FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION LTD.

NEWSLETTER - MARCH 1984

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - DECEMBER 1983

A most successful A.G.M. was held on Monday 5th December at the Kensington Court Hotel, which was the same venue as the previous year. After the A.G.M., we enjoyed a very interesting talk by Mr. Ken Smart, Chief Engineer of the Accident Investigations Branch of the Department of Trade. About 30 members attended.

SPRING VISIT, APRIL 26th and 27th

This visit will take place as already announced. On Thursday 26th April, those who wish to visit R.A.F. Scampton as guests of their Commanding Officer will fly into Scampton. The Red Arrows are amongst the units based at R.A.F. Scampton. At the end of the visit on Thursday, members who wish to stay in Lincolnshire for the visit to Marshall Tractors on Friday 27th April, will be taken by road to overnight accomodation which our Chairman is arranging. After the visit to Marshall Tractors, members will return by road to R.A.F. Scampton to rejoin their aircraft.

There are certain "ground rules" for this visit. They are:-

(i) We regret that the visit must be limited to 100 persons maximum.

(ii) In order to give the greatest number of members themselves the chance to attend this fly-in, we regret that no guests will be allowed.

(iii) Members may join the fly-in for either the Red Arrows day, or the Marshall Tractor day, or both. Those coming for the Friday only will not necessarily land at Scampton.

Full administrative details of the visit are not yet available. Details will be sent, in good time before the visit, to those members who have indicated their intention to attend by filling in the replies on the tear-off slip at the end of this newsletter. The latest date for returning the tear-off strip is Friday 6th April. This is important.

Finally, it is our intention, if possible, to organise a dinner on the Thursday night for those members who are staying overnight.

VISIT TO FRENCH WINE-GROWING AREAS, JUNE

A comprehensive aerial tour of the French wine-growing areas has been organised for the week of 10 - 17 June. This week has been chosen because on 15th and 16th June the French Game Fair takes place at Versailles.

The outline programme for this tour will be as follows:-

Sunday 10 June - Members fly independently to join up at Rheims.

Monday 11 June - Visit wine growing areas of Rheims - famous for its champagne.

Tuesday 12 June- Fly to Dijon. There are several airfields in this area, and it is not yet certain which one will be chosen.

Wednesday 13 June - Visit Dijon wine growing areas, including hopefully a chateau.

Members will be free to make their own way either home or elsewhere in France on Thursday. Toussons-le-Noble is the nearest airfield for Versailles for those who wish to visit the French Game Fair.

This visit will be limited to 25 on a first come first served basis, so please fill in the relevant section of the tear-off strip if you wish to be short-listed for this visit. Again, we regret that this will probably have to be limited to members only. Please return the relevant part of the tear-off strip by 7th May if you intend to join this trip.

We are most grateful to David Beaman, of Barwell and Jones, who are London wine shippers, for his help in organising this trip.

OTHER EVENTS FOR 1984

(i) September. Our President had now been told that C.E.G.B. can at last accept visitors at its Dinorwic subterranean power station. We are therefore planning a visit for September, using Caernarvon as the airfield for the visit. Further details of their visit will be published in a later newsletter.

(ii) Badminton Estate and B.Ae. Filton. We have been invited to fly-in to both Badminton and Filton, and this could form a combined day. We are looking into this proposal, and deciding what would be a suitable date.

(iii) Badminton Air Day and Fly-in. Two events are being held this year - a Fly-in on Sunday 29th April, and the Annual Air Day on July 15th. Members are invited to attend either or both - full details from:

Mr. J.F. Davis, New Villas, Badminton, Avon; Tel: Badminton 249.

(iv) National and World Ploughing Championships. These two events are being held in 1984 over the four day period 19 - 22 September. A fully-licenced grass airfield , "Horncastle", is being established especially for this event, some 12 Nautical Miles east of Lincoln, and 4 Nautical Miles South of the Belmont Tower aerial. The airfield will be fully radio equiped from 19th September including NDB and VOR - yes, VOR!!

Full details will be published in a later newsletter.

(v) Pembroke County Show. 1984 is the 200th anniversary of this show, and the County Show Secretary, Bill Finn (tel: 0437 4331) is anxious that as many aircraft as possible should Fly-in to Haverfordwest (Withybush) for this event. The Show itself takes place on Withybush airfield. Keep this date in your diary - and visit that beautiful part of the world.

(vi) Enclosed as an appendix to this Newsletter is a combined RASE/Arable Unit calendar of events for 1984.

NEWS FROM THE C.A.A.

The C.A.A. have sent us their usual annual quota of letters announcing increases in charges from June and July 1984. Members may be interested in the following extracts:-

(i) Grant of non-expiring PPL - £80
(ii) " " - " - PPL (microlight) - £50.
(iii) Conversion of 5 year PPL to non-expiring - £20 (does anyone still have a five-year licence?).
(iv) Aircraft up to 2730 MTWA - £41 for each 500kg or part thereof for renewal of C. of A.
(v) Permit to fly. £95 for aircraft up to 500kg. £178 for aircraft between 500 and 2730kg.

ASSOCIATION TIES

At long last, the design has been "frozen" and is now being woven. Orders for ties to the Hon. Secretary please, anytime now, enclosing a cheque for £3.50.

A PORTRAIT OF YOUR AIRCRAFT

Our Chairman has forwarded to me a folder showing coloured photographs of aircraft painted by a Lincolnshire artist - from "Harriers over the Falklands" to the Chairman's own aircraft over Lincolnshire. Any member interested should contact the artist, Kevin Woodcock, Wriggly Willow Cottage, Orby, Skegness, Lincolnshire.

AN ARTICLE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

We publish the following article from Col. John Williams-Wynne - and take this opportunity to send our best wishes to John and Peggy.

THE SAD DAY

One afternoon last November I came in from walking round the cattle, which were soon going to have to come indoors for winter. I was tired but felt perfectly normal. However, having got a tray of tea I sat down with my wife feeling ready to relax for an hour before going to the estate office to tidy up. Half an hour later when I tried to get up my left leg had pins and needles and I could not stand; nor could I lift my left forearm. Any layman, especially a livestock farmer, could do a diagnosis, and mine took me about three seconds. Thereafter came our doctor, who had been doing my medical for my PPL for twenty years. Two ambulance men followed with stretcher and I was

carried up to bed, and so, ignominously, ended my flying days.

Eventually the hard truth dawned upon me that I would never get a clear medical again and I must sell my aeroplane.

But how does one sell a 13-yo light aeroplane?

A dealer would take it (and his mark-up) in part exchange for a new one and I would have to accept his price which would obviously not be anywhere near value. Then when he eventually sold it he would have to add VAT. So I decided to try to sell it myself, direct.

My first step was to phone Customs and Excise to ask about VAT. "You will be selling it second-hand and you say you bought it before 1973?" "Yes" I replied. "Then there will be no VAT". So far so good.

An advert in this FFA Newsletter produced one reply, but like many a good fish, I lost it. Rather unsatisfactorily, I still cannot think where I made any mistake, but anyway I lost it. So then, on the advice of my First Officer and fellow traveller, my wife, I sent a fairly detailed advert to Flight. I then thought that I would have to wait at least a month for it to appear, and as I had already given up taking Flight now that I was to be a pedestrian I did not see it and my first clue to its appearance was a continuously ringing phone. Calls came from London, the Midlands, Cornwall, Merseyside, Wicklow, Greece, everywhere. Clearly I had a saleable item and I had pitched the price about right.

Several of the Enquirers than came here. One by air, most by road. I left them to talk and think, suggesting they should, if they liked it, bring a licensed engineer. Some of them did. One prospective and his engineer spent six hours examining for compression, corrosion, wear and tear and more. I was glad, for I would not want to sell with a known defect.

In the end, a deal was agreed with one buyer, and I was given a cheque for what I asked and that, sadly, was that.

This is rather a tall house for a country home so the proceeds are being spent on installing a lift. I'm damned if I have to be carried to bed on a stretcher again if I can help it; but its a bit of a come-down after to-ing and fro-ing, IMC at FL 60.

The strip is to be ploughed and levelled then laid down to long lay. It has not been touched for twenty years and is a good example of every known weed. The records show over 1000 landings, from a Turbo Porter and Islander and Beech Travelair, through Cessna 182, 172, 150 and 152, to various Jodels, Robins, and a Turbulent. Its due for a face-lift, but I am sad.

Editor' Note

I have been holding this article for some time, and apologise for the delay. I understand that Colonel John's aeroplane has been bought by a new F.F.A. member, and also, that Colonel John's strip is now useable again.

AN ARTICLE FROM DR. DUNCAN FEARNS

The following article has been received from Dr. Fearns of Nigel Press Associates Ltd. In addition, your editor has received two "thermal image photographs", which look most useful. If anyone is seriously interested in following this up, please contact Dr. Fearns direct. His address is:- Nigel Press Associates Ltd., Edenbridge, Kent. TN8 6HS. Tel: 0732 865023.

REMOTE SENSING FIELDS FROM SATELLITES

NASA launched the first earth resources satellite Landsat 1 in 1972, and the images (pictures) have proven extremely valuable in large scale mapping, geological exploration and agricultural surveys. Until very recently, the ground resolution of images from the Landsat satellites was 80 x 80m. Although this was adequate for many purposes, a higher ground resolution was required for most agricultural purposes. In late 1983, Landsat 4 was launched with a new 'thematic mapper' (TM) sensor, which has an improved ground resolution of 30 x 30 metres, and 7 wavebands including the blue, green and red of visible light, and three infrared bands. Any three wavebands may be combined to produce a false colour image to enhance particular features such as field patterns and crop discrimination.

Each dot (pixel) composing the picture is transmitted from the satellite as a number and each Landsat scene contains over 1 million numerical values

in each band. Image processing computers allow us to process and manipuate this data with a real-time colour picture display, which can be recorded to produce maps classified by land use or crop type. Land ownership boundaries can be computer defined and reproduced on the image.

The new TM imagery clearly identifies field boundaries, and in many instances, patterns within fields can be determined.

These patterns are caused by relative crop stress, such as differences in fertilisation, drainage or incidence of disease. It is not yet possible to determine what causes the stress without ground information, but the vertical perspective - as I am sure FFA members will be aware - is a boon to defining problem areas and thus optimise work on the ground.

Pilots may also utilise satellite imagery for VFR flying, if it were to be overlain by printed chart information. Prints showing the features and field patterns around small airfields may also be useful to pilots who only have a 1:250,000 chart to navigate with.

Nigel Press Associates Ltd is an established International Remote Sensing Consultancy and our activities include geological and agricultural consultancy overseas, development of digital image processing computer systems, and sale of custom satellite images. We would be pleased to satisfy any requests for imagery, from the whole of the British Isles, to the area of land under your ownership. Any expression of opinion concerning satellite imagery, either positive or negative from FFA members, would be most welcomed.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Since the above article was written, I have spoken to Dr. Fearns, who has told me that "TM photographs" can be enlarged up to scale 1:25000, and that they are now able to superimpose farmers' property and field boundaries over the photographs.

For further information, please contact Dr. Fearns direct at :-
Nigel Press Associates Ltd., Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 6HS. Tel: 0732 865023.

FINALE

May I, through this newsletter, apologise to Mr. Snook for not sending the information he requested. However, I now find I have no record of you as a member, or therefore your address or telephone number.

My apologies.