FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION

December 2022 newsletter no. 141



CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS

I have never known a farming year like the one that is drawing to a close. I don't think many days have gone by when I haven't looked at corn prices and seen them rise or fall by at least £2 or £3 a tonne with anything up to £10 or £12 variation in the same week and £100 a tonne over the year.

As a seller of a quite a bit of corn and a buyer of even more feed for chickens, I wish for higher prices on one front then lower prices on the other. It is very rare that I make the right decision – I seem to sell the wheat too low, then buy the feed too high. I buy some feed forward but don't cover it off by selling wheat ahead. When I did get it right and sold some wheat at the top, I didn't sell enough. The word greed comes to mind!

In July we saw a temperature of just under 40 degrees C in Yorkshire and exceeding 40 degrees in Lincolnshire – 6 degrees above the previous record for this area! This has serious consequences for intensive livestock, particularly the broiler chickens which cannot survive much above 32 degrees C when they are in the later stages of growth, when the sheds are at capacity. Consequently, we have had to spend a six figure sum on misting systems in all the sheds because we fear these temperatures are becoming the norm.

We have seen inflation hit double figures, which is the first time in 40 years. Likewise interest rates have risen to 3% (as of when I write this ramble), which, although most people under the age of 60 seem to think is astronomic, they are nothing compared with 17% in 1979. The question is, how much more will rates rise in 2023?

As far as our farming inputs go, I really wonder how we are going to cope with energy costs escalating by unbelievable amounts. I don't altogether understand why electricity costs haven't fallen back as about half the electricity is generated by gas which rose to over 600p/therm on the wholesale market, but is now less than half that. The other half of the cost is generated by nuclear, wind and solar. Not sure about nuclear cost inflation, but the wind and sun haven't gone up in price, in fact it has been a good year for solar.

Enough of that ramble. You can read about the FFA AGM elsewhere in this newsletter, but just to say, largely due to a superb venue offered by our member, His Grace, The Duke of Rutland, we had a superb turnout. One of our speakers was Rob Gratton, head of airspace infringements at the CAA, who gave an encouraging talk telling us that the CAA aren't there just to prosecute those that put a wingtip or an aerial twig into someone's airspace, but are there to educate us into not misdemeaning. I'm not sure that everyone in the room quite swallowed that so simply and I think they still believe that the CAA lead by stick rather than carrot.

However, Rob Gratton told me after the meeting that he was very impressed (and maybe surprised) by our members' intelligent questions and was delighted to have spoken to such a diverse group of aviators.

Maybe it was more a case of the FFA educating the CAA that we are not flying rickety air tractors with a flat cap, sucking on a bit of straw!!

Paul Stephens

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2 Chairman's Ramblings
3 FFA News
6 FFA Safety
14 Programme 2023
17 VISITS
22 Adventure
26 FFA member story
27 AGM
28 Member profile

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GAP – General Aviation Partnership Report November 2022

The last meeting of GAP was held online on the 9th November 2022.

Another milestone in the decline of this forum was passed when we were told that no one from the senior leadership was available. Since the first and founding head of the CAA General Aviation Unit, Tony Rapson, retired in May 2019, we have had three heads of the unit and the most recent appointment seems to be a job share. Such is the importance that the CAA now attributes to GAP.

GA Advocate

Mike Pearson takes on the role of GA Advocate following the untimely passing of his predecessor, Phil Dunnington. Some members will know him; he is a member of the Royal Aero Club, an airfield manager for Popham airfield and served as a Chair of the Airfield Operators Group (AOG). The role of the GA advocate is, so to speak, what it says on the tin – to act as a conduit across the many government departments and GA organisations to deliver the "GA Roadmap" (published in 2021) that aims to make the UK the best place in the world for GA. Yes, they are still using that phrase which I heard first coined by Grant Schapps at a GAP meeting many years ago. The trouble is, and this opinion has been expressed in so many other areas of government and policy making, the sweeping ambitions of our politicians are not matched by the legislation and regulation which, in the GA case at least, seems to achieve the opposite.

Low Flying Frequency

Squadron Leader Osbourne presented on the VHF Low Level Common Frequency 130.490. As a reminder, this was a military-led trial from 1 June 2021 to 1 June 2022, as an information service available for use by all aircrew, military and civilian, operating in Class G airspace at or below 2000' above Ground Level for better integration with users of low level airspace and to help build situational awareness. Sadly, although I could pointedly say, predictably, very few people actually heard about it. A previous trial in Scotland in 2015 was deemed to be successful and this time, there were a few appreciative comments from Wales, both areas of significant military low level activity with not many other people to talk to. In the south of England there is perhaps too much choice as illustrated by one GAP member who asked which of any one of 8 valid frequencies he should contact on take off from Blackbushe.

Additionally, there has been a significant drop in military low-level training since the withdrawal of the Tornado and, GA will report altitude while the military will report radar altimeter height – something to sort out there? It's not certain whether this will become a permanent addition but even if it does, Squadron Leader Osbourne said that in the main lowland AIAA's, the first frequency of choice has got to be LARS.

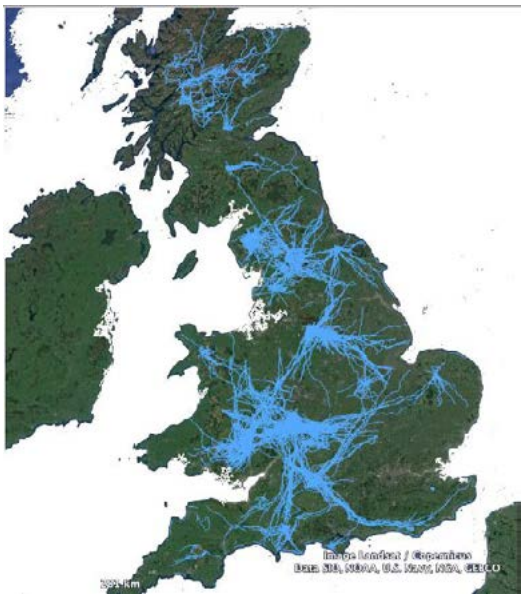
Innovation in Airspace Integration-

The CAA innovation team discussed the Landscape of Innovation in Airspace Integration including emerging themes in UAV BVLOS integration. [Unmanned aerial vehicles beyond visual line of sight]. Innovation doesn't seem to be much in evidence since clumsy temporary restricted airspace will remain the tool of choice for GA avoidance until the technology catches up – if it ever does. This topic has always generated lively comments – I would say debate except that doesn't happen anymore. There was an opinion expressed that the prediction of swarms of a million drones buzzing around the UK like flies may simply not come to pass. Many projects are supercharged venture capital projects and their generous predictions of fuelling the economy are surfboards that the politicians just love to jump on. The wave that is being ridden will inevitably reach the beach!

Hang Gliding and Paragliding in the UK

Recently, each GAP meeting has included an item called "Community in the Spotlight". This time it was the BHPA presented by Dan Shaw. For me, his is one of the more confusing cohorts in the flying community since they encompass hang gliders and paragliders, both of which can be powered (therefore not gliders?) , parascending, microlights and SSDR's (single seat de-regulated). They have a membership of 7600 with a further estimated 1500 participants in the sport who are not members.

It was a very interesting insight into that community. You can imagine that being slow moving with often limited lookout, the BHPA is well invested in see and avoid and has embraced the concept of electronic conspicuity (EC). Nevertheless, give them a wide berth! Perhaps the most extraordinary fact was the scale of the unpowered flight distances – like cross-country gliding. See below for unpowered cross-country flight routes.



EU Exit

The dispensations in place following UK's exit from the EU relation to flight licensing and maintenance come to an end on 31st December 2022.

One of those dispensations was for EASA licence holders to continue to enjoy the privileges of that licence in the UK. CAA guidance on this is ambiguous : it says that holders of an EASA licence must obtain a UK licence after this date to continue to exercise their privileges. What it doesn't say is that holders of a **UK issued** EASA licence can continue as if nothing had happened. This error was spotted on publication months ago and remains uncorrected although the GA media machine has largely got the message out to us.

Similarly, mutual recognition of certification of aircraft parts within Europe also disappears at the end of December. As with all these things, the effect of this will depend on what you are trying to do. There is not expected to be any problems with **new** manufactured parts; the issue is with second hand, repaired or overhauled parts. UK organisations will no longer be able to accept EASA Form 1s as an acceptable certificate for overhauled components from an EU/EASA organisation that has not applied to the CAA for UK approval. Since that approval is seen

to be unreasonably expensive, few have, or will be bothered to apply.

In practice, it may not be as bad as it may first appear. For planes in the private category, many UK licensed engineers have the delegated authority to re-certify, sign off and fit a European part accompanied by an EASA Form1. In the commercial sector, the route is to apply for a CAA Authorised Release Certificate which will be expensive and time consuming and in the case of an overhauled engine might require it to be stripped down and re-examined. That will result in a, you guessed it, a CAA Form 1. I expect there'll be a fee…

When perfectly acceptable EU parts become un-airworthy simply by entering the UK then surely common sense has been sacrificed at the altar of politics. At this rate, we will quickly become the worst place in the world for GA.

Andrew Cragg

General Aviation Awareness Council

GAAC attended the All-Party Parliamentary Group (Aviation). Needless to say, due to changes in Prime Ministers, appointments of ministers are in a state of flux and uncertainty. Robert Courts is the head of the APPG Aviation and Mark Harper chairs the Department for Transport. Baroness Vere is the Minister for Aviation. We continued to campaign for tax benefits for GA: apprenticeships; training of professional pilots; etc.

Protection for airfields under the Strategic Airfields Network should be guaranteed for all airfields for at least five years to allow for the needs of piloted and remotely piloted aerial systems (RPAS) for landing and take-off places. Zero emission large drones may well replace diesel lorries for the transport of goods, as one quoted example.

Green issues

In view of increased restrictions on the use of leaded avgas in France and California the introduction of unleaded fuel into the UK should be a priority. It is essential that GA responds – and is seen to respond – to the call for zero emissions of CO2.

Regulation

Importation of certified parts from the US for American aircraft should not be subject to re-certification by the CAA.
There is currently a review of licensing and instructor regulations by the CAA which GAAC member organisations (FFA) are urged to respond to.

GAAC accounts show a continued, creeping deficit.
Perhaps large oil companies such as Shell and BP should be approached to contribute donations to the GAAC.
There is a need for a fund-raising specialist. Any suggestions?

Anthony Kedros
Hon Secretary
November 2022
www.gaac.org.uk

AOPA Luxembourg has set up a collaboration with Graine de vie consisting of calculating the carbon effect of flights in powered aircraft organized by AOPA Luxembourg. By individual flight, we now integrate the environmental impact in terms of CO2. The partnership will make it possible to contribute financially, on a voluntary basis, to reforestation campaigns in the eastern region of Madagascar. Graine de vie supplied more than 80,000 seeds for the reforestation of 40 hectares in Mahanoro Vatomandry. This operation will consist of neutralising the carbon effects of flights carried out under AOPA Luxembourg

Shahriar Agaajani, Member of the AOPA Luxembourg board, developed the initiative to quantify the environmental impact due to general aviation, to record all the emissions caused accurately and to neutralise the carbon impact of AOPA members.

AOPA Luxembourg and Graine de vie are pleased to obtain support for this new initiative from Mr. Francois Bausch, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Mobility and Public Works of the Government of Luxembourg. Minister Bausch explains:
"I welcome the awareness and initiative adopted by AOPA concerning the assessment and voluntary offsetting of CO2 emissions from general aviation. Among private flights, it is still rare to take carbon effects into account. In this sense, I fully support the green and proactive spirit of AOPA."
www.grainedevie.org

In an informative video posted on YouTube, AOPA Luxembourg presents the CO2 reduction strategy it has developed.

GASCo

The General Aviation Safety Council

The constant theme is that human error is to blame for most accidents. Nothing else to report.

Rick Holt

FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION

NEW FFA name badges



£3.00 each plus £1.50 postage and packing.
To order please email charliepapworth@gmail.com
with the name you would like on your badge and the address if you require it to be posted out

GASCo Safety Evenings

Headcorn Airfield 19:30 - Thursday 12th January 2023 Email: ops@headcornaerodrome.co.uk
Perth Airport 14:00 - Sunday 22nd January 2023 Email: office@scottishaeroclub.org.uk
Rochester Airport 19:30 - Thursday 16th February 2023 Email: kcarr@rochesterairport.co.uk
Portmoak Airfield 19:30 - Saturday 18th February 2023 Email: reiner.kipp@web.de
Goodwood Aero Club 19:30 - Thursday 30th March 2023 Email: amy.harte@goodwood.com
Further details on GASCO website

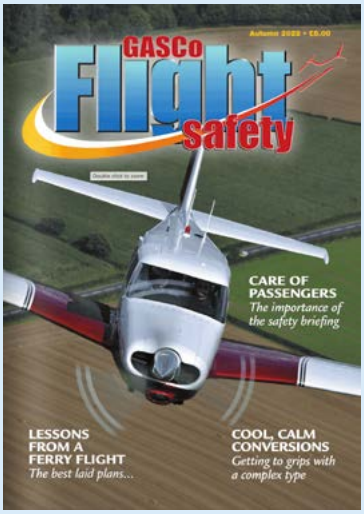
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IMPORTANT
Membership Matters

1. Change to Direct Debit – GOCardless

Members will know that we are asking members to move from Standing Order to Direct Debit to simplify the collection of subscription in the future. It will also enable one-off payments to the Association for FFA clothing, for example. We started the process in May 2020 and 2½ years later 80% of the membership have successfully signed up. Notwithstanding a very few esteemed members who have been given exceptional leave to remain, there are 74 members who have not taken the plunge. The remaining reasons are "don't see the point", "don't see why I should", "its working fine, why change it".
Well, in the short term it makes the Treasurer's job administering the subscriptions much easier but more importantly, sooner rather than later, the subs will have to go up. Members on direct debit will have to do exactly nothing and the new sub will be taken. However, all remaining SO members will have to cancel their standing orders and re-establish their subscription at that point, so why not do it now to avoid the tsunami of wailing and knashing of teeth that will surely ensue on the 26th April in the future? You may think that the Treasurer "protests too much" - thank you Will - but he has still not been able to fully resolve issues arising from the last change of subscription standing orders which happened 23 years ago!

If you have not set up the direct debit with GOCardless then PLEASE Go to the website; News > Subscriptions **https://ffa.org.uk/membership-subscriptions/** and click the link.

If you have any questions or concerns then please **email treasurer@ffa.org.uk** or **ring the office on 01303 874251**

2. Flying Farmers Emails

We now use emails to send you important regulatory information, requests from members and most importantly, details of events and booking links. 60% of our membership routinely open emails and while we contact those whose emails are undelivered we can do nothing about those that go to spam or an unused inbox. If you are not getting regular emails from info@ffa.org.uk and you want them then please contact us on the website, info@ffa.org.uk or 01303 874251. If you don't want them, unsubscribe at the bottom of any email or contact us as above.

FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION

FFA Clothing

Item	Logo	Sizes	Price
New Style Jackets		M, L, XL	£40.00
Lined Fleece Jackets		S,M	£30.00
Unlined Jacket (discontinued)	Old style	M	Half price £10.00
New Style Body Warmer		M, L, XL	£28.00
Unlined Fleece Waistcoat	Old style	S	Half price £8.00
Sweat Shirts		S, M, XL	£14.00
Sweat Shirt	Old style	S	Half price £7.00
Polo Shirts		S, L	£12.00
Polo Shirts	Old Style	M	Half price £6.00
Baseball Caps			£8.00
Ties			£15.00
Umbrellas			£29.00
Clocks (NEW)			£30.00
Pens (NEW)			£2.50

The above clothing is available from stock. If your size isn't listed, it can be ordered. Please note reduced prices on old stock with old logo. Prices do not include postage. For all orders contact Roz Stephens **07773 052001** or **chix@farmline.com**

MEMBERS MISHAPS

A platform giving members the opportunity to submit any article about their flying career from which other members can benefit and learn from. If anonymity is required that will of course be respected

ILAFFT (I Learnt About Flying From That)





I had just purchased a Taylor monoplane and the weather was perfect on the early spring morning set for collection day. The ferry flight would take me back across the country from a strip in Suffolk to Halfpenny Green airfield, via my home strip in Worcestershire. The aircraft was going to be taken apart, re covered and painted to smarten her up ahead of a summer of evening strip flying. For those not familiar with the Taylor Monoplane, it is a small single seat, fabric covered, home built machine of timber construction. There have been just over 100 built, all variations of the 1950's design. Most feature an air cooled VW 40hp engine. I had not flown one before but had plenty of Tailwheel strip time, albeit in more 'common' homebuilt aircraft. My new monoplane had a lovely bubble canopy, hinged on one side which closed and locked with a simple catch above the throttle on the left hand side of the cockpit.

I advanced the throttle for takeoff and with my feet working hard to keep it straight, I soon lifted off into the lovely dense high pressure air above the East of England. The ferry flight itself was uneventful, the only slight issue being very poor reception from the handheld radio. I decided to steer clear of airspace and enjoyed the quiet 2.5 hour journey back West. I landed for a quick stop at my home strip where the aircraft was given the once over by my inspector before I would fly it up to Halfpenny Green ahead of the restoration work. It was decided, following a PPR call to Halfpenny green that I would arrive 'non-radio' due to the hand-held radio being practically useless! I had the telephone number of the ATC FISO in my mobile should plans change.

Takeoff and climb out was uneventful, I again enjoyed the freedom that this small, single seat provided. An almost fighter jet feeling, sitting so close to the panel and centre of gravity.

Then, without hint or warning, Bang! I'd heard of people experiencing malfunctions previously talk of the silence following an engine failure or the panic setting in as they watch a dial slowly wind down. This was entirely different. The bang wasn't from an engine failure. It had infact been caused by the canopy of my new toy flinging open and smashing against the side of the fuselage. I had the sudden rush of air flow in my face, coupled with the wash from the prop just feet in front of my face. It caused my headset to fly off and nearly my spectacles too! It was incredibly disorientating but I immediately went into survival mode, taking in as much information from the instruments as i could, as well as looking down for a field if required. I needed to land this thing, the main issue facing me now was the canopy. Despite having flung open, it was infact still attached. I tried in vain to close it but unfortunately it had become distorted in the initial opening and was now acting like a big bucket of drag, hanging down on the side of the aircraft. I was descending, fast! Concerned about my ability to remain in the air and the possibility of the canopy detaching, I applied full power. This was just enough to maintain a shallow rate of descent. With no working radio, an emergency call was not an option. Fortunately I was only a few miles from my destination at this point and I did have the phone number of the controller at Halfpenny green. A blunt text message advised him I would be arriving shortly and to clear the way! Coming from the south, I did not have the altitude or desire to make a full arrival to Runway 16 so, I decided to land downwind, a 'straight in' approach to Runway 34.

Moments later I was taxying in alongside the fire vehicles at Halfpenny green. My previous text message resulting in the crash alarm being activated and other traffic being held off for my arrival.

I believe the photos (above) summarise the state of the aircraft following the incident. The above being caused simply by the canopy latch mechanism failing, itself a relatively simple homebuilt design.

Now what had I learnt from my experience that day?

I learnt to plan my cruising level more carefully. Had I been flying just 1000' lower, the outcome may have been entirely different.

I now carry a spare radio when I fly. I always tell someone what time I'll be going flying and when I aim to be back. Flying farmers are able to enjoy the freedom of unhindered strip flying more than most, but this doesn't come without risk.

No flight is the same. When we go flying we're always exposing ourselves to an element of risk, but how can we best manage this? I find a comprehensive brief helpful, always asking myself not only WHAT could go wrong, but HOW will I manage any issue should it arise.

Things do go wrong, components fail and despite the most thorough maintenance programme or in depth walk around, we must factor in the potential for the unknown. We must never allow ourselves to become complacent.

I decided to remove the canopy completely during the restoration work and I enjoyed some fantasying open cockpit flying before the aircraft moved on to its new owner.

Matthew Coles

Blocked Pitot Tubes

We have the G500H TXi in a helicopter and noticed that there was always a tailwind whichever direction we flew in, including going in to land at an airfield.

We assumed that the airspeed must be reading low, and thus the Garmin produces an incorrect wind direction. We had the service agent blow through the pipes and some pupae shot out (see pic).

On the 2nd occasion about a year later I was flying solo in quite gusty conditions. I took off from my home and felt uncomfortable in the bumps. Having seen Tim Tucker's video about "fly at a speed you personally are comfortable with", I pootled along at 85 knots thinking gosh this is still pretty bumpy. The interesting point here is the dangerous confirmation bias because the high ground speed I observed confirmed to me – in that microsecond – that there were high winds and not that there was an airspeed read error. A few microseconds later, I did realise my mistake though but probably only with the benefit of experiencing this previously.

Here is why I think a blocked pitot is dangerous

1. The blockage causes just enough airspeed error as to be inconclusive. If the airspeed read zero it would actually be safer as it would be immediately noticed.
2. The situation is basically undetectable until flying at cruise speed – you cannot detect this preflight.
3. Since the first time, we started to use a pitot cover and yet this STILL happened.
4. The diagnosis in flight is easily confused due to the confirmation bias
5. The analogue dial still matched the reading of the TAS in the Garmin but not exactly. This the pilot is easily convinced that the 2nd instrument cannot be a slave and must therefore confirm the airspeed is 85.
6. Blockages happen a lot. I have had one a year!
7. Just finding the blockage in the aft tube gives a false sense that the blockage is removed, you MUST also check the forward section (remove the G500X unit to get to the airspeed dial).

I have now concluded that it is actually quite easy to diagnose but I feel like other pilots won't know.

Diagnose a blocked pitot

If you suspect low airspeed (e.g. the ground speed less reported tailwind from the internet is much higher than the displayed airspeed), then a pitot blockage can be confirmed by changing direction 45 degrees whilst pulling a gentle N1 of say 60%. If the tailwind arrow does not significantly rotate (by 45 degrees), then your pitot may be blocked.

And keep it covered!

Sarah Chenevix-Trench



Pupae blocking the pitot tube



Robinson R66 with covered pitot tube

Landing on a remote beach on The Isle of Harris in my Rallye Club Summer 1972

Having recently acquired a share in the group I flew my wife all round the remote Scottish Islands. The Rallye Club would land almost anywhere and I would land on many of my Farmer Friends fields and airstrips.

On this occasion Stornaway ATC told me pre take off about a beach worth landing on the south west of Harris. The beach in question looked too tempting, with not a person in sight I decided to land on what I thought was firm sand being darker coloured just where the tide had reached at high tide.

The moment the tyres touched down the plane stopped in 30 yards in spite of applying full power!!!!

The tyres although only 2 inches deep in the sand were immoveable. What were we going to do with not a soul in sight and the tide turning?

Then I spotted a crofter way up on a hill turning his hay, I grabbed a bottle of whiskey and ran towards him. When I reached him and told him of my plight he immediately drove down with his tractor and a length of rope.

All he had to do was tow me barely 10 yards onto the firm lighter coloured sand which I tested by walking an imaginary 400 yard strip.

Take off was routine! Amazing what difference 10 yards made.

I certainly learnt about flying from that!

John Milne

Swing Starting a Bolkow

It was way back in 1966 and I was just starting my PPL course with my flying club. It only had one aeroplane, a Bolkow 208 Junior . A lovely little aerobatic all metal shoulder wing machine with a Rolls Royce 0-200 100 hp engine. The aircraft had a rear hinged canopy with an over centre central locking mechanism . Being a trainer it had a push/ pull throttle mounted either side of the cockpit and the joystick was a centrally mounted yolk for use by either pilot.

The sole navigation aid was a tiny E2B compass centrally mounted by the canopy latch. It kept you nicely (albeit vaguely) on the track that you had carefully drawn on your half mill as it bobbed around the sky . The radio, if I remember correctly was a new fit and was a state of art Becker which had on its face a crank handle which when rotated propelled a little vertical wire from right to left along a graduated scale containing frequencies. You knew roughly where your frequency was so you wound the crank handle to the approximate area of the dial and then you pulled out a little plunger and as you wound it left or right when it reached the frequency that you hoped was yours it let out a little squark at which point you pressed in the plunger.You then confirmed by either listening or calling.

All in all a really nice little aeroplane although it had a propensity to lose its nose undercarriage unless it was landed very carefully with the nose held high until it stalled on. In my time with the club we got through several losses of nosewheels due to student miscalculations and consequently there were many periods when training was interrupted due to repairs to our only aeroplane.

The club was struggling to survive and so we often had to do without the simplest replacement items and sometimes I would arrive to find a flat tyre or no fuel or no working headsets.

On the day in question I arrived on time for my lesson . There was no one about and the aircraft was still in the hangar . I had by this stage in my training reached solo and my hours were steadily mounting up and I was pretty familiar with the aircraft and the general routine . I got the aircraft out of the hangar , checked it over, noting that it needed fuel I decided to fill up ready for when my instructor arrived.



Credit: Peter Davis Collection. Bolkow 208 Junior

My pre flight check completed I swung myself into the cramped little cockpit , checked the controls full and free, flaps up , brakes on , throttle set and pulled the starter toggle- not a sound and the instruments which had been lit a moment ago went out. The battery was lawnmower sized and even when new it needed careful handling but this was tired and was not going to start it on that day.

I sat and thought for a moment or two and decided that I would hand swing it into life. Normally done with someone in the cockpit but never mind. I had already primed it and closed the throttle so I turned the mags off and swung my leg over the side and jumped out. Standing at the side I leaned in and checked the brakes were full on. I swung the canopy forward to close it - but just leaving a gap large enough to get my arm back inside.

Standing behind the prop I turned on the mags and had pulled the uppermost blade through just one quarter turn when it exploded into life . When disembarking I must have nudged the throttle because it was running pretty fast. Alarmed I hastily leant inside to close the throttle but inadvertently nudged it forward - but worse , somehow the canopy had closed and the little aircraft started nudging forward . I reached up for the canopy lock knowing that if the slipstream caught it the canopy would be torn off. Somehow I managed to release the central catch with one hand whilst holding the canopy down with the other. The aircraft was starting to move forward as I reached in again and closed the throttle.

Lesson learned? my word yes , a salutary lesson was learned that day and has never been forgotten, and until this moment I have never ever told anyone, and no one saw it happen .I still feel fortunate to be here since it could so easily have been a fatal mistake.

Moral

It is one thing to hand start a J3 on your own with that nice open side door but most certainly not a Bolkow.

Post script

It was more than 40 years later that I swung a prop for someone. I was an attendee at the very last Pershore air show and was standing watching the display when someone came up behind me and my colleague and he asked " are either of you swingers ? " I am afraid I took his comment as somewhat offensive and I just stared at him. As he walked away I realised what he meant and I caught him up as he reached a Piper Cub .

I agreed to swing start him and discovered from the tannoy that he was Brendan O' Brien. He put on a memorable display. I reminded him of this incident when I met him a year ago when he was demonstrating a Schweitzer 300 at another display.

Mike Cuttell FFA 27

Flight with James May (Top Gear)

I saw some activity on the ground whilst flying over Ashwin Hill's beautiful Airstrip near West Meon a few years back so I landed!

James May was doing some research in the area and also had just got his PPL so he asked if I would take him up for a quick recce. He jumped in . Then two of his assistants seeing there was room for more asked if they could jump in. I couldn't refuse being with Celebrities!

Being in the pilot's seat I didnt observe how large they were, luckily the strip was 1000 metres long because we needed most of it to get in the air!

Looking around I realized how heavy my rear Passengers were.

Needless to say they were none the wiser but doing my calculations later we were way out on C of G and total all up weight.

I had only just refuelled my 'long Range Tanks'/James must have been 15 stone/ I was 14 stone-----the two in the back possibly a combined 36 stone!

If it had been at Thruxton before take off I would have done all my checks meticulously and taken them on a separate flight!

I learnt about flying from that !

John Milne

Don't assume – CHECK

My son is a very accomplished sportsman, and in particular a very competitive water skier. One bank holiday weekend he was practicing for a slalom competition when things didn't go quite according to plan, and at something approaching 50 knots across the water he missed a turn, hit the turn marker buoy which kicked him into the air, culminating in a seriously smashed ankle. The next 10 days were spent in the National Orthopaedic Hospital - which is just a hop, skip and a jump from Elstree airport.

Being a dutiful father I popped over to see him and his progress after a lengthy and complex operation, several times, as the flight was easy from my base and only required a very short taxi ride to the hospital.

On this particular day I had my daughter-in-law as a passenger and the flight was quite routine - routing via Earls Colne, North Weald and then direct to Elstree. I said goodbye to Earls Colne, dialled in the North Weald frequency onto standby and flew on southwards. 10 miles from North Weald I flip-flopped the frequencies and spoke to them for transit and onwards through the southern TMZ of Stansted CTA.

Continuing westwards I maintained a casual listening watch with North Weald for another 5 minutes and then with a quick glance to the standby frequency, flip-flopped it into the active box and listened out. A couple of minutes later an aircraft spoke on this frequency confirming joining instructions as being right hand downwind for R/W 24 - with no controller acknowledgement. I keyed my button and asked for joining instructions, but received no reply either. With suitable pauses I requested instructions another couple of times, and still received no response.

Having been to Elstree on many occasions and knowing it to be just a radio service, I was aware that the controller sometimes left his radio to go to the loo, or to have a coffee or even for other reasons, leaving all aircraft to blind call their intentions. I assumed this was one of those occasions.

Having heard the other aircraft calling their joining intentions with no controller reply, I called the other aircraft to confirm the details for myself and he replied that indeed the details were R/W 24 with a right hand circuit. I set up for the join, blind calling my intentions all the way around the circuit and on to short finals.

With about a mile to run on finals I was aware of opposite direction traffic approaching, which did a touch and go. I was seriously alarmed by this rather dangerous manoeuvre but continued my approach anyway. Just as I touched down I was aware of a further aircraft on short finals on the reciprocal runway so I expedited to the turn off point near the end of the runway rather than continuing to the usual exit mid-way down the runway. I was furious at this unfolding situation and told my daughter-in-law that this was disgraceful and I was going immediately up to the tower to give a them a serious piece of my mind.

As I parked up by the tower - noticing the other aircraft taxiing in from the other runway - I looked up to the window of the tower to see a very unhappy controller staring down at me.

I could feel a very uneasy situation developing in my mind and wondered why the controller had not been responding to my calls if he was indeed at his desk in the tower, so before I left the aircraft, I turned the master on again and the radio also - and to my absolute horror, the answer was right there in front of me.. I shamefacedly climbed slowly up to the tower wondering what the reception would be - and believe me it was NOT GOOD. I had a great deal of explaining to do, and even more grovelling with massive apologies. I was VERY lucky not to be reported to the CAA and earn myself (another!) MOR. It was certainly an accident just waiting to happen.

You, dear readers, will by now, I am sure, have worked out my careless and obvious mistakes. You will be asking how COULD I have been so stupid (easily is the answer) Having signed off from the North Weald frequency I glanced at the standby frequency and thought it was correct for Elstree, when it was in fact still on the Earls Colne frequency. The difference? Earls Colne was 122.425 whereas Elstree was 122.40. That was not my only mistake. Having talked to the other aircraft I failed to take on board him telling me the runway was 24 (for Earls Colne), whereas Elstree's runway is 26/08. That alone should have told me something was not right.

I have often said that a worthwhile aviation phrase is "Don't assume, CHECK".

That day I didn't.

Martin Gosling

2023 Renewal - FLYING FARMERS – PRICING MATRIX

SECTION 1 and 3 – PREMISES and PRODUCTS LIABILITY
Limit of Liability (any one occurrence and in the aggregate in respect of Products Liability)

Annual Movements of Third Party Aircraft (see INFO in the last year renewal schedule)	**GBP500,000**	**GBP1,000,000**	**GBP2,000,000**	**GBP5,000,000**
Up to 100	GBP420.00	GBP600.00	GBP780.00	GBP1,320.00
More than 100 up to 250	GBP480.00	GBP660.00	GBP840.00	GBP1,440.00
More than 250 up to 500	GBP540.00	GBP720.00	GBP900.00	GBP1,560.00
More than 500 up to 1,000	GBP720.00	GBP900.00	GBP1,080.00	GBP1,740.00
More than 1,001 up to 2,000	GBP840.00	GBP1,020.00	GBP1,200.00	GBP1,860.00
More than 2,000 to be agreed by Slip Leader	To be agreed by Slip Leader			

SECTION 2 – HANGARKEEPERS LIABILITY
Plus GBP210.00 for GBP500,000 any one occurrence, but limited to GBP75,000 any one aircraft.
Plus GBP420.00 for GBP1,000,000 any one occurrence, but limited to GBP75,000 any one aircraft.
Minimum premium in respect of mid term additions GBP145.00 in full, subject to AVN9A (applicable to the movements/limit banding).

If any memebers are interested further details can be obtained by contacting Gallagher directly (0800 612 3635).

TWO LEFT FEET – An exciting solo in a Robinson R-22 helicopter

I had been dreading the solo engine failure practice from the start. I had been warned, quite rightly, of the dire consequences of allowing the rotor RPM to decay, especially while entering or recovering from the autorotation. "Low RPM Rotor Stall can be Fatal" is the title of a Robinson R-22 Helicopter Safety Notice. Because of its lightweight, low inertia blades, the R-22 is especially prone to it. In the USA there's usually a clause in the Self Fly Hire agreement preventing even qualified pilots from practising "autorotative procedures" without an instructor on board, and even instructors are warned that "Surprise Throttle Chops can be Deadly". The thin, reedy whine of a Cessna's stall warning horn is nothing compared with the strident screech of the Low Rotor RPM horn! Yet here was I being sent off, in accordance with the British system at the time, to practise them solo.

After 45 minutes of cheating death, and with my reference point, a water tower, miraculously still in sight, I decided to do one more 360 degree auto before returning. I should have quit while I was ahead: when I'd finished, my worst fears were realized, and the water tower was nowhere to be seen.

Eventually, by reading the motorway signs, I identified my position and located the airfield. No reply on the radio, so no landing information (there was a fault on their radio).

I had now been airborne for nearly two hours. My addled brain told me that since I had come out of the field over the gypsy camp, this was obviously the way to return, i.e. err, yes, that would be downwind, but I wasn't thinking straight, was I? Apparently my instructor spotted me at this point, and was concerned since I had not been taught downwind approaches. However, the mind works in mysterious ways: the training kicked in after a fashion, and though I had not consciously made a downwind approach, I knew I had to finish up pointing the other way, and performed a flawless 180 degree turn and quickstop into wind, a manoeuvre I had not even heard of. It was the best thing I did all day. From then on it was downhill all the way.

By now I was cream-cracked and thoroughly stressed. I hover-taxied over to the landing area, in front of the clubroom, and tried to land. At this point the tail began to turn to the right (nose to the left). You correct this with right pedal. But the rate of turn simply increased, so that I was pirouetting in front of the restaurant window, next to the fuel pump. I heaved on the collective so as to get above the pump and avoid smacking it with the tail, and continued the frenzied whirling dervish routine about fifteen feet above ground. My instructor, a very professional ex-military pilot, was heard to mutter "What's that silly woman doing now?" I think he too was in a state of shock by this time! Something must still have been functioning in my brain, since I was vaguely aware that, since the speed of rotation increased in response to pressure on the pedal, I hadn't actually lost control of the tail rotor, i.e. these were not the classic signs of tail rotor failure. Making what felt like a superhuman effort, I forced my brain to follow through the correct steps: RIGHT foot on RIGHT pedal to stop the turn. The rate of turn increased further. Strange - it was as if, in some way, I was causing it.

Somehow, in desperation, in the middle of this aerial dance of death I visually checked my feet - and realised in disbelief that I had been pressing all the time with my LEFT foot on the LEFT pedal! The tricks played by an exhausted brain! Goodness knows how I lived to tell the tale.

Christina Belton

Control Lock Scare







We had owned the Cessna 182 for about a year and the only problem we had was getting it in and out of the hanger, the main problem was the concrete ramp which inclined upwards towards the doors making it difficult to pull in and out with the hand towbar, so after a visit to the aero expo at sywell we decided to purchase an electric Flyer-Truck 25 to make the job less strenuous.

After about six months the long awaited unit arrived and I could not wait to use it. I quickly unpacked it, charged the battery and pulled the Cessna front wheel onto the shiny new tug. This put the front wheel about five inches higher so as the plane went down the ramp the elevators would have dug into the grass. To stop this happening I made a new control stop which consisted of a black ribbed plastic tube which fitted perfectly around the black control column tube. I then cut it to length so when the Cessna control lock was fitted it the elevators were fully up out of harm's way. What could go wrong?

The next day I had to go and see a customer on my own, so i manoeuvred the plane down the ramp removed the tug and did my normal pre-flight checks after removing the Cessna control lock. As I taxied out as always, I did a full and free check but didn't notice I had left the black ribbed plastic tube on.

The takeoff with ten degrees of flap was short with only me and half tanks. I climbed away quickly raising the flaps at 300ft and trimmed for a 700ft a minute climb when i noticed the airspeed was getting slow I pushed forward and to my horror the plane kept climbing, luckily I had the electric trim button and after what seemed like a very long time the nose came down just after the stall warning.

I then realised what I had done and hastily removed the offending plastic tube with one sweaty hand.

When I arrived back home the first job I did was alter the tube. I am sure if the tube had been just slightly longer this story may have been told by the AAIB.

Charlie Papworth

Why is the Dirty Dozen Important in Aviation

This happened a few years ago. Three of us went to Bournemouth by car to collect our club A/C which had been serviced. The intention was that I would accompany another pilot as this pilot had never flown from a major airport.

When we arrive at the engineering facility, I asked the other pilot would he do the walk round and get himself ready for our flight back to our home airfield, while he was doing the walk round I would check the paperwork and give this to the third member whom had driven us down. (he would wait for us to depart, just in-case there was a problem and we had to go back by road)

I was watching the other pilot, from the engineers office, and as soon as he arrived at the A/C he got straight in.

When I walk out to the A/C and asked him if he had carried out the walk round, he said no, as the A/C had just come out of service, and there was no need!

I carried out the walk round, and when I came to check the oil level in the engine, I dipped the engine 3 times, and each time I found the level to be well down. (as I am sure you are well aware, new oil is difficult to see on the dip stick) It was below the minimum level, I went into the Chief Engineers office and asked him to come out and check the oil level, which he did and found as I had.

So what had gone wrong?!

There had been 2 engineers working on the A/C, one carried out the airframe and the other was doing the engine. The one that was doing the engine had completed the engine apart from filling the oil. He put in 2 Ltrs of oil and just closed the filler cap, (to stop anything dropping into the engine) he went back into the stores to refill the 2 Ltrs jug. When he walked into the stores, he was called by the Chief Engineer, and was told that his wife had been involved in a major car accident and was in A &E. The engineer jumped into his car and went to the hospital. (at this point no-one was aware that the engine was low on oil). The engineer that had been carrying the Airframe finished, and while he did the final walk round he checked the oil filler cap was secure. He was unaware about the Engine Engineers situation.

This was a typical situation of Human Factors.

Distraction	Engineer
Lack of Communication	Engineer
Stress	Engineer
Lack of Awareness	Engineer
Complacency	Pilot not doing a walk round, assuming work had been carried out

Why is the Dirty Dozen important in aviation

The Dirty Dozen refers to the top twelve most common indications of human error, or elements that can lead to disastrous accidents. These twelve components drive workers to make mistakes. According to the FAA, human factors account for over 80% of maintenance errors, which can waste time, result in injuries, or even result in death.

How do you avoid the Dirty Dozen in aviation?

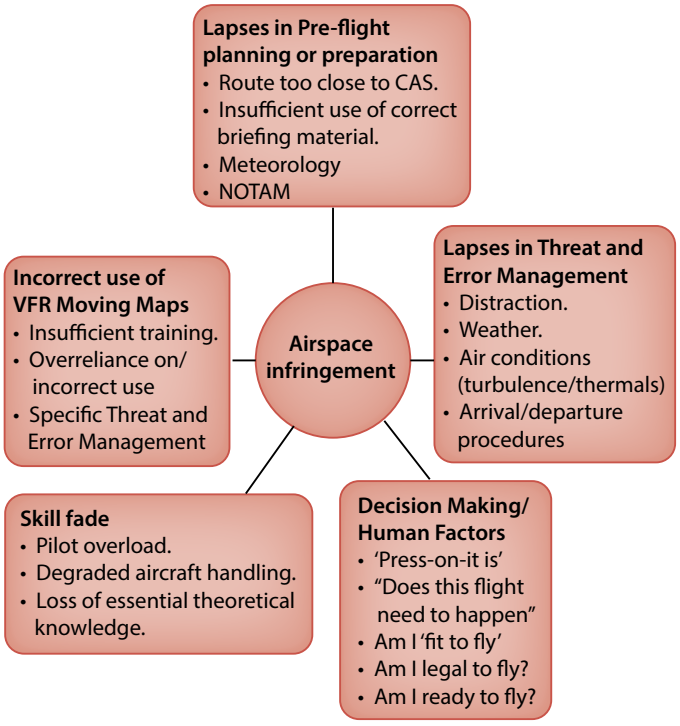
The Dirty Dozen are the most threatening human limitations that can endanger safety. Human error may be minimized by spreading awareness, providing training, and constantly monitoring activities.

Dirty Dozen	Descripton	TEM
Stress	Feeling anxious or threatened by overbearing influences	Threat
Fatigue	Extreme tiredness from prolonged activity	Threat
Pressure	Compulsion or anxiety to satisfy demands	Threat
Resources	Lack of sufficient/suitable means for the task	Threat
Distraction	Attention diverted from task by external factors Attention diverted from task by internal mis-prioritisation	Threat Error
Awareness	Inputs not available Inputs not assimilated or sought	Threat Error
Knowledge	Information not available Information not obtained or understood	Threat Error
Communication	Information flow or misunderstanding from others Information flow or misunderstanding to others	Threat Error
Teamwork	Effectiveness of others Effectiveness to others	Threat Error
Assertiveness	Indecisive, diffident or incurious	Error
Complacency	Disregard for risks, over-assumption of ability or habitual behaviour	Error
Deviation	Normalisation of divergence from formal procedures or taking short-cuts	Error

Neville Stops

Background – Casual Factors

Adapted to fit from CAA presentation to FFA at the AGM



GASCo

The General Aviation Safety Council

Farm Strip Flying – Part One

Flying into and out of farm strips is great fun, but is fraught with pitfalls for the unwary. Dave Unwin looks at how to stay ahead of the game.





These two shots illustrate just how hard it can be to actually locate the strip you are aiming for … (James Benson)

GA airfields are often inconveniently sited with regard to your ultimate destination and may be expensive or have restrictive operating hours. There's also not that many, and there seems to be less every year. Conversely, farm strips are often where you want to go, don't close and aren't costly, but they do require application of what used to be called 'airmanship'.

The real key to farm strip flying, and indeed practically every other aspect of aviation, is preparation. Long before you go anywhere near your aircraft there are certain fundamentals that you need to address. Firstly, is the aircraft that you are planning to use suitable? For several reasons, the retractable tricycle undercarriage of the fast tourer that you usually fly may well prove eminently unsuitable for visiting your uncle Fred's farm strip.

Some people (myself among them) proclaim that the nosewheel of many modern aircraft is only fit for taxying on. Well, when applied to farm strip operations there is more than a grain of truth to this observation, so ensure that you have the right aircraft for the job. Having secured an aircraft that is suitable, the next point you need to address is – is it insured for landing at a farm strip? This point may be particularly pertinent if you are planning on using a club aircraft. Don't assume – check. As the saying goes, to 'assume' makes an 'ass out of u 'n me'! Next consider objectively whether you – personally – are up to the job. Think carefully about your own experience levels, with emphasis on how current you are *on the type of aircraft that you will be flying*. Can you routinely land the aircraft (as opposed to driving it onto the ground) precisely where you want to? A very important point to always bear in mind when flying from farm strips is that the margin for any kind of error will be greatly reduced! With this in mind, I can heartily recommend the CAA's GA Safety Sense leaflet 12, *Strip Sense*. This is well worth a read, and will certainly provide food for thought, the intel regarding grass length (and especially wet grass) being well worth noting.

The next part of our preparation is a detailed study of the intended farm strip. Lockyears Farm Strips and Private Airfields Flight Guide is *the* publication for this although, particularly if you're new to strip flying, a quick visit by road first will pay dividends. However, before we even do that, it is imperative that you have obtained permission from the land owner. You MUST remember that private strips are exactly that, private. Many of these strips have hostile neighbours, so turning up announced will almost certainly guarantee a less than warm welcome. Having obtained permission, you should also get as thorough a briefing as possible regarding the nature of the strip, and particularly on its size, surface, surroundings and any slope. After that, settle down with the aircraft's POH and a copy of the CAA's GA Safety Sense leaflet 7B, *Aeroplane Performance*. A handy tip here is to make your initial take-off performance calculation with everything in your favour i.e. a good wind right on the nose, the surface dry, the grass short and the ambient atmospheric conditions at or below a standard ISA (International Standard Atmosphere) day of 1013.2mb at sea level and 15°C. Those of you who are paying attention will probably have noticed the very important words *sea level* in the preceding sentence. It is imperative that, should the field be much above sea level, density altitude is also factored into the take-off calculations. "But hang on Dave" I hear you bleat, "we haven't even got there yet. Aren't you being a bit previous doing the take-off performance calculations before we've even arrived?" Well, actually no – unless, of course, you have no fixed agenda as to when you might be hoping to fly the aeroplane home again! It is a fact that many light aircraft require substantially more distance (up to 30%) for the take-off than they do for the landing. You'll look more than a bit foolish if, having landed, you find it impossible to take off again!

Into the POH you go and calculate the take-off distance required with everything in your favour. Don't forget to factor in the height of any obstacles



Fowlmere

that need to be avoided – simply calculating the length of the take-off run has been the undoing of more than a few aviators! Having finished your calculations - having taken care to include any slope into the equation while ensuring that you have not mixed your units, as a yard is less than a metre - multiply it by 1.33. Now, unless it is obvious that you can still safely accomplish the take-off with ease, start planning a different destination – as on the day, the surface may be soft and the wind distinctly unfavourable!

Why multiply by 1.33? Well, although this number is applied to the take-off performance calculations for Public Transport flights, by using it in this scenario it builds in a safety factor. Always remember that the numbers in the POH were obtained by a test pilot flying a brand-new aeroplane from a hard-surfaced runway at sea level on an ISA day. – it is extremely unlikely that either you or the aeroplane will produce the same level of performance, particularly if your aircraft has an engine that is about due for a major overhaul and a prop past its prime.

Having ascertained that the strip in question is within both your and your aircraft's capabilities take a good look at the weather. Not just the forecast, but an after cast too, with particular emphasis on recent rainfall. If it has been abnormally wet in recent days, it may be prudent to postpone your journey accordingly.

The next trick is to find the field – a farm strip can be surprisingly difficult to spot, particularly if it is not located near a readily identifiably line feature. Obviously, GPS has taken a lot of the effort out of this aspect of aviation although – at least in my opinion – good map reading skills should never go out of fashion. And, of course, good map reading skills require a good map. I learnt a tremendous amount about farm strip flying when I was the Tug Master for the Black Mountains Gliding Club, and one of the very first things I realised is that even a ¼ million aeronautical chart is useless for ascertaining if the farm you're looking at is Black Dog Farm or Black Sheep Farm. A 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey map (correctly folded before setting off) is much more useful, as just about everything is marked on an OS map. They are also far more likely to show obstacles such as mobile phone masts, as for an obstruction to be marked on an aeronautical chart the mast or aerial must be 300 hundred feet tall. However, always bear in mind that the elevations on OS maps are marked in metres.

Having found *and confirmed* that the strip you're looking at is indeed the correct one, remain at altitude and take a good long look at the field and its immediate surroundings, with particular respect to the wind. Any sizeable obstructions, such as a large building or an avenue of tall trees, can have a profound influence on the surface wind, while if the strip is anywhere near the coast, a sea breeze front can cause the wind to change direction by 180° (and also speed) in less time than it takes to read this article! Also remember that hills can often have a pronounced affect, while valleys tend to funnel the surface wind.

Having decided that this is the place and all is well, it is time to decide whether or not you're going to land. Remember, if there's any doubt, there's no doubt – go somewhere else and come back on a better day. If you fly a circuit (and not all strips allow you to do so) ensure that you do not over-fly any farms or villages. Opinions differ on the use of the altimeter, but personally I would recommend ignoring it entirely and flying the whole circuit and approach by keeping a 'constant angle' with your intended touchdown point. Ensure that the aircraft is correctly configured for the approach, although delay selecting 'fully fine' on the prop until short final, as this helps keep the noise down. Monitor the approach carefully and ensure that it is 'stable'. Large changes in pitch or power indicate an un-stabilised approach, which is far from desirable. If in doubt, go around, and make this decision sooner rather than later. Having executed a perfect landing right where you intended to, do not get complacent – you're not stopped yet! Use aerodynamic braking (by holding the nose up if flying a nosedragger) at the start of the ground roll, and gentle wheel braking at the end of the ground roll. Remember that until the full weight is on the wheels, wheel braking is less effective, so make full use of aerodynamic braking.



Often unmarked

Far too many pilots taxi too fast these days, and on a farm strip such practices can quickly end in tears. Taxi very slowly and cautiously, and if you're even slightly unsure as to whether your wing will clear that barbed wire fence, stop. Do not use heavy differential braking (it gouges the grass) or large applications of power (it annoys the neighbours).

Finally, I would heartily recommend that you do something that very few people seem to do these days – a post-flight inspection. A tailwheel spring that has survived countless landings on smooth tarmac may crack when landing on a much rougher farm strip, and it's better to find this out sooner rather than later. Before leaving the aircraft, have a really good look round it, and if you're staying the night, ensure that it is secure. I would recommend using chocks and leaving the wheel brakes 'off', as diurnal temperature variation can cause all sorts of problems with the seals of hydraulic brakes. Also ensure that it is well tied down, using the proper techniques and correct tie-down points. We'll be looking at this oft-neglected subject in another issue.

So you got in okay, but what about getting out? We'll look at that aspect of strip flying in the March 2023 Newsletter.



Programme 2023



During 2022 we have had six Pop-ins (of which 2 postponed due to weather), nine 1 day events, one 1- 2 day events (Tony's) and a 9 Day Study Tour IOM & Ireland. Three of these events had been delayed due to COVID 2020, originally having been organised in 2019. Thanks go out to those that have put on events and a special thanks to those that organised the postponed events.

Looking ahead to next year we have another full calendar of events as you see listed below. Some of these may be carried over to 2024.

Neville Stops

Events 2023

- 8th February – **Private Thames tour with Lunch** – London
- Date TBC – **Possible Retro Track and Air event with leading experts on over haul of Vintage engines.** – Cam, Nr Kemble
- Date TBC – **A Days Visit to Lasham Vintage Gliders & Flight experience**
- Wednesday 26th April – **Modern and Ancient: John Deere & R J Fenton (private collection of Tractors)** – Notts and Melton Mowbray
- June/July (Possibly 12th July TBC) – **Our chance to become a Freeminer for the Day** – Forest of Dean
- 3rd May – **Spetchley Park & Weaving Machinery**
- Date TBC – **Maldon Salts and or Tip tree Jam**
- 14th June – **Air Salvage International** (Kemble)
- 20th-21st June – **2 Day visit to Bosworth Wing-Ding** – Gill & Alf Oliver
- 28th June – **A Farm Diversification Visit to a former National Dairy Cow breeder** – Avebury, Wiltshire
- Date TBC – **Possible Visit to Alderney**
- 28th May – 4th June – **Study Tour – France**

Pop-Ins 2023. For all Pop-ins (unless otherwise announced) the intention is to meet at 12.00pm for lunch.

- Thursday 8th December 2022 – **Kemble – Passed**
- Wednesday 18th January 2023 - **Turweston**
- Thursday 16th February 2023 – **Bovingdon**
- Saturday 18th March 2023 - **White Waltham**
- Saturday 8th April 2023 – **Leeds East**

If any members wish to offer their strips for informal gatherings next year, please do contact David Keene (david@davidkeene.co.uk) or Neville (neville.stops@gmail.com).

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).

AS THESE EVENTS ARE CONFIRMED, THEY WILL BE PUT ON THE WEB SITE. WHEN THEY OPEN FOR BOOKINGS AN EMAIL WILL BE SENT OUT TO ALL DETAILING WHEN YOU CAN THEN BOOK THROUGH EVENTBRITE.

Eventbrite Just some of the benefits of Eventbrite are that an event can be organised at short notice, if you book you know straight away that you have a space, no applications to get lost in the post, cheques not signed, email address not legible..., it is easier for sending out emails to those that have booked in, details are all in one place and can be accessed at any time and the updated list is on the website. If an event is full, we may run a waiting list. YES there is a cost with Eventbrite, but by the time you have paid postage, written and cashed a cheque, re-sent cheques back because they have not been signed or put the wrong payee on, this works out about the same as the handling cost that Eventbrite charge and you have confirmation.

When you book a place please fill in all sections, even if you put N/A. If coming by car, put this in under A/C, and the Reg under A/C reg. If you do not fill in all sections Eventbrite will not accept the booking.

If you are thinking of organising an event please contact either Gordon or Neville and we will send you the updated "Guide for Events Organisers".

Event Information: At this moment in time, we are unable to attach documents to a group email through Eventbrite. For the time being, things like joining instructions and attendee lists will go in on the web site under that event.

Booking note: When booking on the home page next to general admission there is a drop down menu, please select how many people you are bringing.

Cancellation Policy: We will have to have a strict Cancellation policy. All events will be going through Eventbrite, and up until the closing date you will be able pull out and get a refund, BUT after the closing date you will be committed for the full cost. This is because coaches need booking, caterers need advising, and hotels rooms numbers need confirming.

This Policy will stand unless there are people on the waiting list or you can find a replacement.

Events such as these are arranged by FFA members on a voluntary basis. It is accepted by those who participate that nothing undertaken by the FFA collectively or members individually shall be construed as establishing a duty of care nor in 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.

Private Thames Cruise With 2 Course Lunch 8th February 2023

Embarkation 11:00, Tower Millennium Pier, Lower Thames St, London. EC3N 4DT
Boat leaves pier 11:15, disembarkation 15:00
During the cruise you will be served a two course lunch and commentary will be given by the guide.
Full ticket price £90 per person. Deposit required £20 per person, balance due on request.

Please note applicants who cancel must expect to remain liable for the full amount unless their place can be filled.

Modern and Ancient – Wednesday 26th April 2023



Morning; John Deere Ltd. at Langar, Nottingham.
We will be bussed from the airfield (to be confirmed) to John Deere Ltd at Langar for coffee and biscuits, followed by a presentation on the history of John Deere; a talk on how the overnight parts delivery service works and a look at the newest, biggest and best John Deere machines including combines; tractors; and self-propelled sprayers. A buffet lunch with drinks will be served.

Afternoon; R J Fenton at Old Dalby, Melton Mowbray
After lunch we will be travelling to R J Fenton, Vintage Tractors at Old Dalby, near Melton Mowbray. Richard will show us round his wonderful collection of ancient and rare tractors. Starting with the David Brown shed (note David Brown 4 wheel drive tractor next to a new Aston Martin); followed by the IH and the Massey Ferguson sheds. Richard also collects old signs and there is a collection of ploughs.

Richard and his sons are passionate about their vintage machinery and are delighted to be able to share their collection. Janet Fenton will then provide refreshments before we travel back to the airfield for the return journey.

PLEASE NOTE: appropriate footwear is needed and the sheds may be cobwebby!

Bosworth Wing-Ding – 20th/21st June 2023

An exciting opportunity. Alf and Gill Oliver invite you to Land at Fenn Lane Farm, the site of The Battle of Bosworth 1485, where Richard III died.

This is not open to the public. Talk provided by the battlefield archaeologist who made the recent discovery.

Overnight at Bosworth Hall Hotel, spa available or go-karting. A fascinating second day tour to Statfold Seed Oil led by the owner. How he developed an international essential oils business. See the UK's most significant collection of narrow-gauge locomotives and travel on the farm railway line.

Price £210.00 per head, £28.00 Deposit through "Eventbrite"
This event is fully booked. There is a waiting list, if you would like to put your name down

Your Chance To Become A Freeminer For The Day Date TBC June/July (possibly 12th July)





Fly to Gloucester airport, tea and coffee awaits you

Morning Visit
Clearwell Caves; The nine caverns open to the public at Clearwell are part of a mine complex extending over 245 hectares (600 acres). The cave system consisting of thousands of caverns and over 30km (20 miles) of passageways, throughout the limestone strata which dips from west to east at an angle of 15 degrees. The old mines extended down to 135 m (530 ft) below the surface but since deep mining and water pumping ceased in 1945 the water table has returned to its normal variable level of around 110-120 m (350-400 ft).

Lamproom Café For Lunch
The Lamproom Café sits above ground and is the only marker for the adventure taking place below.

Afternoon Visit
Discover the fascinating history & heritage of the Forest of Dean in our 5 Gallery museum with a guide
Return to Gloucester airport, fly home

Farm Diversification Visit Wed 28th June 2023 Organised by Judith Marcham (members guest)



A Farm Diversification visit to a former top National Dairy Cow Breeder, the famous Noremead herd. East Farm, Avebury, is a 900 acre mainly arable farm adjacent to the Avebury World Heritage site, run by the third generation of the Cooper family.

Downland grass managed within the Marlborough Downs Space for Nature project. Part of a 2500 acre farm contracting group.
Diversification includes: Warehousing
Children's teaching swimming pool: 0 to 10yrs
Goat meat producing herd "The Gourmet Goat Farm"
White Park cattle herd for beef production.
The Larder Café with Farm Shop selling home produced Goat and Beef meat from their own butchery.

FFA Euro Tour 2023

Sunday 28th May to Sunday 4th June 2023

The European tour for next year is in the planning stage.

- We should meet up near Paris at Toussus Le Noble for a visit to the Palace of Versailles. https://en.chateauversailles.fr/
- Then to Le Mans to visit the Claas Tractor Factory, https://www.claas.co.uk/sales-finance/contact/contact followed by the Le Mans Motor Racing Museum https://www.lemans-musee24h.com/en/ and the French Cadre Noir National Equitation Centre at Saumur. https://www.ifce.fr/en/cadre-noir/
- Third stop will be Vannes for a boat trip round the Golfe de Morbihan https://www.golfedumorbihan.co.uk/ and then an Oyster Farm. https://www.golfedumorbihan.co.uk/explore/savour-the-exceptional/oyster-tasting/
- Fourth stop will be south to Bordeaux for a visit to one of the top viticulture estates in the country, courtesy of a local negociant or wine broker. https://www.bordeaux.com/gb/Our-Terroir
- The final destination is to be a mixed farm near Limoges owned by English friends of a FFA member. https://www.tourisme-hautevienne.co.uk/node/148
- The tour will end officially there but I plan to stop off at la Rochelle on the way back and spend a night or two on the Isle de Ré which is gorgeous and relaxing. There are beaches, bikes, swimming, surfing and relaxing walks - idyllic. https://www.holidays-iledere.co.uk/

I'm afraid it will not be as cheap as the last couple of tours but I will let you know the cost when the prices arrive from the French hosts.

This just an outline but it gives a taste of what will be on offer. We may have to stretch the dates to get everything in.

Will those who are interested send me your name, the names of crew and their requirements, ie Double/Twin Sharing or Single so I can start hunting for hotels please?
Will you get your bid in please as the coach seat limit may be reached early and you may have to sit on a waiting list.
I am very excited about the tour and I hope you will enjoy your self as much as I intend to.

Roger Bell



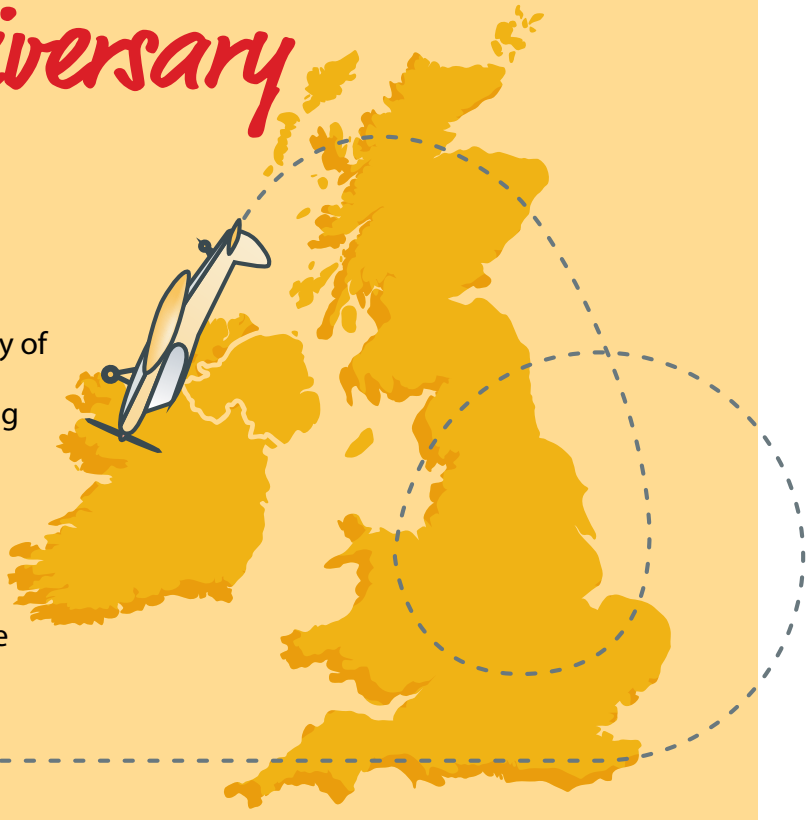
FFA's 50th Anniversary Coming soon!

FFA's 50th Anniversary 2024 Tour:
In 2024 we will be marking the 50th Anniversary of the FFA. How do we celebrate this occasion?
We have had many suggestions and are thinking of a Grand Tour.

This would consist of an 8 to12 day tour, flying round the UK, starting and finishing in central England.

Afterwards there will be an End of Tour Black Tie dinner, all members welcome.

The distance will be approx, 1,800 miles



AGM – Belvoir Castle, 28th September 2022



Main picture Belvoir Castle; Inset Paul Stephens Opening the AGM in the Banquiting Hall (photos by Roz Stephens)

The Committee decided to hold the AGM a little earlier this year to try and lessen the weather related and shorter day problems of the usual October dates. Our member, The Duke of Rutland, very kindly invited us back, after a previous meeting, to use his strip and provided the facilities and access to the Castle without charge for our AGM. The 28th September was a beautiful day and 29 aircraft flew in to The Duke's strip, which was a spectacle in itself on final approach, with Belvoir Castle sat high on a hill overlooking the airfield and the Leicestershire countryside.

The Duke is not a pilot but has a keen interest in aviation and has been involved with the Air Training Corps most of his life and enjoys gliding as a passenger. He made the strip for those that want to fly in for the various functions held at the Castle such as shoots and weddings. He also has a helipad.

I did ask the Duke if he had any problems with the people in Woolsthorpe village as it is on the centreline of the runway, just where we turn on finals. His simple reply was – "don't worry about them, they are all my tenants!!"

The strip has quite a slope, so runway 27 uphill was the obvious landing direction with the northerly breeze. This was handy as the parking area was just off the runway at the far end, so there was no backtracking necessary as that could have caused a backlog with the 29 aircraft coming in. Everyone used Safety Com and from what I saw and heard, the airmanship was excellent with no problems.

The shoot bus ferried us up to the Castle which takes your breath away as you disembark. It is very picturesque and beautifully kept. By the way, if anyone saw the first 3 series of The Crown on Netflix, this is the location used for the Windsor Castle scenes.

Our allocated room for the meeting was The Banqueting Hall. Neville, our organiser asked me to print some direction arrows to guide us to the room and I now realised why, as it would be all too easy to get lost as we had to negotiate several staircases and corridors adorned with oil paintings, rows and rows of swords and flintlock rifles on display, even a 1908 Renault car which the Duke had driven to southern Spain on a rally.

The room itself was the most splendid we have ever been offered for an AGM. Although it was a big room with loads of round tables, we filled it to capacity with 87 of us plus 4 CAA personnel.

The Association usually covers all the costs on behalf of the members, but this year we did charge £15.00 per head to go towards the cost of the amazing buffet lunch.

The AGM itself went smoothly, although personally I don't pretend to be a public speaker, which for a Chairman is not good. The Minutes of the meeting are published in the newsletter, so I won't repeat the business side of the meeting, but from the feedback I have had, both from our members and those that belong to other flying organisations as well as the FFA, our Association is conducted in a friendly, light hearted and easy going manner. But we do have an underlying serious side as we are very conscious of safety when flying.

After the AGM business side, we devoured a particularly good buffet lunch, then we had two speakers – Rob Gratton, Airspace Infringement Lead from the CAA and our own Giles Abrey. See the separate reports on their presentations.

Finally, it was time to depart. By now the wind had calmed right down, so everyone took off downhill in a very orderly manner and enjoyed their flights back home – hopefully with no infringements!

Paul Stephens

AGM: CAA Airspace Infringement Prevention Team Presentation



Rob Gratton and his team

At the AGM, there were two excellent presentations, the first of which was from the CAA Airspace Infringement Prevention team and is the one that is the subject of this report.

Due to a personal flying indiscretion some while ago, I came across Rob Gratton who is the CAA Airspace Infringement Team Lead, and who offered to come and talk to our Association at some future date if I thought it would be beneficial to our membership. The AGM seemed the ideal opportunity, and so the invitation was sent out to him, which he was more than happy to accept.

Near to the date of the event, Rob asked if he could bring other members of his infringement team since it seemed that we were an interesting bunch of aviators to talk to, and so it was that no less than four of them turned up - although the extra three were just in an observational capacity. This transpired to be the entire team operating for the CAA - and they were all here meeting up with the FFA! Two of them were trainees not yet operating for the CAA in a formal interviewing capacity, so effectively there are only two interviewers to serve the whole country. What would happen if one of them were to be sick or incapacitated one could only imagine, but clearly the infringement system would grind to a halt.

Checking the CAA website revealed that there are around 1200 notified infringements annually in the country - that's an average of 5/day over the whole year. Assuming that the vast amount of GA flying takes place over the best 8 months of the year, there are probably around 10-15/day during those months. Surely we, as flyers, are not that poorly trained - so does it indicate perhaps that we have such complex airspace that the whole flying experience is fraught with the danger and fear of infringing?

Rob has been in his role for the last 7 years and every reported infringement is seen by him, and he reckons he has seen between twelve and thirteen thousand(!) infringements before him in that time - that's 5/day every day of the year, winter and summer for the last 7 years. We really can't be that bad as flyers, can we? Obviously not all of these events involve interviews or even investigation, but nonetheless they all started as a reportable offence.

His presentation was informal and good humoured and, of course centred entirely around what we as aviators could, and should, do to minimise or eliminate our chances of infringing. The present day, up-to-the-minute mantra of the CAA is 'TEM' (Threat and Error Management), and is all the rage in their litany of education. In reality it is no different whatsoever to the 'Risk Assessment' which we have all been doing in our businesses for many decades now, so I guess the CAA is catching up under this new catch-phrase of 'TEM'. I have said for years that it is generally an inescapable fact that in every minute of our lives we all consider risk assessment - 'is it safe to cross the road?' - 'how sharp is that knife?' - 'how close can I stand to that fire?' etc. etc.

The other mantra close to their hearts is their 'Take 2' encouragement, whereby we are encouraged to remain at least 2 miles from any restricted airspace and 200' below any altitude restriction. This reduces any chance of transgressing due to navigational inaccuracies or height incursions due to turbulence or poor altimeter settings. This has to be a sensible idea and clearly would add very little time to one's journey whilst vastly reducing the chance of an unfortunate incident.

It was at times thought-provoking and in most cases a reminder of what we should have learned all those years ago when we learned to fly - but rather like the rules of the Highway Code, we have let slip the finer details of our learning. And therein lies the risk to us all. In motoring we can (usually) get away with a little speeding, or even driving home from the pub just around the corner. In aviation, if you transgress, you will get punished, because big brother is always there waiting for you just around the corner, with mandatory reporting of every transgression, however small.

However, the whole point of the presentation was not to threaten us with that big stick, but rather to encourage us to think about our upcoming actions before setting off on a flying trip, and to continually update our thought processes en route. It is an inescapable fact that our airspace in the U.K. is covered by complex and wide-ranging areas of restricted airspace - and moaning about it will not make it go away! However Rob did try to stress that no airspace grab by airfields is sanctioned without a great deal of investigation as to its justification, and indeed any potential impact that it might have on all areas of aviation. He also stressed that we had every right to be aviators and to enjoy our flying. It is our hobby and is there to be enjoyed in whatever way we choose.

The time set aside for questions was quickly swallowed up such that they had to be cut short to accommodate our following speaker, Giles Abrey, FFA member, with his presentation of his solo flight to South Africa.

However such was the appreciation and pleasure gained by Rob for coming to speak to us, and his enjoyment of our company that he has extended an invitation for anybody to contact him via his email address if they want any questions or concerns addressed or clarified - either of a personal nature or of more general information.

He can be contacted directly at rob.gratton@caa.co.uk

Martin Gosling

AGM: Solo Charity Flight, London to Cape Town - Giles Abrey

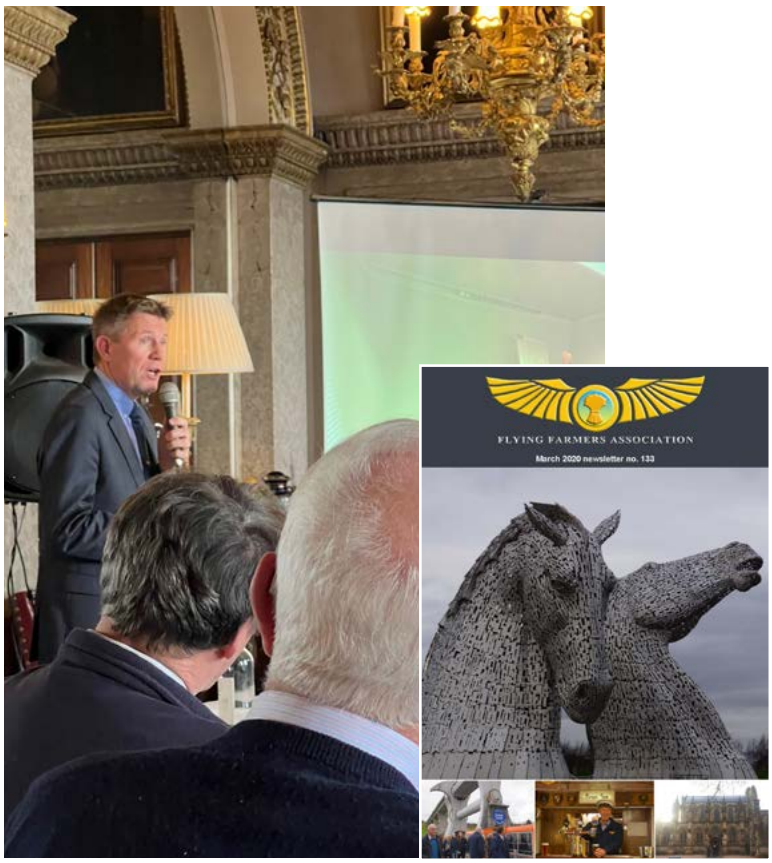
Purely by chance I had read the book by Alex Henshaw a couple of years ago which told of his record return flight from UK to South Africa. And again, purely by chance, I had seen the lovely Percival Mew Gull in which he made the record flight on display at the Shuttleworth Collection. So I was more than a little interested to hear Giles Abrey's account of his much more recent one-way flight to Cape Town. I could also compare it with Steve Noujaim's record-breaking return flight in 2010.

I believe there are several points to make here: Alex Henshaw flew the route in a highly modified but difficult to fly aircraft when flying was still in its relatively early days and navigation was very basic. Airfields were very basic, too. His was an astonishing feat. Fatigue was a constant problem and he couldn't even have a rest (but for a few hours sleep) in Cape Town. Noujaim flew a similar route but in much greater comfort and with modern electronics to assist his navigation and better support en route. However, fatigue was still a problem!

Giles Abrey's flight was very interesting, but different! For a start it was one way, as he pointed out, and not a race against the clock. Secondly, he had excellent navigation equipment and thirdly, although fatigue was a problem it was nowhere near the level of his predecessors. Giles' flight was undertaken to raise money for charity (which I applaud) but there were still ground handling problems such as difficulty getting the aircraft refuelled. You really would think that the supply of avgas in Africa might have improved a bit since the 1930s!

Overall, this flight was a terrific achievement and his presentation after lunch at Belvoir Castle was outstanding. Many thanks, Giles.

Richard Butler



Main picture; Giles Abrey, Inset; see March 2020 newsletter for full write up of the trip.



Clockwise from top left; View of estste from main house, Lunch in the Banqueting Hall, Grand gallery room, Johanna Abrey and Kirsten Lee, Arrivals and Aircraft in field.

Pop-In – Oaksey Park 12 October



The names are, left to right Unknown, John Webb, Gaynor Luckett, Richard Butler, Gary Nelson, Neville stops, Mike Cuttell, David Keene, Karen Everson, Roger Bell, Richard Everson, Stephen Watkins. Photo by David Keene

Having been cancelled from an earlier date when the weather was inclement I was delighted to see that the forecast for the fly into Oaksey Park in October was set fair. Although I didn't have far to fly from just south of Salisbury to the venue which is near Kemble, flying around the western end of the Salisbury Plain Training Area is always interesting with a very good variety of farmland to inspect on the way. I arrived to find Nine other aircraft already parked up the side of the immaculately maintained East-West strip. At the end of the row was the mighty Broussard G-CLLK (C/No. 5C) which flew for the first time in the UK on 10th Feb 22 after its extensive rebuild and avionics upgrade program.

The little clubhouse is well glazed on three sides and it is mostly made of wood which gives it a warm ambience with a large wooden table in the middle of the main room.

We were greeted by Andrew Austen who is the son of Brian Austen the owner of Oaksey Park. We were told that Brian had formally been in circuses and had a joint enterprise with Jerry Cottle for some time. During that time Brian had learned to fly and had been flying from Oaksey Park until it came up for sale. At which point he bought the airfield and buildings. He has continued to bring in many businesses and is keen on antique, vintage and classic vehicles and aircraft.

Oaksey is home to the Classic Aeroplane Co Ltd. We had a tantalising glimpse into their hangar as we walked to the vehicle hangar. There seemed to be a lot of activity around some interesting looking old aircraft.

We were taken to one of the buildings which contained about 20 vehicles. Brian has been collecting Scammell prime mover units since his circus days and has a large collection of these wonderful pieces of solid engineering in many different roles. Older members may remember these tractor units hauling articulated trailers in the 50s 60s and even into the 70s when they were overtaken by more modern and powerful continental types with their bigger more frugal engines, gear boxes with synchro mesh gearboxes, heating and sleeper cabs.

The majority of the Scammells were fitted with the Gardener straight six engine. There were a few with circus generator units that were used in fairgrounds as well. There was a very striking heavy recovery vehicle that had one winch at the front and another at the back. There were chains for each of its six wheel drive wheels to assist in snow and mud. My favourite was a prime mover and generator truck for a Fun Fair written up as 'Caractacus Pott Showman.' I would love to see that old girl in action.

The interior of the Scammells is interesting because each cab was coach-built and it was possible to see the exposed fine carpentry which had been used to create the cabins. Some later versions had fibreglass as the outer skin covered in a thin layer of gelcoat which made them look very modern for their time. The dashboards if you could call them that were a riot of dials, knobs, switches and buttons dropped in haphazardly all over the place. The speedometers were showing a maximum speed of 60mph and no Kms of course. Gear boxes showed the development of heavy machinery from the 123R four gear H with ratio sticks alongside through rear axle splitters to the preselect air-changed sequential box.

Unfortunately Brian was not around so we weren't able to get one fired up for a cabby round. That is promised for another visit and we may even get a ride round in one then.

Other vehicles included a very original and well-maintained French Jeep rather like the Willis jeep that was common in the British Army and an absolutely immaculate Massey Ferguson 35X.

At the back of the display hall is a well equipped workshop where a Scammell was being overhauled. The work looked thorough and painstaking as the chassis had been exposed and was being de-rusted and some new parts had been fabricated.

Down the centre of the hangar were the real stars of the show though. Brian has been buying luxury American cars. There was a Packard and 1929 Cadillac.

There may have been more types but I was hauled out before the doors were locked so was unable to explore further. I lost my way back to the club house as it was due to dawdling with the newer arrivals outside waiting for repair and overhaul. There were another couple of Scammells one of which had the British Leyland engine that was fitted to the final iterations of Scammell tractor units.

To my surprise there was a Green Goddess. These vehicles gained great fame during the firemens strike of 1978, 1979 Winter. They were basically a Bedford RL with a cab extended to take a team of firemen and space on the back for ladders, pumps and hoses.

After the tour of the vehicle hanger we went back to the clubhouse where we had our picnic lunch on this magnificent centre table before departing.

The arrival and departure routes for Oaksey park are littered with noise sensitive pink blobs on SkyDemon and as far as I know we all took great care not to elicit any phone calls from vexatious noise complainers. The Oaksey Park website is a riot of wonderful pictures of exotic aircraft and vehicles and is worth a visit.

I would very much like to go back to Oaksey and see one of the scammells fired up and moving around as they really were magnificent. Thank you David Keene for organising the tour and Neville Stops for handling the admin.

Roger Bell

Pop-In – Nottingham 12 November



G-FNLD, G-OBBO, G-DUDZ, G-CUBI, G-LADS



Inbound to Nottingham it was pretty misty in patches.

Whenever there is a FFA event on and you get a call in the morning from the organiser the first thought is "do I have enough time and fuel in the car to make it by road!" Well the morning of the Pop In to Nottingham was no different. We woke to glorious skies and thought that it really would be plain sailing with everyone turning up.

The news on the phone was David informing all participants that the weather was not good in the south but also the weather report for the middle of the country was not great for later in the day from the afternoon onwards. The question is always "what next?". I called the tower at Nottingham and the cloud base was around 1200ft but a call to a local aircraft to confirm whilst I was on the phone came back with "but it is about 900ft in places". With the forecast showing a decline in visibility throughout the day we decided we would set off and at least make our way and judge it as we went as we needed to blow the cobwebs off anyway.

The weather was ok but not ideal although the minimums still allowed for an overhead join with visibility of the whole circuit. As we initially called up at around 10miles out I had already heard the smooth tones of Mr Fisher so knew there would be someone else there to meet up with, which was a nice feeling.

Straight forward circuit and in we were, "taxi to the fuel please" where upon we passed 4 FFA aircraft!

Getting back in G-DUDZ and asking for taxi from the pumps, the very nice gentleman in the tower said "are you with the other young farmers" to which I of course replied "YES". Free landing with my tank of fuel and a compliment, what is not to like about Nottingham airfield?

Arriving inside it was lovely to see some familiar faces and of course for me to see David and Anthony who I had not seen for such a long time given Covid etc.

Am and I ordered ourselves a breakfast and whilst tucking in we saw G-SACH taxi by the window with Rick Holt on board followed by G-PEVA and Peter Evans.

Peter told us how he had given up on the idea of coming and was doing paperwork in his office but when he looked out around midday he thought "that looks flyable!" and promptly swapped the paperwork for the radio work. What a result and with the weather improving there was no rush to get away and we enjoyed a catch up which I imagine will be the last one of 2022 for us given the workload I have during the week making mid week meets a bit tricky.

The flight home was glorious, with the warm sun behind us, the visibility was great and this year no drones to contend with! I made an effort to fly though Doncaster and get a clearance given the pending closure and we packed G-DUDZ away until the next adventure.

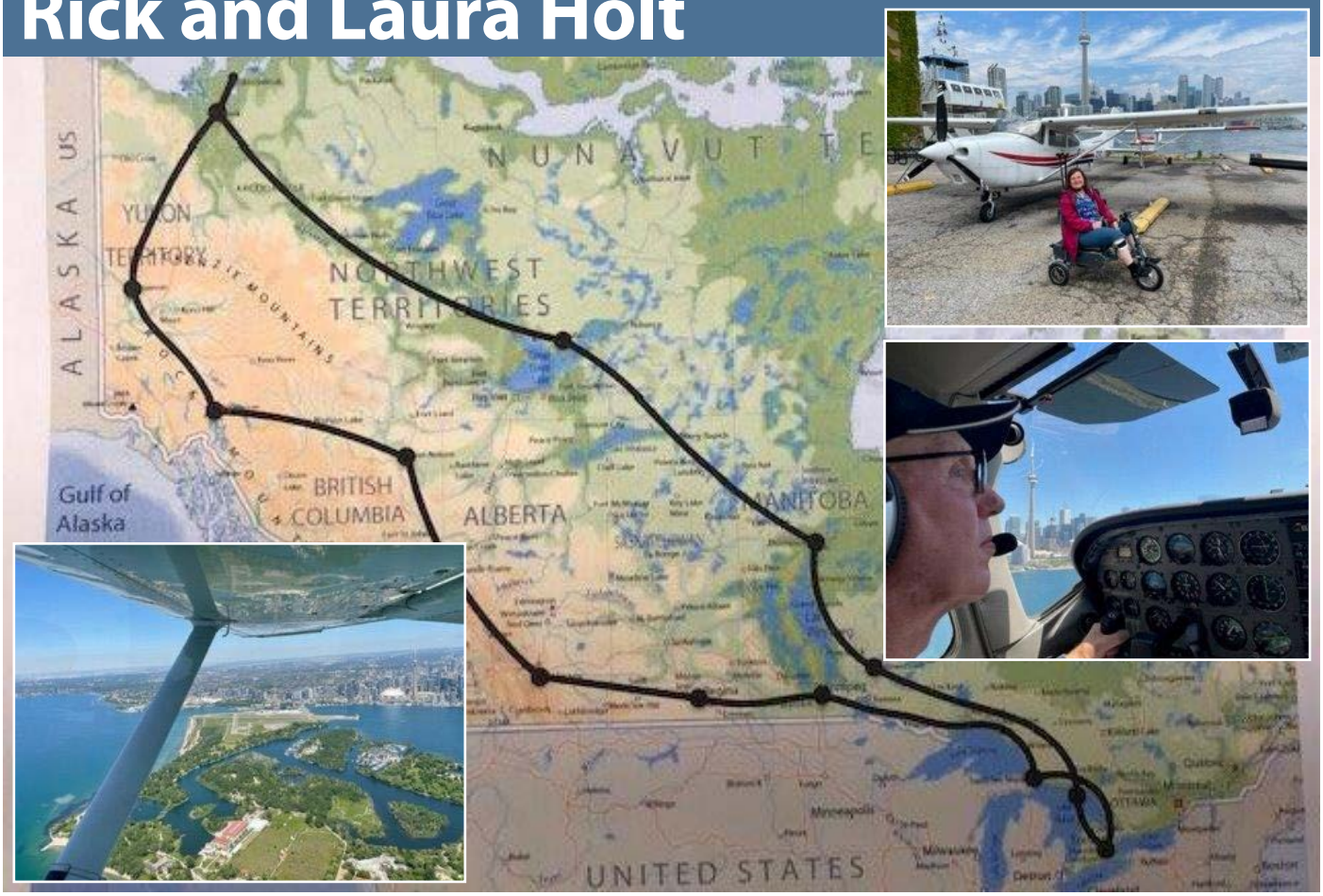
I love flying and I love the cold clear winter days with smooth journeys and wonderful views. I also love meeting the fellow aviators and friends that are those who make up the association to enjoy the gift of flight. Thanks to all of those who made it to Nottingham and fingers crossed those of you that could not make it are lucky with the weather the next time.

Winston Lee



Left to right Robert Laming, Anthea Brown, Anthony Kedros, David Soul, Tony Fisher.

Canada Mountains and Wilderness – Rick and Laura Holt



Above main picture: Map of route
Inset top right: Ready to leave Toronto
Inset middle right: Climbing out on 1st flight
Inset lower left: Downwind view of Toronto and the airfield

In February 2018 Laura and I joined a group of fellow members for a flying holiday in Australia organised by Clare McEwan. Starting in Toowoomba near Brisbane we flew down the coast to Tasmania returning inland. The two week action packed tour included a dozen stop overs. Clare, from Toronto, has been running his company Air Safaris International for twenty years now and has a wealth of experience. As well as other tours in Australia he covers the UK, France, and Canada. He was talking of planning a new tour from Toronto, flying west to the Rockies, north to the Yukon and returning through Northwest Territories after dipping our toes in the Arctic Ocean. Several of our group expressed an interest with the tour taking place in Summer 2020.
Of course it was put on hold and by early Spring 2022 there was only Martin and myself interested. Eventually because of lack of planes to hire only Laura and I went.

So on June 12th Clare met us at our hotel in downtown Toronto and drove us to The City airport just 1 mile away, also known as Billy Bishop to see our C182 C-GDSJ, quite a mouthful. The airport, on an island, used to be connected to Toronto by ferry only and being just GA was quiet but under threat. So they built a tunnel and infrastructure for commercial traffic and is now the 9th busiest airport in Canada. Clare gave us a list of safety equipment, and we had three days to purchase what we could. I also needed a check ride, having flown just 2 hous on a C182 at home. An added complication was Laura's mobility is now reduced to 50m walking. We had previously bought an e-foldi electric scooter which had performed admirably on Peter Gale's study tour of Ireland. It folds into a suitcase size in seconds and weighs just 17 kg. Laura is completely independent if the terrain is even.

Wednesday 15th June was fine so Laura and I left Toronto for a 1 hour flight to Kitchener Waterloo to meet the rest of the group and make final preparations for our adventure. With Laura's scooter tucked behind my seat, we climbed out on my first solo flight past the CN tower and west along the shoreline of Lake Ontario. What excitement! We all met in the luxurious Langdon Hall hotel for the first of many dinners together. Four couples flew in from the States, our lead pilot Gord flew in with Clare and his son, a Scottish Father and Daughter flew in from another airfield near Toronto, and with us made seven aircraft and 15 people in total. We had a fleet of four C182's, a Mooney, Cessna Centurion, and an RV10. Everybody had flown on at least one of Clare's trips before, the Scottish couple were doing their seventh,



Transport for the day


Waterfall in Banff


Lake Louise


Go carting in Calgary, next to Eddie the Eagle's ski jump


Laura ready for taxi

and included three vets, good for those bear encounters! We then had a full day of flight planning and Canadian procedures and generally getting to know each other. It was emphasised that we were going into some extremely remote places and if possible we should stay close to roads. We each carried a full set of maps, water and overnight provisions and briefings each day would use the Foreflight nav system.

At long last we were off to learn about all these strange sounding places, first stop Sault Ste Marie, positioned between Lake Huron and Lake Superior with a bridge over the border to the States. With a 30 kt westerly this flight was the first of several beyond our personnel endurance so we were pleased to be well practised! Clare didn't want us to starve by arranging packed lunches which were very welcome throughout the trip. In the afternoon we visited an aviation museum near the hotel. A video of fire fighting using the Canadair amphibious aircraft was particularly memorable. From now on we would see fires burning every day.

Our next night time stop was Winnipeg, or Winterpeg, the coldest city in Canada. Our lunchtime refuelling was at Sioux Lookout where calling for taxi I was asked if I had read the notams. A line of thunderstorms was blocking our approach into Winnipeg. Well the rest of the group had already gone and we're British, we're used to this sort of thing. Sure enough once airborne I could hear the others diverting. As we got closer we could see a nice gap and were the first into Winnipeg airspace. The controller questioned my altimeter setting and I was 10mb out, or the equivalent in inches of mercury which they use in North America. It was the only time on the entire trip we arrived first. It took me more than twice as long as everyone else to prepare the plane, remove the tie downs, load Laura and the buggy, not that the others didn't help.

Our stay in Winnipeg turned out to be longer than expected. On start up we had no left magneto and by the time I found out the others had gone. So a couple came back including the lead pilot and agreed I was going nowhere. Now today was both a Sunday and Father's Day and not a chance of getting it fixed. However a few phone calls revealed there was a recon available and it would be fitted the next day. So Gord, the lead pilot and Clare's son stayed behind putting us a day behind the rest of the group who we eventually caught up in Banff. Now Winterpeg didn't live up to it's name because that day it became the warmest city in Canada, so hot that the annual marathon had to be cancelled. Anyway after sheltering in the air conditioned club house, we departed the following evening just making it into an Irish pub in Moose Jaw before last orders. After an uneventful flight we were vectored into Calgary Springbank, the GA airfield a few miles west of Calgary International. A taxi took us to the famous Banff Springs Hydro where we had a wonderful two days exploring the mountains and Lakes. We also had the first of many bear sightings.

Neville had put out an email saying Laura was doing a daily blog on TrackmyTour. I was rung by an FFA member who had emigrated to Canada but used to farm in the Northern Cotswolds, close to us in Evesham. Could we meet? Of course we were on a very tight schedule but the best time would be in the clubhouse at Calgary Springbank prior to our next leg North, and then it would just be Laura because I was trying to keep up. So on arrival at the airfield he was waiting for us in a snowstorm. We weren't going anywhere in a hurry. So we had a couple of hours with William before flying was called off and we had to find another hotel nearby. This turned out to be



Rocky mountains



Yukon sign



Machine to pulverise rocks to extract gold

bang next door to the Olympic park where Eddie the Eagle won glory in the 1988 Olympic Games and has since had a downhill go cart track built. So that sorted the rest of the day out and we returned to the airfield next morning to fly North. We would get our schedule back in Whitehorse where we originally had three nights planned.

We were now flying into the foothills of the Rockies and remote country where the best chance of survival would be landing on roads, in particularly the Alaskan, Klondike and Dempster highways. These roads were built during and after the war, the last section up to Tuktoyaktuk on the Arctic Ocean in the last few years. Needless to say the flying was fantastic, weaving in and out of the mountains with the big ones in the background. The weather was perfect and by the time we got to Dawson City over 30C. This part of Canada is best known for the Klondike gold rush of the 1890's and the hardships endured by hopeful prospectors. We had a go and are proud owners of two tiny samples. The two biggest towns around here are Whitehorse in Yukon Territory and Yellowknife in Northwest Territory. I told the controller at Fort Nelson that I was departing for Yellowhorse, just to keep him on his toes.

Dawson City, lying outside the Arctic Circle and close to the border with Alaska, was the destination of those prospectors who didn't succumb to the appalling conditions.It is now like a film set with all the houses, footpaths and roads built above the permafrost. Summer is busy with tourists and motor homes passing through. Everyone has three or four months to make their living in the perpetual daylight. Our guide also danced every night at Gerties Show in the Casino. It was surreal coming out into broad daylight at midnight.

Of course we were all wondering if we would make it to Inuvik, proper Eskimo country and beyond some very high mountains. The weather was deteriorating which caused us to spend an extra day involving scrambling around for rooms. If we didn't get away the following day we would be camping. In the end we had to climb out of Dawson City in appalling visibility made worse by smoke, levelling off above 10,000ft in glorious sunshine and eventually picking up the massive Mackenzie Delta leading to Inuvik. There was no time to waste, so after a quick fuel stop we jumped back in and made a b line for Tuk while the weather held. So we had achieved one of the goals of the trip.











Clockwise from left: Tuktoyaktuk on the Arctic Ocean; our hotel in Inuvit; Catching pike; Blachford Lake only accessible by float plane in Summer; Yellowknife.





All the towns in the Canadian Arctic have been built since the war. The houses look a bit like shipping containers piled on top of each other, constructed out of colourful materials to brighten up the long winters. Because we had lost a day we only had time for a short cruise on the Mackenzie delta, a labyrinth of channels leading to the Beaufort sea. We stopped by a Summer camp where we sampled beaver and other local food and learnt about the traditional way of life now under threat from climate change. Back in the hotel I stayed up because I wasn't going to come all this way without seeing the midnight sun. Then it was up by five because we had to be in Yellowknife by early afternoon. This was five hours flying or three days by road. We were catching a flight to Blachford Lodge, a remote camp, only accessible by float plane.

We were now crossing the tundra, a myriad of pristine lakes and rivers and the occasional dirt track. Yellowknife is the capital of Northwest Territories, situated on north shore of the Great Slave Lake, and a magnet for outdoor types and those wanting to see the Northern lights. Even though the airport was busy everyone was given a downwind join from twenty miles out. I finished up going ten miles further downwind before the controller let me turn base, by which time I had lost sight of the runway. We had to make absolutely sure our tie downs were secure because dust devils are a problem here and we wouldn't be back for three days. As always we filled to full tanks in case we had to make a long diversion.

After a brief tour and talk by a bush pilot we were split into two groups for the outward journey in a single engined beaver to the lodge where we were met by the staff who entertained us for two days. Laura was particularly well looked after having her own chauffeur driven quad bike. The manager took us on a fishing trips, see photo!, and we had the use of canoes and other outdoor equipment. The lodge is off grid and environmentally aware. The staff work short shifts away from their main jobs, one of them is a 'Mounty', Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

It was time to return to Yellowknife, this time in a Twin Otter, and a long two day flight to Killarney back in Ontario. This proved to be too ambitious, each flying day being the length of the British Isles, and we had an unscheduled over night stop in Red Lakes, quite close to Churchill. I asked the man on the bowser about the bird scarer. It was actually deterring wolves and bears. These unscheduled stops put a lot of pressure on Clare who had to find accommodation for 15 people during Canada's short tourist season. He did it with remarkable good humour. Killarney is a top tourist destination situated on Lake Huron, on the southern edge of the Canadian Shield, an area of granite rock formations, eastern white pine and rugged beauty. Again, having lost a day, there was only time for a short boat trip before booking into the Mountain Lodge Hotel and a well earned dinner.

Now it was time to return to our starting airfield Kitchener Waterloo, and our transfer to the Elnora Mill hotel for our farewell dinner. We had been through some amazing experiences and by now were a close knit group. So saying goodbye the Americans returned across the border and we just had a short flight left back to Toronto where I thankfully returned the aircraft back in one piece, after an awesome 55 hrs and 6000 miles.



Top left; Forest fires everyday
Top right; Back in Toronto
Right; No farmers no food. We saw this on the back of the taxi drivers seat in Calgary.


Peter Evans with his sheep dogs


Milford Sound New Zealand

Peter Evans – 50 Years of Flying

From a very young age I had always had a huge interest in aircraft and I made many models as a child.

For me it all started when my elder brother Lloyd phoned me to say he was going to hire an aircraft and pilot at Sywell to take aerial photos of the farms, would I like to join him?. I jumped at the idea and from that day on I was determined I would learn to fly. The year was 1972.

My wife Janet bought me all the books I needed and within nine hours of training I did my first solo.

I soon gained my PPL and after short time I would buy my first aircraft in partnership with a very good friend John Graves who had also got his PPL We kept the Beagle Pup at Sywell Airport for around nine years. It was a great little aircraft .I took up aerobatics and went on to win the aerobatic trophy two years running.

I did my IMC rating and night rating but I never did take to night flying.

On one occasion I hired from Sywell Aero Club a Cessna 172 as three friends wanted to go flying. This was to prove to be a disaster flight. After about half an hour into the flight the engine started run rough. I applied carb heat thinking it was carb icing but it just got worse. I hadn't got much height at the time when there was an almighty bang and the prop froze. I gave a Mayday call to Sywell and picked the best field available which was into wind. This proved to be far too short and we went into the hedge at quite high speed. No excuses but I had only flown a few hours in a Cessna . The machine was a write off but the main thing was we all walked away shaken but OK. One of the cylinders had broken off completely and lay in the cowling of the aircraft.

In August 1983 I bought a Rallye Commodore 180 which was an ideal short field take of and landing aircraft for my strip here at Dalscote. After 39 years of fantastic service I have just sold her and replaced it with another STOL aircraft a Vixxen A32 with a Rotax engine and constant speed prop.

Thanks to the Flying Farmers Association I have over the years participated in many of their tours around Europe and visited most of the countries. We have made some life time friends.

Janet and I have flown in Australia and New Zealand and had some great experiences. One of these is when we flew in the Southern Alps around the summit of Mount Cook some 12thousand feet high in blue sky and then flew into Milford Sound. Flying in the Alps was incredible.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members that have put such wonderful tours on over the years.

Peter Evans



Vixxen G-PEVA at Turweston

For Sale

Boeing. Stearman 1944

A/F 1621 hrs • Eng 90 hrs Continental W670 220hp (Vintec) • N Reg • Never a Cropduster • £130,000 • Please contact Brendan Walsh on 01680 300377 or email brendan@glenforsa.com



For Sale

De Havilland Gypsy Major 1 Engine with Logbooks removed from an Auster Aircraft

Please contact Rob on 07880713159
Email: robertthetent@hotmail.com



Bowser Wanted

Based up in the Highlands and am looking to purchase an Avgas bowser (Newhall Mains). I was wondering whether any FFA members have a second hand one they are looking to sell.

Please contact Euan Ramsay at ramsay.euan@googlemail.com

For Sale

2018 Aviat Husky

Listed with Bob Pooler at Aviat UK. One owner from new, it is currently based in Mayfield, East Sussex.
Always hangared, meticulously maintained, no damage history.
Contact us for details +44 (0)1952 770776

Minutes of the 48th AGM – Belvoir Castle 28th September 2022

Committee Members Present: Martin Gosling (President), Paul Stephens (Hon. Chairman), Andrew Cragg (Hon. Treasurer & Membership Secretary), Neville Stops (Hon. Events Secretary), Giles Abrey & Rebecca Rayner. Roz Stephens took the minutes

	Description	Action
	The meeting was opened by the Chairman at 10:34 hrs (local) The Chairman started by saying that this was the largest attendance at any AGM, mainly due to the venue. He thanked His Grace, The Duke of Rutland for allowing us to his airstrip and the Banqueting Hall at Belvoir Castle for our meeting. He also thanked the staff for arranging our meeting at the Castle and putting on the buffet lunch. Also, thanks to Ed Smiley-Jones and his wife for sowing the seed with the Duke to hold our meeting at Belvoir in the first place.	
1	**Members Present** The President, The Committee as above, plus G. Robson, A Kedros, R. Guess, A. Oliver, P. Bishop, R. Everson, C. Belton, R. Lamming, P. Powell, J. Peplow, G. Gibson, R. Culley, D. Topp, C. Moore, R. Chapman, J. Milne, J. Thorold, R. Giles, W. Procter, W. Knowles, M. White, T. Fisher, S. Goddard, T. Jarvis, J. Graves, J. Fulton, F. Ward, J. Noble, R. Pye, P. Evans, Lord Rotherwick, R. Bell, G. Sly, R. Hall, E. Smiley-Jones, D. Keene, R. Butler, S. Turley, A. Creaser, E. Creaser, W. Banks, J. Golden, N. Houghton, P. Shotbolt, S. Chenevix-Trench, G. Stops, W. Bailey, D. Soul, J. Raven, D. Johnstone, A Collett, W. Miazek plus wives and partners where appropriate.	
2	**Signing of the Minutes of the 47th AGM held at Leeds East Airfield on 20th October 2021** The minutes were signed as a true and correct record.	
3	**Any Matters arising from the Minutes** The relevant action points had all been dealt with. There were no matters arising.	
4	**Chairman's Report** The Chairman said the FFA were financially sound and the membership database was all in good order, both due to the efficient manner in which Andrew Cragg handles them. He also thanked Andrew's PA, Emma Gorman for her work behind the scenes and Andrew's political advice gleaned from his GAP representation. He thanked Neville for his enthusiastic approach and coordinating with members to put events together plus arranging events himself such as this AGM. Also, thanks to David Keene for organising the Pop-in events which were proving popular. He thanked Giles Abrey for producing a very professional newsletter with help from Kirsten Lee and encouraged members to send in their stories for inclusion. He also thanked the rest of the committee for keeping up attendances at meetings and for their valuable input.	
5	**Treasurer's Report** The Treasurer ran through the 2021/2022 accounts. He explained that although they showed a small loss, this was due to additional newsletter costs, re-instatement of insurance to cover our corporate responsibilities and events. The budget for 2022-23 shows a return to normal levels of surplus.	
6	**Membership Report** The Membership Secretary reported that the total number of members are 417. Of those, 243 have strips. Average age was now 66. He highlighted the battle he is having getting the remaining members onto the GoCardless system and explained why it is important to change. He also ran through why we still receive £1275 in over paid subscriptions due to old standing orders not being cancelled – despite attempts to contact these members.	
7	**Events Report** The Events Secretary summarised the 2022 events programme. There were 9 one day events, 1 two day and 1 study tour lasting 9 days. Plus 6 Pop-in meetings. Some of these meetings had been carried forward from 2019/20 due to Covid. This winter he is planning a Thames lunch cruise and ran through several events planned for 2023. 2024 is our 50th anniversary and to celebrate, he announced a round Britain tour. This will be run based on 8 to 12 one day events all linked together and organised by 10 to 14 members. One idea is to drop in to as many members' airstrips as possible en route. Members will be able to join all or just parts of the tour, ending in a dinner in the centre of the UK. More details to follow.	
8.	**Eventbrite** The Events Secretary said that the Eventbrite booking in programme was now in full operation. We are learning how best to handle the facility. Although there is a cost to it, the old paper / cheque system also had costs and disadvantages. Eventbrite is the future, allowing members to book online and use a card payment system. It has been well received by most and we have learnt from any criticisms, such as the need to update the guidance book for organisers.	
9	**Election of Committee Members** It was the turn of R. Rayner and G. Abrey to stand down. There were no new nominations for Committee members. The former were both willing to stand again and were unanimously re-elected.	
10	**AOB** The subject of strip insurance arose again. The Chairman explained how his own strip is covered under his farm Public Liability policy. The policy must be amended to make mention of the strip and to cover vehicles that go "airside". There is a stipulation that a duty of care is carried out and recorded. He estimated that up to 20 members are now covered by the NFU policy. Rob Chapman asked if there is a special FFA arrangement in place with Haywards. The answer was yes. A member from Devon said that she persisted with the NFU and finally got the cover for no extra charge. Andrew Cragg said he would raise the issue of inconsistency with the NFU as most local Secretaries are initially unwilling to implement this cover. A question was raised about recruitment of younger members. The Chairman said that our first grandson of a member has now joined (George Nutt), but it appears that the younger generation just don't seem to take up flying. The original news of the FFA forming, was broadcast by Farmers Weekly, but there is always the fear of generating bad press when there is a cost of living crisis at the moment. The Membership Secretary said that we are getting an increasing number of hobby farmers applying, but the committee are strict about eligibility requirements. Robin Culley said he was proud to be a member of the FFA and thanked the committee for their work. Rob Chapman pointed out that there were glitches with the online CAA medical form. Andrew Cragg said the CAA were embarrassed by this but it was working better now.	
11	The meeting was closed at 11:52. Minutes approved at a subsequent AGM	

Profile: Tony Fisher, Whittlesey Cambridgeshire

By Rebecca Rayner



Tony Fisher, stood in front of his 1953 Piper Supercub 150hp (which has been totally rebuilt) and a 1952 petrol engined David Brown aircraft tug ex RAF

Hello Tony, We knew each other before I joined the Flying Farmers, as local Cambridgeshire farmers. Tony, tell us about your childhood and farming life…

I was born on the family farm at Thorney and went to the local primary school. I was then shipped off to boarding school at Wellingborough, Northamptonshire at ten years old. In the later years we used to have great fun riding our bicycles at school unlike most of the other lads.

I remember coming back to help on the farm driving an old tumbrel cart pulled by a Ford E27N during harvest. Sheaves were loaded from the stooks by Irish regulars who came every year.

Taking over the family farm, what did you do?…

I gradually took over from my father in the eighties as he enjoyed salmon fishing and shooting. My brother John went off and farmed Granny's land and bought more land.

Our farm expanded and we now farm 950 acres with a variety of wheat, beans, sugar beet, mustard and potatoes. We have just had our last year of potatoes as the firm that rents our potato land for several years is now cutting down its acreage having lost so much money last year.

Tell us about your family…

I have twins Vanessa who flew quite a lot in G-NESY, and Suzie who now farms our land. Victoria is a full time Mum. I continue to keep 'my hand in' on our farm as the role of Vintage and Advisory Department and always help with a breakdown.

How did you gain your PPL?...

My flying started in 1966 at Skegness with some superb J1N Austers that were originally from Lincs Aerial Spraying Company at Boston, Lincolnshire, who ran a large crop spraying business. We were taught to fly by the late Rex Larsen ex RAF. It's said if you can land an Auster, you can land anything!!

How long have you been a member of the Flying Farmers?

I've been an FFA member for over 25 years meeting some wonderful like-minded friends. I flew with the late John Dunford on the FFA Australian 2004 Tour. We were 1 of 7 aircraft who left from Brisbane (Redcliffe) and flew for 2 weeks and 3000 miles across the outback stopping off at some memorable farmsteads. I remember Bruce Sharp who came to collect us all from his airstrip with 2 camels drawing a four wheeled wagon!

I had a spell at the helm of the Catalina which Ray Guess had organised to convoy us from Cairo to Nairobi on a 3 day flight. Unfortunately George, the aircraft commander, got Delhi-belly in Khartoum and took off and promptly laid in the boat deck hull for eight hours, so we each grabbed the opportunity to fly the plane over Ethiopia! I've been fortunate to fly Moths, Stampes, Chipmunks, Cessnas, Austers and Cubs.

Have you any interests other than flying?...

My other hobbies have been shooting, ice skating and vintage car and tractor restoration and it's been a great pleasure to have been able to organise the Vintage Extravaganza for our members.