FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION

WINTER RUMINATIONS. JANUARY 1978

As usual at this time of year my aircraft is tucked away in its hangar and very rarely do I have the chance to fly it. However a month or so ago my rough terrain fork truck broke down. The local agent did not have the spares but with a little coordination from the importers and an hours flying I had the spares and the tractor was going the same day. Jolly handy as we were shifting manure to a contracter.

If I had to sum up my farming last year in one word I would say it was a year of 'Containing'. Containing costs and somehow Containing some sort of profit.

I was more aware than ever this year of the huge cost increases with which we have had to contend. Thank goodness feed prices have remained stable or in some cases dropped from last year. We are all aware of the huge machinery costs; it now looks as though labour costs are fast escalating in the same direction. We must not begrudge our men a fair wage. They are by far the most loyal and trouble free employees in the country. Somehow we must keep this treasured boss/employee relationship. If ever the closed shop entered farming it would be a quick step towards disaster.

Aviation is still a subject not far from my mind even in January. We are busily engaged in rebuilding an Auster Autocrat and a J.I.N. I'm still looking for a Gypsy 10/2 so if anyone knows where there is one with low hours or zero time I would be grateful if you could tell me where I might find it.

So far this year we have three visits planned. If anyone knows more places of interest I would be grateful if he or she would inform the Hon. Secretary as soon as possible. I would like to aim for a meeting every month from April until September and hold our A.G.M. as usual in London in December.

The first meeting this year is on March 1st (Wednesday) at 14.00hrs. at the West Drayton Air Traffic Centre. Numbers are restricted to 20 or 25. Please let me know if you wish to come as soon as possible and then I can send you a plan of how to find the centre.

For security purposes I need 1) your name 2) your address 3) your car number 4) your passengers name.

Another visit is on Thursday May 27th to S.Nayall and Sons' farm near Sleap in Shropshire. Details of this visit will be announced later. This is an interesting farm which relies on organic system of fertilizing. I am sure this farm will be worth that extra effort to see. Organic farms were once regarded with suspicion by many farmers. This one I am assured has been going for many years and is I believe very successful.

The next trip which I am in the throes of organising is one to Holland. For several years we have been going to 'go foreign'. This year irrespective of weather or anything else its on !

The visit is planned to start on Thursday 22nd June. I have arranged for us to meet at Schiphol Airport at 18.00 hrs. We shall be staying at an hotel just outside the airport.

Flying Farmers Association - Winter Ruminations January 1978 (Contd.)

Dinner will be served at 19.30, followed by a talk on Dutch farming in general and the polders in particular. This talk may be given by the Dutch Agricultural Attache.

On Friday 23rd we embark by coach for Lelystad. If you wish you may fly but you will miss a talk en route, a brief stop at an Agricultural Museum and a visit to a couple of typical Dutch farms. We return to the hotel at 19.00 hrs. for dinner at 19.30.

On Saturday 24th there will be a visit to the Flower Auctions followed by a short stop at a local plant breeding centre.

On Saturday afternoon or Sunday you may return home as you wish.

As this visit is confirmed by the Dutch Embassy and the Travel Agents etc., I think it may be advisable to book seats by a charter flight for those who do not wish to fly their own aircraft or think the weather could beat them. Therefore it is imperative you let me know IMMEDIATELY.

a) If you want to go.

b) If you want to fly your own aircraft or not.

c) How many persons in your particular party.

I would hope for a really good attendance at this visit. Remember we are in competition with the Dutch. I believe it's healthy to know what our competitors are doing !

A considerable amount of effort is going into organising everything so don't be shy and stop at home. We could all say we are busy in June as in fact we are, but as farmers we are busy all the time !

Finally this could be one of my last newsletters to you. David Corbett has agreed to take over from me after Holland this year. You all know David as our man from Shobdon. He sits on nearly every Aviation Committee possible and is a man of remarkable calibre and character. I'm sure you will give him every support. I shall still remain on the committee and act as Hon. Treasurer.

It only remains for me once more to thank all those who have helped me through the past three years of office and once more to thank our Chairman Col. John Williams Wynne for his tireless efforts in keeping our organisation growing and supplying us with an endless supply of interesting and indeed eminent speakers at our Winter Meetings. We are very lucky to have him as Chairman. May he long continue in office.

Food for Thought?

An extract taken from 'Pilot' safety matters. Especially for those who attended our A.G.M. in London last December.

"A special V.F.R. flight provides flexibility in a control zone or specified special rules airspace for a pilot who is unable to comply with the instrument flight rules."

A pilot of an aircraft on a special V.F.R. flight:-

a) Must comply with A.T.C. instructions.

b) Is responsible for ensuring that his flight conditions enable him to remain clear of cloud, determine his flight path with reference to the surface and keep clear of obstructions.

c) Is responsible for ensuring that he flies within the limitations of his licence.
Controllers are not responsible for checking pilots qualifications.

d) Is absolved from the rule forbidding flight below 1,500 feet over congested areas (Rule 5 (2) (a)).

e) Need not file a flight plan unless he wishes his destination to be advised of the flight.

"A special V.F.R. clearance shall be issued only when specifically requested by a pilot".

Anthony E. Poulsom
Secretary