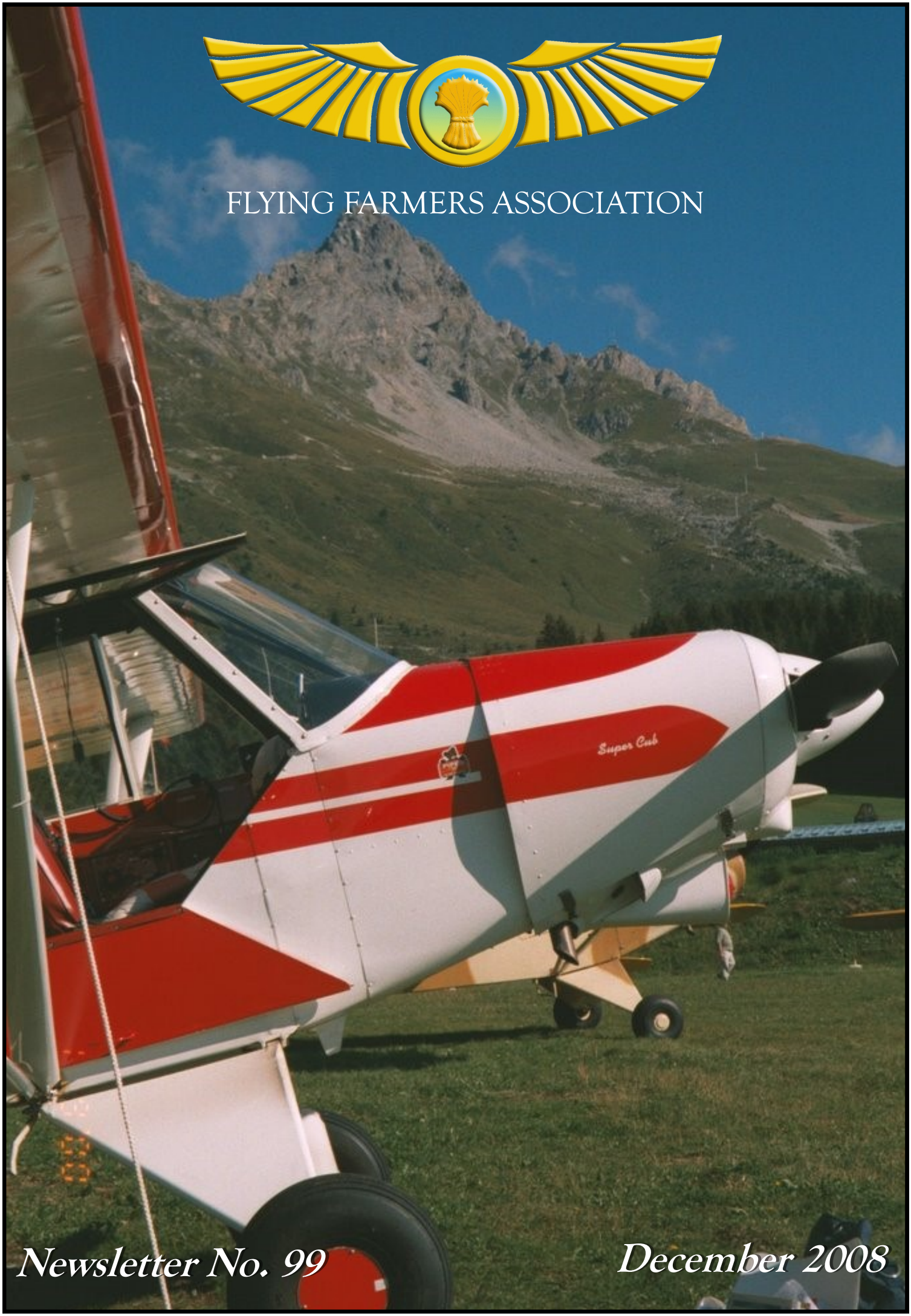


FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION

Newsletter No. 99

December 2008

Opening Thoughts

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Cover photograph;
Steve Samson's Cub at Meribel (for sale, see elsewhere in this issue).

Chairman's Message

2008 has been an 'interesting' year for the farming fraternity. We hoped that at last we were going to receive fair recompense for our labours, but then most of our suppliers saw an opportunity to share this pot of gold and now we are left with the reality that we are probably worse off than we were before. It is difficult to see far ahead when so many world economies are in, or going into, recession, when the likes of Woolworths are in a very serious condition, and when even Rolls Royce is cutting car production. I can only think that a time of consolidation is called for.

In any difficult time the 'big toys' sector, which includes aircraft, suffers. It will be interesting to see how many aircraft manufacturers survive the current down-turn.

And now the good news ....

The FFA is financially sound; those of you who attended the AGM will have seen our balance sheet, and I am sure that you will want to join with me in thanking the committee for their good management of our finances.

The FFA is about much more than its financial success: it is about what it is doing for its members. This year it organised some first class events around this country as well as trips to Spain and Normandy. Sharing interesting experiences and enjoying each other's company are pleasurable and hugely important to the present and future value of the Association. This issue of the Newsletter contains details of 2009's events. I am sure there will be something in the programme to tempt those of you who don't usually attend events - come and share with other members the benefits of belonging to the FFA.

Since Christmas is nearly here, I have sent Santa a note telling him that I want a new aeroplane equipped with all the goodies available. He did not respond to previous similar requests but, seriously, the value of aircraft is falling so you might be able to pick up a new or used bargain if you are in the market for new wings.

Two other things to cheer you up are the cut in VAT and the current price of avgas, which I hope will continue to fall so that I can afford to attend FFA meetings in 2009.

I wish you all a very happy Christmas and, if it's possible, a prosperous new year.

John Golden

Editor's Notes

This is the FFA's 99th newsletter and my 33rd. So what are we going to do for the 100th edition? Any suggestions or really good articles welcome.

As John suggests, now is maybe a good time to buy a new aeroplane and you need look no further than this issue. Fortunately, the reason for sale of all these aircraft is either retirement or a new aircraft's arrival. Also in this article is an update on the political side of general aviation - what would we do without David Corbett's updates, straight from the relevant meetings!

Coincidently, like John, I also wrote to Santa asking for a Mode S, a PLB and someone to simplify aircraft servicing requirements. He actually replied to my email, saying that he was fed up with new regulations and as he couldn't afford to keep up with all the requirements due to the recession, he's designed a stealth sleigh so that he can get round the EASA zone on Christmas Eve without being noticed.

FFA Forum

For those of you not on the bulk email system, you won't be aware that I have started an experimental FFA Forum. Registration is simple - either go to the www.ffa.org.uk go to LINKS, then OTHER and you will find the link. Or go directly to the forum at www.punbb-hosting.com/forums/ffa/index.php The first time you login in, you will have to go to 'not registered yet', fill in the boxes, then you will have a password to get on the forum. I'll let it run for a few months and if there is sufficient interest, then it can continue. I was actually surprised that we got 23 members registered in the first 24 hours. Topics will be split initially between flying matters and farming topics. So if you want to air your grievances, pose a question to everyone or join in the chat, please give it a try.

Paul Stephens

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
Martin Gosling	Airstrip Advice	01787 269369
Rick Holt	Committee Member	01386 761816

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Proposers and Seconders

When new members apply to join the FFA, according to our Articles of Association, they are required to be proposed and seconded by existing members "to whom the candidate shall be personally known and who shall be responsible for their eligibility".

I am bringing this to members' notice because a few year's ago the Committee decided to tighten up on eligibility for several reasons - one being to keep the Flying Farmers' membership nearer to a farming base and hence we would still be "flying farmers" rather than just another flying organisation.

Another reason was that applicants should be aware of the problems associated with operating farm strips.

Some pilots notice our website, or they hear that the FFA exists and they literally just want to join to get hold of our membership list, so they can joy ride round our strips. If you are a strip owner, you will be aware that some strips are in sensitive areas and risk being shut down and you will also be aware of liability problems if someone gets it wrong and ends up suing the landowner.

For these reasons, we rely on proposers and seconders to check that applicants follow the eligibility rules, which are basically that they should be "engaged in agriculture or forestry and use private aircraft or own an airstrip". (*This is a much shortened version of the Article*).

So if you are asked to propose someone, please make sure that they fit these parameters in order that we can keep the Association farming orientated and with a membership that appreciates the difficulties of strip ownership. If in doubt, give one of the committee members a ring or send an email.

Insurance Matters

Since May 2005, it has been compulsory to have Passenger and Third Party liability insurance for all UK registered aircraft. The minimum levels of cover proscribed are based on aircraft weight (MTOM). Where these minima are expressed in "SDRs" (Special Drawing Rights) changes in exchange rates should be checked with the Insurance Broker, to ensure that there is compliance. The current exchange rate is I SDR + £0.818. In most cases, liability cover under the policy is expressed as a "Combined Single Limit" (CSL), which means the cover is available both for passengers and Third parties i.e. those outside the aircraft. All this translates to a requirement for an aircraft such as the single engine Cessna 172 and similar, requiring Third party cover not less than £2.454 million, and passenger coverage of not less than £82,000 per passenger seat, to have a combined single limit of £2.7 million

Aircraft owners and operators should seek appropriate advice from their aviation insurance broker about whether they should purchase a higher limit of cover than the minimum. In our experience, in most cases they should purchase a higher level of cover. With a serious back injury and consequent lifelong disability for a passenger injured as a result of a pilot's negligence, one could be looking at a claim running into Two million pounds or more. It follows that pilots, whether aircraft owners or non-owing renters or users, are well advised to check the legal liability cover provided by the aircraft policy, and if necessary, seek advice from a broker or lawyer as to whether or not it is likely to be sufficient in all the circumstances .

As far as legal liability is concerned, there is a distinction between passengers, and those on the ground. In respect of passengers, a pilot who is negligent, will have a liability to any passenger who is killed, or injured (or who suffers loss or damage to property) while in his care. This liability is not automatic - the pilot must be shown to have been negligent ; that is doing something he should not have done, or not doing something he should have done. However in the case of injury or damage to persons or property on the ground, the liability is automatic, by virtue of the Civil Aviation Act. This means that there is no defence to a claim by a farmer awaiting FFA arrivals, who is injured by a landing aircraft going astray, and who claims both for his injuries and the barn full of expensive equipment which goes up in flames.

Further details or clarification are always available to FFA members, from Tim Scorer on tim.scorer@incelaw.com

Tim Scorer

Aircraft for Sale

There are a number of member's aircraft for sale on the FFA website (www.ffa.org.uk) including a very nice Piper Cub (see front cover) offered by Steve Samson:-

FOR SALE: Supercub G-BVMI PA18-150. After about 10 years of ownership it is finally time to put 'Mike India' on the market. TTAF 5635, Engine 525 SMOH. CofA valid until April 2011. For full details please see: http://gbvmi.blogspot.com/

He has also completed and flown his RV4. For anyone building or considering building their own aircraft, he has an excellent and detailed website http://gikonhome.blogspot.com/ well worth looking at even if you aren't a builder.



Welcome to New Members

Since 1st August 2008, the following have joined

		Strip
831	David Lloyd, Oswestry	n
832	Howard Owen, Llanelli	y

The total membership now stands at 394

Programme 2009

February 20th	Houses of Parliament, London
March 20th	Isle of Wight
April 16th	Alvis Bros. Lye Cross Farm, Bristol
April 22nd or 29th	RAF Cosford
May 9th-16th	FFA Tour of the Netherlands & Norway
May 27th	Harewood House, Leeds
June 3rd	Tilsted Manor Estate, Wiltshire
June mid	Scottish Borders
July	Beachy Head, East Sussex
September	Jodrel Bank
September	Rolls Royce Heritage, Derby
October	AGM



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.

Dear Members,

Before I launch into the 2009 programme, I would like to record my thanks to you all for supporting the 2008 events, for assisting me with ideas, writing up reports, arranging transport and generally being a good crowd which, as any organiser will tell you is the thing that spurs him (or her) on.

To those of you whom we never see all I can say is that you are missing some wonderful outings. Why not give it a try in 2009.

I declared at our AGM that this will be my last year as events secretary so I am earnestly hoping that someone will come forward in the next 6 months to take my place both in this role and on the committee.

The 2009 programme.

This is still short on some detail so it may change a little. Once again I have tried to criss cross the country to suit all of you.

February 20th London. Tour of the Houses of Parliament. There is no charge for this visit. Responses to MJC by 14th January please.

March 20th Isle of Wight. Arriving late morning at Sandown airfield we visit Airframe Associates who manufacture Spitfire (and other) airframes. We stay overnight at The Sandringham Hotel where, after our evening meal, our well respected guest speaker Syd Bowsher will recount his experiences flying Chinooks in a war zone and other escapades. Cost, to include landing, bed, breakfast, evening meal, guest speaker and mini coach, but not lunch is £62 per person. Registration please by 14th January stating single or double room to MJC.

NB This is limited to about 40 people.

April 22nd or 29th RAF Cosford. I have had to put two dates on this visit because, if the weather is poor, ATC at Cosford will close, and they will do so even half way through the day if a deterioration occurs, so we have to be very careful not to be caught out. MOD insurance is a must as are details of aircraft and passengers. Cost to include landing and light lunch £25. Response please to MJC by 14th February.

May 9 – 16 Overseas – Norway (see next page).

May 27th Harewood House, Leeds. You won't want to miss this one. Further details in next newsletter.

June 3rd Tilstead Manor Estate, Wiltshire. Farm tour, barbeque, vintage DH Moths, huge grass runway. Further details in next newsletter.

June (mid) Visit to Scottish borders, Buccleugh Estate plus Alnwick Castle. This is planned as a 2 day visit. Further details in next newsletter.

July Beachy Head. East Sussex. 1000 acre estate plus diversification. Further details later.

September Jodrell Bank. Landing at Ashcroft. See the work and history of JB. During the cold war period this was the only radio telescope in the world capable of tracking a Russian nuclear missile. See also National collection of Malus and Sorbus in the arboretum. Further details later.

September Rolls Royce Heritage in Derby.

Mike Cuttell

Netherlands/Norway Study Tour, 9th - 16th May 2009

The programme for the tour is at a preliminary planning stage but will include a stop in Amsterdam and a visit to some state of the art horticultural, a stop in Oslo, a visit to the Agricultural University's farm, a visit in the Kristiansand area to a family farm/forest unit and fish farming and processing in the Stavanger area, together with some cultural stops.

Stavanger is our final airport and would be a good starting point for anyone wishing to spend more time in Norway flying the Fiords.

Costings have not been finalised but suffice to say the tour will not be cheap.

Anyone wishing to take part in the tour should register their interest with Mike Ashmole ASAP by email mike.ashmole@blueyonder.co.uk or by post to Waterside Isla rd. Perth PH2 7HG. Indicating number of participants and aircraft type, and whether you wish to extend your stay to fly the west coast of Norway.

Autumn Meetings

October 1st, Part 1 - Thatcham

Having arrived by road due to the high winds and low cloud, we all met at John Goddard's farm. Two intrepid flyers managed to fly to John's strip and two more flew to Brimpton. 27 members in all attended.

The first part of the day's visit was around the Thatcham centre, which is best known as The Motor Insurance Repair Research Centre, which was established in 1969 by British insurers. The centre is independently operated with a Board of Directors drawn from amongst the 31 insurer members that fund their work. It is a not-for-profit organisation; there main aim is to carry out research targeted at containing or reducing the cost of motor insurance claims, whilst maintaining safety and quality standards.

They are best known by the motorist for testing vehicle security systems and for their work testing seats for whiplash prevention. Less well known is the fact that they provide some 70% of the data that insurers use to define a car's insurance grouping. They employ over 140 members of staff in a very modern building. Also energy conscience, they have a number of wind turbines on the site which provide approx 25% of their electricity. Week days and weekends, the surplus power goes back into the grid.

With more Asian manufacturers now entering the market, Thatcham have now established a base in Thailand for visiting countries like Japan, China and others which are within the Asian corridor. This was a very interesting visit.

Neville Stops

Part 2 - The Newbury Crematorium

After a light lunch locally, we were taken to the site of a new Crematorium for the area built on our member John Goddard's land on the outskirts of Newbury town.

Only open for a year or so, it is a most attractive building but in a traditional sense with the usual well laid-out gardens and flowerbeds giving a feeling of peace and tranquillity. It operates on a five-day basis, but this can be extended for a Saturday or Sunday on special request. With no service taking place at the time we arrived, we were fortunate to be given a comprehensive account of the workings of a crematorium, and this one in particular, by the registrar – a large jolly man from South Africa - and our many (predictable) questions were answered with patience and good humour. He told many stories of various incidents over the years – mostly with black humour, which kept us all amused – indeed he suggested it was an essential ingredient in his job, although he was at pains to point out that when a taking a service or dealing with family and friends, dignity and compassion were paramount.

Eventually someone plucked up the courage to ask the question that we had all wanted to ask – could we have a look 'behind the curtain'. "Of course" was the answer, and it was with much trepidation that we all filed through the door into a large spacious room containing in the centre, a large rectangular gas-fired furnace, which to our horror was running at full bore! We were surprised because there had been no service for a while, but our guide explained that in fact cremation takes much longer than a service, so in busy times there is a queue of coffins to be dealt with. We were shown the extremely high-tech control panel, which monitors every conceivable aspect of the operation. Emissions are very tightly controlled by law and all details of the operation are transmitted to the authorities by telemetry to ensure compliance.



Probably the one thing that most people are doubtful about with a cremation, is whether they would be getting back their 'own' ashes, and that there may be a pooling of the ashes from many cremations. We were shown categorically that that is not the case and the furnace is cleared out after every cremation – indeed no furnace is capable of dealing with more than one coffin at a time. The shiny handles and fittings on coffins are in reality just combustible plastic rather than brass. In the office were several shelves of containers of ashes all very well documented and ready for either collection or delivery.

The matter-of-fact way that our guide dealt with all our questions - and no question was out of bounds - rapidly put us all at ease. If the above sounds in any way ghoulish or tasteless, I can assure you it was not. What it has done for every one of us that went 'behind the scenes' is to very much put our minds at rest about how our friends and loved ones are dealt with in their final contact with this world.

After all questions were exhausted we returned to the body of the hall to enjoy a large spread of tea laid on by two ladies involved in the maintenance of the crematorium, and a grateful vote of thanks given to the registrar for the amusing way he dealt with our visit and all our questions.

Our thanks go to John and Steve Goddard for setting up these two visits for us.

Martin Gosling

Autumn Meetings contd....

AGM 2008

The 2008 AGM was held at Husbands Bosworth on the 15th October 2008. It gets boring, but the weather did it's usual with low cloud scheduled to clear by late morning. This year we decided to delay the start of the meeting to 12 noon in order to give the weather a bit more time to clear, but the weathermen also delayed the clearance, hence only 5 aircraft arrived just in time for the start and 1 helicopter arrived the previous day.

As usual, members put in a big effort and took to their cars. So considering the weather, numbers were respectable with 45 out of the 60 booked in sitting down in time for John Golden, our Chairman to start the AGM spot on 12:00.

The action minutes are printed elsewhere in this issue. More detailed matters as follows:-

- It was the turn of Mike Ashmole and Martin Gosling to stand down from the committee. Mike didn't wish to stand again and as there were no nominations for a replacement, Martin was adopted back onto the committee.
- Mike Cuttell went through a provisional events programme for 2009 starting with a meeting in London in February. Other possibilities fir the year are a visit to Manchester Airport, the Met Office, Jodrel Bank, Cosford Museum, an estate on Exmoor, a visit to RS Hill and Sons, Rolls Royce at Derby and a meet on the Scottish Borders. Mike then announced that he will be standing down from his position at the end of the 2009 events season.
- Mike Ashmole gave us a little more detail of the 2009 FFA European Tour, which will start in The Netherlands with some visits organised by Rick Holt. Then we move onto Norway for a few days. Because of the expense, the tour will be a little shorter than usual. Probabe start date will be May 11th.
- In AOB, various items were discussed including the annual debate about who should receive the FFA donations, OFFCOM charges, Mode S, ELTs and PLBs.

The guest speaker was Steve Jarvis from Cranfield who gave a very animated talk on Human Factors in Aviation. He demonstrated quite clearly, with the aid of videos and audience participation, how we can be concentrating so hard on one thing that we completely miss the obvious. He showed how human nature lets us be guided by others, and how we react in the company of others compared to being on our own.

It was an extremely interesting talk and we all learnt how avoidable accidents can happen.

The demonstration of a gyrocopter was cancelled by the pilot because of the poor weather, so after a very acceptable buffet lunch, we dispersed in much improved conditions to the morning's weather.

Paul Stephens

General Aviation Updates

ATSOCAS – Air Traffic Control Outside Controlled Airspace

With effect from 12 March 2009, the categories of Air Traffic Control service available to pilots flying outside controlled airspace will change; Flight Information Service, Radar Information Service and Radar Advisory Service will disappear. New types of service will be provided, and these new types will be provided by all ATS units, including UK military and USAF stations in UK, as a standardised service.

Most of us will have heard about this new service by now, but this is to confirm that all pilots are about to receive a tutorial DVD issued by the joint civil/military "Airspace & Safety Initiative" working group, early in the New Year. The group also plans to issue a generic article for publication in magazines, and I hope that we may be able to include this article in the March 2009 FFA newsletter.

EASA Pilot Licensing – NPA 17.

Paul has already put out an e-mail newsletter about this NPA, but since that went out, we now believe that the consultation date will be extended to late January 2009. In this context, can I draw your attention to the IMC questionnaire on the AOPA website – it is very important that AOPA gets as much information about use of the IMC rating as possible.

Flying Training from Unlicensed Airfields

The possibility of a change to the ANO, to allow training from unlicensed airfields is getting very much closed – the CAA and all GA organisations are now giving the proposal their full support. As I am on the CAA working group that has been dealing with this, could I ask any FFA member who plans to consider allowing flying training from his/her airstrip to contact me direct at my usual e-mail address david.corbett5@btinternet.com Please put FTSG in the subject box.

Listening squawks

Pilot members will be aware that several airports now publish "listening squawks" which we can set on our transponders to show to the relevant ATC that we are listening on that frequency, but not intending to make contact; this principle has already enabled controllers to warn several pilots that they might be about to (or have just) infringed controlled airspace. GASCo are now pressing for a listening squawk for, in particular, Farnborough Radar, which pilots can set to show that they are listening on that frequency, trying to make contact, but cannot get a word in because there is no pause in the traffic flow; watch this space...

ELT's, PLB's and Mode S

The intention to withdraw the listening watch on 121.5 mhz is being well publicised, as is the requirement by the French authorities that all aircraft carry PLB or ELT in their airspace. The CAA have not yet decided whether to renew their exemption for UK aircraft from the ICAO requirements for another year from 1 April 2009. Again, watch this space! And for those going on the FFA Study Tour in 2009, make sure that you understand the Dutch requirements for Mode S, in particular.

EASA Maintenance

By now, all C of A aircraft owners will be well along the route of making your maintenance arrangements under EASA's Part M, Sub-parts F & G. The Light Aircraft Association, which has a very well established engineering department, is investigating the option of setting up as a CAMO.

Watch the LAA website – which also has a good section on "Consultations". There is very serious concern at AAIB, echoed by GASCo, about EASA's action to remove the necessity of performance test flights for C of A aircraft. A recent accident report, on the PA28 fatal accident at Sandown, illustrates the reason for this concern; www.aaib.gov.uk Publications, October 2008 Bulletin, G-AVRP.

And finally – the latest on "Per Plane Tax"

It was announced on 28 November that the Government has abandoned plans to replace Air Passenger Duty with a "per plane" tax which would have been applied to all Avtur fuelled aircraft for every take-off in the UK, based on their MTOM. Although AVGAS fuelled aircraft would have been exempt, diesel powered aircraft and all helicopters would have had to pay this tax on top of the recently imposed Avtur fuel duty of over 50P per litre for private and leisure flying. Great credit is due to all the GA organisations that have fought on our behalf to have this proposal scrapped.

David Corbett

By Europa Around the Balkans

In mid September a group of Air Squadron members set off from UK to tour the Balkan countries. Of the 11 aircraft listed to take part in this adventure, 5 were FFA members' aircraft – Martin and Annette Gosling in their DR400, Roddy Blois in his C172, Seamus Lyons in his Maule, and my Europa were at the smallest end of the range, and Bruno Schroder in his PC12 was the largest and fastest of the fleet. One other participant should be an FFA member – we are working hard to recruit him!

We were asked to meet up at our hotel in Split (Croatia) in time for a reception at 1830 on Sunday 14 September. Martin and Roddy decided to play safe, and flew out to Losinj Island, Croatia, on Friday, leaving themselves just 100 NM to fly on to Split on the Sunday. Penny and I left Shobdon after an early lunch on the Friday and had an easy flight to Poitiers where, thanks to www.booking.com we stayed in the Central Hotel, which was the hotel that the FFA 2002 Study Tour had used. We planned to fly on to Genoa the following day to meet up with Michael and Rosemary Fopp in their Lancair (the only other Permit aircraft) for Saturday night.

Thanks to a small laptop and an external modem (no need to be in a building or anywhere near a Wifi source), we were able to interrogate www.xcweather.co.uk and www.orbifly.com, amongst other sites, before breakfast each day. On that Saturday it was clear that there was no way, due to CB's and low cloud, that we could go direct from Poitiers to Genoa, or anywhere near the rhumb line track – the whole of the Alpes Maritimes area was covered in thunderstorms. We therefore decided to fly south east to Montpelier on the S coast of France, where it was fine but extremely windy. We refuelled and then, after each being frisked at least 3 times by "security", we flew all along the S coast of France and then north east along the Italian coast to Genoa, watching the CB's inland with relief that we were not amongst them! Passing Hyeres we were diverted inland for a few miles and required to climb to 4000', because of a big fire in woodland on the coast ahead, and then had to make a rapid descent to 500' to get past Cannes and Nice airspace.

We arrived at Genoa at 1840 local time, about an hour after the Fopps, and we all spent the night at the hotel on the airport – convenient, but far from a brilliant meal!

The following morning it looked to be possible to fly north from Genoa, over the mountain range which tops out at 3846', and then turn east to fly at low level to coast out at the CHI VOR, 25 NM south of Venice. In the event we got over the hills by flying through the valleys – it was only about 35 NM before we could turn east - and we then proceeded at 800-1000' under low cloud, along the route that I had followed in 2007 during the Europa club trip around Italy; had I not known that route, I might well have aborted during the first half hour after turning east, but luckily after Cremona the cloud base started to rise, and the cloud to break up, such that we coasted out at CHI at 3500'. We had a peaceful sea crossing of 70 NM to Pula, where we arrived in CAVOK conditions, and had a quick and easy clearance in to Croatia. Whilst we were refuelling, the co-pilot of a NetJet Citation, awaiting his passengers, came up to talk (he knew all about Europae) and he used his mobile to get us the latest Split weather; this promised an easy trip down the coast and a cloud free landing at Split.

We left Pula after a 1 hr 20 min stop, and set off at 2000' down the approved VFR route over the offshore islands for the 1 hr 10 min flight. We passed directly over Losinj Island, where Martin and Roddy had spent two days relaxing, but their aircraft were no longer there. As we approached the headland about 20 NM SW of Split airport, the skies darkened and the cloud began to lower. Luckily, we were able to make a straight in approach to Split's runway 06; as we approached over the narrow spit of land between Trogir and the "island" just off shore, the cloudbase was down to 800'; we landed in light rain, in almost dark conditions. The airport staff were excellent, ferrying us in to the terminal and getting us through security and into a taxi in record time. As we set off for Split city – a 30 minute drive – the heavens opened, and torrential rain then fell all the way to our hotel.

On arrival at the hotel about an hour before the appointed time, only Roddy, the Goslings and ourselves had arrived. At



En route Split to Tivet

Pula we had received a text from the Fopps to say that they had landed at Voghera, about 30 NM north of Genoa, and had abandoned any attempt to get to Split that day; their Lancair is very much faster than my Europa, and not suitable for low level flight in poor visibility under very low cloud. There was no news of any of the other aircraft.

As there was a reception laid on in the hotel for the whole party, it seemed likely that the five of us, and our Serbian liaison officer from the UK Embassy in Belgrade (himself an ex airforce helicopter pilot) were going to have a major party – and we did! (I have just had the bill – we really did!!) During the evening John Steel (the Air Squadron organising member) arrived IFR in his C182, and later a Cirrus SR22 arrived with 2 on board, also IFR.

Luckily, for reasons not unconnected with the previous night's party, Monday was a sight-seeing day. The 10 of us (John Steel had brought his brother-in-law, until recently Defence Attache in Belgrade) walked down to the old harbour in Split and boarded a fast ferry to Hvar Island, about an hour's voyage. On the island we had the most excellent fish lunch, with innumerable courses and plenty of wine, in a restaurant on the quayside; it was probably no more than 20 m from the ferry to the restaurant, but we did have time to explore some of the very narrow streets on multiple levels behind the harbour before lunch. After lunch there was time for more sight seeing in the town, before we took taxis across the island to board a different ferry to return to Split.

Back in Split, we walked into the old city, close to the old harbour, and met up with the other members who had managed to catch up with us (there were still some absentees) before enjoying an excellent meal outdoors in the main square of the old city.

On Tuesday, we were scheduled to fly to Podgorica, a military airbase in Montenegro, about 10 NM north of the Albanian border. By the time that we had gone through the usual routine for these trips – a 45 min coach journey, flight planning, met briefing, fee paying, etc, Penny and I did not get airborne until 1225 local – about half way through the fleet. John Steel had taken off first, to meet up with our military hosts at Podgorica. As we approached abeam Dubrovnik, their Approach controller warned us that we might not get into Podgorica because of thunderstorms, and that we might have to divert to Tivat, about 20 NM due west of Podgorica, but on the coast and clear of CB's. We were delighted to hear this, because Tivat was only a 15 min taxi ride to our hotel near Kotor, rather than a 75 minute coach ride from Podgorica! Tivat had declined, during the planning phase, to take our aircraft, because of supposed shortage of parking space. In the event, only the first two aircraft got into Podgorica, and all the others were diverted into Tivat, where we all landed in glorious sunshine. We were met by some charming girls from "Ops", and we self-parked into a tight huddle at the east end of the airport, leaving room for, in my opinion, 10-15 B 737's on the normal apron. We arrived at our hotel, on the south side of Kotor Bay, and had a relaxed afternoon, before going around the Bay by coach to embark on the Montenegrin navy's sail Training Ship "Jadran". Kotor and its surrounding mountains are a World Heritage Site, and deservedly so.



TS Jardan arriving at Kotor



Reception on board TS Jardran

On board TS Jadran we were greeted by officers of the Montenegrin Navy and Air Force, and by HM Ambassador to Montenegro and other guests. A magnificent buffet had been laid out on the upper deck, and Jadran cast off and motored quietly down the Bay and back again, during which time darkness fell, and we were able to enjoy the spectacular clear evening sky and the lights all around the Bay, and of course the hospitality on board.

On Wednesday, we set off by coach for a tour which initially took us south east along the main coast road, then up into the mountains to the small city of Cetinje, which had been the capital of Montenegro until just after WWII; here we were shown around a town house which had been preserved as a Museum, and then looked quickly around the town square, and saw many other interesting buildings from our coach. We then set off in a north-westerly direction, climbing up an in-



Tivat Airport


Bargaining at Centinje

credibly narrow road (having to stop frequently to let oncoming traffic pass), before starting our descent towards Kotor. Some way down the mountain, we stopped at the village of Njegus, where we were given lunch in the village restaurant – an excellent light meal of the village's specialities of air dried ham and


Typical mountain scenery

cheese; all the pigmeat used for the dried hams (which is similar to Parma ham) is imported from Hungary. After lunch the ladies were able to try on (and in some cases to buy) the most wonderfully colourful, and extremely warm, woollen coats. Once we got the ladies back onto the coach, we continued down the narrow mountain road, which was a spectacular descent, turning ever tighter hairpin bends, and with wonderful views out over the Adriatic, and down onto Tivat airport (where our aircraft were too small to be identifiable), and down into Kotor Bay. After a quick turnaround at the hotel, we took taxis and went back into Kotor for dinner in various restaurants. Yet another of our aircraft arrived to catch up with us today!


Climbing away from Tivat

On Thursday, we moved on to Belgrade; the weather was kind enough to allow VFR flight, including clear skies for the climb up across the initial 7000' range of mountains to the north of Podgorica. Once at the top of the climb, we were at 7500' for almost an hour, before beginning a very gradual descent to stay VFR as both the land mass and increasing cloud cover began to lower; by the Belgrade area we were down to 1500' amsl, for a visual approach to the military airport Batajnica (270' amsl), some 10 NM north west of the city of Belgrade. Here we refuelled, and had fairly relaxed "port of entry" formalities, whilst being welcomed by our Serbian Air Force hosts with some light refreshments. We then moved to our hotel in the city centre, where we found two more of our party, who had failed to find suitable weather to fly across Italy; they returned to the UK, and had flown out to join us for two days on a scheduled flight.

That night, we were entertained by HRH Crown Prince Alexander of Yugoslavia and his family at the White Palace, which is their home in Belgrade. We were conducted around the Palace – more like a large family home – and then given a display by a troupe of Serbian dancers and singers, after which we were entertained to an excellent dinner.

On Friday we had a free morning in Belgrade, and for the afternoon those keen on flying went back to Batajnica air base for a flying display featuring the Serbian Air Force's three principle fighter types – a Super Galeb, the Serbian equivalent of our Hawk, a Tupolev mid size fighter, and a Mig 29, all of which gave excellent solo displays. Most of us then went flying in SAF aircraft; Annette Gosling, another guest, and myself were taken off for a tour of the local country in a Gazelle; when we arrived at their local training area – which was in practice no different from any of the other farmland and villages we had flown over – we descended from 100-150' to 10-30', and had an excellent view of trees and maize crops flashing past the sides of


Getting ready

the helicopter!

That night we attended a reception in HM Ambassador's Residence. On the way to the residence, we passed a number of buildings, including one which had been their Ministry of Defence, which had been neatly drilled into, through their front walls, by cruise missiles from NATO forces when Serbia was coming under NATO pressure in 1999 to stop their ethnic cleansing of Albanian families in the autonomous province of Kosovo.The accuracy of these missiles, fired from hundreds, or more likely thousands of miles away, has to be seen to be believed. A number of these damaged buildings have been left, untouched and unrepaired, to this day.

On Saturday the group started to make their individual ways home to UK. The weather over Belgrade was lousy – 500'-700'


Refuelling at Batajnica


Tupolev


Mig 29

cloudbase and occasional rain, all reputed to be moving slowly westwards; nevertheless, the weather was forecast to gradually improve as we flew further to the west Penny and I were last away, having had a problem communicating with Batajnica Tower, but we were eventually able to get airborne, and to stay VMC – luckily the countryside is very flat in that part of the world. We passed south of Zagreb, having paid good attention to the very strict instructions that we were not to stray into Bosniam airspace; provided we remained north of the E70 motorway, we complied with that restriction! Our first stop was planned to be Portoroz, a small GA airfield in Slovenia, about 20 NM SW of Trieste. The reason for choosing this airfield was that it was the first airfield en route in a Schengen country, and was known to some of our party as a really friendly airfield, in a very attractive setting alongside the sea in a smallish bay. About 40 minutes before arriving at Portoroz, we ran into some of the most violent turbulence I have ever experienced – over the range of mountains running NW/SE just inland of the Adriatic coast; luckily this did not last too long, and we were then able to start our descent towards Portoroz.

Following a quick lunch and some more flight planning, we set off to (almost) retrace our route of a week earlier across N Italy; the weather for this leg was fine, and we were heading for Cuneo, a small airport about 50 NM S of Turin. The reason for this choice of destination was that it gave us the option, for the Sunday, of going south and west around the Alpes Maritime, or north over the Alps to Switzerland and thence home via the eastern part of France. As we made an evening approach to Cuneo, in very hazy conditions and towards a setting sun, it was apparent that we were flying over some very beautiful countryside; lots of small hills with villages and vineyards on top and around them – definitely an area to visit again one day.


Indija, the local VRP

On Sunday, our trusted laptop and met reports from the Ops desk at Cuneo indicated that we could get over the Alps, routing west of Torino, then overhead Aosta, past the Col du Grand St Bernard, and then start descending to pass over Bex and the east end of Lac Leman. France had been reported as being CAVOK all the way to the Channel, but in fact there was a layer of cloud over Lac Leman and north wards; I made the mistake of letting down through this cloud over Lac Leman, and then found that we could not get over the Jura mountain range, so we diverted into Yverdon, at the south end of the Lac de Neuchatel. Yverdon-les-Bains is a small and very quiet GA airfield with a hard runway. The airfield manager was incredibly helpful, fixing customs and immigration over the telephone, and giving us advice about our options. In the event, the cloud began to break up within an hour of our landing, and after flight planning and a quick lunch, we were able to climb through a hole over Yverdon and fly over the top of the small amount of cloud remaining on the mountains (about 20 NM); we then had a cloudless and hassle free flight, with FIS the whole way across France, direct to Lydd, where we cleared inbound, refuelled, and flew straight on to Shobdon, arriving home at 1830.

Some brief logistics and statistics – the whole of the journey was covered by Jeppesen VFR charts, except for the flight from Tivat to the Belgrade area, and the first part of the following flight, I am indebted to Bill Burton and Gerry Humphries for helping me out with chart coverage for that area. The total chart distance flown was almost exactly 2700 NM; flight time was 24 hrs 15 mins, and the total fuel used was 409 litres – so the overall averages were 111.3 kts, and 16.9 litres/hr. The average speed included two long non-stop climbs – one to 7500', the other to 11500'

David Corbett

FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the 34th AGM

Husbands Bosworth
Wednesday 15th October 2008

Present: J.R Walgate (President) J. Golden (Hon. Chairman), P. Stephens (Hon Secretary), A.Cragg (Hon. Treasurer) M. Cuttell (Hon Events Secretary), M.Ashmole, M.Gosling (Committee Members) and approx. 35 members.

P.Stephens took the minutes.

The meeting was opened by the Chairman at 12:02 hrs (local)

Apologies for absence
Apologies received from Pat Nutt, John Graves, Warwick Banks, William Procter, Roger Taylor, John Milne, Mike Rowland, Winston Bailey, David King, Andrew Collett and Paul Burtwistle.

Signing of the Minutes of the 33rd AGM held at Sywell on the 10th October 2007
The minutes were signed as a true and correct record.

Any Matters arising from the Minutes
There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report
The Chairman gave his report saying we were going through interesting times in the financial and aviation worlds with much gloom. Despite this, the FFA is sound and going forward.

Treasurer's Report
The Treasurer gave his report detailing a few items on the accounts.

Election of Committee Members
It was the turn of Mike Ashmole and Martin Gosling to stand down from the Committee. Mike Ashmole decided not to stand again. Martin Gosling agreed to stand again and as there were no nominations for the vacant position, it was agreed that Martin Gosling be adopted back onto the Committee.

Membership Report
The Secretary declared the total membership stood at 392 members. In the previous 12 months 13 new members had joined, 2 had rejoined and 6 members had left the list.

Event Secretary's Report
The Event's Secretary gave his report detailing a provisional program for 2009. He also announced that he would stand down from his position at the end of the 2009 events season.

AOB
There was a discussion on current issues; donations to the LAA, 2009 Tour to the Netherlands and Norway, OFFCOM charges, Mode S, ELTs and PLBs etc.

The Chairman closed the meeting AGM at 12:55 hrs (local)

Minutes approved at a subsequent AGM ……

1974 Maule M5 210HP N775RG



Airframe 1,920 TT, Engine TCM I0360-A 1,310 SMOH 1,500TBO, Prop 25 hours SMOH King ADF, King KX170B Duel/Com, King KX Nav/VOR Digital, King KT76A Transponder with Mode C Height Encoding, Two place SoftCom Intercom.
New Headlining, 8/10 Interior Grey cloth, 8/10 Paint White with Blue/ Green Accents
On N registration, annual due September 2009
Price: £24,950 + VAT
Contact: Ray Guess (FFA No 520)
Telephone: 01780-740142 Mobile 07860158300
e-mail: ewguess@compuserve.com

Half Share in Maule M5 M235C "Lunar Rocket"



Aircraft built 1979. Completely stripped, repainted & recovered in 1995 at 824 hours. Engine top end overhauled in 1999 at 1224 hours. Manufacturer's reconditioned zero time prop fitted in 2005 at 1594 hours. Total time 1725 hours.
New EASA ARC due for renewal by May 22nd 2009. Long range tanks. Full instrument fit including 2 GPS.
The present owners have shared the aircraft since 1993 on the basis of fixed costs split 50/50 and fuel costs based upon hours flown. It is based on a grass strip at Compton Chamberlayne, 8 miles west of Salisbury, where it has always been hangared and where there is a fuel bowser. A partnership of only two makes for good availability
Excellent rugged STOL aircraft, able to lift pilot plus 3 passengers, luggage and 4 ½ hours fuel from a 500 yard grass strip. Climbs like a homesick angel. 120 knot cruise provides good touring capability. This aircraft, under the present owners, has visited Sion, Saanen, Majorca, Cannes, the Isle of Gigha, Berlin and many other interesting destinations.
Price: Half share £14,000 ono **Contact:** Andrew Jeans (FFA No 402) at andrewjeans@tiscali.co.uk or John Clarkson on 01380 840744 or 07771 737319

1973 CESSNA 182P SKYLANE G-BAMJ



A superb full 4 seat touring aircraft with grass strip capability and IFR potential. This aircraft has been in the present owner's possession since 1989.
Airframe 2,800 hr, Engine 1,150 hr, Variable pitch propeller 210 hr
A new C of A will be issued. Excellent flying condition. Interior trim needs some attention. New paint 2002.
230 HP Continental 0-470-R engine
KMA 20 Audio Marker, Narco NS800 VHF Nav / DME (Rnav), KX 170BE Nav / Com, Narco COM 810 VHF Comm, KR 85 ADF, KT 76 Transponder (mode C), Navomatic Autopilot
Serviced by Akki Aviation Services, Turweston Aerodrome; CSE Aviation, Oxford; Airtime Aviation, Bournemouth.
Reason for sale: upgraded to a newer model.
Offers over £40,000 (no VAT).
Enquiries to sole agent: RON HARRISON, GT Aviation, Bournemouth, Worldwide Aircraft Sales Web Site: www.gtaviation.co.uk
Email: ron.harrison@gtaviation.co.uk
Tel / Fax: UK +44 (0)1305 814040 (Office) Tel / Fax: UK +44 (0) 1202 591500 (Airport Office)
Mobile: UK +44 (0)7802 203290 Mobile: Fax UK +44 (0)7715 015419 Skype: gtaviation
Price: Offers over £40,000.00 No VAT **Contact:** Anthony Kedros (FFA No 447) **Telephone:** 01865 513 224 **email:** anthony@kedros.co.uk

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DHC-1 Chipmunk ¼ share for sale.

Based Fen End Farm just north of Cambridge. Zero Hour Vintech Engine, new C of A Good availability
Price: Quarter share £9000 **Contact:** Ken Kelso (FFA No 761) **Telephone:** 01954 252399 **email: ken@fenendfarm.co.uk**