FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION

August 2019 newsletter no. 131









CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS

As predicted in the last newsletter, Brexit should have come and gone -but didn't.

Teresa May has indeed come and gone, to the relief of many - but as I see it, she was on a total hiding to nothing. The EU wouldn't re-negotiate, Parliament wouldn't agree, and so we all lost interest. Now it's Boris versus Jeremy, and the public don't seem that interested, just so long as SOMEONE delivers. I very much doubt the EU will entertain any renegotiation, parliament has vowed not to accept a No Deal, so it will be interesting to see what actually happens on October 31st. Are we still holding our breath...?

All the visits for this year have now been completed and reports on them are elsewhere in this newsletter. The weather played a mixed part in these events, but as is the case with our most resilient membership, when the day turns out to be un-flyable, they jump into their cars, drive for hours and many miles to support the hard work put in to creating the event. The final event of the season, at the beginning of this month, to The Map Room at Southwick House followed by a visit to the Tangmere Aviation Museum was, at last, blessed with the best flying conditions of the year with cloudless skies and unlimited visibility.

The women's World Cup seems to have caught the imagination of the country, but, despite the predictions of the press, success was not to be theirs. Wimbledon has started this week as I write, and Andy Murray has returned to the tournament to the delight of the nation after his hip replacement surgery - although not in the singles event, but in both the men's and mixed doubles. The first week enjoyed almost unbroken sunshine and it is to be hoped that this will continue as our harvest is just around the corner. After very mixed weather during the year, including a cold and miserable June, it appears that the potential for this year is pretty good. The last thing we need now is a damp miserable spell of weather to spoil it all.

Weather records seem to continue to happen around Europe and beyond. The 'Sahara Plume' spread across Italy, France and Germany giving record temperatures in all of these countries and came with the usual pleas from the government do-gooders to take care, stay indoors, seek shade and drink plenty of water - pretty basic things that hardly needed a government edict. I always feel we are lucky to live in a temperate climate that rarely has the dramatic events of other areas of the world.

This will be my last offering of 'Chairman's Ramblings' as I am standing down as Chairman as from the AGM. I have been in the chair now for 10 years and it is time that the role is taken by someone else. No one should hold that sort of position indefinitely, and besides, just a fortnight after the AGM I shall reach a milestone age in my life that doesn't need dwelling upon! It is time for younger folk to step up to the plate for committee work, and I hope that some of you out there will consider serving the Association. Committee work is not arduous and involves just two dedicated meetings a year, the rest mostly being conducted by email and occasional phone calls.

It has been an honour to be your Chairman, but the Committee is a joint effort by all members to do the will of the membership. I have to pay tribute to every one of them; Rick Holt, who for 7 years took the role of Events Secretary, sourcing and co-ordinating many enjoyable events. Neville Stops who has taken on Rick's role with some gusto, assisted by Gordon Bellerby - who together continue to give us such enjoyable flying events in the true traditions of the Association. Giles Abrey who has just taken over the role of newsletter editor from Paul Stephens, and will be bringing his own ideas of presentation. Along with that role he has agreed to mastermind a brand new and improved website which is very exciting and will hopefully be presented to you all at the AGM in October. Andrew Cragg who for many years now has kept our accounts in order and up to date, an unenviable post which he fulfils with great attention to detail. And finally Paul Stephens who has been the lynchpin of the Association, dealing with the original setting up of the (now outdated) website, all membership matters and of course that most envied newsletter which was all done in house at considerable time expenditure (not forgetting his wife Roz who has been a dedicated minute-taker at all meetings, and controller of all Association clothing) . To them all I say a big thank you.

Martin Gosling

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Publisher & Editor: Giles Abrey giles@abrey-farms.co.uk

Art Editor & Production: Kirsten Lee, kirsten@leeillustrations.co.uk

Main cover photograph: Le Havre taken by Winston Lee

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dick Walgate	**President**	01472 371203
Martin Gosling	**Chairman**	01787 269369
Paul Stephens	**Secretary**	01944 738281
Andrew Cragg	**Treasurer & Vice Chairman**	01303 874251
Neville Stops	**Events Secretary Elect**	01264 889678
Gordon Bellerby	**Assistant Events Secretary**	01423 520770
Rick Holt	**Committee Member**	01386 761816
Giles Abrey	**Committee Member**	07967 665470

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8655 John Verulam from St Albans, Hertfordshire
8658 Jeremy Garrett-Cox from Brechin, Angus
8660 Tom Kneen from St Germans, Cornwall
8661 Bill Miazek from Turriff, Aberdeenshire
8662 Al Bales from Norwich, Norfolk
Richard Pearson from Belford, Northumberland
8668 Roger Sheridan from Shipley, West Sussex
8669 Miller McElrea from Strabane, Tyrone

Committee Meeting, 27th June 2019

Nothing stands still in life and nor should it if we are to progress and move forward. Certainly, at this committee meeting, there was an air of change and the feeling that we are moving forward into a new era.

Martin and Annette Gosling hosted us again for our biennial meeting, providing not only a lovely venue and lunch, but ideal weather as well, allowing all 7 committee members to be present. These are just some of the points discussed.

The first point arising was to verify the proposals made at the last meeting, appointing a new Chairman and a new Newsletter Editor. If you remember, Martin Gosling had announced two years ago that he would retire at the 2019 AGM. Paul Stephens was proposed as the new Chairman and Giles Abrey had kindly stepped forward and said he would have a go at doing the newsletter. Both said they were happy to take the positions, and both were unanimously approved by the committee. The official changeover will take place at the next AGM, which will be held at Stow Maries in Essex on 17th October 2019.

The Secretary gave his membership report stating that there had been an influx of new members since the turn of the year. In fact, 15 had been approved by the committee as being eligible and 2 had been rejected as not eligible as they had nothing to do with farming. A problem we are experiencing is the standing order system of payment. An applicant is not made 'active' until the bank recognises the standing order and the subscription is taken. The system has worked reasonably well in the past, as long as the standing order is filled in correctly, but some banks seem to be treating these orders as old fashioned and they are dragging their feet, or they are not being activated until pushed. The Treasurer had already recognised this tardiness and there was a discussion on how this improved.

The Treasurer presented his budget, and it was also plain to see that costs continue to rise, yet our subscription rate hasn't changed this century, the last rise being from £5 to £25 in 1999! This rise caused the loss of 100 members, either because we are tight farmers or the process of getting members to change their standing orders was a step too far. A rise will be inevitable at some point in the future, but the method of doing so will be considered carefully.

The new Newsletter Editor had also taken on the task of forming a new website as the present one is based on an 'old' (in computer terms) platform and is due a makeover. He hoped the new website would be ready to launch at the AGM with the possibility of online booking for events and even an 'app' for the telephone.

Although online event booking is the way forward and even government insisting that BPS forms and tax be made digital, there were some on the committee who suggested that the paper based reply slips should be run alongside for a while, for the benefit of those that weren't up to speed with the modern technology.

The Events Secretary showed his continued enthusiasm for keeping a full events program. As already mentioned, the AGM will be at Stow Maries in Essex on 17th October organised by William and Jane Procter. There will be more Pop-in meetings with the possibility of one at Peter Gales's strip on 6th October. The traditional winter London meeting will be held in Edinburgh for a change – possibly 2 nights starting on February 4th. This is being put together by Richard Lawrence and will include a tour of the Royal Yacht. There are possibilities of a trip to Ireland, stopping over at Blackpool and the Isle of Man en route. Other possibilities include Rick Holt's tomatoes, the Intelligence Museum, a ballistics factory in Warminster and another visit to the Panton Brothers at East Kirkby to see not only their Lancaster but a Mosquito as well. Neville also has many more ideas, which is a healthy position to be in.

Please keep the ideas coming forward and anyone who has thoughts for farm visits would be welcome as this is the essence of the Flying Farmers Association.

Another air of change came with Gerald Hackemer standing down as our GASCo representative. Rick Holt kindly put himself forward to fill that position. It is important that we do keep up representation on these councils as we are making aware that the Flying Farmers exist and that our right / privilege to operate our own strips should continue.

Lastly, a continuously recurring subject keeps popping up, which is the matter of introducing Associate Membership. It was proposed about 10 years ago to make this category for those that didn't quite fill the eligibility requirements, such as vets, land agents etc. This was enthusiastically opposed by the membership at the AGM at the time for fear that we would not be the Flying Farmers anymore but become the Flying Allsorts. The matter has come up again, mainly because one of those that did oppose the move, would now like to make a flying companion a member, as he has contributed a lot of time and effort to helping organise tours - but he doesn't qualify for membership. It was agreed at committee that there should be a place available for a limited number of Associate Members who help us, but that they wouldn't have any voting rights, would not be committee members and would not be able to influence the direction of the FFA. This will be put forward at the next AGM.

As I said at the beginning – times are changing!

Paul Stephens

GAP Report 23rd July 2019

First off, the CAA GA unit has a new Head; Tony Rapson has moved on to be replaced by Rachel Gardner-Poole who chaired her first meeting of the GAP last Wednesday. On appointment she canvassed all the members of GAP about how they felt the forum worked and received the fairly resounding reply that it was a one-way street - lots of time to tell us what they were doing and not enough time to seek GA's opinion about what they were or should be doing. If this first meeting is indicative of the way forward then we can expect more two-way dialogue.

APPG

The All Party Parliamentary Group on GA lower airspace inquiry report was published this July. At 23 pages, it's not such a burden to read and easy to find: (**google: lord kirkhope inquiry report**). The first conclusion from the executive summary says it all: "The current Airspace design model, on all levels, is unfit for purpose." Basically, UK airspace is too complicated and the CAA has no powers to remove or reclassify airspace may have

become redundant or inappropriate - so it just gets "worse" (for GA).

Our member and chair of the APPG, Grant Shapps, has had to resign the chair since he has been made Secretary of State for Transport in the Boris re-shuffle. During his time as chairman he has been good to us and invited members of the committee to participate on many occasions.

Airspace.
The number of reported infringement continues its inexorable rise:
Year reports– 2014 – 913, 2015 – 1026, 2016 – 1000, 2017 – 1165, 2018 – 1387.

There is an acceptance within CAA that some of the rise is enhanced reporting but they are still "worried" about it. Head of Airspace was keen to assure us that the response was appropriate : the fact that most infringers only get letters, and the infringement course is generally well received and there are single digit prosecutions. That may be all well and good but we have a way to go yet – CAA needs to understand the nature of the increase as well as reviewing its conduct in the more serious cases.

We have the additional conundrum of CAA recommending use of moving maps while the publishers of moving maps propose the ultimate caveat to this in their disclaimers. Further, use of moving maps seems to give rise to the "technical infringement" where a pilot may navigate closely along the boundary of controlled airspace using a moving map and slip a wingtip over the edge.

I think there may be more going on than meets the eye; I was travelling south towards Southend for transit, and called them early for clearance. It was very quiet.

I was told to remain clear of controlled airspace and when the time came I had just started to turn away at the boundary when I received crossing clearance. Then he tore me off a strip for entering controlled airspace without clearance.

I don't know if I was a statisitic, I certainly didn't get a letter but it was strange behaviour. Controlled airspace is being challenged, is ATC thinking that infringements perversely justify the said airspace?

Airspace modernisation is on every body's lips. Sharing airspace with drones or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles as they are more commonly referred to is being vigorously debated not only to accommodate Amazone deliveries but unmanned aerial taxis. Airspace below 500' may suit the former but less so the latter perhaps. This issue, along with infringements and safety and non radar traffic services at airports is driving the electronic conspicuity (EC) debate.

There is nothing more to say on the detail of this but there will be a big push at the LAA Rally to seek pilots views on EC and elsewhere there are trails proposed to inform future strategy. GA needs to be strongly involved in that conversation.

Usually, time is given over for reports from each department head. This does take up a lot of meeting time and possibly lies behind the comments of members being talked at rather than listened to. Instead, the new chair gave a presentation on current projects. These had been reclassified under three priority areas, 1,2 & 3. There were 54 in total, most very technical and difficult to comment on in the scope of this report. I will, of course, be reporting on them in due course. We were asked if we agreed with the prioritisation although since there had been no prior notice of the presentation, members were somewhat short of inspiration and there was little comment. It is usual for very little information to be available before the meeting and we sought to address this as well. In future we should be better prepared to contribute.

Andrew Cragg

Chairman's Report to the 23rd AGM held on 14th June 2019

The All Party Parliamentary Group on General Aviation (APPG)
This year has been dominated by our work for the APPG. The objective for this Group, as set out by the British Government, is to make the UK the best country in the world for General Aviation. A full background may be found on their website www.generalaviationappg.uk .

I am delighted to say that the GAAC was invited to chair the Working Group on Airfields and our vice-chairman, John Gilder continues in this role. My own invitation was to be Chair of the Tax and Regulation Working Group. Other members of the GAAC Board serving alongside and supporting the APPG efforts are: Geoff Weighell, Steve Slater, Marion Wooldridge, Ann Bartaby, John Walker and Marc Bailey.

The APPG has considerable influence on Government and Regulatory Policies and in addition to our regular meetings with the Minister for Aviation at the DfT we have also had a face to face meeting with the Chancellor, Philip Hammond, which, without the influence of the APPG Chairman, Grant Shapps MP, would simply not have been possible. Such meetings are vital to enable our needs to be considered by Government. Again, details of the programmes for the working Groups are set out on the APPG Website.

Green Paper: 'Aviation 2050: The Future of UK Aviation
Most notable has been the result of the GAAC work last year which resulted in two reports published alongside the Green Paper 'Aviation 2050: The Future of UK Aviation'. In addition to the overarching Green Paper, two specific GA Documents were also published. These were 'General Aviation Strategic Network Recommendations' by Byron Davies, the specially appointed GA Champion at the DfT and the York Aviation 'Research into a Strategic Network of General Aviation Aerodromes'. The GAAC had several meetings with those concerned and was instrumental in gaining the DfT support necessary for their funding. While we believe both papers present a significant advance in the awareness for Government to protect airfields, we feel that much more should be done to ensure that the continued loss of airfields to Housing and other development is halted.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles will require both freight and passenger facilities and links to other transport infrastructure as well as for landings and take offs, neither report does justice to identifying such a future. Electric Transporters should reduce the pressures on our roads and the consequent pollution. With this in mind we have strengthened representation our Board to enable both the BMFA and ARPAS input to have a voice in our

work. Knee-jerk reaction to the 'drones' issue has already caused anxiety among those affected but their recreational use has significantly declined in recent months .

We shall be responding to the Green Paper and a 'Travelling Draft, should be with you for comment early in June. We would also welcome copies of the responses submitted by our supporting Associations in order that we may take into consideration those views expressed.

For example the BBGA is finding the 'slot' system working against their members wishing to use Airfields on an ad hoc basis and we would emphasise this issue in our own response. Indeed, we would welcome your contact with examples where you feel adverse impact on Airfields might warrant our specific input.

New Aviation Minister

We have enjoyed an excellent relationship with the DfT and have met with them on a number of occasions both individually and at Round Table events. The outgoing Minister Baroness Sugg was most helpful and we are sorry to lose such an advocate for our cause. The new under-Secretary of State with responsibility for Aviation is Baroness Vere of Norbiton was appointed only last month and we hope to establish an equally beneficial relationship.

CAA

Changes are also taking place at the CAA with the retirement of Tony Rapson from his position as CEO of the General Aviation Division and the appointment of Rachel Gardner-Poole as the new Head of the General Aviation unit. Rachel is a qualified ATPL and shares a passion for flying which I believe is a very positive plus point in her new job. Tony was a good friend to GA for the past five years and I have no doubt, given Rachel's experience in the CAA, she will be a worthy successor. The GAAC maintains a close working relationship with the CAA.

GAAC Activity

I have asked John Gilder, your most able vice-chairman, to provide a more detailed overview of his considerable work during the year on protecting the future of Airfields, he has commented as follows:

There has been a considerable amount of activity on a number of airfields but few have actually reached a final conclusion. Dunsfold and Haddenham appear doomed to become housing estates while the recently announced sale of Cambridge simply confirms rumours that have circulated for years as the Local Authority (and Marshalls) permitted developments on the south west departure route that simply made further safe operation difficult. At present we are actively involved with:

- Andrewsfield - Initial plan scrapped, new draft imminent
- Bicester - encroachment by current residents
- Blackbushe - AB expert witness
- Chalgrove - Working with Martin Baker & APPG
- Colerne -
- Elstree - Local Plan issues
- Eshott - Complex but crucial legal issue regarding rights of adjoining owners
- Fairoaks - GAAC Submission made, Application to be considered later this year
- Gamston - Housing threat
- Henlow - Local Plan Inquiry - JG & AB Attending June 14th
- North Weald - Adjacent development
- Redhill - Active
- Shoreham - currently under offer. Call in of consent refused.
- Stow Maries - letter of support for revised consent.
- Wellesbourne - awaiting result of a legal challenge. CPO approved by Council

Of these, Eshott and Wellesbourne are currently the most important as their outcomes will either resolve very specific issues for airfield owners and operators or throw the situations open to considerable abuse. Both are with the Courts and we await the decisions with interest.

Henlow is a more straightforward Planning matter but will be a significant indicator it terms of the Government's commitment to both the revised NPPF and the continued development of STEM activities.

Charles Henry FRAeS
Chairman GAAC

GASCo
The General Aviation Safety Council

GASCo meeting at AAIB Wednesday 31st July 2019

More than 30 people attended including Rupert Dent, son of ex FFA member Robin, and two people who fly from Croft Farm. If I'd known we could have shared a lift!

In the past year they have put on 50 safety meetings, 8 instructor/examiner meetings and 4 infringement meetings. Anybody can attend the latter but the ones in the home counties are booked up quickest. They have also been to Aero Expo and Parafest at Caerwys, North Wales and have the Scottish Aero Club flyin and the LAA Rally to come. There is also a ditching and survival day in August.

There was a discussion on paragliding. They are usually found below the cloud base. If you see one the chances are there will be more. Some paragliders stay up for 9 hours so the chances of busting controlled airspace are high. In the future there may be a mode S app on your phone with 5G on the horizon. Some statistics – GA is more dangerous than motor cycling, but less so than swimming!

After lunch we had a talk from Mike Bromfield of Coventry University on Loss of Control, the no 1 cause of accidents. After all the delegates were given the chance to speak, the meeting closed before we were split into groups for a tour of the hangar to see the crashed aircraft, most involving a fatality. The Shoreham Hawker Hunter is still there.

The next meeting is Wednesday 27th November.

Rick Holt



A FOLLOW-UP FROM THE GUERNSEY MEMBERS – The Lancaster Report

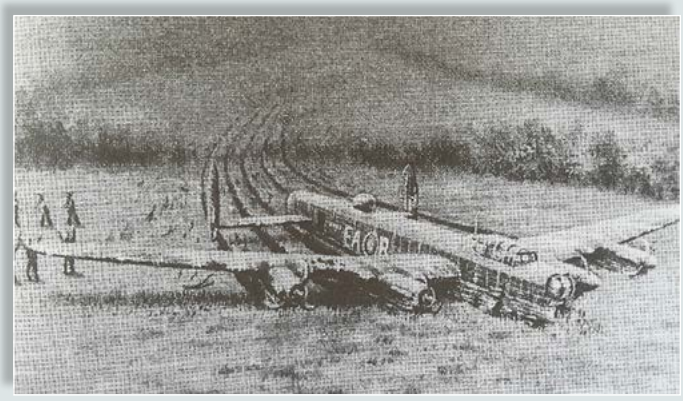
Is it almost a year since those of you who joined us in Guernsey, Alderney, Herm and Sark were here?

We all enjoyed your company very much, and the weather treated us very kindly – fond memories of last May – and thank you for coming.

Since you all returned, we were (eventually) able to send each aircraft owner a copy of the film of the book "The Guernsey Potato Peel Pie and Literary Society". Entertaining though it was, those of you who visited the Guernsey Occupation Museum and listened to the informative talk by Richard Heaume, its owner and curator, will know that life in these Islands under the jackboot was very hard indeed.

Those of you who came to Sark will remember the story of the damaged Avro Lancaster which put down at night in what, since before World War II, was always known as the Aeroplane Field, as one pre-War resident used to fly his De Havilland Moth from there. Those of you who saw the field and heard Chris Unitt talking about it may have thought he was telling fairy tales. Since your visit, the report and the letter dated 26 September 1992 from Eric J Singleton, the pilot of that Lancaster, has come to light and makes interesting and poignant reading. In its very matter-of-fact way, it brings home to us all just how lucky we are to be able to enjoy our flying in the way which we do.

To you all…
Blue Skies Always!
From Chris, Mark and Roger in Guernsey


Artists impression of the crash


La Dame, Bob Hathaway & Luftwaffe personnel

34 The Parchment
Havant
Hants. P09 lHD
'phone (0705) 492083

26 September '92

Dear John

At last I have managed to get down to writing as promised and hope the following is sufficient but not too lengthy for your purpose. Regretfully, I have been unable to find a photograph of myself at that time but many thanks for the one of Les Saunders which you gave me.

Perhaps a brief account of flying training etc. which led finally to the Sark landing would not be amiss. First of all came the initial introduction to flying on Miles Magisters near to Reading and the requirement to go solo in 10 hours or be remustered to other flying duties. Thence to Medicine Hat in Canada flying twin engined Airspeed Oxfords and obtaining our wings at the end of that course. Back to England for a course on Blenheims culminating in a posting to the Middle East and flying the Mark 5 (Bisley) out to Gibraltar unfortunately, I stalled mine coming in to land and crashed on the Rock's very short runway. No blame was attached to me because the Bisley was a very heavy aircraft and it was a case of third time unlucky after two earlier successful attempts but nonetheless nerve shattering as we nearly ran out of runway.

Thereafter back to England courtesy of the Royal Navy although I did have to take a turn in guarding two captured Italian submariners during the voyage. They were not very popular I gathered because I was told to shoot them at the slightest excuse. Next was an attempt to fly Whitleys near to Inverness but that proved abortive because my legs were too short to cope with the extreme left rudder required on landing. Later I did some flying on Wellingtons - mostly uneventful patrols over the North Sea- finally graduating through a conversion course from Manchesters to Lancasters.

It was late in 1942 when I joined 49 Squadron at Scampton under the command of Wing Commander Slee. After some training ops as second pilot/flight engineer my crew and I were allocated our own aircraft. On only our second op the target was Stuttgart with orders to fly at ground level after crossing the channel As there was mostly le tenths cloud cover we had to divert a little from our course in order to find a hole in the clouds where we could see our way down The outcome was a little delay in reaching Stuttgart which was already well ablaze when we arrived, Approaching the target we climbed to about 13,6eO ft. and made a quiet gliding approach with engines well throttled back. There was no ack ack and all would have been well if the bomb release gear had not failed to function Regretfully, I told the crew that we must go back for another run in.

Having lost considerable height by our earlier manoeuvre, I had to open up the throttles and climb once more before turning back; this time using the engines for a powered approach. I think the ack ack crews must have just returned from their coffee break because as we dropped our load all hell seemed to open up. We dodged most of the light tracer flak but took a few hits which started a fire near the starboard inner engine and another in the fuselage, although I learned later on this was caused mainly by one of our own incendiary bombs which had failed to drop.

The crew did their best to put out the fire in the fuselage but finally. reported no possibility of success. Meanwhile I was finding it difficult to prevent the aircraft from flipping over to starboard even with the application of maximum opposite trim. My feeling was that at any moment there would be an explosion and so ordered the crew to bale out.

I saw the flight engineer depart through the front hatch, after a second attempt because he forgot to disconnect himself from his inter-com, followed by the Navigator who pulled his rip cord before leaving but wisely clasped both hands round the chute until outside, then came th wireless operator and all no doubt preceded by the bomb aimer. At this point, the rear gunner, Les Saunders, knew more of what followed immediately than I did. Apparently, the mid-upper gunner, Eddie Pope, vacated his turret but could not leave via the fuselage door on the starboard side because it was jammed shut and was prevented by the fire from going forward so he went back to try the rear turret exit. However, Les Saunders was still trapped in there because the hydraulics no longer functioned. It appears that Eddie Pope found an axe and somehow managed to free the turret movement; Les Saunders first knowledge of this was when he felt a thump on his back. They then found a fire extinguisher and finally managed to extinguish the flames allowing them to come forward to the cockpit.

For my part, after some minutes I assumed the remaining two crew members had managed to leave and expecting to have to go myself through the top hatch I put up my hand to remove it only to find it had already been shot away. In any event my parachute was not any-where to be seen and as I could not leave the controls there was nothing for it but to await the course of events. Eventually, Eddie and Les appeared thinking the aircraft was flying itself! It would be a masterly understatement to say I was pleased to see them and they were able to locate my chute although we were too low to jump and just flew on hoping for the best.

Miraculously, it seemed to me, the fires in the wing went out and, even more surprising, the aircraft began to behave normally with even all four engines still functioning. It was then we began to consider where we might be and what to do next. I had no idea of where we were nor how we should steer for home. Les Saunders took the controls for a short spell whilst I had a look at what was left of the navigation papers but without any real help. In the event, I decided to stay at ground level -because we were quite defenceless - and head roughly north west mainly by looking at the pole star because I thought the compass and gyro had suffered some knocks.

In due course we passed over the coast and headed out to sea without attracting any opposition. After a while I saw some land on the port side which I thought might be England only to find the ack ack opening up again. I called out "Mayday" the distress call, several times thinking it might be our own people but without any good effect. The next few minutes We spent in diving under then over the stream of tracer fire from the land. Then a searchlight caught us with its glare making flying absolutely blind whilst every few seconds I did a slight dive followed by a similar climb until luckily the searchlight went out and the flak ceased also without any apparent damage having been done to us. I was still of the opinion we must be close to England, possibly near the Scilly isles but certainly very short of fuel.

A short while later we flew over a small island and as there was no unfriendly welcome I called the others and told them we had to go down somewhere soon and was their preference for the sea or the land. As one voice they said "the land" despite my pointing out the very small area available. After one quick circuit I picked out the best approach line beginning just

over someone~ house and came in at about 135 mph just over the chimneys. As we hit the deck my feet went up onto the instrument panel and I saw a hedge bank rapidly approaching, then we were through with the front of the cockpit still intact and finally slithered to a halt in a corner of the next field. We all climbed out through the top hatch and stood around feeling very pleased to be still alive and unhurt. About 5 minutes later a troop of soldiers rushed up to us shouting "hands up". Good I thought, the Home Guard, until I saw their uniforms and realised the truth. After a brief search for any weapons they marched us off to a cemetery which was very depressing because I thought we were to be finished off in the most convenient place for them. However, I was wrong once again as we continued on to their barracks where we spent the rest of the night before being taken on to Guernsey, I believe, and thereafter to P.O.IV. camps in Germany where we all came together once more until the end of the war.

One very sad outcome was the death of Wireless Operator Alexander McInnes in a motor cycle accident not long after returning from Germany and on the night before his sister's wedding.

The foregoing is probably much more than you wanted but hopefully is sufficiently detailed in those aspects which are of interest to you. Let me know if any further information would help. In that respect I see that I have omitted the important fact that the raid on Stuttgart took place on the night of 22/23 November 1942. Please excuse the poor typing but I assure you it is much better than my manuscript.

Yours sincerely

Eric J. Singleton



THE LANCASTER BOMBER CRASH ON SARK

Date:	**22/23 November, 1942**
Aircraft:	**R.A.F. Lancaster W4107**
Squadron:	**No. 49**
Base:	**Scampton, Lincolnshire**
Depart:	**18:16**
Target:	**Stuttgart City Centre**

As the flight of eight Lancaster heavy bombers took off for their just over six hour round trip with 10/10ths cloud cover over their base. Little did the crew of seven aboard aircraft No. W4107 know how the events of the night would unfold.

Crew:

Sergeant E.J. Singleton 539435 (Pilot)	
Sergeant Wood 576842 (Flight Engineer)	**Stalug Luft V1**
Sergeant Corry 1263894 (Navigator)	**Stalug Luft V1**
Sergeant Pope 1048603 (Act / AG)	
Sergeant A. McInnes 1073261 (WT / AG)	**Stalug Luft 1V**
Sergeant Hills 1376451 (A / Gnr)	**Stalug Luft V1**
Sergeant L.W. Saunders 1416688 (Act / AG)	**Stalug Luft 1**

The aircraft had been hit by flak while over the target and was limping home with leaking petrol tanks. Four of the crew had baled out about five miles from Stuttgart and were taken prisoner. The three remaining crew crash landed the heavy four engined bomber in a field on the north of the island, a gap in the hedge can still be seen to-day. They thought that they had landed in the Isle of Wight, but it was a nasty shock when they realised that they were on enemy occupied Sark and were also taken prisoner.

La Dame often told the story of how she and her husband Robert Hathaway, obtained petrol for their cigarette lighters from the German guarding the plane, in exchange for a bottle of inferior Kirsch from the kitchen cupboard.

During the post war scrap drive the aircraft was cut up and sent to England. For years there were just a few pieces of the undercarriage left in the corner of the crash field.

Programme 2019/20

When you read this Newsletter, all of this year's main events will have been held, with the exception of the AGM, which is on the 17th October at Stows Maries airfield. The AGM with be under the capable hands of William & Jane Procter. **All reply slips to William Procter: Stows Farm, Tillingham, Southminster, Essex CM0 7TW closing date 9th September 2019.**

By popular demand we will be holding two more "Pop In's" these are being coordinated by David Keene, (Thanks David).



Events 2019

- 17th October – The 2019 AGM Stow Maries WW1 Airfield – William Procter
  PLEASE NOTE DATE CHANGE DUE TO VENUE AVAILABILITY
  Closing date: 9th September 2019.

Pop-In Meetings

- Saturday 28th September – arrive 10.30 to 11.00. Fly in to Peter Gale's strip, transport to a local café for tea and cakes or a light lunch. As this strip is inside the Salisbury Plain Danger Area please contact David Keene or Peter Gale if you are intending to come, for a briefing. david@davidkeene.co.uk or peter.gale@talktalk.net
- Saturday 16th November. Venue TBC, possibly Gamston.

Events 2020

4th & 5th February – Edinburgh – Richard Lawrence
1st & 2nd July – 2 day" Vintage Extravaganza" event – Tony Fisher

The 2020 Study Tour, is in the planning stages, at this moment in time, the plan is to start in Blackpool, Isle of Man then onto Ireland. More will be said at the AGM, and the December Newsletter, Re dates & cost.

We have other day events that are still being put forward. If you have any ideas please let Gordon or myself know.

Neville Stops

We would like to thank all the organisers of events for making these meetings possible. If you happen to see anything in your area that would form the basis of an interesting FFA visit, then please contact Neville Stops (neville.stops @gmail.com) or Gordon Bellerby (gordon@jgbellerby.com).

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 individualy shall be construed as establishing a duty of care nor in anyway 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.

Notice of the Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Flying Farmers Association Limited will be held:
At Stow Maries Airfield on 17th October 2019 at 11:00 am.

At the AGM, you, as a member who is entitled to vote at the AGM, will be asked to consider and where appropriate vote on the following :

1. Andrew Cragg and Neville Stops retire from the committee by rotation and offer themselves for re-election

Nominations for these posts are invited. If there are more applicants than vacancies then a ballot of the members present will be held.

2. Approve the annual accounts

3. Resolution :

It is proposed to change the articles of the association to allow a new class of membership called an associate member. An associate member will be a person, who, not fulfilling the membership criteria, has significantly contributed to, and will be expected to continue to contribute to, the activities of the association.

Associate members will be able to attend meetings.

Associate members will not be able to vote nor propose new members.

Candidates must be proposed by no less than 2 full members of the association.

Candidates will be considered by the committee and, if approved, invited to become an associate member.

By order of the Board
Andrew Cragg, Co. Secretary

Please see reply slip sheet for new Committee member nominations.



Kev Gregory/Shutterstock.com

2019 AGM, 17th October 2019

Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome, the venue for the 2019 AGM, opened in 1916 as home to B Flight of No 37(HD) Squadron, Royal Flying Corps, the aerodrome saw the birth of the Air Defence of Great Britain in response to the first raids by Zeppelins and Gotha bombers on London and the South East. It played a key role in the Battle for Britain (the first London Blitz) the following year. It was at Stow Maries that No 37 Squadron transitioned from the Royal Flying Corps to the Royal Air Force on 1 April 1918. It continued in its dedicated role until Spring 1919 – when the RAF closed its doors forever.

Please send reply slips to William Procter
Please note date change due to venue availability.
Closing date: 9th September 2019.


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Edinburgh, 4th & 5th February 2020

The first main event of the year will be held in Edinburgh on the 4th and 5th February.

- Arrive in Edinburgh on Feb 4th - evening meal and 2 nights in a hotel
- Feb 5th Visit, Royal Yacht Britannia, the Falkirk Wheel and the Kelpies to fill in the day.

Anyone who is brave enough to plan to fly themselves up should talk to me about landing strips and transport.

Richard Lawrence

For those interested in attending, please fill in the reply slip, and return to J. R. Lawrence: Nether Huntlywood, Earlston, Berwickshire, Scotland TD4 6BB. with a £40.00 deposit per person. **Closing date 9th September**


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Tony's 2020 2 day" Vintage Extravaganza" event. 1st & 2nd July 2020

We will be landing at "East Kirkby" Home of Avro Lancaster "Just Jane" on July 1st. This event will encompass not only Vintage Machinery but Aircraft.

Day 2; We will be going To BBMF at Conningsby and hopefully to go on the base to see the Typhoons.

We will be staying at the Famous Petworth Hotel, in Woodhall Spa, that was used as 617's Officers retreat in the war years.

If you are interested, please send the reply slip and a deposit of £25 per person to Tony Fisher: Wallis House, Thorney PETERBOROUGH, Cambridgeshire, PE6 0RL.
Closing date 9th September 2019. (with Room preference Double, Twin, Single the Hotel need a hefty deposit to hold the rooms)

Helpful reminders

If you are organising an event…

- Please nominate someone before the day to write up the event.
- Please take pictures with a high resolution/picture quality.
- Please name all people in pictures left to right.
- Please take some portrait pictures that could be used as a front cover image for future newsletters.

If you arrange a payment or a standing order by online banking please remember to include your membership number in the payment reference

Applications for events will be accepted in receipt order.

Booking of events - to give everyone a fair chance. There is no harm in any member emailing the organiser to show that they are interested in attending that event. To this end it was decided that all future events would still be booked when the reply / disclaimer slips come out in the newsletter, even though some newsletters arrive sooner than others.
Members will be given priority up until the closing date.

Deadline for articles for the December newsletter 25th October 2019, please email giles@abrey-farms.co.uk.

Sandhurst and Hatchgate Farm



Image credit: Tempest Photography

The Arrival

The forecast for the day was good but with fog in the morning as a result John Golden sent out a note inviting attendees to telephone if they were going to be late because the entry restrictions to Royal Military Academy Sandhurst are strict. We were instructed to carry passports!

In the event the fog was so thick that no one flew. However people drove for miles some arriving the night before and stayed in a local hotel which shows great determination worthy of an officer cadet! We gathered at the initial RV - Blackbushe International Airport where all day breakfasts were consumed with great relish.

In true Military fashion the coach arrived at the wrong end of the car park so when our sheep dog for the day Neville Stops came busying around to get his herd of cats out and onto the coach we couldn't find the coach! It was at the other end of the car park hidden behind a Portakabin. After embarkation we departed for RMAS.

In another example of military efficiency we were taken to the tradesman's entrance by our driver. Having been met by the lead guide for the day, we were treated to an extensive tour of the back roads and exercise areas before eventually pitching up at the back of the main iconic building, Old College, which you will all be familiar with from television.

The Introduction

We were introduced to our four guides, elderly gentleman of definite military bearing, who told us a little about themselves and about the programme for the day. We also heard about the Sandhurst Trust from the Director. These were delivered in the Waterloo Room, a most elegant room with a 20 foot high ceiling and a painting of the Battle of Waterloo across the end of one wall and a bust of the Iron Duke in the corner.

The History

The original officer training establishment for infantry and cavalry officers was based at High Wycombe in 1799 and which became the forerunner of the Royal Military College. However, a gifted officer called Colonel John Gaspard le Marchant, from Guernsey, opened a junior department in Marlow which moved to a newly built Old College in 1812, to be joined later by the Senior Division at what was to become the Staff College.

Engineer and Artillery officers, who did not have to buy their commissions, were trained at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, which opened in 1741. The two establishments were combined in 1947 to become the present-day Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, which now trains all UK officers together with International Cadets. Since 1947, nearly 5,000 International Cadets from about 120 countries have graduated from the RMA.

In 1802 similar military training establishments were established in United States at West Point and in France at the St Cyr. Clearly something happened in 1802 in the military world. There were other officer training establishments in the UK but they were all merged together into Sandhurst in 1992 to include female cadets. A number of the International cadets come from the Gulf area and it was noticeable that substantial sums had been given to the RMA by these alumni as there are buildings on the estate with the names of Gulf countries.

Cadet training

There are three courses run, each course lasting 44 weeks. About 80% of Officer cadets are university graduates with an average entry age of 23 years. At the end of the first term the cadets have to undertake a training course in Outward Bound type of activities to achieve a training certificate at their own cost. At the end of the second term cadets are encouraged to go further afield to gain experience of countries overseas on expeditions, such as mountain climbing, sailing, humanitarian works and other activities to benefit those people in less well off.

After commissioning, the young officers attend special-to-arm training courses to fit them for their first command appointment.

The Buildings

The central building comprises at ground floor level training, administration, catering and estate management facilities with residential accommodation at first floor. Grouped around this building are a number of other facilities providing accommodation for cadets and Directing Staff together with vehicle parks, playing fields for sports and other institutional activities.

Our visit to the Royal Memorial Chapel was a sobering experience because the names of all officers who have died on active service are recorded on panels within the chapel. There is a separate Roman Catholic chapel and another multidenominational facility.

Museum

The museum is contained in one quite small room with display cabinets containing uniforms and memorabilia directly concerned with the Academy.



Works of Art
In the Grand Entrance, the ceremonial entrance to Old College, there is a painting of Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of the commissioning of Prince Harry in 2006. Opposite is a magnificent painting of the Queen standing alone and unusually a copy of the face of the Queen has been used on postage stamps. There are many other works of art in the building many of which have been given by former cadets. There are paintings and beautiful swords in precious metals encased in glass display cabinets.

The Adjutant riding up the steps.
We were shown the steps where the horse is written up the steps at the end of the Sovereign's Parade, so named by King George VI who took the first commissioning parade of the re-formed Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 1947. The Sandhurst professional photographer lined us all up and after much nagging and shifting took a photograph of our assembled company on the iconic steps to Old College.

The visit was a great success enjoyed by all who attended. A vote of thanks was extended to the four gentleman who provided our guided tour. Our thanks should be given to Neville Stops for organising this tour.

Tony Merrifield



"Your Flying Farmers were one of the best groups I have been involved with, interested, appreciative and happy to do as they were asked. You did have a first: Leaving somebody behind. We often lose people at the end of tours but normally find them before the coach leaves!"

Andrew Lawrence, Sandhurst Guide

If individuals would like to to order/pay for framed copies of the group photogtragh taken by Tempest Photograghy please call Tempest on 01276 691550.

Alternatively you can pay by BACS, to do this please email N.Lewis@htempest.co.uk to confirm your full postal address and mobile number.

Account Name: H Tempest Ltd **Bank:** Barclays Bank
Sort Code: 20-67-35 **Account No:** 63735141

Frame prices for Standard Size - 16" x 12"; Ebony £30, Old College £40, New College £45, Windsor £62.

There will be a £7.50 charge for P&P to a standard UK Address.



FFA Visit to Hatchgate Farm



Long-time FFA members Robin and Shane Humphries welcomed us to their beautiful farm not far from Blackbushe airport. Robin no longer has an aircraft but the windsock was still flying and the airstrip mown. His hangar now houses part of his impressive collection of old motor cycles, bicycles, tractors, lorries and cars.

Starting with 30 acres in 1983, after various acquisitions Robin and Shane now have 300 acres. They have erected all the fences, dug twenty-two ponds and pools, installed ditches and drainage, farm roads and services, and have put up numerous buildings including two houses. They used to maintain a flock of 600 sheep, a suckler herd of 120 Aberdeen Angus and a deer herd of up to 200 red and fallow deer, but have now disposed of the sheep and cattle and have reduced their deer numbers.

From the hangar we walked down the hill past the herd of fallow deer, through woods full of new green leaves, primroses and bluebells until we reached the River Whitewater, stopping to watch Robin operate a log saw powered by a water wheel which he had made and installed in the river. We walked round some of the beautiful ponds which he has dug and landscaped before reaching his very impressive workshop.

Robin has designed and made, amongst many other things, the Shane engine, a revolutionary rotary power unit which we were able to see in static and component form. Further information can be found on-line at **www.shaneengines.co.uk**.

When we could at last tear the menfolk away from the workshop we were treated to tea and delicious home-made cakes in the spring sunshine beside more beautiful ponds in the woods before boarding the coach to drive past the herd of red deer and return to Blackbushe to retrieve our cars - only two aircraft had made it to Blackbushe that morning. It was sad that fog had stopped the rest of us from flying, but good that so many people had managed to come by road and so been able to enjoy a varied and most interesting day.

Clare Golden



Mull, Tiree, Colonsay & Bute

We arrived on a fairly cold and moist lunchtime (a typical Mull day apparently) but to a warm welcome from Brendan and Allison at Glenforsa.- A quick stagger from the airstrip to the hotel bar was all that was required to get us into holiday mode, and meet up with the rest of the group that had arrived the day before. The previous day 10 aircraft out of the 11 taking part, arrived early due to the forecast. The hospitality provided by Brendan and Alison, was second to none, having to cope with 20 FFA members for accommodation and dinner, could not have been easy, at short notice.

Thank you Brendan & Allison and your staff. We can recommend your Hotel and your 5 Star food.

We caught up with the rest of the Flying Farmer crews in a dreich Tobermory where we had all mooched around the various local craft shops and picked up a few items (the local whisky is now home safely and waiting to be tried)

The next morning we awoke to bright sunshine and what a difference a day makes. We departed Glenforsa for Tiree and looked back over the glistening sea to a bright Hebridean Island.

Where Mull is hilly, Tiree is as flat as a pancake. We all arrived, with military precision, at the airport which still has regular daily commercial flights to the mainland. It was a short walk to the island's local cattle mart where the livestock auction was taking place and the crofters had gathered. We were given an informative coach tour of the island by Dr John Holiday (Ex Flying Doctor, based in Alice Springs), a local farmer, and Dr. John Bowden, the RSPB representative on the island. It was refreshing that both parties seemed to understand that there needs to be a compromise between the farming and the environmental practices on the island. Interestingly we learned that there are no badgers, squirrels or foxes on Tiree.

After a fairly hurried lunch in the mart café we flew onto Colonsay where we were met on a tarmacked strip by Alex Howard, the local Laird and FFA member, (on Sundays Alex's name, is Lord Strathcona), to Yet again the landscape had changed from the flatland on Tiree to green hummocks and trees. Fortunately the sun continued to shine on an island that is described as "a landscape of raw beauty and the sunniest place in Scotland"

We were taken to Colonsay House and Alex gave us a brief outline of the positive as well as the negative issues that he faces with having the responsibility for both the island and its people. We all greatly enjoyed the stroll around the beautiful grounds with its famous rhododendrons and the wide variety of shrubs and trees before we adjourned to the café for tea and cake and the purchasing of island made items (Neville was seen wandering around with a knitted hot water bottle cover!)

Finally we headed back to the airstrip and onward across the shimmering sea to a green and lush looking Bute.

Everyone managed to arrive on cue on a field only 480 metres long and with quite a slope but it was made better by the fact that the large trees at one end had recently been chopped down--maybe they'd heard we were coming!!

The sun continued to shine on the following day and, after we had managed to scrape the front of the coach off the tarmac on the steep hill from the hotel , we headed for Mount Stuart The deputy factor was a man of few words but fortunately a local farmer , John Dixon, provided us with a brief but enlightening talk on the issues facing farmers on the isle, particularly as milk production is the main agricultural activity which is " on a knife's edge" with extra transport costs being a major factor together with the enormous cost of having to import large quantities of lime.

As on the mainland, most farmers on Bute, in these uncertain times, need to increase acreage and are having to diversify in order to survive.

We then spent a delightful couple of hours wandering around the magnificent gardens which went down to the sea. The house itself looked rather like a boarding school from the outside and some of the party (Richard H and Alf being 2, were not keen to enter somewhere that looked like their alma mater). However once inside the whole group gasped at the sheer opulence of the artwork and architecture. Our guide, Jim Bicker, deserves special mention for his enthusiasm when pointing out the 3rd Marquess of Bute's passion for art, heraldry, astronomy and religion.

Back at the hotel for dinner we were again treated to a sort of Fawlty Towers affair but it was all the more fun for it.

The following morning the weather appeared unpredictable. Some decided to stay put on Bute and others made a break for it but all would undoubtedly say what a wonderful few days we enjoyed and thanks must go to Mike Ashmole for organising such an interesting and informative tour with such good company as always.

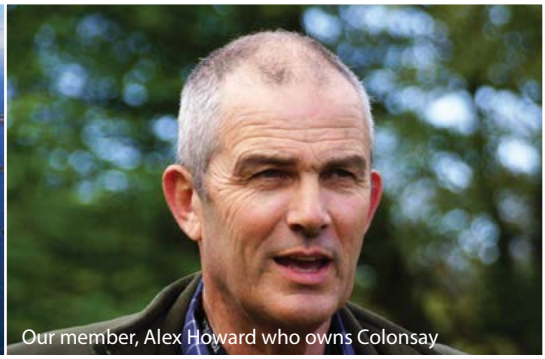
Gill Oliver



Poor weather at Glenforsa



Departing Tiree



Our member, Alex Howard who owns Colonsay

International Bomber Command Centre

When I lived along Canwick Avenue more years ago than I care to remember, Canwick Hill was just the unusual obstacle (a hill in Lincolnshire) that had to be climbed to get home. Now it is the home to the International Bomber Command Centre which has fine views towards Lincoln and the Cathedral which was such a landmark for the bomber crews departing and returning from raids over Germany. In my view a better site could not have been chosen for this memorial and we were blessed with perfect weather for our visit.

I think there are 4 striking aspects of the memorial: the size of the Chadwick building in which the museum and café are housed, the height and girth of the Memorial Spire, the Walls of Names and, finally, the pathway from the main building to the spire alongside which are tablets funded by relatives, friends and others giving names of the fallen. The main building is named after Roy Chadwick who designed the Lancaster, and it's interesting to note that many Lancasters that had been damaged were repaired during WWII at Avro's factory in Bracebridge Heath close by. The Spire is made of Corten A weathering steel (the same as the Angel of the North) illuminated at night; its height is the same as the wingspan of the Lancaster (102ft) and it is 16ft wide at the base which equates to the chord of the Lancaster wing. It weighs 73 tons and has deep foundations (over 6ft).



The Band of the Royal Air Force College march past the Chadwick Building

At the moment the memorial gardens are less inspiring because they are so new but they will be very attractive when they've grown up. However, we were fortunate to be leaving the building after lunch to see the Royal Air Force College Cranwell arrive to rehearse for a forthcoming event. Outstanding!

Richard Butler

Flying Farmers visit to Lincoln Cathedral



After a visit and tour and lunch at Bomber Command Memorial the group visited Lincoln Cathedral where they were welcomed by two Cathedral guides. An additional guide gave a very interesting tour of the servicemens chapels which commemorate the Army, Navy and Airforce.

Lincoln Cathedral dates to 1072 when Remigus the first bishop began building the Norman Cathedral. It was completed in 1092 and dedication 1093. This first Cathedral was built like a fortress and indeed the battle of Lincoln 1141 was fought by King Stephen from the Cathedral to the Norman castle directly opposite.

The first roof which was wooden was destroyed by fire 1141 perhaps due to the battle, it was replaced by Bishop Alexander the magnificent the 3rd bishop of Lincoln with a stone roof.

Lincoln experienced an earthquake in 1184 which raised the Cathedral to the ground leaving only the west front. Hugh of Avalon a Cathesuian french monk was asked by Henry 11 to rebuild Lincoln Cathedral, his cathedral was apse ended and has a unique crazy vaulted ceiling. Hugh later became St Hugh 20years after his death in the year 1200. There were two shrines dedicated to St Hugh but only the head shrine remains today.

Lincoln Cathedral was built of local oolitic limestone and Purbec marble which was transported by sea from Purbeck to Boston then up the river Witham to Lincoln.The cathedral has some very special fearures and treasures.

The Font is Tournai marble which came from Tournai on the banks of the river Scheldte which is now in Belgium. It is really polished limestone which looks like marble it dates to mid- 12 century and was most likely have been given by Bishop Alexander.

Most of the stained glass windows are victorian but there are two beautiful rose windows which are medieval The Dean's Eye window dates 1220 – 1235 it depicts the last Judgement. This window required a vast restoration programme which was completed in 2006. This window is situated in the north transept. Opposite in the south transept is the second rose window the Bishops Eye window dates 1330 the delicacy of the bar tracery contrasts with the heavy plate tracery of 'the Dean's Eye The stained glass is medieval but is not the original as Oliver Cromwell's soldiers used it for target practice.

The Pulpitum or choir screen is a wonderful example of the finest medieval stone masons skill and craftmanship. It is second to none in the country. It dates back to 1330. Throughout the Cathederal there are many examples of very intricate carvings.

The Angel Choir is the square east end of the Cathedral it was built after the death of St Hugh in the year 1200, its purpose was to house the shrine of St Hugh. It is called the angel choir as it is decorated by 28 angels high up on either side of the spadrels of the triforium.

The great east window was the first Gothic eight light window and the largest of its time.The stained glass is not the original but is mid victorian 1855 by Ward and Hugghes.

The very famous Lincoln Imp sits proudly high up on a nearby pillar. As everyone knows the Lincoln City football team is named after him.

Unfortunately not all of the Cathedral could be seen in the time available, there is still much more to be seen hopefully this visit was just an appetizer and people will return to visit Lincoln's wonderful Cathedral.

The tour concluded about 3.30 pm The group left the Cathedral for a five minute walk to the coach

arriving back at Wickenby just after 4 pm. Tea and coffe was available before departure most people enjoyed a chat in the sunshine before leaving for home. The last aircraft departed at 5.30 pm (just before the airfield closed)

Sue Bailey

European Tour 2019– France, Germany, Switzerland



Day 1: Monday Kuhn factory
Day 2: Tuesday the glass factory and Pilatus in Switzerland
Day 3: Wednesday,the farm visit in Switzerland
Day 4: Thursday Chamonix
Day 5: Friday the aircraft museum
Day 6: Saturday the farm visit in Nevers

First leg to Le Touquet, and events unfolding!

- **Captain - Pilot - Mr Alf Oliver**
- **RH seat Radio - LAPL (A) Philip Woodfield**
- **Leg 1 - G-CIMM 190nm 1hr 33 mins / Fenn Lane Farm to Le Touquet**

On the 25th May we awoke to a fairly calm morning , we left Limes Farm , to travel to Fenn Lane Farm for a 9.08 Z departure , fully loaded with wives , fuel and baggage, Rose and Gill in the rear, believe it or not tracking our route on a Road Map.

We headed south to Old Warden (EGTH) and Henlow (EGWE)passing between the Luton and LONDON Stansted Zones tand onto Brookmans Park, and then a South Easterly route south of Stapleford and north of the Deptling VOR , crossing the Coast just North of Pent Farm to Cap Grin Nez, then straight down the coast , with the superb help of a very pleasant lady at Lille managing our passage, then again activating my limited French to introduce our selves to Le Touquet-Paris-Plage, it was a fairly normal approach, no orbits like last time. We joined downwind for runway 31, and headed for fuel.

We stayed in Le Touquet-Paris-Plage overnight, within half a mile of the Airport, a superb place, extremely comfortable and our hosts ferried our bags for us too, as we all hired bikes . We also had a close encounter with President Macron on Saturday night, as we cycled in to town for our second gastronomic meal of the day ! Macron was in a house near to the centre of LT, allegedly there to vote as its his home town , the place was rippling with Close protection group heavies, we thought it was unusual at the airport as 10 police vans lined up outside Arrivals.

Sunday morning arrived and after cycling to the Westminster Hotel for coffee we headed back to LT to pick the plane up, with what we thought would be a fairly early departure; but the cloud rolled in off the sea, so the superb social began, with the Halls , The Holts, and later by Roger and Mike in G-Hope in our group , we went for a meal in the Art Deco Airport Building but it turned out we had joined a wedding party !! So we were escorted to the patio area , by the Apron , it suited us fine!, chatting and drinking coffee, awaiting the improvement of the weather. Then the unthinkable happened just as we were starting to see the cloud breaking, an inbound aircraft had undercarriage issues on landing, closing the runway, this was approaching lunchtime so nothing happened quickly, as this aircraft limped, with help to the apron, another aircraft with 4POB had issues on landing, Alf and I thought it was crosswind miscalculations, however this ended with a new Cirrus , being piloted by a sales manager and Citation training pilot, ending up 25 metres off the runway, closing the airport for the second time!

Numerous pilots become fairly animated (none of the FF though as we were having a great time!). A guy in a Twin who had to get someone back to Gloucester and then himself to Blackpool insisted that we all walked over and physically lifted the offending cirrus out of the way, he was too touchy for me to want to fly with him! , another very amiable Belgian couple from Ghent , in a club Warrior , needed to get back to vote !We were also told that the French Air Accident Investigation team were en-route, which made us think were not going to make Sarrebourg that evening, however our social ended pretty quickly with the northern stretch of the runway being opened, and an orderly departure of the FF aircraft from Le Touquet-Paris-Plage, via R 31 RH to Sarrebourg commenced!

Departure for us was interesting, as low cloud greeted us at 500 feet but behind us and the direction we were tracking towards was clear and bright, so a climbing right turn in sea mist, on to track took us into the clear air. The flight to Sarrebourg was an absolute pleasure, settling at 3000 ft and autopilot on. We had a bit of excitement as a climbing Hercules appeared around 3 /4 Miles ahead and 2000 feet above, in a climbing left hand turn out of Lille I believe . Our journey continued 246 nm and 1 hr 48 mins, joining the team on the ground at just past 5pm.

Philip Woodfield

Visit to the Kuhn machinery factory - Saverne.

With all aircraft safely arrived in Sarrebourg, France, from their various bases in the UK for the start of this year's FFA Summer Study Tour, we were taken by coach to the town of Saverne, which is the home and headquarters of the Kuhn machinery company, a large global organisation which was to be the subject of our visit the following day. Having booked in to our comfortable hotel, we all walked a short distance to a pre-arranged restaurant in town where we were fed well whilst discussing our various routes and adventures getting from our home airfields.

The factory was close enough to be seen from the hotel, but with road closures and diversions in town, we still contrived to arrive 15 minutes late, much to the consternation of our host and guide, a large Welshman, who thought we weren't coming!

The obligatory coffee and video presentation in a warm reception room saw a few eyes flickering despite seating which was not conducive to much comfort, and was followed by the group being split into two for a very extensive tour of the factory - much aided by the use of the recently purchased audio equipment which meant that the guide could be clearly heard by all in the group even if some lagged behind a little - rather than just a few people crowding around the guide with the remainder not being able to hear anything. This has been a very successful investment by the Association, and used extensively on all visits for the year.

Factory visits generally follow the same format, and this is particularly so of most machinery factories. A presentation with coffee showing the range of equipment made and the worldwide distribution of their products, followed by a methodical tour of the premises starting where the raw material arrives at the factory gate, and then progressing round the various departments showing the steady build progress as various machines become recognisable to what we know and use on the farm, and finally a look at the showroom showcasing everything that they make.

Kuhn were no different in this respect, but as a company they have an enormous range of equipment to suit all requirements of farming life in all corners of the world. Some number of years ago the FFA visited this factory, and if memory serves me right, the main focus was on power harrows. Now the range of equipment produced is enormous - although all the equipment is either land driven or power driven. Up until now they have never produced equipment that has its own motive power - except, this year they have gone into partnership with a small French company producing self-propelled sprayers with whom they hope to quickly become a competitive player in the world. It is such a new partnership that the sprayers are still in the yellow livery of the partners company, but as development continues they are expected to quickly become liveried in the traditional Kuhn orange.





As we toured the factory we were left in no doubt of the quality of all the equipment in which they are involved, and often the small details which set it apart from their competitors. One such small but very significant detail is incorporated in their grass mowers where the cutting disc unit has a small groove milled into its shaft to create a weak link. This means if damage is caused to one disc, whereas previously the entire cutting bed would have had to be stripped down to replace the damaged unit taking maybe many hours - now with just a couple of spanners the damaged unit can be replaced on its own in just 10 to 15 minutes, vastly reducing downtime.

There is very little on their machinery which is not made 'in house'. They even have their own foundry for all their various castings required for their vast range of machinery - something that is probably unique amongst all manufacturers. As we walked around the various departments it was obvious as to how production has changed from a manual operation when we last visited the factory to much more emphasis on robots. Although many machines were still being assembled by humans there're were robots everywhere churning out parts, and cutting material with the most extraordinary precision.

Nowadays tractors are so much more powerful - every model seems to have an almost insatiable requirement of power, and of course all the equipment has to be ever beefier to cope with this. So castings have to be bigger, shafts have to be stronger, bearings have to cope with more stress, and so the roundabout continues. Electronics are the new 'must have' on machines so the design departments are constantly having to change with the times.

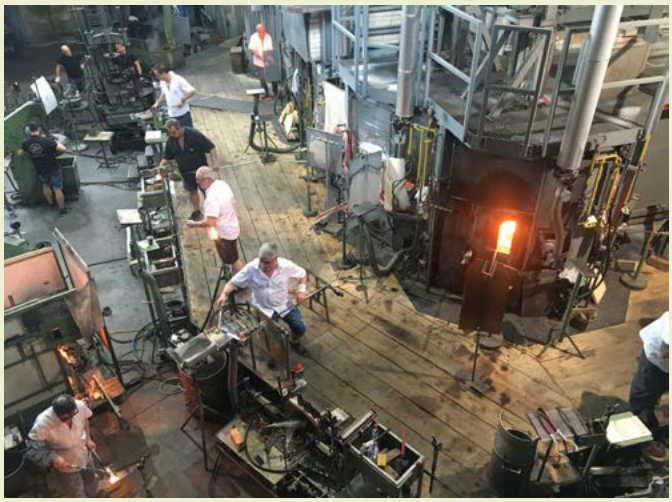
Kuhn accepts that its equipment is certainly not the cheapest on the market, but is confident that it is of the very highest quality available, and this is what makes it's machines such a market leader worldwide.

Tour over, we spent a little while in their showroom poking and prodding various machines and asking relevant questions of the long suffering staff (who must have known we were most unlikely to place an order for anything!) and then a group photo was taken for the record followed by each of us generously being given a goodie bag of toys, caps, pens and brochures.

The day at the factory ended by the group being treated to an excellent lunch in their management dining area - a most generous end to an excellent visit.

Martin Gosling

Flight to Bremgarten and visit to the Glassworks.



Before leaving the UK Richard had received advice from the local flying club as to the best route for our next flight from Sarrenbourg to Bremgarten. This looked to be a very scenic flight, flying south from Sarrenbourg before turning east to fly over the Vosges mountains, with peaks to 4470 feet, before descending over the valley of the Rhine for the approach into Bremgarten.

The weather, of course, had other ideas! Low cloud and rain meant that this route had to be abandoned in favour of a low-level route. First fly due east, highest peaks now only 1434 feet, into the Rhine valley north of Strasbourg, then south down the valley. Even the higher ground on this route looked a little intimidating when on the ground prior to take off, but once airborne there proved to be no problem and once out of the hills and in the river valley the weather magically improved with excellent visibility making the flight a real pleasure.

Our next visit was to the Glasi Hergiswil glassworks. These glassworks, situated on the edge of Lake Lucerne, occupies the site where glass has been produced since 1817. The original factory produced a complete range of glass products but became uneconomic as glass production elsewhere was automated and glass became a mass-produced commodity item. Now the factory produces, in the traditional craft method, niche, high value fashion items. Visitors to the factory could try the art of glass blowing to produce their own products and several members tried this with rather mixed results!

David Keene.

Pilatus factory

Our arrival at the Pilatus factory was on a day of low cloud and gentle rain. We did not expect to see any aircraft flying that day.

Our hosts addressed us in a modern state-of-the-art lecture theatre with video and still presentation of the highest quality.

The first slide was of Goldfinger, the James Bond film, with Sean Connery in an Aston Martin parked outside a typical but old fashioned factory building with mountains in the background. The next shot was of Connery sitting on a grassy bank with a pair of binoculars studying the same factory. It transpired that the factory was the original Pilatus factory and not Goldfinger's lair! Pilatus, named after Mount Pilatus a mountain massif overlooking Lucerne in Central Switzerland. It is composed of several peaks, of which the highest is named Tomlishorn. Besides its Swiss plant, the Pilatus group has plants at Adelaide in South Australia and in Broomfield, Colorado, United States.

To our great joy we were joined by the FFA German Honorary member Werner in Bremgarten who was just as much fun and as mischievous as ever. He did not have the lovely Trudl with him as she was not well enough to travel. However he was able to translate and keep the peace with our Swiss guides when one of our party absent-mindedly gently rubbed a newly built $12m jet waiting for painting.

The company was established on 10th December 1939 by the armament company Oerlikon-Bührle, and construction of a new production building started in March 1940. The company was formed to do maintenance and repairs for the Swiss Air Force, the first work of the new company was assembly of EKW C-35 reconnaissance biplanes from spare parts, and overhaul work on other types. Pilatus aircraft design and construction started in 1944 with the production of the SB 2 Pelican. This aircraft never went into series production. After that hesitant start another effort was made in March 1948 with the P4 which got no further than a maiden test flight. Other aircraft from P1 to P10 only remain as drawings, each one was a development of the last and eventually the PC8 came into being in November 1967.



This aircraft after initial flight testing was withdrawn from service. It was explained that each of these aircraft was being used as a test bed and eventually the PC 12 flew on 31 May 1991. The initial test flight was 42 minutes instead of the planned 36 minutes. When the pilot was asked why he had extended the test flight he said 'Well it was such beautiful weather and the PC 12 is such a pleasure to fly, I simply made the turns last a bit longer. The PC 12 flies like an airliner."

The iconic Pilatus PC6 which has featured in recent telephone television programmes is the turboprop hi-wing STOL version. It is known around the world as the Pilatus Porter. The Porter can take off in 1,400 feet and land in just over 1,000 feet, it has large sliding doors and a multiplicity of uses. It is a popular jump ship for parachute clubs with its payload of 1,000 kg.

The PC7 Mark 2 is a world-class trainer used by many other forces. It has proven by much testing across the world that it has cost efficiency and a very docile behaviour. The engine produces 700 Shaft Horsepower and can climb at just under 3,000 feet a minute, and it has a 300 knot maximum speed. Students aiming to fly larger, faster aircraft will benefit from time spent in the PC7 Mark 2.

The PC 9 M has established itself as the leader among military trainers in its class. It has a more powerful engine than the PC7, a different wing profile, ejection seats and state of the art glass cockpit with HUD. Simulators are available to aid pilot conversion.

The PC 12 is generally regarded as the best small business aircraft available. It sets the standard by which other aircraft are judged. It is a popular aircraft with its large cabin, single pilot operation, long-range, low operating costs, high speed short field capability and of course Swiss engineering and construction. It can take off in just over 800 m cruise at 285 kn and has a range of 1845 nautical miles. Altogether it is a worldbeater. We were told that Textron is so impressed with the aircraft that they have produced their own version, note not a copy, in an endeavour to catch up.

The PC 21 is a trainer for the next generation. It has a new engine with 1,600 shaft hp, a maximum rate of climb of just over 4,000 ft/m and maximum speed of 370 kn. This aircraft really does break the mould for flying training since it can take a student from elementary to advanced all on the same aircraft. Aircraft can be fitted with the same cockpit as the countries main fleet fighter to reduce conversion time. We agreed that the aircraft looks absolutely gorgeous! Later on, during a hangar tour, we were told not to take photographs of this aircraft. However, the one that we had a sneaky peek at was painted in Royal Australian Air Force colours.

The one we had all been waiting to see is the PC 24. This aircraft has been widely covered in the aviation press. I have yet to read any report which has any form of criticism of it other than why has it taken so long to get this aircraft out. We encountered this aircraft on the initial press presentation and we then saw it in the construction hangars later on. It is simply unique, it is the only aircraft combining the versatility of turboprop with the cabin size of a medium jet. It is one of only two jets that I know that is capable of using unprepared runways due to its engine, wing and undercarriage configuration. The stats for this aircraft are extraordinary. There are 20,000 runways around the world that are 839m or longer but are unpaved. If you need to use an airport or runway with paved surface you will have access to only 2,400 runways.



It is indeed impressive that Pilatus have designed and built the PC 24. It can carry 11 passengers plus a pilot, it has a maximum a load of 1,200 kg and maximum altitude of 45,000 feet. With a stall speed of 82 knots indicated air speed short field operations will be an easy matter for this flexible aircraft. It has the range for Newfoundland and Cairo from Farnborough, and can be fitted out for the Medivac role making it a most versatile aircraft.

A major feature of the visit was a tour of the construction buildings which were built mostly out of wood with metal cladding. The pictures you will see show roof joists made of laminated wood and the largest one is the PC 24 factory with a span of 24 m and the length of 89 m. Switzerland of course has great resources of timber and they have used this timber to good effect by constructing these very interesting and strong buildings.

After the tour we went outside and saw a PC 12 on a very steep descent through wispy cloud into the adjacent landing strip looking more like a skier than an aircraft. Somewhat disturbing was the sound of gunfire echoing around the mountains from a rifle range next to the HQ building. This we were told was the local police practising. Since some of the gunfire was from automatic weapons we can only assume that the Swiss do not trust their neighbours or new guests as much as others do. The visit ended with a thank you speech and presentation of an FFA clock and caps to the guides.

Altogether a good day out and an interesting insight into the construction of modern aircraft in a beautiful setting.

Roger Bell



Bremgarten to Annemasse and Chateau du Crest 29th May 2019



Chateau du Crest

The route from Bremgarten to Annemasse on the Wednesday morning was south avoiding Basle, over a ridge of high ground rising to 3500', then a right turn straight down the valley to Annemasse. Since there was no way around it, the options for crossing the ridge had been exercising a few minds since the forecast had not been brilliant. In the event it was 5/8 broken base 3500' with good visibility at Bremgarten and CAVOK at Annemasse. For those who didn't fancy going on top the obvious choice was the GAFOR route. GAFOR stands for "General Aviation Forecast" and means different things in different countries; in Switzerland, the GAFOR route is a predefined VFR route through high ground. Each sector of a GAFOR route is defined by the lowest safe "reference" altitude and a specific 2hr forecast which is distilled into 4 weather categories : X: closed, M: marginal, D: difficult, and O: open. Sky Demon not only shows these routes but also the 2hr forecast state for the next 3 periods.

That morning, on one GAFOR sector, the 2hr period prior to departure was Difficult, Open for our flight and difficult again after. Having had the storm clouds melt away just prior to our departure from Sarrebourg, it seemed our luck was in again!

The run south from Bremgarten to the high ground was exciting; skimming along under a 3000' base I was not convinced I was always 500' agl but how to tell in that beautiful lumpy landscape? Just south of Basle the GAFOR route began and I was so intoxicated with the novelty and the navigation of flying along a valley with clouds kissing the ridge tops in places that I failed to notice that the ground was rising. As expected, the cloudbase was rising as well so a hasty application of power was required. Of course, I should have been climbing with the cloudbase all the time. Meantime, attention diverted, I failed to make a sharp right along the GAFOR route and carried on up the wrong valley. Well, I'd made good the altitude and it was clear across the ridge so I was soon back on track.

The rest of the journey was delightful. Once we had cleared "Grumpy" Grenchen it was Geneva Info the rest of the way. Down the middle of the Lac de Neuchatel where a couple of planes were playing at dogfighting; a left turn down to St Prex VOR not above 3500' please and



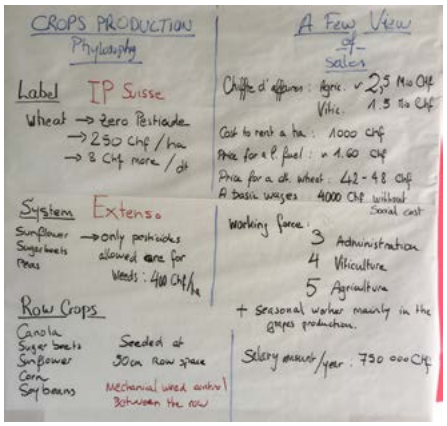


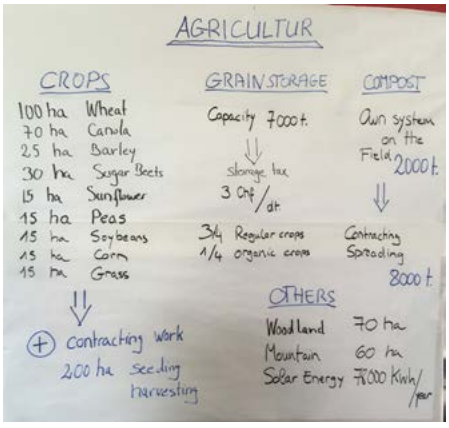
I think this is where I should have turned right…

direct to Annemasse where the radio sort of, "fell apart", with us arriving in English, a French plane doing touch and go's in French, almost nothing coming from the tower punctuated by a guy on the ground with a handheld trying to arrange parking. I think Flying Farmers agree that we do best when we're just allowed to get on with it.

It is pleasing to note that the large regional airports in France and Switzerland do not feel the need to surround themselves with vast swathes of complicated airspace as seems to be the desire in the UK. On the other hand they do love their restricted airspace and what at first appears to be depressingly inconvenient is often closed or can be crossed with permission and little aggravation.

After a swift buffet lunch provided by the Aeroclub we were on the coach for a short drive to Chateau du Crest, a large







The yard and inside, this awesome 9m combination drill.



Companion cropping peas and barley with OSR behind. A very creditable crop of wheat with little nitrogen and only a haze of blackgrass



Original presses and new steel tanks in the old underground cellar.

300ha semi-organic farm with arable, fattening pigs, a vineyard, a winery and a thriving retail wine trade. Allegedly the 10th biggest farm in Switzerland. The estate with a beautiful chateau at its heart is privately owned although the farming operation is carried out on contract by a 3rd party farming company. We were met by Dominique, the owner of this company, who spoke good English as a result of a gap-year in South Dakota.

In a bright bespoke meeting room, clearly doubling as a tutored wine tasting venue, and with a welcome glass of the aforementioned liquid in our hands, he gave us information about the farming activities in great detail supported by flip charts. In the time honoured fashion that a picture tells a thousand words, here they are, for those who are interested, in place of a lengthy narrative. References to Chf are of course Swiss francs, currently worth about 80 pence. Chiffre d'affaires = turnover.

It is clear straight away that this is a highly supported and protected agriculture with wheat at £360/t. Government backed organic schemes; for wheat, IP Swisse, no chemicals, £200/ha support plus £6.50/t bonus; for some other crops, Extensa, herbicides only and a wacking £320/ha support. It was also evident that nearby Geneva provides a ready market for much of what they produce.

Data assimilated, we went for a look around the farm. The first thing that strikes you is the fastidious tidiness and cleanliness of the yard – I suppose we shouldn't have been surprised, after all it was Switzerland! Then you notice the (clean) modern, new machinery lined up for us to see, including a brand new Claas combine on tracks. Then you ask, how do they justify this large investment on a holding they do not own? The question was asked; a few shrugs later it was clear that this was not an issue and he reminded us of the additional activities; contract farming on a further 200ha, 2000t of compost to make and spread and contract spreading for a further 8000t, and, 130ha of grass for hay or silage at Geneva airport - but only while the airport is shut in the middle of the night! On show and of particular note were the camera-guided inter-row hoe and two large mechanical weeders; required equipment on an organic farm.

Around the corner was an indoor pig fattening unit producing 2800 pigs per year, adlib feeding on straw. The rationale; the manure is good for crops and the Genevese like pork. Out in the fields we saw crops of wheat, rape and peas; crops that I would have been proud to call my own despite the organic restrictions. Of particular note was the companion cropping of peas and spring barley, where the barley acts as a support for the peas for easy harvesting. The field is harvested conventionally and the two crops separated yielding a tonne of barley per ha as a bonus.

Finally the winery. 20 ha vines, 20 different varieties, 50:50 red/white, 180000 bottles/yr.

A delightful combination of old and new; the old presses retained for show in what doubled as a corporate venue; The old underground cellars re-purposed at the behest of the owner - with only the original staircase, a lift had be installed to get these modern steel tanks in.

You just can't go to a winery without a wine tasting so we tried a white and a rose in the shop. By then it was late afternoon and the general public was also streaming in to taste and buy.

The votes of thanks was given, the clock presented and were were off the the hotel in Annemasse.

This was a farm that had lots to say. Many practices that we would consider novel and innovative in the UK were present here; companion cropping, the re-introduction of mixed farming, camera-guided hoes and diversification. Although well supported, they were making a fist of organic farming. With Brexit, the loss of pesticides and the current landscape of wildlife and environmental protection that the UK will undoubtledly endure, we could do worse that this.

Finally, Switzerland is one of the four European Free Trade Association (EFTA) member states and is an associate member of Schengen. With wheat at £360/t it must be protected from cheap European agriculture yet it has open borders with the rest of the EU as we found criss-crossing the border on many occasions. So, what is it with Northern Ireland?

Andrew Cragg

Chamonix

We had a perfect weather day for our trip to Chamonix – bright and sunny with clear skies. We arrived in Chamonix around 10am after a coach journey of approx 1.5 hours from the hotel Campanile in Annemasse (just the French side of Geneva). A quick ice cream was grabbed by some and the next thing we're all aboard the red mountain train winding its way up slowly through trees to see the glacier. Once off the train at Montenvers Station we walked around the viewing station feeling the cool fresh mountain air and taking in the stunning surrounds of mountain side forests and snow crested summits. To get to the glacier we had to go down by cable car. Out of the cable car and the glacier is even further down, to the tune of 480 steps. This is how much it has shrunk in the last 33 years. Seeing this who can doubt the reality of climate change? On the way down every now and then there would be a sign indicating the glacier level such as 2001 and so on back in time-at one of these signs we peered down at the tiny people far below at the ice cave and calculated the big effort to climb back up. For the few of us it seemed a more exciting prospect to use our time to get as high as possible up Mont Blanc rather than do the steps down and up from the ice cave. So up we went taking 2 cable cars to Aiguille du Midi at 3842m. Walking around the viewing station perched on the side of the mountain made you a bit giddy, the atmosphere had changed, gloves would have been nice, and the views of the mountain summits around were breath taking. A quick snack from the restaurant there and it's time to descend to meet the others back at Chamonix and hope we're not too late to catch the coach for the afternoon trip to Geneva.

Rosemary Woodfield





Visit to Musee De L'Aviation at Lyon Bron 31 May

On the morning of the 31st the tour group took off from Annemasse on a beautiful glorious clear blue day heading for Lyon Bron which is a leg of about 110 nautical miles. As we climbed out we had a fantastic view of Mount Blanc. A designated route wound its way round various restrictive zones and the last foothills of the Alps climbing up to just over 5000'. It was a perfect flight down across the valleys and following the River Rhone till routing around the bottom of Lyon International airspace. As we approached Lyon Bron, the air traffic controller seemed a little emotional and stressed, she seemed to have forgotten not only the colour of her control tower but also the runway direction! We all landed fine but a couple of Swedish girls were left traumatized, because they had landed the wrong way!!! This may have been the reason the ATC Controller was stressed. The adventure didn't quite end there though as some of us waited for 2 hours to be refuelled as the refueller, in typical French fashion, was having lunch. However, we were then warmly welcomed by John Michel at the Lyon Bron Aero Club who gave us an excellent simple lunch. The Club is a consortium of 7 separate clubs which altogether has 700 members, including a helicopter section.



Our Chairman enjoying piloting a Mirage

A quick bus ride took us to the museum which is based on an ex-French helicopter base run completely by volunteers. Most of the aircraft have been donated by the French air force as they are decommissioned.

There is a huge range of aircraft from a homebuilt Evans VP1, plastic Spitfire with dodgy undercarriage right up to state-of-the-art front line fighters, Mirage 2000 B and a Jaguar Sepecat only decommissioned in 2005. There was a Nord Aviation 1101 which was a French built Messerschmitt Bf 108 and used in many war films including The Longest Day marked up as a Messerschmitt. Various helicopters, the Alovette II the world's first turbine powered helicopters and Alovette III which were both very successful multi-role light helicopters, were represented. There was also the first French supersonic fighter, the Dassault Mystere IV, and the Fouga CM170 Magister, a very successful fast jet trainer with a periscope for the back seat instructor which must have made instructing interesting!



Breguet Alizé Br 1050 Carrier based anti-Submarine aircraft

Of particular interest was a never-flown Mirage F1 with short field capabilities including leading edge flaps for reconnaissance and ground attack roles. It was on order for Saddam Hussain but never delivered due to the Iraq War. Another impressive aircraft was a massive twin engine Mirage 4 which was the French air force strategic nuclear bomber from the cold war period capable of Mach 2 used in this role from 1964 to 1996. It was finally retired from its reconnaissance role in 2006. Outside the hangers stood a huge French version of the carrier based Gannet, the Breguet Alizé Br 1050, which was a submarine detector with radar dome and carried a torpedo, powered by a Rolls Royce Dart engine. However, the climax of the visit was the opportunity to sit and play in the Jaguar Sepecat and Mirage 2000 B. Altogether a fascinating afternoon which was enjoyed by everyone.

George Farrant

Nevers and Huilerie Brossard, 1st June

Richard Howard the organiser of the European Study Tour for 2019 suffered the unfortunate experience of having his best farm walk cancelled in the last week before departure. It was to have been to one of the major cereal growers in the region. For a tour organiser this is a nightmare. Months of planning go into arranging airfields, transport, hotels, meals, visits and timings. When one of the visits drops out at a late date all of this planning goes to dust. Richard was very helpful when I was organising the French part of last year's visit and we had been in touch this year as I am a frequent visitor to France and speak a bit of the lingo. I said I would see if I could find another farm to visit in the area of our hotel for the final Saturday.

Large cereal growers do not make a habit of advertising their business on the Internet therefore it is difficult to find such a visit at short notice without local knowledge. However I did find what looked like an interesting place. The farmer had a website where he claimed to grow a variety of combinable crops including seeds for processing into oil. Which he appeared to sell to supermarkets and on the open market. So far so good, even better was the fact that the farm was near to our airfield of arrival and hotel. There was another visit organised for the afternoon of the final Saturday but that was some distance to the north. So after a few phone calls and emails in French we were good to go, panic over.

All those who have been involved in moving bodies of people around will know that what takes a single person a few moments on their own to achieve transforms into hours of chatting, faffing, walking around and conferring with one's friends and neighbours before eventually clambering on board, getting into the queue to depart before remembering that one had forgotten to get petrol the night before so having to leave the queue and going to refuel / visit the loo / collect forgotten bags etc. The intended arrival time for the crews leaving Lyon Bron airfield for arrival at Nevers airfield was to have been 11:00 am that day. The final aircraft arrived at 1:30 pm. Our coach driver had been waiting for us since 10:45. He turned out to be a very reasonable and relaxed





individual who didn't think it was at all unusual for 40 people wanting to lunch at no notice. He knew just the place, a small sandwich bar which just happened to be on the route. He introduced us to the pretty lady who owned the bar with whom he was clearly familiar. He then stood quietly by while we bought and consumed lunch. I noticed he had a sandwich himself, I do hope it was free, he deserved it.

We then embarked in the coach again and set off for Huilerie Brossard using GPS. First problem Huilerie Brossard did not feature on GPS so informed guesses were made about where this establishment maybe. After some time squeezing our 40 seater coach down lanes getting ever narrower and grassier we pulled up next to some period farm buildings which had the right name.

Emmanuel Brossard was delighted to meet us and to guide us around his farm. First problem was that he spoke no English at all and although I speak a little French my command of technical agricultural French is slim. Our treasurer Andrew Cragg has spent some time working in an international agricultural enterprise where he had learned all the proper terms and between us we translated most of our visit, turning to Google Translate when we were stumped.

Emmanuel converted to Organic this year and is allowed one application of chemical substance per annum. He did not stipulate what sort of chemical or its purpose but we rather assumed that it was his choice. How the French DEFRA propose to police that regime was not discussed……

We remounted our coach and were driven about 2 miles to a pleasant open plain area where there were excellent looking crops in good condition. It was a hot day and we were glad to be able to walk down a shaded pretty avenue of trees to a field which had a growing crop. Our host explained that this was his first year in organic production and he was having problems with insect attacks on his oilseed rape and other crops due to the lack of availability of pesticide applications. This was OSR and it was barely a crop poor man it looked like flea beetle had the lot. The French are having the same problem that we are having here with over-intensive use of a single crop allowing an uncontrollable infestation to spoil the current varieties. Is GM the answer with insect resistant varieties being developed?

His cropping was interesting as he had a variety of seed crops for his oil business plus some cereals. Also, he was seeking to fix nitrogen in the soil by growing vetch while having a cover crop to produce an income. His big experiment this year is hemp.

He was a bit worried by local smokers helping themselves to his crop even though it is the non-hallucinatory variety.

The next crop we saw was safflower. It is grown a little in UK, in Essex and Kent and is usually known as false saffron. Normally it is usually grown in arid countries with high temperatures and low rainfall. France had a cold wet spring this year so that may explain why the take was not strong and his yield will not be very good he feared. There was considerable competition in the seabed from fat hen and other weeds.

The next field had a good stand of mustard that was fighting its way to the sky among the now common competition from vigorous weeds.

We returned to the farmyard and dismounted from our coach. Emanuel led us into his fields around the steading past a holding lake for his irrigation. He proposed to irrigate the combinable crops later in the year when the ground dried up but for the moment there is adequate moisture for everything to keep growing. The first field we came to was a field of winter wheat that had being direct drilled into ground used for Italian ryegrass in the previous year. The ryegrass had volunteered with



enthusiasm and was thicker than and as tall as the wheat. Emanuel said it was his plan to make hay from this crop.

The next field had an interesting mixture, he had drilled two row Spring barley and then later under sown that with peas. The peas and barley had grown up together with the pods were being held well clear of the ground. The barley was acting like pea sticks. A number of our members thought this was a good idea and something they may try themselves at home.

Sunflower is a crop that does well in an organic regime as the plants shoot up and outgrow the weeds and Emmanuel was proud of his excellent crop in adjoining paddock.

We then saw a good stand of winter wheat and a small plot of linseed that was doing well. It was interesting how some of the crops were good and growing with vigour without too much competition from weeds and insect damage while others were disappointing. That seems to be the way with organic farming which reinforces the need for herbicides and insecticides if farming is to feed the burgeoning world population.

We returned to the farm steading and were shown the small plant which is used for pressing oil from the seeds. The pressed seed waste is sold as animal feed. Oils are produced from OSR, Sunflower, Linseed, Mustard, Camelina and soya. The



oil is bottled on site, labelled and sold to supermarkets and the general public. There was a good selection of vegetable oils of all different types and our members bought a good supply much to the delight of our host. He had some pigs nearby that are fed on home produced grains and waste from the oil plant. They looked healthy and he said they can be sold to a local slaughterhouse as organic produce as they are this year's piglets and have not had non organic food or treatment.

In a magnificent adjoining barn there were two MF tractors which were modern and powerful with an assortment of implements to match. Emanuel was delighted to show us the sprayer which he was proud to say had been used by his grandfather. I suspect his grandfather is no older than many of his guests on that day. He showed us some dumpy bags that were filled with dressings and seconds from the seed plant that he burns for his central heating.

Andrew Cragg and I proposed a vote of thanks to which Emanuel responded with great charm and enthusiasm. he was presented with a FFA clock and a tour cap. He very politely declined to take any payment for his time and trouble on that day. Altogether a rewarding and interesting visit from which great knowledge was gleaned by the attending members. Good luck Emmanuel I hope your organic business thrives and is a success.

Roger Bell



Mike Patterson, Peter Farrington, Roger Bell (Pilot)

Ward Brothers Vintage Cars

Visit to the Ward Brothers Veteran and Vintage car collection at their magnificently restored stable-block buildings. We are very grateful to Daniel, Toby, Adam and his family for permitting us to visit their unique and extensive collection, and our thanks go to Adam for his animated guidance through this amazing collection.

In the first section are the earliest pedal cycles together with the earliest of motorcycles which were the beginnings of making the world a small place. Passing through to the next section was the earliest first Benz cars, together with the oldest 1892 Peugeot which was reputed to be better than the Benz, as the Benz was frequently overtaken by ox carts uphill. 1894 Benz in this section which was bought by Marconi and was kept in its original box for several years before being assembly.

In the upper gallery is a whole host of motoring memorabilia including the first electric car together with many cars eligible to join the annual London to Brighton run. The whole gallery is adorned with displays of original brass lamps. The London Brighton run was inaugurated to celebrate the repeal of the 1896 Act of Parliament which required a man with a red flag walking in front of the vehicle which was driven by a chauffer at a maximum of 12 miles per hour.

Hidden amongst these gems was a four- cylinder Renault which averaged 18 miles per hour on the Paris to Marseille run in the 1890s.

Charles Rolls took a Panhard to keep up with the Renault and eventually became a Panhard distributor.

We saw a Harry Lawson UK manufactured car, and a couple of mid-engine 2 cylinder horizontally opposed Lanchester with tiller steering which reputedly could attain the dizzy speed of 50 MPH. Lanchester eventually branched out into aircraft production but wasn't so successful in that field.

On the lower level we saw a number of cars including the following:

A unique Scottish Argyle, and a magnificent Serpolet steam car, a 1931 Fenandx and Darren bodied Rolls which belonged to Erol Flyn's first wife, later David Niven acquired prior to it arriving in the collection.

A 1903 White steam car and also a Sunbeam that Daniel took from the Haig to Istanbull averaging 200 miles per day until the fuel pump failed in a tunnel.

1910 Sleeve valve Argyle that Caplin Chelsey was driving from Cape Town through South Africa, but broke down in Rodesia where, whilst he was waiting for spare parts, he got tangled up with a Leopold which sadly took his life. Talk has it that Daniel has got the route on his to-do list.

There is a Renault and a 1908 Itala car which was scheduled to do the Peaking to Paris run, also a Talbot just returned from the Peaking to Paris run.

In the tractor shed there are a range of early tractors and machinery. Amongst these there are 3 Fowler Gyro tillers one of which is the largest ever made.

Later on we were joined by Daniel and Toby in the workshops who explained the finer detail of the Itala car currently under restoration which Toby likened to be the mechanical equivalent of the Rolls.

Following this wonderful viewing we were treated to a splendid buffet lunch on the premises, and our thanks also go to Gordon and his wife Caroline for arranging such an interesting visit.

Tony Fisher









Victoria Film Set
Wednesday 19th June, 10am, Leeds East Airfield.

Due to low visibility, heavy rain and thunderstorms in the south only four aircraft out of a possible fourteen managed to fly in. Of these, three came the day before. Jim and Angus coming from the north flew in on the day after delaying their departure for an improvement in the weather.

However everyone else barring Andy & Anne Crag who travelled by train came by car. Some having journeys of up to five or six hours.

Such is the Flying Farmers resolve to attend whatever the weather.



After a welcome tea/ coffee and biscuits in the airfield cafe we departed for a short walk to the hangar which houses the film set for the television series "Victoria."

The set is an exact replica of Buckingham Palace. We were shown round by out tour guide Alex who told us it took thirty joiners three months to construct the facades etc and a small army of specialists to procure or create such things as chandeliers, paintings, ornaments, carpets, fireplaces etc, etc, etc. At an actual cost of around £10,000,000. I think you get the picture. The result was stunning.

There were even painted facades of vistas placed a few feet away from the windows which one would have seen from a particular window, every detail being correct.

Everyone being free to wander at leisure in the many sumptuously decorated rooms were soon prodding and closely inspecting various fake artefacts to see how and what they were made of.

Towards the end of the visit we all assembled on the stairs of the main hall for a group photo.

On Friday evening I turned on the television which just happened to have "Victoria" playing and the scene was of Victoria descending those very same stairs.



After lunch in the cafe we all departed for the afternoons tours which were split into two. One party going the the Allerton Waste Recovery Park and the other to Ripon Select Foods.

Gordon Bellerby

Alerton Waste Recovery Plant 19th June 2019

After lunch, 13 members were dropped of at the Alerton Waste Recovery Plant alongside the A1 near Knaresborough. The site, open since March 2018, is operated by Amey on behalf of North Yorkshire County Council and the City of York Council.

When we consider that there is 26mt of waste generated in the UK each year and 6mt globally each day, this alternative to landfill, significantly encouraged by landfill tax is becoming more important. In the North Yorkshire area, there is 400,000 t of waste produced per year and this plant reduces waste to landfill by 90%. If it wasn't for the 3 week cleaning closedown and some forms of specialised waste then I guess it would be nearer 100%.

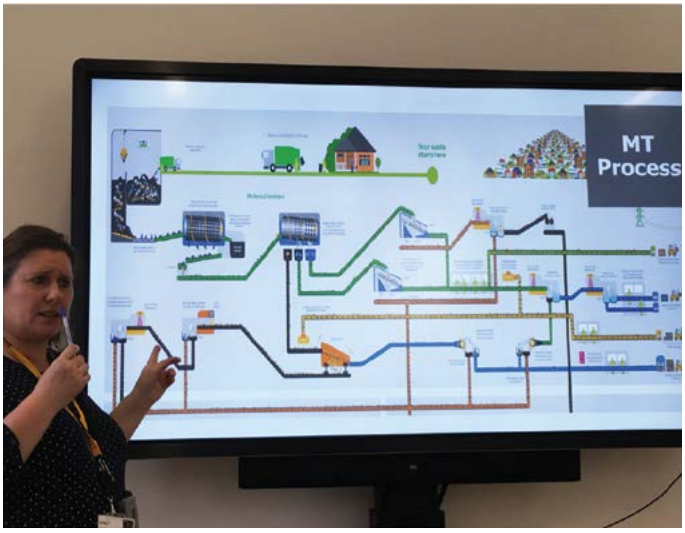
We were met by our guide Emily at the visitor centre where we were given a very professional presentation. It is clear that education is an important outreach function for the company, particularly schools. The mantra : Reduce, Re-use, Re-cycle and Recover. It's a pity that re-cycling protocols vary from county to county so a clear national education policy is not possible. First things first, 'elf and safety : yes, they have rats – avoid touching surfaces and sanitise our hands thoroughly when we get back.

Then, down to the nitty-gritty; there are three principal components to the waste recycling process, mechanical treatment (MT), anaerobic digestion and energy from waste (EFW).

Starting with Mechanical treatment, the waste stream running at 70 tonnes per hour is screened for size using trommels – like a cylinder grain cleaner but with big holes - and then shredded. Three, sized and shredded streams are then subject to all sorts of clever devices to separate the components :

Ballistic separators for flat card and cans (yes, cans, but see eddy current separators below)
X-ray sorting – glass and rubble
Magnets – ferrous metal (obviously!)
Eddy Current separators – aluminium!
The 'flip-flop' separator for cardboard.
Near Infra-red separators – for plastic (bottles) – punched out





The MT Process – regrettably insufficient resolution to zoom in and read the explanatory text.

of the stream with an air jet (just like clod separators for spuds but with an air jet instead of a mechanical finger).

Humans hand sorting on a conveyor – good to know that we are the last resort!

Paper, plastics and metal go to a baler for onward transport to a re-cycler. Disappointingly, despite all the attention the waste receives, only about 10% actually goes into re-cycling.

Organic matter represents about 20% of the intake and goes to the anaerobic digester producing about 3GW. Cycle time 25 days.

The remainder is burnt for energy at no less that 850 deg C. The furnace is diesel start but once at temperature is self sustaining. Eat your heart out tractor fans, these furnaces use Adblue; yes, they add urea to reduce nitrogen oxides. The ash contains inert ash and metal. The metal is magnetically separated for recycling while the inert ash goes for road building. Job done and another 27GW to show for your trouble.

We were well briefed ahead of our visit to the plant itself. Flying Farmers just love to get up close and intimate with machinery but unsurprisingly we were restricted to a viewing platform and the control room. Nevertheless, we could not help but be impressed by the sheer scale of the operation particularly in the control room where there was a "global domination" control chair operating a giant grab which "fed" the EFW furnace from a huge bunker 6 stories tall. Many drew the comparison with the well-known arcade game where you steer a grab to win a soft toy! The 24hr control room monitors all aspects of the process; of note, the temperature of the furnace which must not fall below 850 DegC to achieve a clean burn and the emissions from the chimney which are reported in real time to the Environment Agency. Such is the treatment and recovery from the exhaust gas that we were told that it is essentially steam.

Back in the "classroom". Yes, there was a smell – a bouquet that some found very unpleasant, others not so, in the time-honoured fashion of the wine taster, I got pig slurry and molasses myself. Other than the fast acting doors at delivery, the plant is effectively sealed so the public smell nuisance is contained. Questions were asked about the economics : the only figure available was a £130m saving over landfill over the 25 year life of the plant. Remembering that the plant sells significant electricity and some re-cycling products, we really wanted to know the net cost or profit over collection and treatment – they must know – perhaps local politics conspires to obfuscate the facts.

Despite the obvious benefits and employment for 90 people, this plant faced significant local opposition; for me, a more sensitively sited development I could not imagine! Isolated, near the A1, and, hidden from sight by the former landfill – is that irony?

Andrew Cragg

Ripon Select Foods Limited – Food Ingredient Manufacturers, Wednesday 19 June 2019

This independent family business as founded in 1974 by Mr and Mrs Thomas. The 8 acre site at Ripon comprises of a flour mill, rusk, breadcrumbs, dry mixing and batter factories alongside an administration block, product laboratory and warehousing. Gluten free products are also manufactured on site in a completely separate building to avoid any risk of cross contamination.

Our group guide was Andy Moore, Assistant Production Manager who has been with the company for 28 years whose wealth of knowledge was second to none.

Rusk Plant

The company use only UK farm assured wheat which produces the best characteristics for crumb production. The rusk is produced from wheat flour, raising agent and salt. It is baked slowly, dried and blended to a consistency that will absorb twice its weight of water. The rusk is manufactured in (Grist sizes) ranging from superfine to coarse with large amounts being used in sausagemeat products as a filler. The production lines are automated and PLC controlled. The rusk ingredients travel through sheeters, gauges, cutters and biscuit breakers via elevators then on to the ovens and driers aiming for a moisture content of just 1%. The product is sieved/graded and run through a metal detector. The plant produces 25-30 tons per hour. There are only two operators per shift, running 3 shifts over a 24 hour period. The product is packed in sacks paper or plastic in weights from 25kg to 1000kg, as per customer preference.

Breadcrumb Plant

Breadcrumb is manufactured from wheat flour, salt yeast and food dye and or spices – all to customer specification. Common flavourings include paprika and turmeric. There are 7 different colours/dyes which are all produced on site. There are two automated lines in operation and again the product is manufactured in a variety of grist sizes as per request. Loaves are produced with each mix weighing 260kg which is divided into 1kg portions via a divider machine and produces 3,300 loaves per hour. The entire process taking approximately 55 minutes which then goes directly to packing. Both rusk and crumbs have a shelf life of 2 years, batter mixes only 1 year.

Blending Batter and Mixing Plant

All blending and mixing is computerised using batch controlled ingredients with a bar coded system that provides full product traceability. A wide range of batters, breaders, rubs, toppings and pre-dusts are manufactured all batters can be mixed to any specific request with spices and/or herbs. Stuffing mixes are also produced on site e.g. sage

and onion, apple and apricot, cranberry and orange rosemary and thyme. But most combinations can be manufactured to individual request. Batter production requires a more hands on approach due to the variety of mixes customers request with over 300 recipes in stock. The product development department can reproduce customer requests providing samples for testing and approval within a 2/3 day time frame.

Flour Mill

8 wheat bins holding 500 tons each process 15 tons per hour. The wheat is cleaned, debris removed and tested for moisture. Approximately 12 tons of flour is produced from 15 tons of wheat. The plant is fully automated. In the event of an error/malfunction the engineering team are alerted via their mobile phone, an automatic text is sent identifying the malfunction.

A comprehensive quality control system is in place to check all finished products are compliant to its own specification. Random testing and analysis is undertaken at frequent intervals.

Our visit proved to be both informative and very enjoyable. It is fabulous to see a family run firm embracing technology and adapting to the ever changing consumer expectations and food trends whilst showing complete commitment to manufacturing quality products.

Heather Platt

Herbs Unlimited

The last visit of the second day was to Herbs Unlimited, a commercial herb farm. The business was established by Alison Dodd in 1993 and we were shown round by her son Philip who joined the business from Intercrop, a large vegetable grower in Kent, in 2008.

Alison had trained as a Cordon Bleu chef in the 70's and being also a keen gardener saw an opportunity to grow herbs for the catering trade and began growing herbs in a corner of her grandfather's farm thus blending two of her great passions. She expanded to take a 5 year lease on the Allerton Prison gardens and when that was sold for housing she moved to the present site, initially 30 acres growing to 100 acres today with 5 acres of polytunnels.

The business started well with little competition other than parsley; while there may have been aspirational ideas to sell herbs direct to chefs, the current business model sells herbs to the food industry and catering rather than retail sales, a path influenced by her uncle, a pig farmer who wanted fresh herbs for his Cranswick range of sausages.

The tour started in one of the large polytunnels, reserved for the high value herbs, tarragon, rosemary, marjoram, sage and thyme. The polytunnels afford protection, maintaining high quality. The herbs are harvested by hand to give a uniform product. Problems with leaf hoppers and leaf minors are controlled biologically. Fungicides are required on hot days.

Weeds are controlled by the black mypex through which the herbs are planted. It also prevents soil splash from the overhead irrigation.

A crop may stay in the tunnel for up to 8 years, with 3 harvests a year. At the end of this, the mypex pulled up and burned and a variety of unusual baby leaf salad plants is established in the bare soil.

In the "speciality" tunnel, unusual herb plants we're grown for edible flowers as well as the leaves : bronze fennel, lemon verbena, lavender, garlic chives, anise hyssop, sweet cicely, winter savoury and ornamental sage, the leaves of which tasted of blackcurrent!

Outside there were beds of rosemary, thyme, chives and sage. Additionally, there were beds of mint, mizuma, coriander, chervil, dill, spinach and red chard grown under fleece. Outside crops have 2 harvests per year.

The labour force is predominantly Romanian, a core of 5 permenant staff, peaking at 70 in busy times. It is becoming more difficult to recruit overseas staff, due to uncertainty with Brexit certainly but also the declining value of the pound. This inevitably has pushed up wages and employment standards.

We were unable to see the pack house due to food hygiene complications but enjoyed a welcome cup of tea and cake before departing.

Andrew Cragg



Visit to Beeswax Dyson Farming
26th June 2019 - Nocton, Lincolnshire





21 aircraft were due to fly in to Wickenby, but as is often the case with the British weather things did not quite work to plan. The cloud was low and visibility poor, making the morning arrivals impossible.
However, Flying Farmers do not give up that easily so 33 out of the 50 due managed to arrive at the event by other means of transport.

We were met at the 'Hive', Beeswax's conference centre by Richard Williamson, Managing Director, and James Thompson, Head of Farming who gave us a great introduction into the Beeswax Dyson farming operation.

The company was set up seven years ago by Sir James Dyson and now owns and farms 35,000 acres across 6 sites, perhaps making it the biggest farming business in the UK, employing 140 full time staff and at least 300 outside contractors every week of the year.

Whilst the majority (66%) of the £500 million turnover comes from farming there are also 2 AD plants which contribute 29% and 190 let properties making up the remaining 5%.

Our visit was to one part of the operation, Nocton. This farm has an AD (anaerobic digester) plant and a newly built farmyard which houses grain and potato stores and also workshop facilities.

After lunch we started our tour, first stopping by the AD plant where we were met by Simon, the very enthusiastic site manager. The plant was built in 2010 and acquired by Beeswax as part of the Nocton purchase. Simon explained the many positives of the site as well as the negatives, these areas he was eager to improve. The site needs 50,000 tonnes of feedstock, mainly maize and rye, per year to feed its massive gas powered engine which turns the 2 MW alternator. Perhaps surprisingly, the entire feedstock needed is grown on the farm making it a very good example of an in-house 'field to electricity' production line.

From there we moved to Nocton Wood to hear from Ian the environmental manager about the sustainability work being carried out by Beeswax, which includes striving to protect the sensitive farmland in order to provide new habitats and food for bees which provide invaluable pollination services to their crops.

Our next stop was to the newly built, if not quite finished, Nocton farmyard. This consists of a weighbridge, sampling laboratories, a 150 tonne per hour grain drier, an 8,000 tonne grain store, 2,000 tonne boxed potato store, and machinery storage sheds as well as farm workshops and offices.

Working with such a large acreage, efficiency is an essential aspect, especially at harvest. Having tried a number of options, Beeswax have determined that running the combines (Claas 780's if you were wondering) in pairs, together with a 30 tonne chaser bin feeding arctic lorries, is the most efficient process.

Their harvesting process is likely different to what you are used to as well, at Beeswax combining starts at 8am and finishes around 8pm. With lorry driver hours to consider and having plenty of cheap electricity via the on-site AD plant, the cost of drying the cereals does not seem to faze them.

After a look around the state-of-the-art boxed potato store we did a drive-by inspection of some of the crops being grown. From here we saw the vast irrigation lagoon which is currently being built. So as not to impact further on already scarce water resources during the summer, once finished this will only be filled during the winter months.

Whilst we only saw a small element of the Beeswax set up, the scale of production here is very clear and the additional long term employment it has created is impressive by anyone's standards. It was clear from the chatter on the way back to the 'Hive' that we were eager to see how the Beeswax philosophy develops going forward.

Paul Burtwistle

LINCS & NOTTS AIR AMBULANCE
SAVING LIVES EVERYDAY

Only two thirds of the applicants attented due to poor flying conditions, this resulted in a surplus which by agreement was split between the FFA and the Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance (see below extract from a recent letter).

"on behalf of the team here at the Lincs and Notts Air Ambulance I would like to thank you for your generous online donation of £165.00...

...This year marks our 25th Anniversary. Since airlifting our very first patient 13th May 1994, we have been called out to over 20,000 critically injured patients across Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire. Throughout our 25th Anniversary year we will be working towards providing a 24 hour service 7 days a week, enabling us to give more people than ever the very best chance of survival. This makes donations like yours more important than ever as our operational cost will rise to £4m per year. We anticipate these additional hours will enable us to attend approximatly 450 more potentially life threaening emergencies every year."

FFA visit to Southwick House and Tangmere Museum

The day of the visit dawned as an event organiser's dream - cloudless blue skies and visibility in excess of 50 miles. And so in the narrow window of Goodwood airfield opening and the bus having to depart, all aircraft (except one no-show) were parked in time for a quick coffee in the new clubhouse café.

The original plan of a visit to the Tangmere Pepper nurseries, the largest in the U.K., had to be shelved at their request because of a threat of virus infection which is a very serious problem on the continent. Rather than abandon the whole meeting, I remembered that I had been taken to Southwick House a couple of years ago to be given a briefing lecture on the Map Room, and as it was in the area, albeit at quite a distance further, it seemed an idea to arrange a visit there instead.

Southwick House is the home of the Military Police, and the Map Room is the room that was used for planning and co-ordination of the D-Day operations and where the final go-ahead was given by Eisenhower to set the invasion in motion. The room is within the private house and is preserved exactly as it was on June 6th 1944. We were indeed fortunate to have Richard Callaghan, the chief curator of the room as our lecturer of the day - a man who is passionate about it and has a wealth of detail of the whole background to the events of the previous year, leading up to the invasion. The amount of deception that was employed to "persuade" Hitler that the invasion - which he knew was coming - would take place at the obvious place of the Pas de Calais, had an enormous impact on the surprise factor of using the Normandy beaches, leaving the German forces woefully under-prepared. We were scheduled for a 40 minute presentation but it lasted for over an hour and a quarter - and this was despite him having a group before us with just a 20 minute break between the two groups.

Because there was a group before ours, our slot was put back for a little while which gave us time to look around the museum, which details the whole development of the Military Police from its inception a couple of centuries ago up to modern times and showed what an important role the unit plays in every theatre of war and how imperative it is to have them for enforcement of discipline of not only the troops, but the civilian population as well within the area of conflict. They are also involved in traffic duties such as manning roadblocks and confirming driver identities.

With the Map Room presentation over, leaving us all completely spellbound about the sheer complexities of the joint co-ordination of the three services, and the logistics of all the back-up required (reinforcements, fuel, ammunition, food, medical needs etc.) - but above all the confidence of the weatherman who accurately predicted a short window of calm weather after the storm of the 5th had necessitated a delay, and which again served to surprise the Germans, who couldn't believe we would go ahead in such bad weather.

We then re-boarded the bus to go back to the Tangmere Aviation Museum for a bite of lunch in their cafe and a look around the Museum in our own time. The Museum is much more extensive than I was led to believe and has a special section devoted to SOE operations (which was of particular interest to me, as the father of one of my greatest friends - who only died 3 years ago aged 96 - was involved in dropping agents into occupied France by Hudson's and Halifaxes, and retrieving others by Lysander.) The reason for the emphasis on SOE was that RAF Tangmere along with RAF Tempsford in Bedfordshire, were the two airfields dedicated to these operations in the war.

Just imagine, for one moment, when you are next flying and your GPS goes on the blink and you stare at it in horror, that you had been sent off, in the dark with the most basic of instrumentation, and just a stop watch, a map and a full moon, to find a small field in the middle of hostile territory identified by just a couple of small torches (which may, or may not be the enemy), and with the risk of being shot at from the ground and from the air....now THAT'S navigation, and above all THAT'S courage.

The visit over, we returned the short distance to Goodwood where, with the weather still glorious, we returned home,thus completing our FFA events calendar of 2019.

Martin Gosling

Pop-In Meeting, 30th March 2019, Fenland.

We were again very blessed with excellent flying weather for our meeting at Fenland on 30th March. Over 30 members enjoyed lunch together at this wonderfully hospitable airfield that is always a real pleasure to visit. This did put a little strain on the catering staff for a short time, but we were all 'fed and watered' while enjoying good conversation, in unbroken sunshine!

Several newer members came along, including George Stops, Julian and Hazel Hammond and a prospective new member, Stuart Brierley. We look forward to welcoming you at future Flying Farmer events. Tony Fisher arrived, not by air, but in his immaculate MG TC car, in which he gave several members a quick drive.

The forward visibility on our homeward flights for those of us who had to fly into the setting sun was very limited with identification of ground features only possible as they were passed. Another of those flights when we say a real thanks for the GPS!

David Keene.



The Flying Farmers Association Limited Balance Sheet At 31st March 2019

	2019	2018	
Current assets			
Stocks of clothing	1822	2281	see stock sheet
Tour Talk Radios	2000		
Debtors	68	18	see Cred/Debt sheet
Petty Cash	21	21	
Cash at bank	40438	39341	
Total	44349	41661	
Deduct: current liabilities			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year			
Creditors and Accruals	488	362	see Cred/Debt sheet
Corporation Tax	111	90	
	599	452	
Total NET Assets	43750	41209	
Reserves			
Reserves	39414	38265	
Fly-in Fund	2474	1795	
Profit & Loss	1862	1149	
Accumulated surplus	43750	41209	
Rounding	0		
Tour talk Radios			
Purchase in this year	5000		
Depreciation SL 5yrs	-1000		
Allocate £2000 from fly in fund surplus this year	-2000		
Value in Fixed Assets	2000		
Fly-Fund Reconciliation			
Start Balance	1795.65		
Surplus in this year	2678.88		
Allocate £2000 from fly in fund surplus to right off			
Radios	-2000.00		
Closing value of Fly-in fund	2474.53		

The flying farmers association limited

Detailed income and expenditure account for the year ended 31st march 2019			
	2019	**2018**	
Income			
Subscription & Entrance Fees	10591.00	10488.00	
Surplus on sale of stock of clothing	70.25	13.00	
Interest earned	555.44	473.19	
Total	11216.69	10974.19	
Deduct expenditure			
Newsletters - cost of production	2688.17	4251.44	
Less - advertisements	-50.00	-400.00	
Net newsletter cost	2638.17	3851.44	
Membership booklet	0.00	0.00	
Committee expenses	690.70	824.20	
Contribution to AOPA	750.00	750.00	
Contribution to GAAC	750.00	750.00	
Contribution to GASCo	750.00	750.00	
Contribution to LAA	400.00	400.00	
Accountancy	395.00	355.00	
AGM costs	684.13	1167.12	
Website costs	873.95	298.93	
Insurance	0.00	0.00	
Sundry	1311.30	589.05	
Total expenditure	9243.25	9735.74	
Surplus/(deficit) before taxation	1973.44	1238.45	
Deduct Corporation Tax due on interest earned	-110.99	-89.91	
Surplus/(deficit) after taxation	1862.45	1148.54	



Pilatus Factory Taken by Roger Bell