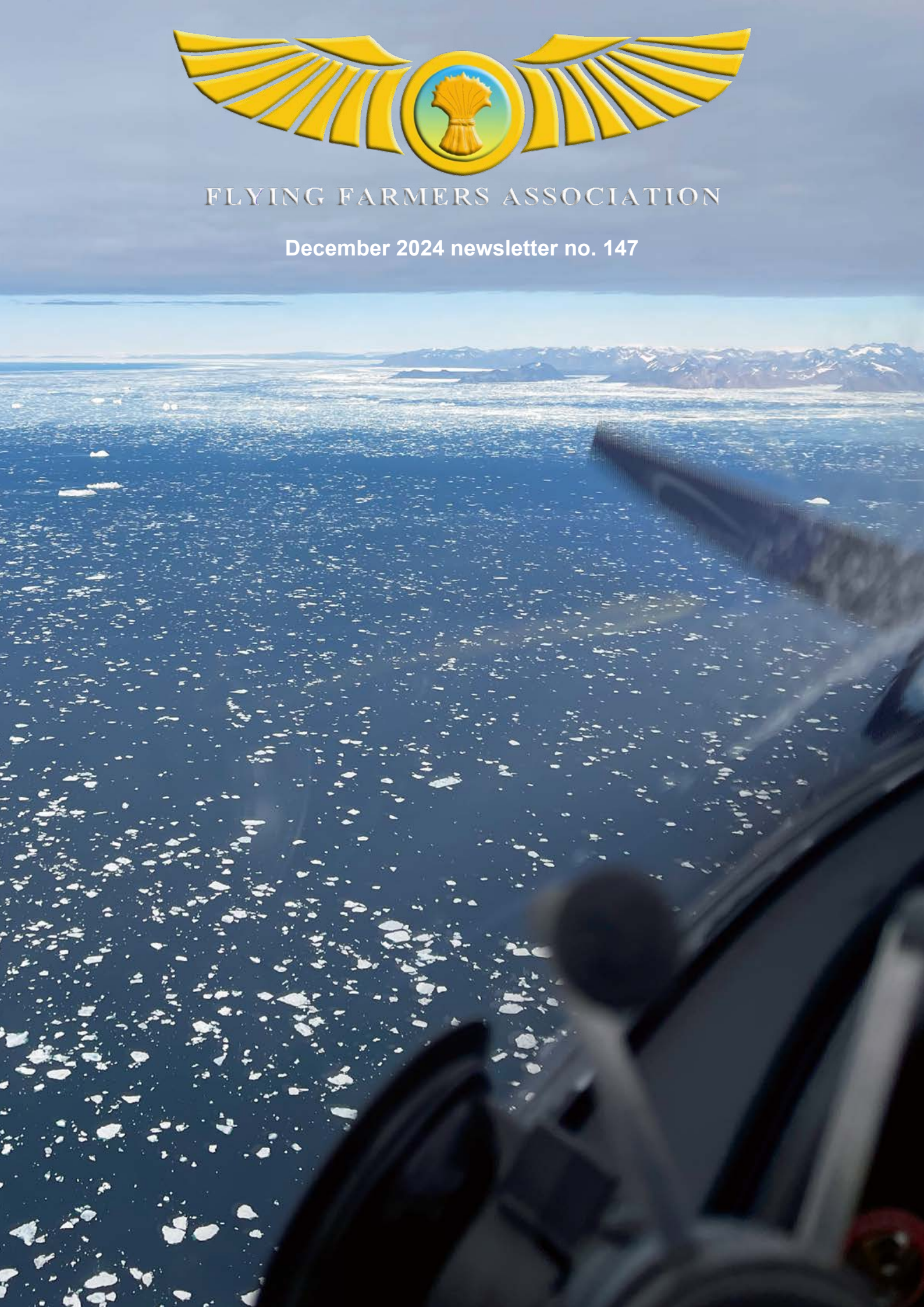
FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION

December 2024 newsletter no. 147



CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS

In my last Ramble, I mentioned that the Labour party had just moved into No 10 and I worried that they would go after anyone with assets to fulfil their irresponsible spending plans.

I never thought that some of our members would end up taking part in protests about APR and BPR in London. This bunch of amateur politicians, who despite only getting 9.7 million votes out of 48.2 million registered voters, have this huge majority of seats and think that they can blindly wreck our country. The trouble is that it was the Conservatives fault for allowing them in with their disunited government.

Hopefully, this matter will be settled without resource to blocking roads and getting on the wrong side of public opinion. Rachel Reeves has obviously been selective with the incorrect information she had and will be looking at ways of softening the blow without losing face.

Meanwhile, on the farm we have had a challenging time again, like most of the country, with excessive rain. We are relatively early drillers, hoping to get the majority of the work done in September. But once the floodgates opened at the end of the month, potato lifting turned soil into mud and that sought after friable tilth no longer existed, so the wheat went into less than ideal conditions. We decided to direct drill the beans as we didn't want to do any deeper cultivations and drag up the porridge that laid beneath.

We are considering the future of potato growing as headlands are getting abused and we are left with several year's legacy of destroyed soil structure. We cannot change the weather, so we have to change our cropping policy – however, I will be very reluctant to go back to OSR, as everything seemed to want to eat it and then we were left a wheat crop that needed loads of slug pellets.

The joys of farming! But I wouldn't want to do anything else, so long as that million pound win on the premium bonds (I wish) allows me to keep farming for another couple of years!

Flying - personally I have done very little recently, but I do find it the ultimate way of getting away from the above mentioned problems. Perhaps it should be paid for by Rachel Reeves and the NHS to counter 'mental health' issues, which seem to be top of the agenda of 'working people' at the moment.

Paul Stephens



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Joined Since August 2024
8833 A. Walton from Hungerford, Berkshire
8832 R. Butler from Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire
8828 J.M. Carter from Trimdon, Durham
8830 R. Forsyth from Beccles, Suffolk
8726 M. Coles from Defford, Worcestershire
Departing Members
8788 A. Hilton from Lincolnshire Lapsed

GAP – General Aviation Partnership Report November 2024

There has been little stability at the head of the CAA GA unit of late and it is noticeable that the format of the meetings has changed subtly on each appointment but I'm happy to report that, despite the increasing brevity of the meetings, there is less preaching and much more time for discussion.

Active CO detectors

We've covered this in emails over the last few months but don't forget that active CO detectors will become mandatory on 1st January 2025 in certain piston aircraft (probably all of the ones that we fly). I won't put the lengthy links in the newsletter since they are a real bind to type into your browser, rather Google "CAA CO detectors"

There are some new **Safety Sense leaflets published** recently; Carbon monoxide and Mountain flying. They are always good for a bit of a refresher and you can be informed about new or revised ones on the CAA's Skywise service. There are some new ones coming out shortly on Non-standard joins, EFATO and Pilot health along with a new podcast about the GA Licensing Simplification Project. With leaving EASA, clarity on the ICAO and national licensing is welcome provided you can navigate your way through the inevitable jargon. Perhaps they should have a CAA Language simplification project? Again, do a Google "CAA Safety Sense leaflets" – the new ones are at the bottom or "CAA licensing podcast"

(A reminder about Skywise, the CAA's information channel, you can subscribe to the emails or get the app but be sure to select your preferences or you'll get overwhelmed with irrelevant topics)

If you've heard the term "**Atypical Air environments**" then good to know that it is a spectacular example of how to name something that tells you nothing about what it is. It is the low hanging fruit of regulation that is surely to come when unmanned aerial vehicles (UAMs) are let loose. This is regulation around UAMs operating beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) inter-alia within 100ft of a building, 50ft of a power line ie places where we will never be – except perhaps in the vicinity of our airstrips. FFA has been actively involved in the consultation to safeguard our airstrips should these operations coincide.

Border Force gave a presentation about the **Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)**. You will have heard of this; it has been bundled together with the new sGAR procedures which has not enhanced clarity in our little GA PPL world. Essentially, anyone entering the UK will have to have an ETA which will have to be checked before boarding a plane or boat. It will therefore affect the commercial operators and the business part of GA the most. Travellers with UK passports entering the UK are unaffected.

We covered this in an email but in case you missed it, there's been a lot of chatter about the new sGAR's so I'll not go over old ground here (while there is still a lot of ground to cover!) However, I had an email from Kent Police recently :

"*Please can you email allports@kent.police.uk if you are travelling to the Common Travel Area ie, Channel Islands, Isle of Man or Northern Ireland at least 12 hours before departure/arrival, alongside your normal GAR / flight plan* ***unless you are travelling from a designated airport***"

It used to be the case that the GAR informed the Police for you, AND, there are four different types of designated and regulated aerodromes!

Not known for brevity or clarity, Border Force has issued a modest 22-page «General Aviation Guidance" recently which I commend to you. It summarises much of the new sGAR procedure, shows a list of designated airports (and their designation) along with emails for all of the country's police forces. Google "General Aviation guidance"

Class 2 Medicals

Over recent months, some of our members and AOPA members have reported that their AME has told them that, when renewing a Class 2, that they now need to have an exercising ECG if over 60 and taking BP medication, even though they have been on approved medication with a stable BP for some time. This is a recent change in interpretation by the CAA which has come out of the blue without consultation or consideration for the outcomes and is being challenged at the highest level. Some AME's have recommended downgrading to a PMD, I'm not sure that's what the CAA had in mind?

There appears to be uncertainty over the details and hence inconsistency among AME's around the "qualifying" criteria; is it age? Age + medication? Is there a trigger BP? We are seeking clarification and in the meantime members might do well to discuss this with their AME's. Also, when doing the test, the CAA stipulate that one cannot "hold on"; some facilities enforce this others say it is too dangerous. I will say from experience that I might easily have lost my balance during the last 3 minutes of the test when the treadmill is steep and fast. My test cost just over £300.

Andrew Cragg

Following the consultation on Pilot Medical Declarations, the CAA has made the following changes which will affect 14,400 existing PMD holders:

- Restrict the PMD to at or less than 2000kg category
- Introduce a requirement for a pilot to confirm that they hold a UK driving licence. If a pilot does not hold a UK driving licence, they will be required to submit a declaration from a GP to confirm that they meet the DVLA Group 1 driving licence standards
- 5 yearly renewals from the date of a pilots first PMD until the age of 60
- 2 yearly renewals from the date a pilot turns 60
- Remove the limitation against pilots who are taking medication for a psychiatric illness
- Introduce a charge

Once the new process is in place, all PMD holders will have a period of 12 months to apply for a new PMD when the charge for the issue of new PMDs will be introduced.

GASCo

General Aviation Safety Council

Report on GASCo meeting on 27th November 2024

New Chairman.
Following the retirement of Professor Michael Bagshaw, the board was pleased to welcome Capt Nils Jamieson as the new chairman. Nils learned to fly gliders at 14, gained a PPL by 19. He had a career in Mechanical engineering and was part-time FISO at Sywell before going commercial in 2007 and is now a captain with Jet2 on 737's.

Already on a tight budget, GASCo was devastated to learn that the CAA has made a significant cut in their funding to GASCo. This will inevitably impact on the organisations activities, particularly attending events, which will have to be carefully targeted. The Council and it's information exchange will be unaffected. With 33 representatives of GA attending, it is a powerful forum for the advancement of GA safety.

The next few **Safety Evenings** confirmed are :

- Headcorn Aerodrome 23rd January 2025
- Rufford West Airfield 20th February 2025
- Rochester City Airport 25th March 2025

British Aerobatics reports that ineffective NOTAM communication and lack of awareness of aerobatic contests remains a problem. (There has been quite a push on making powered pilots more aware of the danger of glider winch activities and these are noted on the charts. Aerobatic contests rely on the NOTAMs)

CAA Infringement team: As of 18 November 2024, the CAA had received reports of 1092 airspace Infringements (AI). The year-to-date total is approximately 5% lower than at the same time in 2023 Identified 'hotspots' are:

- Stansted CTA-2/TMZ-2 in the vicinity of North Weald aerodrome
- Stansted CTR/CTA-1 in the vicinity of Andrewsfield aerodrome
- Solent CTA-2 in the area along The Solent
- Farnborough CTA-1 to the south of Fairoaks aerodrome
- Hawarden Radio Mandatory Zone (RMZ).

Andrew Cragg

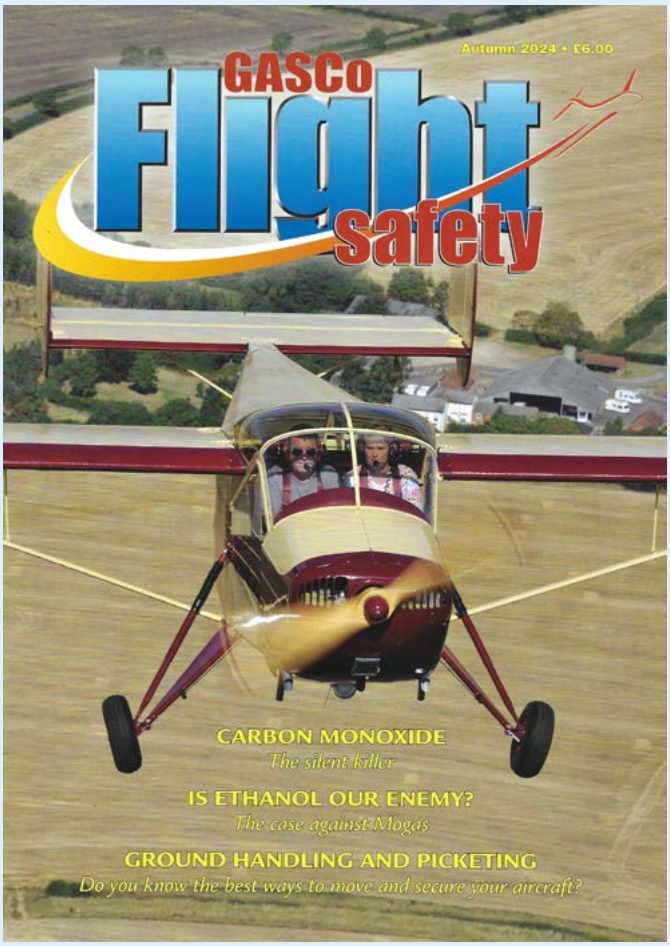
GASCo Safety Evenings

Headcorn Aerodrome
19:00 - Thursday 23rd January 2025
The Scramble Hut, Headcorn Aerodrome, Shenley Road, Headcorn, Kent, TN27 9HX
Email: ops@headcornaerodrome.co.uk
Tel: 01622 891539
Contact: Julie Kelly

Rufforth West Airfield
19:00 - Thursday 20th February 2025
York Gliding Centre Club House
Rufforth West Airfield, Rufforth, York, YO23 3NA.
Tel: 07907 200736
Email: stoxsie220356@aol.com
Contact: Andy Stocks

Rochester City Airport
TBA - Tuesday 25th March 2025
The Bridgewood Manor Hotel, Walderslade Woods, Chatham, Kent, ME5 9AX
Contact: Kelvin Carr - Airport Manager

Further details on GASCO website:
https://www.gasco.org.uk/events/safety-evenings



Subscribe to GASCo Flight Safety Magazine

GASCo Flight Safety Magazine provides an independent view of General Aviation flight safety

An annual subscription by direct debit costs only £20 (for UK addresses).

In the meantime, if you would like to receive a complimentary copy of Flight Safety magazine please contact the GASCo Office by telephone on 01634 200203 or email to: penny@gasco.org.uk. **https://www.gasco.org.uk/flight-safety-magazine/subscribe**

General Aviation Awareness Council

The work of the GAAC in helping to protect our country's airports and airfields covers too many issues to describe in this brief report but here are some of the headlines :

Doncaster council has leased the site to an operator with the intention to invest and re-open in Spring 2026 for passenger services. Nottingham Tollerton is destined to become a housing development which is now well developed and too late to stop. Bicester now has 60 companies on site involved in classic cars. The gliding club has gone, the last hangar has been cleared of its planes and the future of the site as an airfield is very uncertain.

The so-called Strategic airfield network, an aspiration of both previous and new administrations with as yet uncertain function now at least sports a list of 156 airfields eligible under the eligibility criteria. Although airstrips are not included in this definition, some members are already involved in "strategic" activities and it's possible that others may see opportunities perhaps providing a hub for delivery drones. BE assured that the FFA's stand is that we will continue to protect the privacy and anonymity of our members strips.

The East coast pylon line continues to take up GAAC time and some of our members have benefited from GAAC advice in this regard.

Our long term representative on GAAC, the General Aviation Awareness Council, Anthony Kedros, is stepping down after many years and we are seeking a volunteer to replace him.

The GAAC is a forum lobbying the CAA and government on behalf of GA as well as directly helping and advising airfields threatened with development and/or closure. The board consists of representatives of all activities and branches of the flying community: airfields; microlights; model aircraft; balloons; helicopters; gliders; strip owners (FFA); etc.

The board meets four times a year, generally in London at the Royal Aeronautical Society – there is usually a Zoom option. The candidate will represent FFA members' concerns, feed back to the FFA committee and write a short report for the newsletter on any issues that would be of interest to members. Anthony was a director however although all representatives are encouraged to be directors, this is entirely up to the individual.
https://gaac.org.uk/

Andrew Cragg

2024 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 100	GBP470.00	GBP660.00	GBP780.00	GBP1,320.00
more than 100 up to 250	GBP530.00	GBP730.00	GBP840.00	GBP1,440.00
more than 250 up to 500	GBP595.00	GBP790.00	GBP900.00	GBP1,560.00
more than 500 up to 1,000	GBP790.00	GBP990.00	GBP1,080.00	GBP1,740.00
more than 1,000 up to 2,000	GBP925.00	GBP1,120.00	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 GBP235.00 for GBP500,000 any one occurrence, but limited to GBP75,000 any one aircraft.
Plus GBP470.00 for GBP1,000,000 any one occurrence, but limited to GBP75,000 any one aircraft.
Minimum premium in respect of mid term additions GBP175.00 in full, subject to AVN9A (applicable to the movements/limit banding).

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

Nb: Members might already be covered under their farm Public Liability insurance. PLEASE CHECK!
Please be advised that updated rates will follow effective 1 January 2025

ANNIVERSARY PEN

Free of charge to members who request one. As there's a limited number this will be on a 'once they're gone, they're gone' basis.
Email: info@ffa.org.uk

FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION



Last chance to grab a free pen inscribed with the FFA logo and the 50th Anniversary 1974–2024

MEMBERS MISHAPS

ILAFFT (I Learnt About Flying From That)

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

Confirmation bias

I have always been a keen follower of safety reports such as CHIRP and Airprox, but wary of reporting anything myself. Anyway in 40+ years and nearly 2000 hours of VFR flying by good fortune I really haven't had anything interesting enough to report. Until recently, when I fell for a classic case of 'confirmation bias', and I wonder how many others would have fallen for it too?

I think it's traditional to anonymise locations and call signs for fear of embarrassing anyone else. So now I can set the scene: a perfect VFR flying day with a flight planned to an unlicensed airfield A which I know is going to be active with parachuting. Call nearby station B who advise no parachuting yet so an early radio call, good look out and blind calls to land and then get a friendly welcome and some taxiing instructions from the parachute aircraft G-XX who is just starting up and will feature again later..

I want to take a passenger for a local flight and I know I will need to time it between parachute flights, and I know not to start up until 'all canopies on the ground'.

So I wait in aircraft with the avionics on and listen to the drop aircraft and enjoy watching the display. I then call G-XX who confirms that all are on the ground so I start up and make a very pleasant flight with normal blind calls all the way but no one replying so nothing unusual there.

Later in the day it is time to go home. I talk to a brave weight shift microlight pilot G-YY and discuss which runway and departure procedures. We both start up about the same time and he calls "any station on frequency, radio check". I immediately reply saying loud and clear. He does not acknowledge, so I called him again and asked if he copied my last message. No reply so I assume that he is transmitting but not receiving. G-XX then comes on frequency and acknowledges G-YY radio check and says he is about to taxi. First clue missed : why did he acknowledge the radio check? OK, he must have missed my call. Meanwhile I announce that I am backtracking the runway and feel a bit of urgency so as not to hold up the parachutists. On turn around I hear the G-XX telling G-YY there is another aircraft on the runway. I reply straight away to say yes that it is me and I am holding position until I am sure G-YY is going to stop short of the runway because I believe he has a radio problem and is not receiving transmissions. Second clue missed: no acknowledgement. But I then see both other aircraft are holding for me so I announce that I am rolling and I have an uneventful departure. Next it's time to make a courtesy call to station B again. Nothing heard.. Serious check now for 'finger trouble' mic socket, volume, etc. TX is illuminating ok. OK, assume they must have gone home, no problem, give them a wide berth and then listen to a busy London Information. Only when they didnt reply did the penny finally drop that I am the one with a radio problem and am not transmitting. Switched to box 2 which is an old King which we never use because it doesn't have 8.33 spacing. I had to ask London Info if they could phone ahead to home base station C and check if they would accept me with a non-compliant radio. No problem, everyone couldn't have been more helpful. Homebase tower confirmed that they cant tell if a transmission is from 8.33 or 25 spaced radio, so that is also good to know for future reference.

What else did I learn?

1. At an unmanned field it is a good idea to make a radio check call or try to establish 'two way' with any other aircraft heard on frequency.
2. My assumption that a microlight handheld and helmet was more likely to have failed than my Garmin was reasonable, but flawed when I missed several cues and fell for 'confirmation bias'
3. There was nothing really unsafe about the incident. Everyone has to be alert for possible non radio aircraft, which effectively is what I was that day. But here is the embarrassing part: It turned out that the problem with box 1 - a modern Garmin 430W - was that there is a second circuit breaker 'downstream' of the radio which just switches off the transmit function. After 20 years flying the same aircraft I didn't know about it. When listening to the parachute aircraft the lower voltage must have caused a higher current and tripped it. In my haste not to hold up the parachutists I had missed a pre take off checklist item. Another hole in the cheese.

Mark Dravers



Downwind ILS

I was approaching Hawarden in IMC last Thursday (cloud base was around 800 ft and viz. about 7 kms) and asked for radar vectors to the ILS for 22. They told me initially to circle and then cleared me for some traffic reason to the ILS for 04. They did ask me whether this was OK as it meant a tailwind, and I confirmed fine. The tailwind on the ground was about 6 kts, but it was clear once established in the approach that it was much greater at 2,000 ft. Once established on the localiser I didn't manage to hold the glide path at all, since the rate of descent (as it later transpired) needed to be about 1,000 fpm! I had to break off the approach and return for another go at it, which though still tricky, got me down OK.

I had never consciously done a downwind ILS before, and it was surprisingly difficult to fly. The higher than usual rate of descent needed soon results (if one isn't quick to adjust the throttle) in a higher airspeed thus demanding an even greater rate of descent - a vicious circle!

I did learn about flying from that.

Philip Naylor-Leyland

Bird Strike

Remember if you encounter a possible 'Bird Strike' DON'T DIVE!

I tried to miss a Vulture in Kenya at 8,000... We both dived and I got him!

He hit the wing strut of my Father's C-182 just above the wheel pod!

He stayed there until I landed... Pretty gruesome.

Luckily very little damage to the strut.

Best Wishes,

John Milne

I've Lost the Engine

It was the second morning of the biennial Formation School at North Weald and a lovely autumn day as we headed out to the East in a 4-ship of Yak 52s. We had been fully and extensively briefed by Chris Heames, a Royal Air Force fast jet pilot and director of flying, to go out to two of the well-known operating areas near Osea Island and practice battle formation as two separate pairs. Our pair had just separated from the other 2 when my student Kevin in the front seat and owner of the aircraft, uttered the frightening words "I've lost the engine". I could hardly believe my ears and said "what?" He repeated "I've lost the engine!" We told the other aircraft why we were descending and they relayed this back to North Weald.

Things then began to happen very quickly; converting surplus speed to height gave us only about 1700 feet over the ground whilst my life flashed before me in a fraction of a second. I took control as my air force training kicked in and I looked for a field. There was only one as all the others were covered by power lines. I could die here, I thought, or be badly injured. My mind seemed to become two compartments – the first flying the aircraft, the second thinking about short term possibilities which didn't look too bright. My training had been good in a university air squadron where we had always been practicing engine failures. At that point the engine started running again and I breathed a sigh of relief. But then it stopped again.

Meanwhile Kevin was going through all the possibilities in the front but none worked. I told him where we would be landing and that, since he could see better from the front he would do the landing. I realised at this point that our rate of descent, not helped by the windmilling 2-bladed propeller, was the same as a K21 glider with full air-brakes deployed. This was comforting as I could relate to this and I flew our glider round onto finals, put the flaps down and handed control to Kevin. The undercarriage remained up as that was what the book said to do in this situation – the wheels remain slightly proud when retracted so we should roll if we don't dig in.

Perfect landing into winter wheat that was about 4" tall! Although there was a splintering noise as the big wooden propeller was destroyed. The aircraft rolled to a halt after about 80 yards and we noted that we had completed all the essential actions during our 55 second glide. We exited the aircraft, looked at each other and said in unison (and this hadn't been practiced beforehand) "what the f*ck do we do now?"

Well, of course the other aircraft in our pair had been keeping North Weald appraised of our situation and, at the same time, the landowner was walking towards us from his nearby farmhouse. Turned out he was blind as a bat and thought we'd overturned on landing so he'd called all the services under the sun. So, we soon heard a helicopter approaching!

This was the Essex Air Ambulance which landed close by and the crew and medics came over to us festooned with cameras. It turned out this was their 1000th call out and they seemed disappointed we didn't have a few injuries between us. What seemed like seconds later 4 police cars and 5 fire engines made their appearance and it was quite a party. Minutes later the Essex police helicopter arrived but they didn't land because, as they said, "you appear to have a full field".

The hullabaloo soon died down and many groups departed. Kevin asked the Air Ambulance people if they could give us a lift back to North Weald but their reply was "No, what do you think we are? A taxi service?" Kevin said "what if I simulate a sprain?" but still no dice.

A car came to pick us up and when we arrived at the "Squadron" building back at North Weald there was a ragged cheer from the assembled company whereupon Kevin, carrying a broken propeller blade, replied "wizard prang, old chap!"

What did we learn from this event? Well, certainly for my part, that training and constant practice is key. Then your reactions are pretty well automatic and another bit of your conscious mind can look around and constantly assess the situation as it develops.

Oh, and why did the engine (the youngest in the fleet) fail? Well there are two transfer gears that carry power from the crankshaft in the Vedeneyev M14P radial engine to the cam ring and one had been cut from a forging that had an inherent defect. This had failed at only about 300 hours.

Richard Butler

Programme 2025

On behalf of the Committee and Myself, we would like to thank all those members that have hosted events through 2024. Especially those that helped with the Grand Tour, which was a great success. Many Thanks.

During 2023-2024 we had a number of the very popular Pop-ins, sadly not many of these could be held due to the weather, David has more planned for this coming winter, dates are on the Web site. As I am sure you will have seen in the newsletters, we have had another good year for Events.

A summary of the 2025 events is below. The French Tour was sold out in the first 7 days of going live. This event has been put together by Helen Cobb.

A full list of proposed events is on the website, and as they come live, an email will be sent out.

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).

Neville Stops



Proposed Events for 2025

- 19th March 2025 – **Royal Hospital Chelsea** – London
- 30th April 2025 – **First Aid Course** – Stones Farm, Essex
- 26th May – 3rd June 2025 – **The French Study Tour** – Fully Booked
- Date TBC – **Tony's 3 Day Extravaganza** – Old Buckenham
- Date TBC – **Classic Team Lotus visit** – Norwich
- Date TBC – **Fischer Farms Upright Farming** – Norwich
- Date TBC – **Miserden Estate** – Stroud
- Date TBC – **RAF Valley** – Holyhead

* **Please note that some of these dates may change but will be updated on the website.**

Pop-Ins 2024. For all Pop-ins (unless otherwise announced) the intention is to meet at 12.00pm for lunch.

- 17th January, Leicester
- 13th February, Bovington
- 15th March, 16th March - Venue to be confirmed

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.

Eventbrite

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 they will send you the updated "Guide for Events Organisers".

Event Information: Joining instructions and attendee lists will go 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 hotel room numbers need confirming.

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

Deadline for articles for the March newsletter is 14th February 2025

To help us to edit and produce the newsletter in a timely fashion ***please could the event organisers collect all write-ups including videos and pictures and provide all together*** within three weeks of the event taking place.

Please email newsletters@ffa.org.uk

Please note change in newsletter email address; newsletters@ffa.org.uk

Event organisers will now receive a newsletter check list as well as an event organisers guide when planning an event. This will just help editing the newsletter in knowing running order, expected write ups, photos etc.

The Royal Hospital, 19th March 2025

The Royal Hospital is a unique blend of national heritage, royal patronage and military tradition, forged over 330 years, whose model of care and well-being for ordinary soldiers remains as central to its purpose as when first conceived, and whose influence on the history of Chelsea is profound.

The tour tells the story of the 330-year history of the Hospital, taking in the splendour of the Grade I and II listed buildings, inclusive of artistic masterpieces. The tour will bring to life the long-standing ambassadorial role of the Chelsea Pensioners, inclusive of anecdotal personal stories of their time at the Hospital.

Tours are 90 minutes in duration, followed by 30 minutes for the Museum and Gift Shop. The tour route takes groups across the length of the site to visit its main attractions including The Great Hall, Chapel and Figure Court.

The site of the Royal Hospital Chelsea is 66 acres and although the tours do not cover all of this, the tour does involve a large amount of walking. There are 10 steps up to both the Chapel and Great Hall, both of which are fitted with wheelchair lifts. Please make us aware of any access needs your group members have so we can help to facilitate the tour. Please let a member of security know if you require use of the wheelchair lift. Motorised buggies are not permitted on the wheelchair lift. We are first and foremost a residence so please be respectful when walking around the site. Areas that are not accessible to the public are clearly signposted as residents and staff only.



Credit: Royal Hospital Chelsea

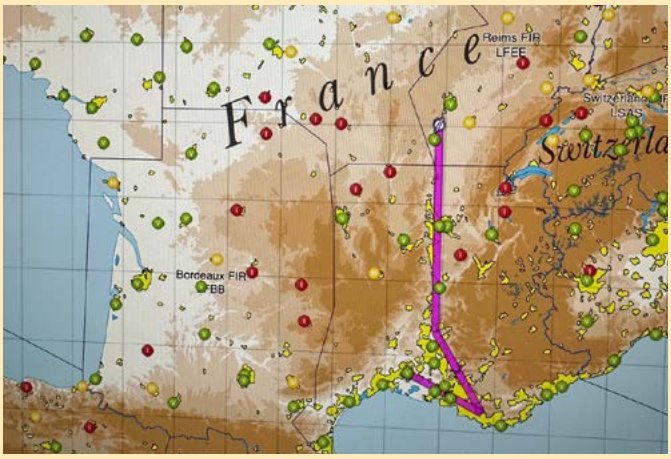
First Aid, 30th April 2025

When you think our average age is now in the mid 60's and we operate from small airstrips, would you know what to do if you found one of the Members or Guests collapsed on the ground, what would be your course of action as first on the scene?

We are planning to run a "First Aid" course with Adam Carr whom is the Head of the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance, based at Earls Colne, "I would be happy to commit to providing CPR and AED (defibrillator) training to your group during your 2025 season, if we still aren't formally delivering these courses by then I will just teach it myself."

This event will be limited to a max of 26 Members

FFA's 2025 French Study Tour 2025 (Fully Booked). 26th May–3rd June



Destinations

1. Beaune Challenges LFGF
2. Valreas Visan LFNV
3. Le Castellet LFMQ
4. Nimes Garons LFTW

An overnight visit to RAF Valley

This was event was cancelled this year, but we are still hoping to be invited back.

This would be an overnight. Plan would be to land late afternoon, stay locally and be shown around the following day, and then depart late afternoon.



Fischer Farms Upright Farming

We are hoping to visit Fischer Farms, which already operates one of the largest vertical farms in the UK. It has started construction at its 4-acre site in Norfolk, which will house 25,000 m2 of growing space – enough to supply 6.5 tonnes of leafy salad, leafy herbs and other fresh produce to UK supermarkets and other customers every day.

The ground-breaking farm will boast the latest vertical farming innovations and pioneering technology and will run on 100% renewable energy to significantly reduce its carbon footprint.

Tony's 3 Day Extravaganza



Day 1. Meet at Old Buckenham and then bus to new Condimentum Mustard milling factory, 10 miles from OB. A light lunch and on to Langham Dome recreated WW2 gunnery target training facility.

Built in 1942-43 on the edge of RAF Langham, this intriguing building utilised innovative technology to train anti-aircraft gunners. This lovingly restored military museum was one of the first examples of virtual technology, then to hotel.

Day 2 to the Radar museum at Neatishead. 3 hours at least to get there. Then possible Strumpshaw Steam museum and then hotel

Day 3 travel to Caistor car museum and Castle. Very large and extensive collection of rare cars then back to OB airfield where there is also an interesting American WW2 museum.

Miserden Estate

Miserden Estate, near Cirencester. One can find out about the estate by Googling "Miserden Estate" , which will take you to their own website as well as other websites that mention the estate. I have spoken to Nicholas Wills who is now running the family estate about the possibility of a visit and he would be only too pleased to show us around,

Miserden Estate, situated among the rolling hills at the heart of the Cotswolds countryside. It is a traditional estate with a Jacobean manor and beautifully landscaped gardens at its centre. It's the epitome of English charm, but until recently it was clear that without major investment it would not fulfil its true potential as a thriving and dynamic rural community. It is a challenge that Nicholas Wills, who took over the reins from his father, Major Tom Wills, in 2017, has grasped with relish. After university, Nicholas spent 10 years in the Coldstream Guards, where he rose to be Company Commander.

Team Lotus visit

Team Lotus F1 World Champions in 1963, 1965, 1968, 1970, 1972, 1973 and 1978 invite you to go on the Classic Team Lotus Works Tour

An invitation to visit the workshops of one of, if not the, greatest Formula One teams.

Classic Team Lotus is the Works historic motor sport branch within the Lotus group of companies.

The Team Lotus mechanics that supported Driver Champions such as Ayrton Senna, Nigel Mansell, Mario Andretti, Emerson Fittipaldi, Graham Hill and Jim Clark continue to care for the World Championship winning works Lotus F1 cars that won 77 Grand Prixs.

Classic Team Lotus is pleased to offer the opportunity for a privileged insight of everything that went into creating the Team Lotus Legend.

This will include:

- Film presentation of a slice of Team Lotus history
- Tour of the Classic Team Lotus race shop and cars on display
- History and technical significance of the many Lotus cars on show
- The Team Lotus archive and stunning new trophy cabinet
- Photo opportunities with an F1 car



Tatenhill Pop-In, Friday 18th October

It was the usual October day which promised well but was slow to deliver. My short flight around the west side of Birmingham and over Cannock Chase was conducted at 1000ft. I arrived as the mist was clearing to be welcomed by a small but select group of Flying Farmers. Parking was limited because 'keep off the grass' signs were everywhere. Just as well people called off. Tatenhill is a very understated airfield. We spent our time in their cheerful sunny cafe. Rebecca Rayner arrived later. I filled up as a black cloud appeared to the South West and spent most of the flight home in liquid sunshine. A friendly destination and a very pleasant way to spend the day.

Rick Holt



Left to Right; Philip Woodfield, Charlie Papworth, Rick Holt, Joyce & Richard Hall, Alf Oliver

Wellesbourne Pop-In, 16th November



Left to Right; Robert Laming, Peter Mailer, Peter Gale, Tony Fisher, Alf Oliver, David Keene, Anthea Brown, Peter Evans, Judith Marcham, Chrissie, Robin Culley, Dave Topp, (Two individuals in the right foreground were not in our party).

A cold front laying across the north Midlands on the morning of our second winter Pop-In to Wellesbourne prevented several members flying and the forecast for this front to move south later in the day suggested to others that it was prudent to leave their aircraft in their hangars. My flight inbound was in good weather, but I was expecting worse going home.

Despite this less-than-ideal forecast, thirteen members flying in seven aircraft flew in to Wellesbourne and they enjoyed an excellent lunch, or 'all day breakfast', and very convivial conversation. The airfield here is a very good venue for winter flying with hard runways, clear airspace, relaxed air traffic and an excellent café. The future of this, and numerous other airfields, is threatened and it is good to give them all the support that we can.

With the forecast arrival of the front later in the afternoon we did not delay our departures too long. However, with three of us still to take off, the runway was closed with a landing aircraft that blocked the runway with a puncture. Eventually, after a delay of twenty minutes, the runway was finally cleared allowing our departure. Fortunately, the weather was clear and we enjoyed a beautiful flight home in smooth air and even, surprisingly, some winter sunshine!

David Keene.

EVENTS – FFA MEMBER HELP NEEDED

- Please NOMINATE someone to write up the event AHEAD of the event
- Please provide in CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER the day/day's events
- Please let us know WHO is writing up which part
- Please take pictures with a HIGH RESOLUTION/PICTURE QUALITY
- Please send ALL pictures as SEPARATE files and not embedded in text
- Please indicate WHICH photos and text go together
- Please provide NAMES (Left to Right) & CAPTIONS for Photos
- Please take some PORTRAIT pictures that could be used as front cover images for future newsletters
- Please provide any video footage that could be used on the website.

Kirsten and I would both like to thank all FFA members who have contributed to writing up trips, sending in articles, pictures and other useful info for the newsletter. It is your content that enables us to fill each issue so please keep it coming!

Dengie visit, 3rd July



When we were young farmers we used to go on farm walks and usually the farms we visited would be like the farms that we had grown up on, were working on and hoped one day to have as our own. These days with diversification, innovation and changes in the structure of our markets, clever farmers are creating many more ways of producing food from our land and using our environment to benefit the world around us while trying to make a living.

Anyone in Britain who has a horse will know of the name Dengie but few will know that Dengie is the name of a village and civil parish with a population of 120 people in Essex on a peninsula between the River Blackwater and the River Crouch. The unusual name first appeared in the doomsday book as Daneseia attesting to the former occupants of the countryside being Danes. Dengie is famous in the Equine industry as horse food suppliers.

The Flying Farmers Association was invited to visit Dengie by member Michael Pudney who farms at West Newlands Farm near Southminster, Essex. The forecast for the day of the event was less than perfect and two of us took the opportunity to fly across to Essex from Hampshire the day before. Neville Stops landed at William and Jane Proctor's strip and stayed with them and I landed at Michael's strip intending to stay in a local motel, but in the end we were able to enjoy a takeaway curry and a glass of Cobra beer in Michael and Jane's kitchen before I retired for a good night's sleep in their comfortable guest bedroom.

The day of the event dawned with low cloud and drizzle, which did not deter seven intrepid fliers who landed and were offered a warming mug of coffee by Jane after which we embarked in a minibus for the Dengie tour. Unfortunately, there had been a burst watermain on the main road so the minibus was forced to take a long detour around bumpy side roads to get to our destination. We were glad to arrive in some open countryside to be greeted by Lance Morgan the field and dryer manager for Dengie.

Dengie is run by Farmers working together. As well as Equine feeds there is also a ruminant feed branch, a grain marketing and storage company as well as other agricultural supplies. The company has a turnover of about £35 million across four divisions following the principle of cooperation which has led to commercial success. There are 90 employees and there is a clever system of vertical integration from right across the company from seed production to bags of feed going out of the gate. The company is completely focused on looking after the customer and ensuring that the suppliers and workers are satisfied with the product and modus operandum.

Dengie is a specialist in the growing of Lucerne known in USA as alfalfa. The seed is planted on clean land and usually has a 3 to 4 year cycle. The first cut in the first year is taken at about the 10% flowering stage. The mower creates swaths which are then picked up by a swather and turned for natural drying before being loaded with a chopper forager into trailers to be transported back to HQ for drying. We were told all the details of the complex process of harvesting lucerne, some of which is special and unique to the Dengie team.

The drying plant has two rotary dryers one of which is used for the product which will go into chopped finish and the other for cubes. The operation runs 24 hours a day seven days a week for two weeks and then the teams have a whole weekend off before the shifts change. The drivers come from all over, many of them are from South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. They come here on a residency permit for six months before returning to carry on their other careers in summer in the other hemisphere. We heard that the drivers do a variety of jobs including one being a safari guide, in the National Park in South Africa and another one who is a worker in the tourist industry in Queenstown, New Zealand.

Lucerne is particularly suited to the dry conditions in this part of East Anglia as the plant has the ability to drive a tap route down into the soil in its search for water. Examples have been found many metres deep after only a few years. Lucerne is slower to establish than ryegrass. For this reason it is undersown to a cereal crop. Lucerne can be harvested three and occasionally four times a year and will produce up to 15 tons of dry matter per hectare without fertiliser as the leguminous crop fixes its











own nitrogen into the soil. The after effect is of benefit to any crop sown after lucerne has been ploughed out. The crop is cut for the first time in May and then at six weekly intervals for the rest of the year until September when is it left alone to build strength for the winter period.

Dengie complies with the quality assurance schemes of UFAS and FEMAS that were set up to ensure safety in horse food. The company also is approved under a scheme that has taken action to reduce the risk of contamination in horse feed with natural occurring prohibited substances that contravene the rules of horse racing and FEI disciplines. Equine conditions which are addressed in the manufacture and mixing of food products by the company cover such things as laminitis, gastric ulcers, weight gain, senior dental issues, gut health, fizzy behaviour and animals at stud. There is a team of highly qualified nutritionists at the company who are continually selecting the best quality ingredients available. They are trying to make feeding easy and simple for horse and pony owners. There is a Feedline telephone service available to owners and trainers who want to seek practical help and advice. The range of horse feeds includes Alfa A range, Hi-fi, Grass, Healthy Tummy, Specialist fibre and Pelleted fibre.

During the tour we were addressed by a number of the employees about their specialist roles in the company. It was obvious that there is a good relationship between staff and Management and when we had our final round up meeting in the boardroom we were shown a Power-point presentation by Ian Hassard, the current Managing Director who was clearly proud of what he is doing and what the company is achieving. One of the employees has been with the company for 37 years and there was a recent celebration of long service for another 17 members of the staff.

The company is proud to be a brand leader in Equine feeds in the United Kingdom. Dengie is changing the way in which the world feeds its horses by exporting to European and international markets. Dengie products are fed to top performance horses and to little pet ponies. Finally the company is proud to hold a Royal Warrant for supplying horse feed to the Royal Household and Michael Pudney is the Grant Holder of that honour. We were treated to a generous lunch in the board room and after that went to see a neighbouring farmer who is growing asparagus. Our thanks go to Chairman Michael Pudney, Ian Hassard and all staff at Dengie for a fascinating visit and tour.

Roger Bell



Bright Seeds visit, 24th July



The Flying Farmers flew into Compton Abbas on the 24th of July for a visit to Bright Seeds at Dean Lane Farm, Fovant, near Salisbury

Transfers were effected by John and Clare Golden, Neville Stops and Gaynor Luckett together with the writer who was privileged to be able to use his wife's very clean car.

We were met by company director Ben Dolbear who showed us around the state of the art office and gave us an introductory speech in the comfortable meeting room at the first floor together with tea, coffee and biscuits.

We heard how Bright Seeds was established 30 years ago by David Bright with the intention of putting them first in the seeds world. David was joined by Christopher eventually to carry on the story. These days the company has a 20 Strong team of specialists who are knowledgeable in a wide variety of maize including bio fuel maze as well as game cover, stewardship seed, grass seed, wild flowers, and game feed.

Chris Bright is the MD and his objective is to ensure that the company is the prime supplier of products for the game, wildlife and environmental spheres in UK and Europe. There are branches in France, Austria and Scandinavia as well as other European countries who seek product from Bright Seeds.

The main focus is to provide cover crops and a great deal of work goes into ensuring that the seeds that are available to customers are of the highest standard in terms of purity, cleanliness and germination. The company is engaged in trialling new products on sites up and down the country and is seeking constantly to embrace new technology where it is seen that technology will help the industry and in due course the customer of course.

Great efforts are made to ensure that every individual customer is provided with the mixture of seeds which best suit their individual concerns. There is no attempt to provide a one stop solution mixture for all eventualities.

The specialists travel all over the world to secure proven and tested seeds to ensure that the customer gets the product that they want.

We were taken into the two large warehouses where seed is received from abroad and plots around the country for screening and preparation for distribu-













tion to customers. With the emphasis on conservation in British agriculture today we were treated to a view of the various mixtures of seeds that customers may select in order to provide the required mixture for environmental payments as well as other applications in the home, leisure and government arenas. We were shown bags containing seeds of all the products available to customers and we had an opportunity of handling some seeds which many of us have never seen before.

Ben Dolbear then led us outside to the plots at Dean Lane Farm. The farm was previously a dairy farm and it has taken time to get the ground clean enough for the growth of pure seed varieties without the danger of other species volunteering and fouling the mixture sample. We were shown plots of plants being grown for harvesting and experimental purposes. With the loss of the Neonicotinoid treatments for seeds, flea beetle is a major threat to brassicas and related plants. Bright Seeds is doing work to deal with the pest by introducing other unaffected plants to protect vulnerable species while they are emerging and in the vulnerable stage. Work is being done to grow Brassica game crops like kale and utopia with a companion crop that creates a better crop when it is sown with such species as phacelia, buckwheat and mustard among others.



We saw good crops of maize of every type together with other crops designed to provide a feed source for birds during the 'hungry gap' between December and March when the natural food supply has all but disappeared. It is an excellent stewardship option with conservation benefits. There are mixtures of seeds for all of the stewardship schemes and products can be supplied bulk or in 20 kg bags available as full or pre-mixtures where the grower can add other seeds or cereals locally to suit their requirements.

Finally, we were treated to a visit to the machinery shed which is almost empty at the time of year of our visit as of course it was harvest time. With the plots being quite small in dimension the combines that are used are of small capacity with small fixed headers. This makes them easy to transport and simple to repair. The sieves have been altered or removed and the seed tends to be taken with everything relying on the dresser back at home to remove unwanted weeds or volunteers from commercial crops.

We returned to the office block for a vote of thanks and round up on the day's events before departing back to Compton Abbas for an excellent lunch in the new terminal building. Those who flew home were able to enjoy flying conditions for their return journey. Our thanks go to Ben Dolbear, Megan Townley and all the team at Bright Seeds for a most interesting day which is sure to lead to many of us ordering seed in the future.

Roger Bell



Ben Dolbear and Roger Bell

50th AGM Meeting, 25th September 2024







This year's AGM was held at the Sherburn in Elmet Aero Club in Yorkshire. The Chairman congratulated the Club on winning the AOPA Aerodrome of the Year award, and we could see why. Having moved the meeting from its long standing late October date to avoid the worsening weather, we were disappointed to have poor to impossible forecasts for this year's meeting, especially for those coming from the south.

However, members took to their cars and braved the British roads, some arriving the night before. The FFA Committee really appreciate this support for the meeting as otherwise it would be a bit of a non event.

As this was the 50th AGM of the FFA and following the very successful Anniversary Tour last May / June, the Chairman recited a couple of lines from the grace he read out at the final dinner on that tour.

"50 years the Flying Farmers have been together,
With wonderful friendships bound forever"

These words were to highlight the spirit of the FFA, which over those years has created many long-lasting friendships as an aside to the more serious business of the Association - which is to unite those with the common interest of flying and farming and maintain the privilege we have of being able to fly from our own strips.

During the years we have been together, there have been many notable flying achievements by our members. The Chairman highlighted two this year, one being Bill Miazek, a relatively new Scottish member, who built his own aircraft and after only 6 years of flying, flew himself to Oshkosh in Wisconsin with a fuel tank as his passenger. Another was our President who in his 80th year, won the Kings Cup Air Race, adding his name to a handful of other members who have taken this prestigious prize.

The Events Secretary gave his report. As mentioned the Anniversary Tour went extremely well and we all thanked Neville for the work he put into this event since he first proposed it 2 years ago. It must have been on his mind every day of those 2 years, coordinating 12 organisers on the route and making it all run so smoothly.

He already has a programme for 2025 and announced that Helen Cobb who partners Charles Course, our member that owns Elmsett Airfield, is organising a tour in the South of France for next year. This event was released for entries after the AGM and is already fully booked.

The Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Andrew Cragg stated that the accounts are healthy and back into profit after the subscription increase this year. There has only been a small fall-out from the increased rate, but he once again pleaded for those members who haven't signed up to GoCardless direct debiting, to do so as the old Standing Order system is outdated and causes him and his secretary so much extra work, trying to contact members to remind them to increase their standing orders and to cancel their old ones. The direct debits can be done by the Treasurer with a click of a button and it all goes so smoothly.











A point made by the Treasurer was that because some of those that pay by standing order had not increased their subscription rate and had been uncontactable, a new category of membership has been created to accommodate them as we don't want to lose members. They will still remain in the FFA but they won't receive a newsletter as this constitutes the biggest part of the subscription.

Anthony Kedros is retiring from representing the FFA at GAAC and the Chairman asked if there was anyone willing to take up this representation. There was a deathly silence! A discussion was raised about increasing aircraft insurance. Some claimed there's hadn't risen but it was noted that hull values had increased, necessitating a rise in premiums.

A number of members took to their feet at the end of the meeting to thank the committee for their work. This was very much appreciated by the committee.

After the buffet lunch, we had two presentations, one by Winston Lee recounting his experience with the new GAR system on a flight to Holland. The other was by Alex from Tritontrak who sells tracking devices to monitor your machinery.

Finally, before the meeting, we had a request from one member who has become infirm, to broadcast the AGM on Zoom. As a trial this was carried out and a committee member who was in France at the time was also acting as a guinea pig. The Chairman said he wasn't altogether in favour of a general Zoom AGM as he prefers a live meeting. Fate dealt a blow and the internet went off, which maybe proved a point! But it will be considered for those with special needs as we are an ageing group - although after attending many AGMs over those 50 years, no one looks a lot different year on year!

Paul Stephens



Roger Bell, Richard Hall and Annette Gosling

Handicapped Air Racing - are you up for it?



The 2024 Air Racing season comes to a close, and ended with considerable success to one of our members.

We have three members presently involved in this fun and exciting sport - Geoffrey Boot (25+ years), Gordon Bellerby (17 years) and Martin Gosling (15 years), and I want to encourage more members to consider joining in. Minimum requirements are 100 hours P1, and an aircraft with a minimum flat-out speed of 100 mph - not a very difficult requirement for any of our members I'm sure!

The season starts in April, with Race School at Popham. Here any interested racers can meet existing racers, have a presentation as to what a race weekend consists of, and how it all happens. After a lunch in the clubhouse any potential racers are paired up with an existing racer who guides them around a short practice course to give them all the advice and tips to become a successful racer.







Three FFA members (Gordon, myself and Geoffrey).

By this time you have to make a decision as to whether you prefer to race with a navigator, who can help you with some of the tasks, such as identifying turn points and when to optimally 'roll out' of the turn, to keeping count of the laps and to keep reminding you of fuel management - or to race solo where all the decision making is your own. In years gone by competitors traditionally raced with a navigator, but nowadays more and more racers are racing solo. Personally I prefer to race solo as I am rather averse to people telling me what to do(!), and prefer to make my own decisions and mistakes. Gordon, on the other hand, has always raced with a navigator and gets on well with that scenario. It is horses for courses and depends who you know well enough to take on the role. There is nothing to stop you changing to solo, or vice versa, as your experience builds up. Changing roles would have to have your handicap revised due to the different race weight.

The season usually has 5 weekends when there is a race on the Saturday and the Sunday, and they tend to happen about once in every month from May to September. The weekends are designed to be socially agreeable with a dinner arranged for the Saturday night where the results for the Saturday race are announced. Then on the Sunday, another race in the late morning, followed by lunch while the results are worked out, followed by the results for that race, the presentations of the cups and then it's off home, hopefully with a cup or two under your belt!

So how does a race happen? The first thing is to find out the maximum speed of your aircraft, and this will be fed into a computer program to determine your place on the start line and what the spacing is between you and the aircraft in front and also the aircraft behind. That determined, there is a compulsory practice of the course for every competitor which allows you to learn the turning points (marked by red luminous tents about 6' high), and observe various features along each leg to help you keep on track. The course itself has anywhere between 4 and 6 turning points (it is ALWAYS left handed) and the total distance runs to about 90 miles, which will take about an hour for something like a Cessna 150, and about 35 minutes for one of the quicker RV's.



Red luminous tents about 6' high mark the turning points



For most pilots, the course is entered into SkyDemon so that it is easier to follow, although it is encouraged to fly the course visually with only short periods of reference to SkyDemon. Every aircraft carries a pair of loggers which faithfully record your track and your height (there is a minimum racing height, below which results in disqualification). The results are calculated entirely on the figures in the official loggers - protesting that your SkyDemon track shows a different result cuts no ice with the handicapper!

And then it's to the race, learning to fly accurately down each leg (it's important to adjust one's heading according to the wind), and keep close to the turn points, ensuring not to have a 'cut' if you get too close (a penalty) or, worse, a 'miss' (a disqualification). The adrenaline runs as the race progresses and you begin to catch up with the slower aircraft in front, but also worrying about the faster aircraft creeping up on you from behind! If the handicapper has got his calculations right, and you have flown as accurately as you possibly can, all the aircraft approach the finish line more or less together, and the adrenalin really builds up in the last few hundred yards running in to the line. Then that waiting on tenterhooks for the results announcement - and maybe going home with a trophy or two!

It's another fun way to use your plane, it's competitive, it's exciting and it's social with very like-minded people. Come and join the fun by coming to Race School next April. If you want to find out more have a chat with either me, Martin Gosling, or Gordon Bellerby, or go to the official website royalaeroclubrrra.co.uk.

There is some serious silverware on offer for the winners, and there are two particularly important races during the season, the **Schneider Trophy**, which was a competition between Britain, France, Italy and the USA from 1913 - 1931 for really hot rod sea planes. The successful British entrant, the Supermarine S6B, was designed by R. J. Mitchell, the designer of the Spitfire. It was finally won three years in a row by the British in 1931 which meant the trophy was held in perpetuity by us - and in fact was never competed for internationally again, (a replica is now raced for by us in the Royal Aero Club).

The other trophy is the **King's Cup**, which was presented as a trophy by King George V in 1922 for the development and promotion of the aviation industry. The winning of this trophy means the winner goes to the RAF club in London to have it presented by someone high and mighty - often a member of royalty. A very big privilege.

This year I was lucky enough to have a very good season and brought home quite a bit of silverware, including The Air Racing Championship and The King's Cup. As a supplement I also won the Saturday Trophy (for the season), the Total Points Trophy (for the season), The Merlin Trophy (for the Goodwood Saturday race), the City Livery Trophy (for the Fishburn Sunday race) and the Bruce and Ian Hook Celebration Trophy (for the Goodwood combined weekend).

A rather embarrassing haul of silverware it has to be said, but it shows that if I can do it, any of you certainly can as well. All three of us have won the Championship over the years, we have all won the King's Cup, and Geoffrey has won the Schneider Trophy. (Gordon and I are still striving for that prize!)

Come and join us and have some real fun with your plane.

Martin Gosling



Brize Norton- Operation - Steadfast Noon - 23 October 2024



This is an Airbus A330 but in RAF service it is called a Voyager. Very quiet RR engines. Many are operated from Brize Norton.

I needed to be out of bed by 0345 in order to be breakfasted, ready and at Brize Norton car park by 0530. The forecast the previous night had been fog but it turned out to be pretty light much to my relief as we travelled along an almost deserted A40 to our Burford turn off, heading for the Tactical Medical Wing car park to meet the Friends of 101 Squadron who had arranged this. A coach collected us and took us to the departure lounge where, just like any other airport, we queued in a zig zag for clearance with our passports at the ready. With that done it was off with shoes, coats , watches, cash, belts and anything else metallic before we stepped through the metal detector (I failed, but never mind) all was well.

Another coach arrived to take us to ZZ333, code named Kayak 26, one of the many A330 refuelling aircraft stationed at BZN. These are the largest aircraft currently operated by the RAF in these days.

Last year had been the 100th anniversary of flight refuelling. It was first performed in the USA by a pair of Airco DH 4B aircraft. Crude ? I should say so but at least it had been proved possible and the concept was borne.

In this country sir Alan Cobham created Flight Refuelling in 1934 and from then development continued and indeed continues today in the name Cobham Plc. I am pretty sure that some of that pioneering work was undertaken at Gloucestershires' Staverton airport using Lancasters.

Just a little about our aircraft now. In service life it is called a Voyager but in reality this beautiful aircraft is a development of the Airbus A330 used by many airlines and, interestingly, it has the same wing as the 4 engined A340 which makes it ideal for tanking because the hard points for the second pair of engines are there ready to carry the refuelling pods. The Voyager came into service in 2012 at a cost of £150m apiece and here at BZN we were surrounded by them including the one that Boris famously had painted with the Union flag at a cost of £900k and it stood next to ours. It looked magnificent.

The brief spec is as follows:-

- Length 192'
- Span 197'
- Mat TOW 233 tonnes
- Empty wt 120 t
- Refuelling Pods are Cobham 905 E units (yes we still make something)
- Engines are Trent 772B (and those too) giving 72000lbs thrust.
- Range with max payload is 4500 nm Non stop to the Falklands for example.
- Passenger capacity 291 with fully kitted personnel .
- Max speed Mach .86. (568 knots)

I understand that one Voyager is on standby 24hrs/ day at BZN fully fuelled for emergencies (QRAs)

Frankly I am staggered that wing and u/c can carry that load day after day in service.

Today we had 57 passengers and I asked one of the pilots in the departure lounge where to sit to get the best photos. Right up at the back he said so I proceeded as far as I could towards the rear only to find that those in the know had already settled into those seats but I managed to find a good window seat on the port side halfway between the refuelling pod and the tail plane and I was rather pleased to have gained that acquisition. The engines were whining into life now and the captain announced that the refuelling pod on the port side was inop (just my luck I thought) but he went on to say that the 'receivers' would stack on the port side awaiting their turn. He then said that we would be refuelling 14 aircraft and the scheduled 3 hour flight would now be



Our Crew



Our Refueller




Typhoon


Tornado


Typhoons


F35

5 hours taking us over the North Sea east of Newcastle and then on to Aberdeen.

We had a crew of two pilots, both Flt Lts, two sergeant refuellers and a cabin crew of some six or eight young people, M&F.

We taxied out at a sprightly pace and the moment that we straightened up on RWY26 the engines went to full power. It was interesting to note that we travelled about three quarters the length of that runway before he rotated. I understood that, for today's flight we had 78 tonnes of fuel on board and we were giving away 34 tonnes and our first 'trade' would be abeam Newcastle. After a smooth ascent we stabilised at 22000feet at 406 mph at –24 degrees. The sky was perfect , very still in full sunshine with the sea looking very flat below us.

The captain then announced that our first customer was delayed by 40 minutes so we would just sit there and wait, which explains the rather strange holding pattern. He also said that if anyone wished to visit the flight deck , now would be the time and many of us did. I don't know why but I was surprised to find that once the crew had set up the racetrack it was performed entirely by the autopilot whilst the two pilots poured over a sheaf of papers on their tables (this aircraft has side stick controls).

We were not allowed to take photos in there until the crew had 'sanitised' the cockpit but then we could photograph anything except the crews' faces. At one point with no one else around I had the privilege of spending about 30 minutes talking to the crew.

The refueller has a desk pointing aft with 4 screens , one being a map and 3, above him, being videos of the situation aft. He faces a mass of buttons to control the fuel delivery and of course the extension of the delivery hose and basket. Each hose can extend up to 75 feet.

Training, including simulator time was, he implied, not too onerous. They can export fuel at the rate of up to 600 USG per minute. The pipe has yellow bands at intervals which help the refueller to know how far it has extended.

Back in my seat now I was so very excited to see our first customers in the distance climbing up fast on the port side. They were four Typhoons and they very quickly formatted on us. Did you know that they can reach 35,000 feet in less than 2 minutes and 35 secs ? . You knew when it was their turn for fuel because the refuelling probes popped out of the fuselage just forward of the canopy on their stbd side and at that point they gently sank below the tanker and came up the other side. A Typhoon can take fuel at the rate of 1500kg/ min at a pressure of 55psi.

Using my stopwatch as a rough guide it took about 7-12 minutes to complete a refill on the fighters today so in that time we would have covered about 40-60 nm and we would have not fully refuelled them.

Experienced pilots can follow the Voyager remaining coupled into the turn but this, readers, is not a simple exercise in what appeared to be a rate one turn not performed slowly either. I was only able to see one' plug in' and that was not achieved in one go. Interestingly our tanker remains in trim as the fuel unloads and in that sense the crews of other aircraft would be very envious. From what I could see this was a brilliant vehicle for the job- yet so versatile too.

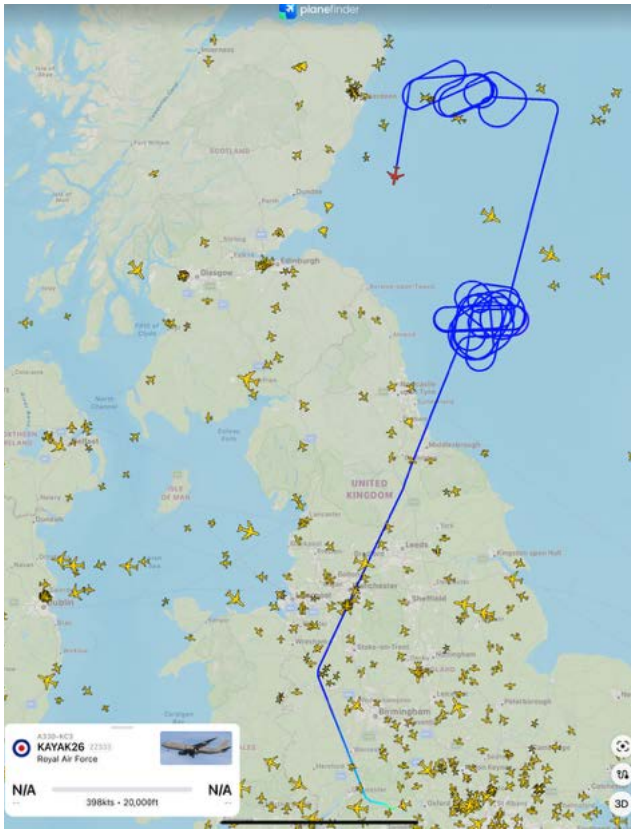
All in all we refuelled eight Typhoons, two Tornados and four F35s. As the last departed our own engines went to cruise power and we headed for BZN gently descending to the scattered cloud tops at, maybe 4000'. The Voyager has almost full width spoilers which were used to shape our descent and once again at touchdown. All in all an awesome and unforgettable trip. My lasting memory will be the waiting Tornados and Typhoons seemingly so very close that you felt that you could almost touch them .

I have some photos to share but I must admit that although they were the very aircraft that we refuelled on that day, and were taken on that day, they were not all taken by me so my thanks go to my fellow passengers for filling the gaps. The track image was kindly recorded by my daughter in law Diane who followed us on the internet.

My profuse thanks go to the 'Friends of 101 Squadron' for arranging this incredible experience and to our crew who patiently answered our questions and willingly gave us so much of their time.

P.S. just to make you envious, it cost each of us £25.

Mike Cuttell, FFA 27



Aberdeen – Oshkosh July 2024 by Bill Miazek





My Aircraft is a Bristell NG5 – Max weight; 600kg – Range; 10 hours, 210 ltrs – Rotax 915 Turbo Intercooled 142HP Engine – MT 3 blade constant speed prop – Stall Speed 43kt – Rate of Climb; 2000ft – Economical Cruise Speed 115kts @ 22 ltrs per h.

Since learning to fly in 2017 and visiting Air Adventure in Oshkosh in 2019 it was my ambition to cross the Atlantic and fly into Oshkosh in my own aircraft. In 2022 I built my Bristell NG and started to plan my trip. Getting my new aircraft through the LAA took longer than first anticipated, being the first with a 915 engine in the UK. In May 2024 I received my permit to fly and preparations for Oshkosh stepped up. No modifications were made to my aircraft apart from space to carry a couple of jerry cans of fuel on the passenger seat. I had to apply for a USA visa which involved me flying to Newtownards for an interview at the US Embassy in Belfast. Also needed a Decal for the aircraft, a tax for flying in the USA. I had already sourced a survival suit, life raft, oxygen system and a Garmin GPS and SOS beacon. Weather permitting I set my date of departure for July 11th 2024.

Day 1: Thur 11.07.24

Left my home strip in Aberdeenshire at 07.48am. The weather was dull, raining with low cloud and temperature of 7 degrees. Took off and flew North over Lossiemouth, over the Moray Firth and left UK mainland at Northwest tip of Scotland at Cape Wrath.

Once out over the sea the outlook cleared up and apart from a strong headwind the flight over the sea was good. Many people were advising me to go to Egilsstadir as Reykjavik was clouded in. I knew however that there was a clear weather window the following day for flying on to Greenland so I felt it was important to get to Reykjavik. I flew on and was able to drop down below the cloud out at sea and come in below 400ft to land VFR at Reykjavik with rain and strong winds on the ground.

Reykjavik FBO were very helpful and drove me out to a local filling station with cans so that I could fuel up the aircraft with petrol which was much cheaper that Avgas and better for the Rotax. I had pre-booked a room at Natura Hotel which is right next to the Airport and spent the first night of my journey to Oshkosh there.

Above left:
Preparing to leave
Above right:
Lining up on runway for departure

Day 2. Fri 12.07.24

After a good night's sleep I got prepared for the day. Weather was the same as previous day, dull, wet and windy. I departed at 8am with weather forecasting to improve and looking better towards Greenland. After flying for 4 hours over sea I arrived at the East coast of Greenland. Flew on and spoke on the radio to Kulusuk Airport. I then proceeded to fly out over the Greenland Icecap. Nothing to see except white below, a bit like flying over cloud! Very difficult to judge height above and SkyDemon was very useful. Flying at 13,000ft above the icecap, this was the first and only time that I used oxygen on my trip.

After 6 ½ hours flying I began to notice lovely ponds of bright blue water and then shortly after saw clearings in the snow with land breaking through. The scenery and mountains coming in to land at Kangerlussuaq was beautiful, sun was shining and it was very warm. Here I was some 71 miles north of the Artic circle in 28 degrees when Aberdeen was only 7 degrees when I left!?

I fuelled up with Avgas here – the most expensive of the entire trip at £3.50 a ltr. The only accommodation available was at Old Camp. Not fond mem-





ories I'm afraid…lots of mosquitos (my nemesis!!) Old Camp is old and room was tired with ill fitting windows and doors and limited facilities. I sorted myself out, bunked down and hoped for a mosquito free night!

Day 3. Sat 13.07.24

In the morning, after being the 'all you can eat buffet' for the mosquitos I contacted Canadian Customs only to be told that I couldn't fly into Iqaluit on a Saturday as they were closed! Resigned to the fact that I would now have to spend all weekend in this hot, mosquito infested land I went to the airport to talk to the FBO. They were surprised by the information customs had given me and advised that aircraft flew to Iqaluit at weekends all the time! After a few more phone calls and assurance that Customs and immigration were available I got organised and although later in the day than I had planned, took off for Canada!

The runway at Kangerlussuaq is huge! At 3km long and 60m wide I could quite easily have taken off across it!

My flight to Iqaluit was pleasant and non eventful. Vistas of clear blue skies and sea, mostly frozen and peppered with icebergs.

Flight time – 4 hours 11mins, distance – 569 miles

Above left: Ice in sea approaching Greenland
Above Right: Using Oxygen at 13000ft over Greenland
Below left: Kulusuk Airport
Below right: Flying over Greenland Ice Cap









Once landed at Iqaluit I used the services of 'Touch-down Services' . the guys there were great, very helpful and took me to the fuel station so I could buy petrol – cheapest ever at .55 Can cents per ltr, approx .31p per ltr!

Tonight I stayed at The Aqsarniit Hotel. Nice large, air conditioned room, great shower, good restaurant with view of Airport and most importantly…NO mosquitos!! I slept very well!

Day 4. Sun 14.07.24

Awoke to a clear, bright sunny morning and headed to the airport for 8am. I had decided to try and get as far down Canada as possible for my day as not many airfields are surfaced and have fuel in this area. I chose Chibougamau-Chapais as my destination, some 990 miles south and also an avgas supplier. And so I began one of my longer flights. After crossing the Hudson Bay my outlook was filled with nothing but rock and pools. Having no radio contact and such barren landscape I found this flight quite dull and monotonous.

Flight time – 7 hours 39mins, Distance – 1002miles

Chapais is a brand new airport, only 2 years old but like a ghost town. No one on radio and no one on site either. Closed on a Sunday. By luck a member of staff turned up on personal business and helped me out. I got a lift to the local village of Chibougamau and managed to find a room there. Communication was a challenge as being in Quebec and not a French speaker I struggled to find somewhere to eat etc. I eventually found a burger van so didn't go to bed hungry!



Above left:
The guys from Touch-down Services, Iqaluit
Above right:
Gordon Moir from UK who flew there from Derby in his Comanche
Right:
Arriving at Oshkosh

Day 5. Mon 15.07.24
Taxi back to the airport where friendly staff there fuelled the aircraft as I prepared to leave.

Today I took off for a relatively short flight of 277 miles to visit friends in Stoney Creek, Hamilton.

After an hour of turbulent weather I flew into storms. Horrible thunder and lightening with heavy rain and low cloud, not ideal conditions. Eventually, following a lot of dodging and a detour well into Lake Ontario I landed at Stoney Creek in torrential rain and below low cloud!

My friends Sue and Nigel met me at the airport and made me very welcome at their house on the marina at Lake Ontario. A home cooked meal and familiar chat was an excellent end to my day!

Day 6. Tues 16.07.24
Next morning there was still low cloud and poor weather but flyable. En route, flew over Niagara Falls but unfortunately was unable to see anything because of the low cloud. Continued to Harrisburg in Pennsylvania where I was clearing customs. This was a particularly bumpy flight due to wind and thermal activity. On landing at Harrisburg, I was greeted by a very helpful customs person who made me feel welcome in America. Temperature was very hot here and I was glad get out of my survival suit! Friendly FBO again made me welcome, gave me a nice cool drink. I then flew onto meet John Rathmell, Bristell USA at Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Day 7. Wed 17.07.24
Today was a 'rest' day for me. John is a real gentleman and made me extremely welcome in Lancaster. He organised accommodation for me and allowed me to use his facilities and materials to service my aircraft and give it a good check over. He supplied fuel and even let me fly the new Bristell 916!

Day 8. Thus 17.07.24
Today I set off for Wittman Airfield, Oshkosh!

What a great flight, routing over busy International Airports e.g. Cleveland and Detroit with lots of big jets landing, taking off and flying underneath me. I also flew over Lake Michigan, which I've since found out seems to be a bit of a no no for Americans in single engine aircraft.

The approach and join for landing at Wittman was a fantastic experience. Joining the stream of aircraft at Green Lakes, rocking my wings at Fisk, pairing off and lining up for landing on Runway 36 and then landing exactly on the Orange Dot as instructed… Amazing!!

Turning off left at the next exit was perfect as this was the main entrance to the exhibitor show ground where my friends Robert and Illonka from Aberdeen who volunteer every year at Oshkosh were waiting to greet and welcome me to the Show!

We walked my aircraft to the Bristell Exhibitor Stand, got it parked up and had a celebratory beer!

I spent the next 7 days at the show on the stand, assisting and staying with the sales team from Bristell. I had a great time seeing lots of new aircraft and meeting up with new (and some old) friends!





TOTAL JOURNEY (so far) 8 Flights 4812 miles 41 hours 14 mins Flying

29/07/24, Trip Home
Left Oshkosh 7am local time. Airfield very quiet after the buzz of the show.

Nice sunny morning when I took off. Flew approx 1 hour south to Gault Field in Illinois (1 hour 2mins to be precise!)

Flew through rain and low cloud and was raining on arrival at Gault Field.

Met with Jeremy Knoll from Rotax Advanced Power Plant Solutions there and spent 4 hours in hangar (workshop) where I took the cowlings off ready for the mechanic.

I had been experiencing a strange vibration coming from the airframe/prop/engine/gearbox and being unsure what was the cause was, was there to

Top right:
Day 6. Meeting John Rathmell from Bristell, USA.

Lower right:
Day 8 - At Fisk with Air Traffic Controllers



Above:
Flying between Greenland and Canada

try and get to the route of the problem. We were unable to find anything wrong, so I decided to leave Illinois and head for home!

Flew from Gault Field to Sault Ste. Marie on the Canadian border. Flew up alongside Lake Michigan on the west shoreline. Mostly flying at 7500ft but went up to 9500ft on last hour, dodging thunderstorms and lightening.

(2 hours 30mins flying. 83.5ltrs @ 2.84 Can$ 158.94 GBP)

Landed at Sault Ste. Marie just in front of a thunderstorm, heavens opened and down came really heavy rain! Customs/Police were a mere formality, checked my passport and I was cleared to travel in Canada. Bought some Avgas fuel here and took off.

Flew another 255 miles North to Cochrane **(1 hour 40mins flying)** On landing I got a lift into town with a lad from the Fire Station and Mike, a helicopter Pilot shared the car with me. Mike was based in Cochrane to look out for and fight forest fires and had digs in the town.

Not much in Cochrane except a huge timber processing plant and a railroad through the town.

While there I stayed at the Station Hotel – part of the old Station. It had been refurbished and was very nice. In the morning I caught a taxi back to the airfield (approx 20km ride).

Once at the airfield I fuelled up and paid the Airport Manager **(122ltrs @ 2.99 Can $ per ltr**)

Nice morning, nice weather and I took off at 08.09 local time on long flight to Iqaluit

This was one of the longest flights of the trip – **(1128 miles 7 hrs 36min)**

Very barren countryside. Had a little bit of a tailwind which helped and average speed for flight was **148mph.** Had flight following for 1st part of journey. Flying with dry suit and life jacket on again. Very warm on the ground. Flew at 9500 ft, dodging cloud. Ever so glad to get to Iqaluit , low on fuel although did not touch reserve tank of 20ltrs. Landed Iqaluit at 15.45 local time.

Met with Gordon Moir in his Comanche G-AVGA. He had been waiting at Iqaluit for a break in the weather to continue his journey to Greenland.

Bought mogas at a local filling station. Very good price **190ltrs @ 0.65 cents per ltr**

Stayed at the Aqsarniit Hotel (same hotel as on my way out, very comfortable). Got a lift from Jake in the morning from the hotel to Frobisher Bay Touchdown Services. Nice guys, very helpful.

Once prepared I took off at 08.26 local time. Beautiful morning, sun shining. Uneventful flight and made good time over the Labrador Sea. Talked to Montreal and Edmonton then Nuuk.

Flew up the fjord to Kangerlussuaq (100mls) with mountains at 9000ft high on either side. Very turbulent but fantastic scenery. With 3hr time change flight was **4hrs 24mins averaging 130mph.**

Landed at 15.51 local time. Beautiful day. Fuelled up **103 ltrs, very expensive at 30.55kr per ltr plus parking and handling.** Stayed at Kangerlussuaq Airport Hotel.

Weather between Greenland and Iceland not good, so bad that Kulusuk on Greenland East coast was closed due to 60 kt winds. Stayed another day in Kangerlussuaq where it was a very nice warm day. Visited Museum, mostly about aircraft crashes and accidents in Greenland!





Big problem with mosquitos. Alcohol very expensive - £9 for a pint , £3 for can of coke.

Next day weather looked better between Greenland and Iceland so got prepared and took off at 09.22 local time. Beautiful and nice day over the ice cap. After Greenland weather deteriorated, became cloudy and windy with rain.

Arrived at Reykjavik at 17.17 local time, just in time to clear customs prior to 6pm when costs double! Once cleared customs I taxied over to Aeroclub and bought fuel from their mobile pump. Met with Thordur and took out cash from cash machine to pay for fuel. Hotel Natura had no available rooms so Thordur gave me a lift into town and I managed to get a room at the University. Very basic concrete room, bit like a prison cell!. I slept well and woke up early at 6am. It was a lovely morning so I walked round to the Airport and decided to set off.

The weather offshore of Iceland and between Iceland and Scotland was looking terrible.

A German registered older Robin took off half an hour in front of me and we agreed to keep in contact on the radio. I heard him talking to Iceland radio in first half hour then didn't hear him again. Turned out he had turned back due to bad weather. He did take off later and eventually got to Wick at 21.30hrs.

For me, after leaving Reykjavik the weather deteriorated within half an hour. It got very windy, 60kt headwind, very turbulent with very heavy rain. First couple of hours flying were horrendous, at some points forward speed was as low as 45kts. Dynon advised arrival time would be 8pm in the evening with enough fuel to last until 17.30hrs!

Thankfully conditions started to clear and winds died down and my arrival time was brought forward to 17.00hrs.

Approaching Scotland weather became cloudy. I coasted in at Durness at around 15.30hrs and had to climb to go above cloud, up to 11000ft.

Spoke to John at Lambholm on Safetycom radio and also Richard and Dave Eades at Easter on my way home overland. They all congratulated me on my trip…Good Feeling!

Arrived home at St Katherines at 16.38hrs to a great welcome reception with many friends and family there to greet me.

Total – 71 hours flying 8936 miles

An absolutely fabulous life experience but very good to be home and in my own bed tonight!!

Above Left and Right: Home!
Below: Details of route



For Sale

Five propellers for sale, located in Quorn, Leicestershire.

Email: robertwright@pawrightandsons.co.uk
Robert is able to pass on details of anyone interested to the owner.















For Sale

Boeing Stearman PT-13D

Serial no 75-5716

Engine Continental W670-6N zero timed installation, less than 50hrs T.T.

Redline brakes installed.

Fixed operating costs PER MEMBER: Monthly hangarage £98, Hourly rate £150, Annual Insurance £525

Minimum hours: 250 TT piston. Training given for tailwheel conversion.

Notes: Flight time costs based on take-off to landing times. Annual due early 2025, including change to CAA reg G-CMST.

Contact Mike Woodhouse 07771 503710
Email : mc.woodhouse@hotmail.co.uk







For Sale

Glastar Aircraft

Beautiful low hours Glastar taildragger.
Price £90K or best offer.

- 160 Hp Lycoming O-320 – approved for UL91 fuel.
- MT 3 Blade constant speed prop
- Liese silencer
- High accuracy fuel computer
- Short takeoff & landing plus great touring performance.
- Very large cabin.
- Low workload with brilliant 2 Channel Garmin autopilot.
- Comfortable automotive style inertia reel harness.
- Cabin heat.
- Trigear conversion parts available.
- Wheel spat kit.
- Airframes Alaska Twin-Shock Tailwheel Suspension Assembly.
- Excellent condition, always hangared & maintained to very high standard.
- Bruces Custom cover + lightweight touring cover.
- Performance:
- MTOW 889Kg, empty weight 564Kg.
- Main tanks 58L + 58L
- Aux tanks 38L + 38L
- Econ cruise at 100 kts, 22L/hour, aux tanks give range > 800nm
- Payload 325kg , max baggage 113kg
- Loading exmple – 2 x 90kg pilots, full main tanks (116l), 60Kg baggage.
- Avionics
- Garmin G5 EFIS, autopilot controller & GSA28 capstan servos
- Garmin GTX330 Mode S Transponder
- Garmin GNS430 NavCom
- Garmin GMC507 Autopilot controller
- Dynon D10A EFIS / Compass / AoA
- Pilot Aware Rosetta with external air-frame antennae for best coverage
- FC10 Fuel computer
- Low fuel warning system
- Auto fuel transfer system

Please contact Roger on 07540 851867 or email rogersheridan@mac.com







For Sale

Jabiru 400

2006

500hrs.vacuum and electric instruments. Autopilot is disconnected as not yet been permitted,Engine rebuilt by Kevin Haym at Camit uk with rebore,new cast pistons and refurbished heads. Now has bags of compression.Only done 41 hours since rebuild.

For sale by ageing owner builder. Has been flown off 400m grass strip all its life. Have the spats£36500

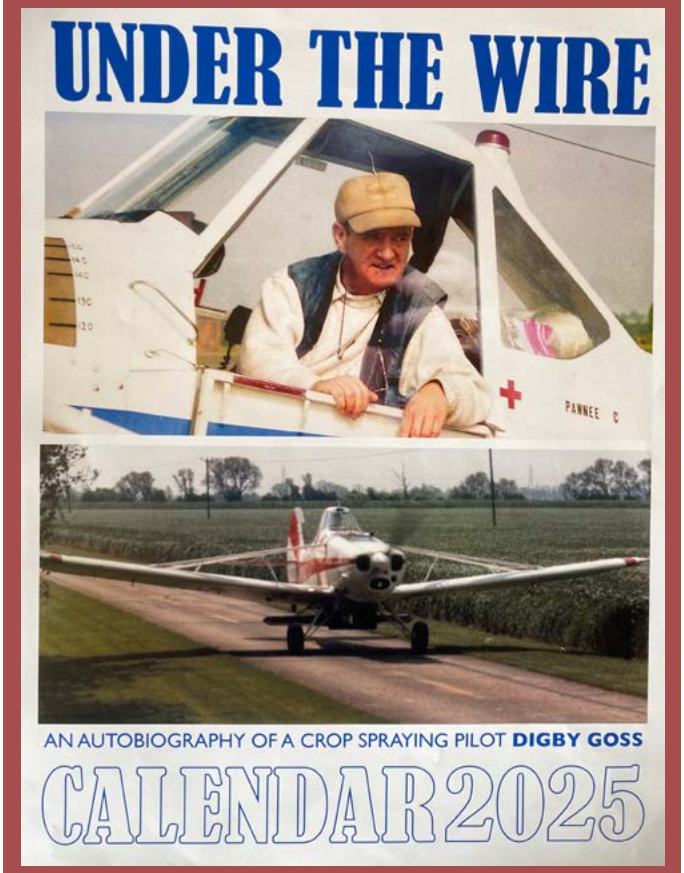
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Minutes of the 50th AGM Sherburn in Elmet Aero Club, 25th September 2024

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

	Description	Action
	The meeting was opened by the Chairman at 11:00 hrs (local) The Chairman thanked everyone for coming despite the weather affecting those from the south, forcing the majority to drive. He also thanked the Aeroclub for the free use of their room and facilities, congratulating them on becoming AOPA Aerodrome of the Year. He also congratulated our President for winning the Kings Cup Air Race Championship and Bill Miazek for flying his self built aircraft to Oshkosh in Wisconsin after only having had a licence for 6 years. Finally he announced that we were trialling a Zoom video link with a few volunteers including committee member Gordon Bellerby, who was unable to attend in person. He did make a warning that we didn't want to get to a position where everyone took the easy option and didn't physically attend the AGM. Unfortunately, the internet and Zoom ceased at that point and was only restored at the end of the meeting!	
1	**Members Present** The President, The Committee as above, plus G. Robson, R. Laming, R. Culley, J. Milne, T. Fisher, P. Evans, R. Bell, W. Miazek, P. Gale, R. Howard, F. Ward, R Guess, R. Holt, M .Jones, G. Lloyd, W. Lee, R. Hall, M. White & C. Thomson plus wives and partners respectively. In all 34 people attended. There were a number of apologies mainly due to the difficult weather conditions.	
2	**Signing of the Minutes of the 49th AGM held at Old Warden on 27th September 2023** The minutes were signed as a true and correct record.	
3	**Any Matters arising from the Minutes** The action points had been dealt with. There were no matters arising.	
4	**Chairman's Report** The Chairman quoted a couple of lines from the Grace poem he recited before the 50th Anniversary Dinner in June 2024 – "50 years the Flying Farmers have been together, with wonderful friendships bound forever". He thought that those words encompassed the essence of the FFA. He added that there is a serious business side to what we have achieved over those 50 years, but reiterated that unlike many "clubs" we have developed an extremely friendly association with apparently no jealously or hierarchy despite wide ranging financial statuses with varying types of aircraft and farms. He thanked everyone once again for coming and to look forward to the next 50 years.	
5	**Treasurer's Report** The Treasurer ran through the 2023/2024 accounts which were also published in the newsletter. He explained about the fly-in fund which was accrued from surpluses at events and held in case an organiser was 'out of pocket' through no fault of his own. It was also explained why £1000.00 is paid to the Treasurer to go towards the cost of his personal secretary – Emma – who does much of the administrative work for the FFA. Everyone agreed this was fair.	
6	**Events Report** The Events Secretary went through the proposed events programme for 2024. He explained that the WhatsApp groups for each event were proving useful and will continue. He asked the President's wife to make presentations to R. Bell and R. Hall as they missed the presentations to all the organisers of the 50th Anniversary Tour. He also explained in conjunction with R. Bell that Helen Cobb is organising the 2025 foreign tour to the South of France and has done a superb job getting a program sorted on a recce by motorhome.	
7	**Membership Report** The Membership Secretary showed Power Point graphs of the membership numbers over recent years which are still increasing. Presently there are 414 members as at 24th September 2024. Another chart showed the analysis of surplus subscriptions being paid due to members not cancelling existing standing orders. Despite attempts to contact these people, he gets no response.	
8	**Election of Committee Members** It was the turn of P Stephens and G. Bellerby to stand down. They were both willing to stand again and were unanimously re-elected. It was also agreed by the committee to invite Richard Butler to become an Associate member. He doesn't actually qualify for full membership but he has helped our member David Keene following his accident and accompanied him at many events. This was proposed by N. Stops and seconded by many of those present.	
9	**Alteration to the Articles** A. Cragg detailed a couple of changes that should be made to the Articles as follows. 1. To amend clause 5 of the articles to introduce the new class of membership: There shall be five classes of members, namely (1) Founder members, (2) Honorary member (3) Ordinary members (4) Associate Members and (5) Short Sub Members It was resolved at the AGM in September last year, that the subscription should rise to £50 in April 2024. All members paying by GoCardless will have simply noticed the increased amount leaving their bank accounts. Of those members still paying by standing order, there are 65 who have not increased it and therefore not paid their full subscription. At the last Committee meeting in July, it was agreed that we would continue to treat these members as members but in a sub-category, "Short Sub" which will not receive the newsletter, it's increased cost being one of the reasons to increase the subscription in the first place. 2. To amend clause 9 as shown below to reflect recent changes to the subscription : The annual and other subscriptions and entrance fee payable by members of the Association shall be such as the Committee may from time to time prescribe provided that, until the Committee otherwise resolves the annual subscription shall be £50.00 and the entrance fee shall be £25.00. Every application for membership, once approved by the Committee shall be accompanied by a remittance by direct debit to cover the entrance fee and the appropriate subscription. These were proposed to the meeting and accepted unanimously	
10	**Clothing** The Chairman reminded everyone that a range of FFA clothing was available at the back of the room.	PS

11	**AOB** The Chairman explained that A. Kedros wanted to cease representing the FFA at the GAAC meetings. He explained that they are an important council as far as strip owners are concerned and have helped many members with development problems near their airstrips. He asked for any volunteers to fill the position. No one was willing, so he said it would be broadcast on the emails. G. Robson enquired if the FFA was recruiting by advertising or were new member joining by word of mouth? The FFA do not advertise for new members. Bill Maizek asked if we should formalise the "short-sub" category by offering a reduced membership of £25 with no newsletter. The Treasurer said that he hoped that the category would only be a stop-gap measure and to have another permanent category would complicate an already complex area. N. Stops reported that one member's aircraft insurance had doubled this year and wondered if anyone else's had gone up, Most reported no significant rise in their premiums. It was noted that aircraft values have risen which if declared then that would increase the premium. J. Milne and R. Culley both thanked the committee for their work and said how much they enjoy the Association. R. Bell gave a formal thanks to the committee.	AC
12	**Close the Meeting** The meeting was closed at 12:18. Minutes approved at a subsequent AGM.	

Calendar of Events 2025

1 – 6 Apr	**Sun n' Fun**	**Lakeland Florida, USA**
9 – 12 Apr	**AERO**	**Lake Constance, Germany**
16 – 17 May	**Private Flyer Fest South**	**Wycombe**
11– 12 Jun	**Join Cereals**	**Roy Ward Farms, Lincs**
27 – 28 June	**Private Flyer Fest North**	**Leeds East**
18 – 20 Jul	**Royal Internationals Air Tattoo**	**RAF Fairford, Glouc**
21 – 27 Jul	**EAA, AirVenture**	**Oshkosh Wisconsin, USA**
29 – 31 Aug	**LAA Rally**	**Leicester**

FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION



NEW
Summer Jacket with fold away hood



FFA Clothing

Item	Logo	Sizes	Price
Jackets - last few		M, L, XL	£40.00
Jackets - New Stock		L, XL, 2XL, 3XL	£65
Summer Jackets (NEW)		S, M, L, XL	£65
Lined Fleece Jackets		S,M	£30.00
Body Warmer (discontinued)		M, L	£28.00
Body Warmer (new similar style)		XL, 2XL, 3XL	£50
Sweat Shirts (discontinued)		S, XL	£14.00
Sweat Shirt	Old style	S	Half price £7.00
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Pens			£2.50 (postage)

The above clothing is available from stock. If your size isn't listed, it can be ordered. **Please note:** Clothes on the list in the sizes available will be at the price stated, but any ordered specially will be at a higher cost.
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For all orders contact Roz Stephens **07773 052001** or **chix@farmline.com**
The price of FFA New Style jackets has risen considerably and once the current stock has run out the new price for one off orders (if not ordered in quantity) will be £85.00 plus postage and packing.

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£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.





Profile: Ray Guess, Stamford, Lincolnshire, By Rebecca Rayner



Ray Guess with his RV9 (left) and his 1947 Auster J1N (right).

Hello Ray, we were introduced through a mutual friend, the Late Campbell Walters and indeed anyone with a love of Auster's will also know Ray too!

Ray, tell us about your early days…
I left School at 15 in 1964 and during the warmer months I worked on our horticultural two acre smallholding which was a long bike ride from my home in Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire. I was given a Johnsons Seed Catalogue and £25 budget and told to 'get on with it'. During winter months I worked on our Market stall and shop in Whittlesey.

How the flying started…
From one extreme to the other I had experienced being flown in a Vickers Viscount airliner to visit a chum in Germany and in contrast I had been given a flight in a somewhat smaller silver Auster G-APKN at Skegness Aerodrome. A good friend of my father, Tom Burdett had also invited me for a ride in his beautiful Gun Metal Mk2 3.8 Jaguar with wire wheels. It was no contest and off we went to Skegness.

When did you get your PPL…
I subsequently learned to fly at the Skegness Aero Club in 1966 on an Auster J1n G-APKN, which had no electrics, intercom or radio and no preflight briefing! After 9 hours and 40 minutes Rex Larsen removed his control stick and pronounced that I could now fly solo though he had to remain in the aircraft as I was still under-age at 16 years old. Two weeks after my 17th birthday I obtained my PPL, and went on to do a night rating, get a radio license, get checked out on the DH82a and then fly various Cessnas.

The following year 1968 I had the required hours to go on an Assistant Flying Instructor course at Rogers Aviation Cranfield under Ron Campbell the CFI. I obtained my Assistant Flying Instructors ticket in June two weeks before my 19th birthday and worked summer evenings and Sundays with Barry Tempest at Peterborough Aero Club. I was now able to instruct advanced aerobatics in a Belgian Stampe SV4C G-AXHC and Tiger Moth DH82a G-AYDI. After this I obtained a twin rating on the Piper Apache / Aztec and twin Comanche, and later that year I also obtained my IMC Rating. There was more twin flying in Fenairs, Beechcraft Travelair and a B58 Barron.

I started my own business in November 1970 in High Street, Stamford, Lincolnshire by buying a company from another pilot friend and founder of Parkair Electronics Fred Parker called Parkers Worthmore Stores Ltd which had been run by Fred's 93-year-old mother who reluctantly took early retirement, the business a high-end Provisions Confectioners and Tea Specialist. The main asset was the remainder of a 46-year lease with a monthly rent of £50 yes £50 a month. The lease had three years left to run. I bought the company lock, stock and barrel for £3000 clearing It out and re-branding as CHEMCUTS Discount Drug Store like Superdrug today.

Tell us about your aerobatics fun!
At this time, I was very much into competition aerobatics coming second competing in the Esso Aerobatic Competition at Rochester in 1972 flying Stampe G-AXHC encouraged by Barry Tempest who was an accomplished display pilot for the Rothmans Aerobatic Team. Barry also encouraged me to join the Barnstormers Flying Circus Display team.

A growing business and married life swapped aerobatics to straight and level!
Once married the Aeros were confined to Sunday mornings and no competitions or Airshows. Family life and the growing business occupied most of my time and flying had to take a back seat. I did however manage to purchase my first aircraft a Belgian Stampe SV4C - G-AXHC in 1974.

My father still enjoyed flying so we formed an aviation entity Conguess Aviation Limited based initially at Connington Airfield and subsequently at our own 350meter Airstrip on John and Ann Teasdale's Dairy Farm on the Tallington Road, Uffington outside Stamford, Lincolnshire.

We bought a Cessna 172 -G-ASMJ in 1975 from Maurice Crouch and later swapped that for a brand-new Cessna 185F - G-BIFE in 1981, I also took a share in Tiger Moth DH82a G-AYDI with the Woods brothers as they had both been posted overseas followed by an Auster J1N G-AGXU.

From flying planes to helicopters…
I was then introduced to the Robinson R22 operated by Sloane Aviation at Cranfield, Bedfordshire and subsequently obtained my rotary wing License in 1986 and bought a half share in a Robinson R22 - G-BOXN with Neil Brown. We then bought a second helicopter a Hughes 500c and have had fun with numerous other helicopters.

In 2012 I lost my medical after a stent procedure but gained a LAPL medical 1 year later, replied to an advert for an Alpi 300 based at Shacklewell Farm from Campbell Walters who I had taught to fly in 1972!

The love of Austers…
Campbell had also restored Auster J1N G-AJIW he offered me a half share and then later I bought it outright. I now fly Auster G-AJIW, and RV9A G-CCZY which I find extremely enjoyable. I have 2,898 hours fixed wing and 3,068 rotary wing.

How did you get to know about the Flying Farmers Association?
I joined the Flying Farmers in 1976 and thoroughly enjoy the events and meeting up with like minded people and old friends.

I was proposed by Ted (Edward) Grant a farmer at Old Leak near Boston in the mid 1970's only attending a few events but got more involved flying with my Auster J1N G-AJIW in 2011 when Tony Fisher a pilot farmer pall of a lifetime invited me to attend an event held at Martin Goslings strip. I also joined the 2018 tour to Belgium/France flying my Robin 400 G-BGWC which was most enjoyable.

Do you have any other interests other than flying?...
When in UK apart from flying I have a small 36ft yacht which I sail from Walton -on-the-Naze for the last twenty four years. Also my wife and I love to travel throughout South Africa, Namibia and Botswana, we prefer areas of sparce population where tourists don't go as there is, in their eyes, nothing to see!