		11260
DEDUCT EXPENDITURE				
Newsletters - cost of production	3937		3598	
Less - advertisements	-150		-200	
Net newsletter cost		3787		3398
Membership booklet		0		1381
Committee expenses		526		137
Contribution to AOPA		600		250
Contribution to GAAC		200		300
Contribution to GASCo		200		350
Contribution to RAeC		0		200
Accountancy		143		118
AGM costs		445		872
Website costs		483		152
Insurance		1313		1509
Sundry		78		89
Re-valuation of stock		-		-
Total expenditure		7775		8756
Surplus/(deficit) before taxation		3315		2504
Deduct Corporation Tax due on interest earned		166		241
Surplus/(deficit) after taxation		3149		2263
Surplus on Fly-ins		-340		308
Surplus brought forward		24057		21486
Surplus carried forward		26866		24057

Balance Sheet as at March 31st 2009

CURRENT ASSETS		
Stocks of clothing	1067	1340
Debtors	1344	2363
Cash at bank	24811	22411
	27222	26114
DEDUCT: CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year		
Creditors and Accruals	178	1816
Corporation Tax	178	241
	356	2057
TOTAL NET ASSETS	**26866**	**24057**
RESERVES		
Accumulated surplus	26866	24057

The FFA in association with Hayward Aviation Ltd, 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 estimated third party movements each year and the limit of liability cover chosen.

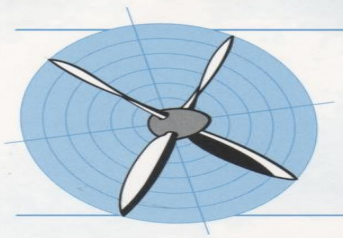
Annual Movements by Third Party Aircraft	Limit of Liability £500,000	Limit of Liability £1,000,000	Other
Up to 100	£195	£300	To be agreed
Up to 250	£240	£325	To be agreed
Up to 500	£275	£360	To be agreed
Up to 1000	£385	£440	To be agreed
Up to 2000	£440	£495	To be agreed
Over 2000	To be agreed	To be 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 **Hangarkeepers Liability** for an additional £75 for £500,000 any one occurrence, but limited to £50,000 any one aircraft. For £1,000,000 any one occurrence, it would be £150, limited to £50,000 any one aircraft.

Additional premium for Extended Coverage Endorsement (Aviation Liablilities) AVN 52G, 15% of premium charged for Premisis and Hangarkeepers Liability.

If you have any queries whatsoever, contact **Tim Procter** at Hayward Aviation on 0207 902 7800 or email TProcter@haywards.net.

Finally, it is worth noting that the FFA Committee are so concerned about liability claims that the FFA 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 its members to any liability claim. Under certain circumstances, the FFA will pay a year's premium if a member will allow their strip to be used for an event.



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- NO PROP REMOVAL NECESSARY.
- REDUCES VIBRATION.
- PROVIDES WEIGHT SOLUTIONS DOWN TO ONE TENTH GRAM.
- PERFORMS TWO - PLANE ENGINE VIBRATION TEST FOR EVEN BETTER VIBRATION REDUCTION.
- CALCULATES SPLIT WEIGHTS FOR EASY PLACEMENT.
- HELPS PREVENT EXHAUST AND COWLING CRACKING.
- REDUCES INSTRUMENT AND AVIONICS DAMAGE.

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