FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION

April 2025 newsletter no. 148



CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS

As I write this in mid March, the whole world could have changed before this newsletter is circulated. Why – because of one man in the USA who has a massive ego, conducts meetings in front of the world press like a soap opera, wants the Nobel Peace Prize and is in a race to secure rare earth minerals before the Chinese snap them all up – hence his desire to buy Greenland and do a deal with the Ukrainians.

And what about AI? Can we ever believe anything we read, see or listen to, as in music, ever again. Is it man made or computer generated?

But AI means something very different to this chicken grower. We don't have the dreaded disease (fingers crossed) but we are now in a surveillance zone which means that every lorry carrying chickens on or off the farm has to have a license. Also the Salmonella swabs we post to the laboratory twice a crop have to have a license. Even our pressure washer gang have to have separate hoses for different zones.

Coincidentally I am also battling with Red Tractor, like other farmers who have become frustrated with them at the moment. For the last eight years we have had one membership number for the broilers, which means one inspection per year and one fee. It is more or less compulsory, otherwise we couldn't sell the chickens into the retail trade. Now Red Tractor want me to split the farm for various reasons and pay two subscriptions, two royalties and have two inspections. Obviously a money grabbing exercise as the birds won't be one jot different.

They say it is for traceability, as our units are in three separate locations on the farm, albeit run totally as one site. How strange that with all the APHA licensing for AI purposes as above, they do not even mention Red Tractor accreditation once in their 11 page license! They go by holding numbers and map references. Also our processors were checked recently for traceability and our birds were going trough at the time – there was no problem.

Likewise, when we deliver wheat to the feed mill, our wheat is assured whilst tipping next to an imported load from goodness knows where! So what is the point of Red Tractor?

Time I went up in the aeroplane to cool down a bit! I'm sure all those that attend our events are looking forward to a new season of visits. As usual we will be going places that you probably wouldn't go on your own, all arranged on a voluntary basis by members and conducted by another volunteer – Neville, our long standing, tireless Events Secretary.

What is concerning, as we get less young, is the new medical requirements regarding the 'stress test' on a treadmill under certain circumstances. I am hearing that relatively fit members are struggling with this, not only their increasing blood pressure during the test, but also the costs and consequential expense involved if you have to have CT scan as well - privately. But then what happens if you want to revert to a self declaration after failing the test? Can you tick the box to say you are fit to fly?

Changing the subject, there is a lot of development work going on, as in new housing, industry etc., mainly because our population is continually increasing with immigrants and our infrastructure is creaking. This means our airstrips could be in danger of being compromised. One member recently wrote to us to say that he had done the right thing and non officially safeguarded his strip with the local council. This means that in the case of development near his strip he should become a consultee if a planning application is submitted. That is the CAA's advice, but because local councils don't understand small airfields, this just isn't happening. This member only became aware of a development on his doorstep by chance, so clearly the system needs reviewing.

Now we have summer in front of us and hopefully some more settled weather for flying. But I understand that in the UK we have 3 months of winter and 9 months of bad weather. Can't all be bad though!

Paul Stephens

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2 Chairman's Ramblings
3 FFA News
8 FFA Safety
10 Programme 2025
14 Visits
19 Calendar
20 Adventure
24 STOL **NEW**
28 Member profile

Publisher & Editor: Giles Abrey
newsletters@ffa.org.uk
Art Editor & Production: Kirsten Lee,
kirsten@leeillustrations.co.uk
Cover photograph Royal Chelsea Hospital Visit by Roz Stephens

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Martin Gosling	President	01787 269369
Paul Stephens	Hon Chairman/ Hon Secretary	07711 201431
Andrew Cragg	Vice Chairman/Treasurer/ Hon Membership Secretary	01303 874251
Neville Stops	Events Secretary	01264 889678
Gordon Bellerby	Assistant Events Secretary	07802 948000
Alf Oliver	Committee Member	07860 165659
Giles Abrey	Newsletter Editor	07967 665470
Rebecca Rayner	Committee Member	01487 773282

FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION LIMITED
www.ffa.org.uk
A company limited by guarantee; registered in England No. 01166733
Registered Office: Brooker Farm, Newchurch, Romney, Kent, TN29 0DT

Joined Since December 2024
8839 J. Lukies from Bishops Stortford, Essex
Departing Members
772 T. Williamson Lapsed

FFA Committee Meeting by Zoom, Friday 27th December 2024

The FFA Committee held a meeting by Zoom as our Membership Secretary / Treasurer / GAP representative – Andrew Cragg, had some burning issues.

1. He had received a request from the CAA to hold our airstrip location database on their ACOMMS secure database for when drones are flying below visual line of site near to our strips for the purpose of inspecting electricity lines for example. It was deemed necessary to inform strip owners for safety reasons. The FFA do not share member's data without permission, so Andrew will be circulating an email with an opt out clause if you do not want your information shared.
2. As Anthony Kedros has resigned as our representative at GAAC, Andrew has volunteered to represent us for the time being. This will add yet another job title to the list above!
3. It was noted that members (including committee members) were using the France 2025 Whatsapp group for general chat. This was not the purpose of these specific event groups, so Alf Oliver, who sets up these groups, has sent out a reminder to keep messages specific to that event. It is being discussed whether a general chat group should be set up for all members.
4. We have had two new applicants from sons of existing / previous members. Although we have eligibility requirements and one was not a farmer as such, they were allowed as they have family connections.

Paul Stephens

Committee Meeting 19th March 2025

The FFA committee met after a very enlightening morning at The Royal Chelsea Hospital . We had a good lunch at The Coopers Arms pub nearby, followed by a committee meeting at the same venue.

All were in attendance apart from Giles Abrey, who sent his apologies due to work commitments. These are a few points that would be of interest to members.

1. David Soul suffered a stroke in December 2022 and is still in hospital with limited speech. His subscription had been cancelled, but we decided to make him an Honorary member, as Sophie, his partner wanted to stay in touch.
2. The membership now stands at 416 with a few still joining and an equal amount departing.
3. Neville went through his 2025 calendar of events which looks interesting, but he says he doesn't have much on the agenda for 2026. There were comments that it seems some of these meetings are already booked up before the spring newsletter comes out. The newsletter has been delayed this year due to the FFA winter meeting being held later than usual and hence the spring committee meeting was later. Members were however informed by email of forthcoming events.
4. The FFA Study Tour to the South of France is being organised very capably by Helen Cobb who is Charles Course's partner. Unfortunately one couple have had to drop out. This comes as a reminder that if after paying deposits for an event, you have to drop out, I'm afraid you lose your deposit unless replacements can be found. This is so that the organisers don't lose out by this, as they will already have committed that money to book hotels, buses etc. It is advisable to check your travel insurance to see if this is covered. It might cover you for illness in the family or work related problems, but whether a privately organised event is covered, you will have to check. Andrew Cragg will check with the NFU Mutual.
5. A similar situation arises with Pop-In events where the organiser arranges catering for a set number, then for various reasons they get a lot of cancellations. It was thought that where arrangements are made to that degree, then it should become a more formal event with deposits if necessary through Eventbrite. It was suggested that a true Pop-In meeting should be more of an open day at a member's strip, or an airfield, where the organiser isn't obligated to put on any catering and members either bring their own pack up or take their chances with the existing facilities.
6. The Treasurer gave his report and budgets through to 2026 which showed that we have moved away from the small loss or break even situation. No doubt that small profit will soon be eroded as costs rise.
7. Dress code at events was on the agenda, as an organiser felt a little embarrassed at a meeting he had organised with a presentation by a guest. He felt that some members were not representing the FFA properly in front of the guest speaker. It was agreed that organisers will put a dress code on the information sent to participants and the minimum should be smart casual.
8. The AGM will be arranged for the end of September again. A venue is yet to be decided.

Paul Stephens

In Memory of Andrew Gordon

Members will be sorry to learn that Andrew Gordon died suddenly, on 20th January.

Andrew hosted one the visits on our 50th tour at Blair Atholl and an earlier visit in 1984. Andrew was a past member of FFA and always welcomed flying visits from FFA members.

Andrew's father William won the DFC as an air observation pilot at the battle of Anzio in WW11, and Andrew followed his father into a military flying career. He flew military helicopters and commanded the Territorial Helicopter Unit at Leuchars.

As well as managing his own extensive estate, for a time he acted as Factor for the Duke of Atholl a more extensive estate. He also served as Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Perth and Kinross.

Andrew will be much missed particularly by the Scottish light aircraft community.

Mike Ashmole

General Aviation Awareness Council

The new team at GAAC continues the work defending aerodromes under threat from development. I don't propose to publish this regularly but I thought the membership would be interested to see the latest airfield update which is shown below and can also be found on the FFA news page at https://ffa.org.uk/ffa-latest-news/. It gives details of 19 civil airfields under threat and the likely fate of 14 military sites.

I would encourage any members interested in safeguarding airfields to visit the GAAC website at https://gaac.org.uk/. Here there is a news section containing the GAAC's response to the National Grid's Pylon Routes Consultations and in "Publications and Guidance" there is advice about Development consent orders and safeguarding.

CAA has set up a Focus Group regarding Air Rallies, Fly Ins, Air Races, Contests and Competitions. They are contemplating Guidance (not regulation, they say) for these activities and GAAC chair Matt Wilkins will join a group discussing their plans. For many aerodromes activities such as these are a welcome source of income. Whilst guidance per se is not unwelcome, it could well be the type of guidance that if you don't follow it and there is an incident then you're in trouble.

Andrew Cragg

AERODROMES UPDATE FOR GAAC (Updated 14 March 2025)

Aerodrome	Current Status
Bicester	A planning application has been granted to refurbish and convert the recently vacated Grade II listed hangar as an indoor electric go-kart track. Work has started to construct the UK's first vertiport testbed on the aerodrome.
Blackbushe	A public consultation ended on 16 February 2024 for the application by Blackbushe Airport to deregister the Common Land on which the aerodrome sits. Deregistration would enable the Airport to apply for planning permission to erect permanent aviation related facilities.
Cambridge	Marshall Aerospace and Defence Group will be vacating the aerodrome by 2027 and an outline planning application for Marshall's new facility at Cranfield was conditionally granted by Central Bedfordshire Council on 19 April 2023. The conditions were signed off in a Section 106 agreement dated 20 October 2023. The Cambridge site is cited for a major housing development in the First Proposals for the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan issued for public consultation that ended on 13 December 2021.
Chalgrove	On 9 December 2024, the South Oxfordshire and Vale of the White Horse District Councils draft Joint Local Plan for the years up to 2041 was submitted for public examination. The Joint Plan will supersede both of the Council's current Local Plans and the draft excludes the aerodrome site from development. Homes England (HE), the site landowner, have objected to this exclusion and consulted with the local community from 18 April to 17 May 2024 on their revised scheme for a housing development on the site.
Chatteris	Anglian Water have conducted a second public consultation which ended on 9 August 2024 on a proposal for the aerodrome site and its surroundings to become a new water reservoir.
Coventry	Outline planning applications for an electric vehicle battery Gigafactory on the aerodrome site were fully approved by both Warwick District and Coventry City Councils on 30 March 2022. The applications were referred to the Secretary of State (SoS) at the Ministry of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities who in a letter dated 26 January 2022, declined to decide them.
Deenethorpe	Central Government has accepted the site for development as a 1,500 home Garden Village. East Northamptonshire Council (now part of the new North Northamptonshire Council) approved the site masterplan on 15 October 2018. A planning application for the development is awaited.
Doncaster Sheffield	On 21 March 2024 Doncaster City Council signed a 125-year lease of the site from the Peel Group, the land owner, and have selected Munich Airport International as the potential aerodrome operator with the intent to restart passenger flights in the Spring of 2026. However, a final decision on using £105m of devolution funding to reopen the aerodrome is to be delayed until the Summer as an independent assessment is ordered into the "significant risks" of the plan.
Dunsfold	Planning application for mixed use development with 1,800 homes on site approved by Waverley Borough Council on 14 December 2016 but called in for a Public Inquiry the result of which was Central Government approval for the application on 29 March 2018. Protest groups appealed these decisions in the High Court but the Court rejected these challenges on 5 November 2018. The development has now been granted Government Garden Village status. A Supplementary Planning Document for the development was adopted by the Council on 22 February 2022.
Elvington	On 27 February 2025 York City Council adopted a new draft Local Plan for the years up to 2032/33 which includes a development of up to 3,330 homes occupying the middle section of the runway. Fairoaks
Gloucestershire	Cheltenham Borough Council and Gloucester City Council, the site owners, have appointed Savills as their agent for the sale of the aerodrome freehold including the Meteor Business Park at a guide price of £25 million. The sale is on condition that the site remains an aerodrome.

Cont...

Long Marston	Aerodrome is designated in Stratford-on-Avon District Council Local Plan adopted Core Strategy for housing and has Government Garden Village approval for which a planning application has been submitted. Developer is Cala Homes in conjunction with site owner.
Newquay	Cornwall Council, the aerodrome land owner / operator, have provisionally selected Adynaton Asset Management LLP as the private sector investment and development joint partner to manage the whole aerodrome estate. On completion of further discussions, the Council now expect to decide on the future site management structure and associated agreement terms early in 2025.
Peterborough / Sibson	Huntingdonshire District Council submitted an unsuccessful bid for a 2,500 home Garden Village on the site but subsequently withdrew their support for the proposal. The site is now included in the Council's Land Availability Assessment for which a public consultation ended on 27 November 2024.
Plymouth	FlyPlymouth, a local social enterprise aerodrome support group, plans to reopen the aerodrome and start regional airline services. Sutton Harbour Group (SHG), the site lease holder, have proposed a mixed-use development although the Plymouth City / South-West Devon Joint Local Plan adopted in March 2019 and reviewed in 2024 retains the site for aviation use until March 2029. The Council have issued a Section 146 Notice under the Law and Property Act 1925 to SHG for forfeiture of the lease which Notice expired in February 2025. .
Redhill	The draft Tandridge District Council 2033 Local Plan which ruled out the site for a Garden Village and allocated it protected status as an Important Employment Site, was withdrawn from public examination by the Council on 18 April 2024 because the Planning Inspector deemed the draft Plan to be unsound. Part of the site is within the boundary of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council whose adopted Local Plan makes no mention of the aerodrome.
Retford / Gamston	Planning permission granted by Bassetlaw District Council on 25 October 2021 to convert hangars 6 to 11 into a vehicle test facility and dual use of the runway for autonomous vehicles and aircraft.
Thurrock	Thurrock Council Planning Committee refused on 9 July 2024 a planning application for development of 750 houses, a medical centre and employment units on the aerodrome site. The applicant has appealed this decision and a Public Inquiry is due to be held in July 2025.

MoD Aerodrome Sites	**Current Status**
	The following MoD aerodrome sites are planned for disposal in the years indicated:
Abingdon Aerodrome 2030	Site earmarked for Garden Village style development with 1,200 homes in the adopted Vale of White Horse District Council 2031 Local Plan Part 2 and in the successor South Oxfordshire and Vale of the White Horse District Councils draft Joint 2041 Local Plan now submitted for public examination. The Plans restrict the development area to the south of the old runway 08/26. The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) first public consultation on the development ended on 6 January 2025.
Brawdy 2028	Cawdor Barracks. The DIO have submitted the site for mixed use development for the review of 2033 Local Development Plan 2 by Pembrokeshire Council but this is not included in the draft Plan issued for public consultation ending on 18 March 2020 and a second consultation that ended on 16 December 2024.
Coleme 2025	Aerodrome was originally expected to be sold in 2018. Local business interest in maintaining the aerodrome for aviation purposes.
Dishforth 2031	Aerodrome site being disposed of but not included for development in the 2035 Harrogate Borough Council Local Plan adopted by the Council on 4 March 2020 but site is expected to be considered during first five-year review of the adopted Plan.
Halton aerodrome 2027	The DIO future vision document for RAF Halton & the Aylesbury Vale District Council (now part of the new Buckinghamshire Council) 2033 Local Plan adopted by the Council on 15 September 2021, exclude development of the aerodrome site.
Henlow 2026	Future of the site being progressed by a partnership between the DIO and HE. The Central Bedfordshire Council 2035 Local Plan adopted by the Council on 22 July 2021 expects the site to be redeveloped for alternative, non-military uses with due regard for the on-site heritage assets including the airfield.
North Luffenham 2026	Rutland County Council consulted on a Preferred Options document for the new 2041 Local Plan which lists the site as a future opportunity area which would be the subject of a separate development plan. The consultation ended on 8 January 2024.
Scampton 2023	West Lindsey District Council reached an agreement with the MoD to acquire the site and pass ownership on to Scampton Holdings Limited whose masterplan retains the existing site aviation facilities and heritage assets in line with the Central Lincolnshire Joint 2040 Local Plan adopted on 13 April 2023. The new Government having abandoned plans to use the site as a holding centre for asylum seekers declared it surplus to requirements and invited expressions of interest to acquire the site which the Council has now done.

Cont...

MoD Aerodrome Sites	Current Status
Spitalgate 2028	Prince William of Gloucester Barracks. Future of the site being progressed by a partnership between the DIO and HE. Site earmarked for a Garden Village style settlement in South Kesteven District Council 2036 Local Plan adopted by the Council on 30 January 2020.
Swanton Morley 2031	Robertson Barracks. There is no reference to the closure of the Barracks in the definitive Breckland Council 2036 Local Plan adopted by the Council on 28 November 2019. As part of the current 5-year review of the Local Plan the site has been listed for a possible 2,000-home development in a preferred options public consultation which ended on 15 July 2024.
Tern Hill 2029	Clive Barracks. Shropshire Council submitted its draft 2038 Local Plan for public examination on 3 September 2021 which includes a 750 home mixed-use development of the Barracks site leaving the airfield intact. The Planning Inspector has queried the soundness of the Plan and it is expected to be withdrawn.
Topcliffe 2031	Alanbrooke Barracks. Due to close under the Future Soldier army restructuring programme. Submitted for potential mixed-use development in the call for sites for the emerging new North Yorkshire Council Local Plan.
Wethersfield 2025	Future of the site being progressed by a partnership between the DIO and HE with new prisons and housing being considered. A Judicial Review claim into the Government's use of the site as a holding centre for asylum seekers has been withdrawn by Braintree District Council. A separate but related Judicial Review hearing took place in July 2024 for which a judgement is pending
Wyton Aerodrome 2024	DIO in partnership with property developer Crest Nicholson has proposed a 4,500-home development on the site which is not included in the adopted 2036 Huntingdonshire District Council Local Plan.

GAP – General Aviation Partnership Report

There has been no meeting since the last newsletter.

When I first joined what we know today as GAP, the General Aviation Partnership, it was called the General Aviation Consultative Committee and it did what it said on the tin; CAA consulted with GA stakeholders on developing issues.

Members took the time and trouble to travel 4 times a year to Aviation House in Gatwick where we had the opportunity to engage closely with CAA staff during the meeting and over lunch. COVID can be blamed for many things but it stopped the in person meetings which, despite many promises, were never re-instated. In the meantime, the emphasis of these online meetings moved from discussion to briefing.

Now we learn it is to be changed again. A long rationale about the reasons in impenetrable politic speak, (e.g. Funding previously provided to accelerate and enhance specific workstreams has reduced, impacting pace and requiring prioritisation against our statutory responsibilities), means, and I quote, "We will not be Providing opportunity for deep policy discussion" rather "opening the group to a wider audience, which lends itself to a more 'broadcast' style of meeting"

Welcome to the webinar!

Andrew Cragg

GASCo

The General Aviation Safety Council

The 304th meeting of GASCo was held on Wednesday 26th March at 0930 by Zoom.

The Chairman reminded the meeting of the confidential warning in place. Members were encouraged to share the information responsibly with their own organisations. I ask FFA members to respect this please.

The CE reported that GASCo were involved in 24 online Airspace Awareness Courses, 1.4 per week since the last meeting.

Planning was underway for a Weather Decision Making Seminar in September at the Met Office. The Met Office was about to upgrade its Supercomputer next month, which would help to improve forecasting. The aviation briefing service would be updated and would give users additional features.

There have been no GA fatal accidents to date in 2025. There were 8 GA fatal accidents in 2024 and 11 in 2023.

It was reported there was increased concern around airspace infringements. Particularly noted White Waltham, Fairoaks and Hunston and stressing the need for the use of regulated sources of preflight information.

The CE said he would like to follow up the action for a meeting with the CAA and other interested parties to encourage pilots and ATSU operators and controllers to use and acknowledge aircraft type/categories used in the initial call (e.g. Cessna G-ASXT) and when abbreviating callsigns to adopt the abbreviated callsign set out in Table 10 of CAP413. This was a good safety idea and was in use in the USA as a means of increasing situational awareness and an additional mitigation to reduce the mid-air collision risk . A discussion with NATS and the CAA was needed to see how this could be promulgated.

The importance of EC (Electronic Conspicuity) devices was discussed, including limitations of traffic visibility and the need for proper integration into training.

There was discussion about the safety implications of approach procedures at Popham, where trees on the approach path, for Runway 03, were seen by some as a deliberate safeguard and by others as an operational hazard.

There was also discussion about a hornet infestation in an aircraft and other near-miss incidents reported to CHIRP.

Rogue Pilots- GASCo to look at the methods available for reporting rogue pilots and engage with the Regulator to see if they were aware of the problem.

The next meeting and AGM is on 01.07.25 at AAIB (Hybrid) including a visit to AAIB Investigation Hanger.

Alf Oliver

Biennial 1 hr flight with instructor rules amended March 2025

Changes to the UK FCL.740.A Revalidation of class and type ratings — aeroplanes – "Refresher training with an instructor"

The following amendment takes immediate effect, thereby requiring the instructor to be satisfied regarding the standard of the required one-hour flight: Refresher training of at least one hour flight time to the satisfaction of a flight instructor (FI) or a class rating instructor (CRI) holding a valid UK instructor certificate who shall select those flight exercises that allow the applicant to refresh their competence in safely operating the aircraft and applying normal, abnormal, and emergency procedures.

IMPORTANT Membership Matters

1 Subscription overpayments

As we approach the subscription renewal date of 26th April 2025, I must remind members that;

- 36 of you who have moved to GoCardless, some now 4 years ago, have still not cancelled your standing orders.
- 2 of you are still paying the £5 subscription that was changed 25 years ago
- The agreed policy for the extra subscriptions is that they are held for a year and if the member does not ask for it back then it goes irrevocably into FFA funds.

2 Subscription underpayments and NO NEWSLETTER

- 66 members have not increased their 2024 subscription from £25 to £50 and have not received a newsletter since as it's increased cost was one of the reasons to increase the subscription in the first place.
- However, we are taking the opportunity to reach out to you individually in this newsletter particularly as this edition falls close to the subscription anniversary date of 26th April and if our records indicate that you are one of these members then you should find a reminder letter inserted inside.

3. Flying Farmers Emails

We now use emails to send you important regulatory information, requests from members and most importantly, details of events and booking links. 65% of our membership routinely open emails and while we contact those whose emails are undelivered we can do nothing about those that go to spam or an unused inbox.

If you are not getting regular emails from info@ffa.org.uk and you want them, then please contact us on the website, info@ffa.org.uk or 01303 874251.

If you don't want them, unsubscribe at the bottom of any email or contact us as above.

GASCo Safety Evenings

Cheshire Flyers
20:00 - Monday 21st April 2025
The Market Tavern
8 Market Square
Sandbach
CheshireCW11 1BB.
Email: steve.r@lsa-technology.co.uk
Tel: 07973 226219
Contact: Steve Rosser

London Biggin Hill Airport
19:00 - Thursday 15th May 2025
The Hub
Building 707
London Biggin Hill Airport
Churchill Way
Biggin Hill
Westerham
Kent TN16 3BN
Tel: 07784 329526
Email: ops@flyefg.co.uk
Contact:Anna Sivyer

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

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

On the 30th July last year I took off from my airstrip at Fenn Lane Farm. I had been asked by a dear friend to fly him, his son and grandson firstly over their crops. Later in the flight we circled East Midlands CTR around Belvoir Castle to Leicester Airfield as they were open until 8pm that evening.

My Report; I took off from Fenn Lane Farm strip at 1705z on 30th July 2024 for a flight to Leicester airport. A VFR flight at about 2000ft altitude. After flying north and then east around East Midlands ctr towards Belvoir Castle, I then headed for Leicester airfield calling them on 122.130. It had been a beautiful flight in ideal conditions.

The flight passed without incident or notification of any problem until I just touched the throttle to reduce speed before turning for a standard overhead join for Leicester airfield. There was a disproportionate drop in engine revs - direct to tickover.

I turned towards the airfield setting my speed to 70kts and checked the fuel, carb heat was on, fuel was set to both tanks, fuel level even in both tanks and the fuel was not leaned. The throttle did not respond and movement of the lever was stiff and notchy.

I was forced to land. I made a pan pan call to Leicester radio reporting engine failure.

On landing in a barley field, we commenced the roll but after approximately 100m I was unable to hold the nose wheel off the ground. Sucked in by the crop the nose wheel collapsed on the rough ground. This resulted in the damage to the aircraft. Coming to a halt we all exited the aircraft in the normal way via the doors, uninjured.

We all exited the plane in a remote field, but we were not alone. Two members of the Leicester Airport Fire Crew were running down towards, us each carrying a large fire extinguisher. They checked us over and double checked the plane. Then incredibly we were joined by Leicestershire fire service, Police, and Ambulance. There was no nearby road, they had found their way to the nearest house, parking at the top of its long drive. Their speed of response was incredible, amazing and any other superlative — Our great thanks to them all.

It's all over, we are all alive, no one is injured, we walk to find a footpath back to the house and vehicles. We all chatted for a good half hour or so. I arranged for my son to pick us up. The emergency services were very loath to leave us, I believe in case of shock. Eventually, after they were completely satisfied we were all ok and I had I informed them that our lift home was just over an hour away, they asked if it was ok for them to depart.

By now we were halfway down someone's drive in the middle of nowhere without even a seat. I cheekily asked if they would drop us at a pub! "Of course sir", they laughed however the police lady stated that we would have to travel in the cage at the rear of her van. The fire service informed that they are not allowed to offer lifts. The Italian Greyhound public house was a very busy place that night, a beautiful summer evening, the large array of outside tables was packed with merry drinkers. Their eyes lit up as an ambulance pulled up and deposited four people into their midst. Sometimes a beer can taste so good! My son Will later arrived and home we went.

Seriously what lessons are to be learned

The throttle was confirmed to be the problem, thinking back odd times it was slow or had a different feel but not enough to investigate or check. I had flown over 400 hrs in this machine, was I complacent or too familiar? Who knows, but should I be more aware in future?

Radio- I had seconds, the Emergency Services need every minute. I was in contact with Leicester 122.130 previously to tell them I was inbound. This is so important; I had immediate contact from the Pan Pan call. Leicester knew who I was and where I was and instantly responded, I was cleared to land in any area or direction on the airfield. I was able to continue setting the aircraft for a landing and speaking to them without wasting one second. The controller was also such a consoling, reassuring voice, there to help. He could not help of course but he was a great help! If I had not been in radio contact, I feel the situation for me, in the cockpit, would have had a very different dynamic. This radio call allowed the Emergency Services to be alerted saving them such vital minutes.

Following on from this, I have travelled England and even over to Bad Regas in Switzerland(another story in itself) in search of a replacement Cessna 182. Eventually I found one at Glebe Farm, a remote airfield on top of a hill, a few miles west of Stonehenge.

As they say, " I am here to tell the tale". A final thanks to my three passengers who stayed so calm, sorry they had to walk so far, especially as one is 87!

Hope to see many of you soon on FFA adventures.

Alf Oliver



POPHAM'S MARSHALLERS QUIZ.

What is our Ground Marshal telling you to do?



1. Right arm raised to head level, bat pointing upwards with a continual circular motion.



2a. Left arm horizontal, right arm repeatedly moving upwards and downwards.
2b. What does the speed of the right arm movement indicate?



3. Right arm horizontally at 90 degree angle to right side of the body. Move other arm in the same direction in a sweeping motion.



4. Either arm with bat level with shoulder. Bat across throat and moved sideways with the arm remaining bent. Other arm stationary at side.



5a. Right arm horizontal, left arm repeatedly moving upwards & downwards.
5b. What does the speed of the arm movement indicate?



6. Arms and bats above head, moving inwards in a "jabbing" motion.



7. Hold right arm straight out at 90 degrees from shoulder and pointing bat downwards to the ground. Left arm stationary at side.



8. Both arms at 90 degree angle to sides not moving.



9a. Bats crossed above head having moved slowly from 90 degree angle to the body.

9b. What does a fast movement to crossed bats above head mean?



10a. Arms a little aside, palms facing backward repeatedly move upwards & downwards from shoulder height.
10b. What does a decrease in arms movement speed indicate?



11a. Move arms from extended 90 degree position inwards & cross bats.
11b. What must the pilot do to acknowledge?



12. Stand to left side of taxying aircraft. Left arm horizontal indicating direction of travel. Right arm in a sweeping. motion.

Thanks to Mike Searle for being persuaded to be our Popham Marshal model and to Julia Maltby our photographer.

Answers: **1.** Start Engine, **2a.** Turn Right, **2b.** Rate of Turn, **3.** Move Horizontally Left, **4.** Stop Engine, **5a.** Turn Left, **5b.** Rate of Turn, **6.** Chocks Inserted, **7.** Negative / Way Not Clear, **8.** Hover, **9a.** Stop, **9b.** Immediate/Emergency Stop, **10a.** Move Straight Ahead, **10b.** Slow down, **11a.** Chocks Inserted, **11b.** Thumb(s) Up, **12.** Proceed

Programme 2025

During the last winter, we have been lucky that most of our Pop-Ins have gone ahead. David Keene puts a great deal of thought and effort into organising them, Thanks David.

Looking at this year's events and tours, by the time the newsletter comes out the London visit will have taken place, (see write up in this newsletter)

The next event is a First Aid Course, hosted by Martin Gosling, on the 30th April, would you know what to do?

The next event is the French tour, which was fully booked within 2 weeks of going live! Following that we have Tony's 3 Day Extravaganza, next the visit to Miserden Estate (which was postponed from 2024). At the time of going to print the itinerary has yet to be confirmed, this event is planned for the 26th June and we shall be landing at Rendcombe. Our last visit is to RAF Valley (which was postponed from 2024).

If any member has any suggestions, or is willing to organise a venue for the 2025 AGM, please contact me, neville.stops@gmail.com.

Happy & Safe flying in 2025
Neville Stops



Events for 2025

- 30th April – **First Aid Course** – Stones Farm, Essex – FULLY BOOKED
- 14th May – **Fischer Farms Upright Farming & Classic Team Lotus** – Norwich – FULLY BOOKED
- 26th May – 3rd June – **The French Study Tour** – FULLY BOOKED
- 17th–19th June – **Tony's 3 Day Extravaganza** – Old Buckenham
- 26th June – **Miserden Estate** – Stroud
- 3rd July – **RAF Valley** – Holyhead – FULLY BOOKED

Please note events sell out quickly, so try and book tickets via Eventbrite as soon as you recieve email notifictaion that the event is open

Pop-Ins 2025. For all Pop-ins (unless otherwise announced) the intention is to meet at 12.00pm for lunch.

- Keep an eye on the website for upcoming Pop-Ins.

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.

Following on from comments received after the latest Pop-In visit at Thruxton, the committee wish to remind members when attending Flying Farmers Association meetings / events the dress code should be at least smart casual.

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 August newsletter is 30th June 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

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.

First Aid, 30th April (Fully Booked)

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 who is the Head of the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance, based at Earls Colne, he said "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

Fischer Farms Upright Farming & Team Lotus 14th May (Fully Booked)

Itinerary:

- Fly in to Seething EGSJ by 9.45 am
- Coach leaves 10 am to go to the Food Enterprise Park to view Fischer Farms - Vertical farming. Unfortunately, due to biosecurity we can't go inside but still a good trip I'm assured with lots happening at the Food Enterprise Park.
- Coach leaves 12.30 to go to Bird In Hand, Wreningham for lunch .
- Coach leaves at 2pm to go to Classic Team Lotus.

Fischer Farms 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.

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.
- Coach leaves at 5 to go back to Seeting.

There is an also Hethel Aerodrome Bomb Group Memorial exhibition if we get time nearby .

Total cost £99/ head due to £44 / head for Classic Team Lotus.

Limited to 23 spaces



Credit: Classic Team Lotus

Tony's 3 Day Extravaganza 17th–19th June



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.

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

Spring has sprung; we are getting closer to the Flying Farmers 2025 South of France trip.

Destinations and itinerary

26th May

- Clear customs at Le Touquet. Possibly have time for a lunch stop.
- Fly to aerodrome de Beaune-challenges LFGF, transport to Hotel de la Poste where we will all meet in the bar for drinks, dinner will be served at 1900 in the restaurant for all.

27th May

- An early start to the morning, after breakfast a short walk through the cobbled streets to the Hospices civils de Beaune for a two hour tour with headsets.
- Don't drag your heels or else you will miss the electric train ride around the city of Beaune, before a walk back to the hotel to board the coach to the Chateau de Savigny. Before browsing the vineyards and collection of old aircraft, cars and fire engines we will stop for lunch at Pinardiers, a small restaurant which overlooks the square and is within walking distance to the Chateau.
- At your own leisure walk through the town to Harvest, a small brewing and blending brewery for artisan beer tasting and talk.
- The coach will collect us and transport us back to the hotel.
- Dinner is not arranged for this evening, so you may want to make reservations ahead of time.

28th May

- Another early start with a brisk walk into town to visit the Fallot mustard factory.
- The coach back to Beaune airport leaves before lunch so we will all have a small packed lunch to take with us.
- Flight to Valreas Visan LFNV Grignan approx. 2 hours 160 miles
- Transport to Hotel Ferm Chapouton, we will be greeted with a local lavender drink under the vines of the hotel. We have a couple of rooms booked at the sister hotel which is a five min walk.
- Dinner has been arranged in the evening at this hotel.

29th May

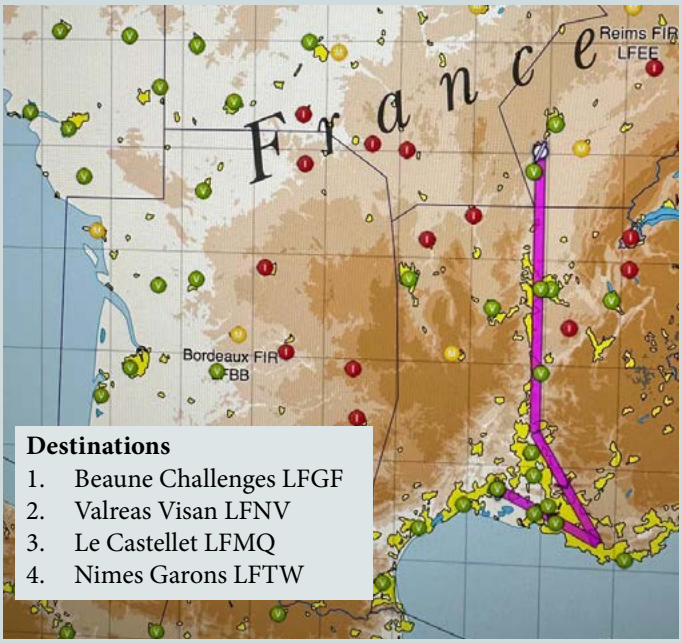
- After breakfast we will travel to L'essential de Lavande for a tour of the lavender farm and distillery followed by a picnic lunch amongst the lavender fields.
- The afternoon is free time for you to explore the city of Grignan, or just relax around the pool at the hotel.

30th May

- After breakfast wheels to visan airport flying to Castellet LFMQ approx. 40 mins – 75 miles
- Mini buses on arrival will take us to hotel Domaine de as foit peres, check into your rooms and meet on the outside terrace for a vineyard tour, wine tasting with charcuterie boards. The views from the terraces are quite spectacular.
- Dinner will be provided in the hotel restaurant.

31st May

- Another early start, breakfast in the hotel, mini buses down to the port of Bandol where we will take a boat trip taking in views of the Calanques to the island of Porquerolles. This trip is approximately ninety minutes. We will have enough time to have a quick coffee before joining the tour guide on electric bikes around the island. We remain on the island for the entire day so take a towel and swimmers if you plan to have a quick dip and most definitely take trainers for the bike ride and walking. Lunch will be on the island before sailing back to Bandol. The restaurant in the hotel is open in the evening for those who wish to dine.



1st June

- Breakfast in the hotel with a slightly more leisurely transport time back to Castellet flying to Nimes (LFTW) with a small packed lunch in hand. Flying time approx. 40 mins, 70 miles.
- The coach will take us to camping les Bois Flottes in the Camargue region, which is in the middle of a nature reserve. We will have time to check into our cabins, change for the evening and set off again to Manade Jacques bon where the Bon family will welcome us to their 550 hectare estate of land divided into rice fields and pasture land for the bulls they raise and the famous white horses of the Camargue, which the guardians ride showing us their skills in rounding the cattle .
- The evening will be spent on the estate, for Dinner we will dine on Gardiane de Boeuf , the traditional Provencal beef stew of the bull whilst listening to live music from the gypsys of the region.

2nd June

- Breakfast in the restaurant and transport to Domaine de Beaujeu where Pierre and his wife will give us a tour of their organic vinyard and rice fields standing on the banks of the Grand Rhone followed by some wine tasting.
- Lunch will be at an understated restaurant in the Camargue which serves delicious food, especially deserts
- In the afternoon we will spend a couple of hours at the Mas Daussan organic fruit farm before returning to the camp site via a tourist route, we can see the spectacular red and orange sunset where iconic species of birds can be seen, flamingos, curlews, pied Avocets are just a few that inhabit the marshes.
- For those that still have room for another meal the restaurant will be open or possibly bring a bottle of wine back from Domaine de Beaujeu and enjoy under your pergola.

3rd June

- The coach will leave at 10.00 to Nimes airport.

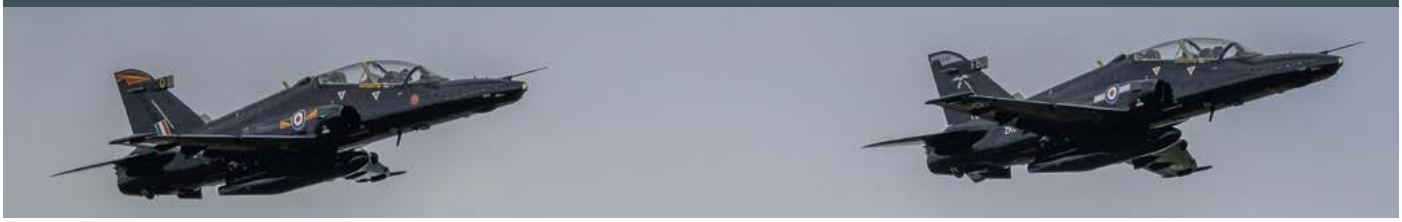
Miserden Estate 26 June

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 in 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.



An overnight visit to RAF Valley 3rd July (Fully Booked)



This visit was originally planned as an overnight, landing at RAF Valley, but due to circumstances out of our control it is now a ONE DAY Tour, and we will landing at Caernarfon (EGCK)

Security will be the same as Waddington, they need names and details before allowing us on base, and again only UK born allowed on base.

We are very privileged to have this behind the scene tour of a very busy Training Base

RAF Valley on Anglesey is home to No 4 Flying Training School, responsible for training the UK's next generation of world-class fighter pilots.

Aircrew are also trained at RAF Valley for mountain and maritime operations throughout the world.

RAF Valley is also home to the Mountain Rescue Service, the military's only high readiness, all weather search and rescue, aircraft post-crash management asset.

It has been cleared with Caernarfon airfield for first arrivals from 09.00 to depart for Valley by 09.45 arrive Valley 10.30. After the tour the coach will collecting us @ approx 16:00 to take back to Caernarfon for about 16:45.

The Visit will be , a tour of the Tower, the Hawk, Texan & Jupiter Squadrons

The Hawk

The Hawk is operational in two very distinct variants, the Hawk T.Mk 1 (and very similar Mk 1A) and T.Mk 2. The latter has replaced the Mk 1/1A in the flying training role, bringing personnel up to fast jet operational conversion unit (OCU) input standards after they graduate from the turboprop Texan T1.

The aircraft's glass cockpit and comprehensive avionics suite provide a realistic advanced fast jet training platform which, as part of the UK Military Flying Training System (UK MFTS), meets current and future standards. It allows trainees to be immersed in more complex tactical environments, 'downloading' training from the OCUs onto the Hawk, which is far more economical to fly than the Typhoon or F35.

The Texan

The Beechcraft Texan T MK1 (Texan T1) provides basic flying training at RAF Valley. Student's progress onto the aircraft from the elementary flying training on the Prefect T1 and move forwards to advanced flying training on the Hawk T2.

CAPABILITY

Continuing the precedent set by the Tucano for employing a tandem-seat turboprop basic trainer, the Texan II replaces the analogue cockpit of the earlier machine with a digital glass cockpit featuring modern avionics. The aircraft's mission system is capable of generating simulated air-to-air targets and scoring against the release of simulated air-to-ground ordnance.

The Jupiter

The Airbus Helicopters Jupiter HT Mk.1 (H145) provides advanced rotary wing flying training.

CAPABILITY

Like the Juno HT Mk.1 (H135), the Jupiter HT Mk.1 has introduced digital technology to the helicopter training programme. The Juno and Jupiter cockpits include the very latest in Airbus Helicopters avionics which delivers enhanced safety and improved situational awareness. The type serves with 202 Squadron at RAF Valley which delivers maritime, mountain and search and rescue training to helicopter aircrew.

- Lunch will be provided on the station.
- Lunch and Landing fees are not included.
- The approx cost for the lunch will be £8.00 a head

Royal Chelsea Hospital 19th March 2025

22 members and friends of the 44 who originally expressed an interest gathered at the Royal Hospital Chelsea coffee shop on a beautiful crisp spring morning. A few early arrivals were found lurking around the wrong gate and the organiser quickly admonished them for not reading the instructions properly only to be smartly chastised in return since they were deliberately lurking around the wrong gate to see if they could blag their way in to see Margeret Thatcher's grave in the Hospital burial ground. Such was not possible but we soon learned that it was featured on the tour.



Group A with Guide in Figure Court

The assembly had been divided into two groups staggered by 15 mins and the Group A guide, Roy Palmer arrived early, resplendent in his red dress coat, peaked cap, known as a "shako" and shoes so shiny you could see your reflection in them. Roy is 86, formerly of the Northampton regiment and as spritely as they come. First, we were shown a painting of Sergeant William Hiseland, [1620–1732] an English Civil War cavalier and one of the first pensioners to be admitted to the Royal Hospital in London and who lived to 112! Then, after a short introductory film we were off on the tour.

During the tour we learned that the Hospital, founded by King Charles II and designed by Sir Christopher Wren on a design inspired by the Hôtel des Invalides in Paris, opened its doors to the Chelsea Pensioners in 1692 for "the relief and succour" of veterans and occupies 66-acres on Royal Hospital Road in Chelsea. Built for 500, it currently houses 300. It is an independent charity and while Pensioners give up their army pension to fund their care or pay the £1600 per month fee, it nevertheless relies on donations to complete the day-to-day running costs of £27m per year. Roy said that everything he needs – a room, 3 meals a day, activities and companionship - is provided, he wants for nothing and he intends to remain there until he dies. Indeed, in addition to the "independent" accommodation, there are also nursing and hospital facilities. In terms of eligibility, veterans are not allowed to be married or have dependants; originally male only, in 2009, the first women in the hospital's 317-year history were admitted.

The hospital maintains a 'military-based culture which puts a premium on comradeship'. The pensioners are formed into four companies, each headed by a Captain of Invalids, an ex-Army officer responsible for the 'day to day welfare, management and administration' of the pensioners under his charge.



Our guides for the day, Bill Horsborough (Right) and Roy Palmer (left.



Group B with Guide in Figure Court



Neville standing to attention in tricorne hat



Cannons captured at Battle of Waterloo



Pensioners room until 1954

Chelsea Pensioners are entitled to come and go from the Royal Hospital as they please, and are permitted to wear civilian clothing wherever they travel. However, within the hospital, and in the surrounding area, pensioners are encouraged to wear a blue uniform known as "blues". The scarlet coats, bearing medals and insignia of rank and service, are also worn for ceremonial occasions, accompanied by the distinctive tricorne hats.

Today, veterans have modern ensuite accommodation but we were shown preserved examples of the original tiny 6ft x 6ft rooms, called "berths" with a straw and flocking mattress [flocking : soft, velvet-like material mimicking fabric] and a chamber pot, 26 berths to a "ward", in use between 1862 and 1955. For the first 100 years lighting was provided by candles. Each ward had a sergeant's berth measuring 9ft x 9ft. Just outside was an area resembling horse stalls although yesterday's horse has been replaced by today's mobility scooter.

Next, the Figure Court, the oldest part of the hospital where accommodation surrounds a court sporting a giant 7' 6" gilded brass statue of Charles II in roman uniform on a marble plinth – hence the name "Figure Court". The court is open to the south and looks out towards the Thames and over the garden where the Chelsea Flower show is held. Nearby are 8 cannons captured at the Battle of Waterloo and the Singora Cannon made in Singora, in modern Thailand around 1623, captured by the Siamese in 1680, transported to Burma during the Burmese–Siamese war of 1765–1767 and taken by the British during the third Anglo-Burmese War of 1885–1887. This well-travelled cannon has made its retirement in an appropriate place.

The Great Hall, now a dining room, is furnished with 16 long tables, one for each original Ward. It contains a large mural painting from around 1690, which depicts Charles II of England on horseback being crowned by the winged figure of Victory, with the Royal Hospital Build-



Refectory



The table Duke of Wellington lay in state in 1852





Organ in the chapel



Margaret Thatcher grave in front of MT Infirmary

ings behind. It was here that the Duke of Wellington lay in state in 1852 and the table on which his coffin rested is just inside the entrance. Each day has a different menu, three meals a day, 3 courses for lunch and "tea". The pensioners make their choice on a slip and are served their meals at the tables. With such an extraordinary choice of food, it is remarkable that all the pensioners look so trim.

The hospital's chapel is a fine and rare example of Wren's pure ecclesiastical work: it rises 42 feet (13 m) high and was completed in 1687. The chapel contains a fine painting of the Resurrection in the half dome of the apse, painted by Sebastiano Ricci and his nephew Marco and dates from the end of Queen Anne›s reign. Services were formerly held twice daily. Nowadays services are confined to Sunday mornings and special military occasions.

Moving on through the hospital, we came to the Light Horse Court. Originally, the hospital served only the infantry but it was expanded to accommodate the cavalry, hence the name. Early residents of these two branches of the army did not mix! The hospital still only admits former members of the army although Roy did say he expected that to change eventually. Further on was the Margaret Thatcher Infirmary, opened in 2009, so called because Mrs Thatcher, as prime minister, was a great champion of its construction. Fittingly, perhaps, her ashes are interred in the old burial ground in front of the new infirmary with Dennis also, "a few paces behind her" as one member pointed out.

Finally, our thanks to Roy and Bill Horsborough, the Group B guide. Incredibly, Roy will be doing a wing walk at 1pm on 4th July at Sywell to raise funds for the Hospital. If you would like to support him here is the link : www.justgiving.com/page/roy-palmer-3

Andrew Cragg



Pop-In, Turweston 11th December 2024

I'm beginning to regard the regular December Pop-In at Turweston to be an unofficial Flying Farmers Christmas lunch. We are always very well looked after in the excellent café at Turweston, and the airfield's hard runway, with clear airspace all around, is usually obligingly into wind.

After another very wet autumn and early winter we were fortunate that the weather for the Pop-In was excellent. Eighteen members flew in and enjoyed a couple of hours convivial conversation over some excellent food. I found myself wondering if perhaps some crews needed to do a revised weight & balance calculation for their trips home after their lunch!

David Keene.





Pop-In, White Waltham February 13th, 2025

The February Pop-In was planned to take place at Bovingdon at the invitation of John and Paul Webb who operate a part of the former airfield, primarily as a film location, but using a part of the East/West runway as a very usable airstrip.

However, as the event organiser, I decided rather late in the day, to move the Pop-In destination to White Waltham, quite close by. Using the Bovingdon strip does have a few challenges, not least a very large building on the centre line at the Eastern end of the strip and Heras fencing down both sides of the strip. Also, the nearby pub where we were to have lunch was asking for food to be pre-ordered which is not ideal when flying. Because of these potential hazards and being rather risk averse by nature, I decided to move to White Waltham, where the food gets delivered very promptly with no pre-ordering involved, and we are even provided with a private room to eat in. If any member wishes to fly into Bovingdon please contact me and I will pass on John Webb's contact details.

Bearing in mind the weather over the winter and early spring, we were very fortunate on the day with a good flying day, with the grass airfield surface in reasonable condition. Sixteen members flew in and enjoyed a very good time together over excellent food in White Waltham's very historic clubroom with a Hurricane aircraft parked right outside! The only note that I would add is that when flying in and out of White Waltham please pay very close attention to the proximity of Heathrow's airspace and the limits of White Waltham's Local Flying Area.

David Keene.





Leicester pop-in on Friday 17th January 2025

There were 14 attendees at Leicester airfield for the Flying Farmers' get together on Friday 17th January.

Some travelled by car because of the low cloud base (around 1000 feet) in the morning. The airfield café offers a pleasant and spacious dining area with a good menu and panoramic views of the runways.

A good start to the season.

Anthea Brown 20.1.25.



Left to right clockwise: Gordon Bellerby, Andrew Collett, Paul Bullen, Dave Topp, Rebecca Rayner, Stephen Watkins, Tony Fisher, Anthea Brown, Robert Laming, Robin Culley, Rick Holt, Anthony Kedross, Caroline Bellerby

Thruxton pop-in on Saturday 15th March 2025





Saturday, the 15th of March Dawn bright and cheerful with a brisk north-easterly breeze heralding a good turnout for the last pop in of the season at Thruxton Airport. When the visit was planned, there was a little café underneath the tower known as the Jackaroo which was pleasant and quiet where it was hoped the assembled members could have had a simple café meal and a chat before going down to visit the air ambulance Depot with aircraft and dispatch office. However, on the day HIOWAA were briefing a dozen new volunteers and were unable to show us around. Interestingly, one of the volunteers is a member of the Flying Farmers Association.

The café has moved to the inside of the circuit at Thruxton and is now housed in the ground floor of the brand new Thruxton Centre. A magnificent glass and polished stainless steel building which will have offices and space for media and all the attendant functions and utilities required for a modern race track. It was not expected that there would be close on 100 or so putative race drivers in the café looking forward to the trip round the track in various hot rod cars and filling the café with excited chatter.

Judith Stephens from The air ambulance office on the airfield drove up to the Thruxton Centre in one of the rapid response cars and gave us a rundown on how the service works.

We were interested to hear that there are four cars used as emergency response vehicles as well as the helicopter.

The cars are prepositioned at motorway junctions throughout Hampshire ready to respond quickly to emergencies. These emergency dispatches are controlled by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight NHS Trust in order to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure that casualties receive the quickest service possible.

The cars are equipped with drugs and equipment allowing the teams on board to deal with everything up to an amputation and open heart surgery at the scene of the emergency.

All the air ambulance organisations in the United Kingdom are entirely self financing by funding from the general public. They take no payments from the NHS or the government.

Some emphasis was made that it is important that everyone knows how to operate a defibrillator machine and our president has organised a visit to his strip later this year when interested parties may learn about defibrillators and CPR.

A cap was passed round and £240 was collected for air ambulance funds from the assembled 18 Flying farmer members which shows great generosity as some of them had no cash!

A vote of thanks was given by Roger Bell to Judith Stephens for her highly informative talk on the function of the air ambulance in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

18 intrepid members made the journey half a dozen of whom live so close that they drove in.

Great thanks to David Keene for setting up Winter Pop Ins.

Roger Bell

WhatsApp Groups Explained

You may have been added too or invited to join a WhatsApp group chat for an FFA visit or Fly-in. Like most things in life a few simple rules.

From the start of the group until the event please use for event organisation or event questions only please.

The exception is, and this is the most important use of the chat, FLIGHT SAFETY. Weather, airfield information, departure, and arrival times etc. In effect anything that will help incoming pilots. Ask a weather/safety question before you depart. When you arrive, you may wish to tell others the runway condition or where to park, especially if you are first to arrive, as an example.

After the event we would encourage all to post event photos, comments etc. with no rules except decency please.

If you ever wish to leave a group, do it yourself or post your wish on the group and you will be removed.

Alf Oliver



Thankyou to Popham Airfield for allowing us to use their quiz and also for allowing FFAmembers to enjoy a free landing.

Invitation from an FFA Member

I am an FFA member and Operator of Dornoch Aerodrome in Scotland. The FFA is at the forefront of flying organisations which I wish to engage in supporting growth of aviation activity here. Dornoch is General Aviation gateway to the north Highlands and has a vibrant and sociable historic town within walking distance, boasting first class accommodation, restaurants, golden beach and its famous golf course ranked 2nd best in the world by Golf Digest.

The aerodrome has strong links with the Sutherland Agricultural Society who host their annual county show in the adjacent field. This year it is scheduled for 19th July 2025 and I would like to extend my invitation to FFA members to land at Dornoch free of landing fee on Show day.

https://www.sutherlandshow.com
https://www.thisisdornoch.com

Hughie Urquhart
info@dornochaerodrome.co.uk







Calendar of Events 2025

16 – 17 May	Private Flyer Fest South	Wycombe
17 – 18 May	Real STOL Fest	Breighton Airfield
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

New Zealand flying safari – Martin Gosling





Above main picture:
Mount Cook
Inset:
Matt (Safety Pilot) and Annette

There are just 5 companies in the world offering self-fly flying safari tours, and over the years we had used 3 of them - one in Australia, one in South Africa and one in Central America. In our inexorably advancing years we were keen to try Flyinn, the safari company in New Zealand, with whom several of our members have already used, so this article will be fairly familiar to them.

Flyinn are based in Wanaka in the South Island, and are a company run by a husband and wife team - Matt & Jo McCaughan. Farming being their core business, they branched out into flying tours some 20 years ago, with one Cessna 172, now supplemented by a second one. So with just two aircraft, theirs is not a business operating for large groups but rather more bespoke with Matt very much at the helm joined by other instructors as required.

New Zealand, and particularly the South Island is surprisingly very mountainous with very variable and changeable weather. Consequently it is an absolute requirement that pilots should have a current mountain rating to fly in these potentially challenging areas, and so to get around these challenges, a safety pilot (Matt) joins the crew and is there to instruct/mentor/advise the paying punter. Personally I find this less than satisfactory on two counts. First my flying always seems to get a bit ragged with a professional sitting beside me, and secondly it means Annette had to sit in the back at all times whereas she is used to being P2 beside me when flying at home. With the other flying safaris where mountains are not involved, one hires an aircraft for the duration of the tour with a lead pilot in his own aircraft doing all the planning and admin, and you are responsible for your own flying - a much more agreeable process in my view. There are usually more planes involved so is much more of a group exercise.

And so on January 8th last year we set off from Heathrow on the long journey to the other side of the world stopping at Singapore and Sydney before arriving at Queenstown in the South Island after 27 hours of continuous travel. Two days of chilling out and recovering before returning to Queenstown airport to meet up with Matt under the pre-determined travel poster. Introductions complete we embarked in one of his less-than-attractive lurid yellow Cessnas for the 40 minute flight to his farm where we met his charming

wife Jo, who plied us with coffee and biscuits before Matt suddenly jumped up and said "right, the weather's perfect, let's go and fly around Mount Cook".

This all seemed rather sudden, but Matt explained that with the mountains so close you have to take every opportunity to take advantage of every weather window - sometimes completely changing a days programming with the weather in mind - and this was one of those opportunities.

Mountain flying is not to be trifled with, as the wind over the tops and the difference between the windward side and the lee side can be so extreme as to be fatal. The downdraughts on the Lee side can easily overwhelm the ability of a light aircraft to climb out of them, which many pilots have discovered to their final cost. The advantage of having an expert beside you is obvious, not only for safety but for the steep learning curve they imparted.

Flyinn offer three alternative tours. An 8-day tour, an 11-day tour, both of which remained in the South Island, and an 18-day tour which included the North Island. We figured that as we had come so far from the UK we would get our moneys-worth by doing the long tour, coupled with the fact that we had planned to spend a few days with the widow of a good friend of ours who had been a farm student with me way back in 1963. By an even better stroke of luck, the final leg northwards ended up landing on Waiheke Island - which is where our friend now lives, so we finished our final day's flying there, leaving Matt and Jo to return home to their farm in the South Island in the 172 without us.

I don't propose to delve into every moment of every day of our adventure as that would be far too boring, but rather to give an overview of our trip with a few highlights. The first few days flying were on our own, but after 5 days we were joined by another couple who took the second aircraft - an equally lurid yellow (at least it helped to find the aircraft in the parking lot each day!) who had flown in from Alaska and who had their own 206 on floats in Alaska. Ross and Ashleigh weren't the typical American brash tourist, mainly because Ross was profoundly deaf and had a Bone Anchored Hearing Aid attached to his skull (not sure what our beloved CAA would make of that), which made communication somewhat challenging. They were only here for the 8-day tour, so our friendship was quite brief.

In the earlier days of Matt's flying business, the guests were billeted on the farm, but when his son returned from his travelling, he joined Matt on the farm and needed the accommodation, so guests are now accommodated in lodgings in Wanaka town with access to a car. The planes are kept at Wanaka airport so it is just a 20 minute drive to get to the start of the daily adventures, and if it is a non-flying day, then the car is available to go exploring.

For the next 11 days we flew to many interesting destinations around the South Island, starting and finishing at Wanaka. After flying around Mount Cook we went to Milford Sound - again because the weather was perfect for that destination. For those



Above: Milford Sound

that don't know, Milford Sound is one of the wettest places in the world with an average annual rainfall of 6813mm (that's 272" or 22 feet of rain - and that's an average of 3/4" every single day!) sometimes it rains up to 10"/day and the hills around turn into raging waterfalls.

Again the weather was perfect and the approach and departure is spectacular running close to the high hills on either side to avoid the active circuits and carrying on down the gorge to make the base and finals turn in a wide area before landing. It is of course very important in this busy and constricted airspace to religiously stick to the laid down procedures. On this perfect day we arrived at a slack time of day between offloading the tourists and their subsequent pick-up, but there were still 9 Cessna Caravans parked up on the ramp with aircraft buzzing around all over the place, so one really had to be on one's toes.

Another day we flew around the 10,000' peak of Mount Aspiring and adjacent glaciers, and finished up landing at an airfield close to the Dart River where we took a jet boat upstream. Although the weather had now turned rainy, we were lucky enough to take the last tour. An exhilarating, and at times somewhat hairy experience travelling at up to 90kph over water that twisted and turned through a myriad of rivulets and fingers of the main stream and with a depth of just a couple inches to a couple



Above main picture: Mount Aspiring and adjacent glaciers.
Inset: The Dart River
Below left: 3 mile beach
Below right: Socializing after a day at Geordie Hill Station with Matt.

of feet. The boats, obviously with no propeller and aluminium hulls, are designed to run in water as shallow as 4", so at full chat the driver really had to be ahead of his game, skimming over the rocks and pebbles rattling against the hull. The whole river was a pebble-strewn moraine field of a retreating glacier.

Landing on 3 Mile Beach at Big Bay was another days great experience, combining so many different experiences in quick succession.

We landed at private strips, in open fields, and at regular airfields, and during or after the flying, visited heritage museums, aviation museums and many other interesting places and met many interesting people. We met up with the daughter of one of our greatest friends who had emigrated some 10 years ago, by landing at another strip just a couple of miles from her house, where we were very well looked after for an hour or so. Her father was entirely responsible for my ongoing love of flying, when on one snowy Thursday in April 1979 he rocked up at our house for a cup of coffee after we had both delivered our young children to the local primary school, and just said "how about learning to fly together?" We ended the day at the Suffolk Aero Club at Ipswich airport (long since defunct and covered in houses,) and the rest, they say...!

One day, before the Alaskan couple arrived, we had a day back at Geordie Hill Station (Matt's farm) looking around his whole farming enterprise which was predominantly sheep but also with a few cattle, and which relied very heavily on irrigation. Recent years have seen great deficits of rain in the country generally and irrigation is a 'must' for successful farming. A social evening and meal with the family rounded off another good day.

Eventually, we finished cruising around the South Island, Ross and Ashleigh departed for Alaska, and we headed north for our last few days. Wellington, known as the Windy City, was our first destination in the north. Being the Capital of the country, we would have expected a very busy area, but to my amazement, on making first contact we were cleared to 'Finals, No:1', and for the first time, at last, I managed a 10/10 for my landing - something that had eluded me for most of the South Island!

It didn't seem particularly windy when we left, but on coasting out we were met with probably the most violently turbulent conditions we have ever flown in. Curl over from the local hills was a demonstration of what can catch you out in the mountains, and these hills weren't particularly high, but boy, was it rough, tipping the aircraft nearly on its wingtip several times until we had got far enough away from the land to escape its clutches. That was NOT fun for Annette in the back!

We stopped in Rotorua and looking at the boiling mud was a great disappointment to me. I was last











there in 1964 and the area was much less developed and touristy, and the mud much more interesting. Like so many things in the world, the dreaded climate change seems to have taken a great change on these spectacles, (but it has not diminished the smell of rotten eggs!). The disappointment with the mud was more that compensated for by a superb evening show put on by the Māoris, preceded with a dinner for the whole audience.

The Bay of Islands, was our next stop, where Captain Cook landed in 1769 and rather inadvisedly shot a Māori, which made them a bit grumpy. We had a relaxing day cruising around on a replica tall ship and had a final dinner with Matt and Jo before flying to our final destination of Waiheke Island where we were to meet up with and spend 3 days with our great friend.

By an extraordinary coincidence, while we were enjoying our dinner, my phone went off to find that Peter Gale and Judith, who knew we were due to be in NZ some time in January, were ringing to find out where we were and if we were in the country. And where were we…? Less than 100 yards from the restaurant where they themselves were eating!

On our way to Waiheke Island airstrip we flew up to and around the Auckland harbour bridge which is just on the outskirts of the city, and around the downtown skyscrapers, safe in the knowledge that the airport is some way distant to the East.

And so we said goodbye to Matt and Jo with their wonderful New Zealand adventure offering, where we had spent 2 1/2 fabulous weeks sampling all that the country had to offer with their great Flyinn organisation.

But it wasn't the end of our time away because after our 3 days with our great friend on Waiheke Island, we flew back to Canberra where my niece and nephew-in-law have a 3000 acre sheep station, and we spent a happy 5 days mustering and doing general sheep duties, as well as catching up on family news.

Not even content with that, we realised that The Maldives were on the route home, and so what better idea than to spend a relaxed 6 days there with two particular days standing out - an underwater restaurant (wallet emptying!) and swimming with Manta Rays (nature at its best), before finally returning to a cool and damp UK after a wonderful 5 week holiday.

Just one more self-fly safari company to go to get the Full House…!

Martin Gosling

Above main picture: Superb evening show put on by the Māoris before dinner for the audience.
Above middle: Cruising around the Bay of Islands on a replica tall ship
Above right: Back to Canberra to catch up with family at their 3000 acre sheep station.
Below left: Relaxing on the way home in the Maldives.
Below right: An under water restaurant.





STOLing About by Ed Smiley-Jones



As land owners flying in and out of relatively short grass strips which are sometimes challenging, the editorial team thought it would be a great idea if we had a regular feature focused on STOL (short take-off and landing) and backcountry flying. Our new feature is called ***'STOLing About'.***

'STOLing About' is designed to cover many aspects of STOL and backcountry flying to keep you up to speed about the fastest growing aeronautical niche in the world.

Here's flavour of some of the up and coming articles:

- **Skill sharing** - Why we should consider inspection passes and dragging before landing, Wheeler or three point landings - What's best and why?
- **Modifications** - The SuperCub is the most modified STOL plane with over 100 STC's and they're all designed to make it go slower - We find out why.
- **Conversations** - interviews with STOL manufacturers and backcountry pilots.
- **Events** - What's coming up, STOL competitions and fly-in's.
- **Youtube films** - Pilots and experimental STOL plane builders that are worth following.

This issue, we're looking at modifications - and asking bush tyres are they worth the money?
There's always been much debate if it's worth buying a set of bush tyres for use in the UK. The argument has been, we don't have a true backcountry environment and a need to land off airport.

The chattering aero classes have commented,
'*There's no rocks, no gopher holes and our airfields are perfectly smooth and you've bought those tyres for pure ramp appeal - huh, huh!*'.

To me, that's the opinion of those who fly from the pristine and well manicured grass airfields such as Leicester, Fenland and Compton Abbas and maybe they're right, bush tyres aren't required for these airfields.

But some say the FFA members are the true backcountry pilots of the UK.
Where I fly from it is different. The majority of the time I fly from an authentic farm strip, that has a few mole holes (the UK version of a gopher hole!), lumps, bumps, undulations, the occasional rock or two and an added bit of sheep shit for good measure! However, some might say that's my fault and my paddock management isn't that good!

I thought it would be worth sharing my experience of flying my Aviat Husky on three different sets of tyres - 8.50 Aero Trac, 26' Good Year tundra tyres and 31' Alaska Bushwheel tyres, and why I invested in bush tyres.

Let's explore the benefits of these tyres.
Let's start by addressing the elephant in the room - the price. My latest set of 31' inch Alaska Bushwheel tyres cost me £3,600 + VAT. This is a substantial cost compared to a tundra tyres such as a 26' Good Year at £1,200 each and a regular tyre at about £90.

The Alaska Bushwheel tyre is only made by one company, The Alaska Gear Company in Palmer, Alaska. These tyres are hand-made from extremely high quality, softer compound rubber, plus kevlar liner with a unique feature, the inner tube is built into the tyre - it's resembles a very large doughnut. Unlike the competition that fit a standard inner tubes.

Running at low pressure. The integrated inner tube and valve stem allows you to adjust pressures to an extremely low setting to suit your landing environment. When at a low pressure the bead will slip freely on the wheel rim without ripping the valve stem from the inner tube and this allows you to land on;

Rocky terrain. The big advantage is you can take the air pressure down low, allowing you to roll-over rough and rocky areas - these tyres are capable of dealing with 6 to 8 inch rocks which is significant. The minimum recommended low pressure is 8psi but some pilots I know run them at circa 4psi when operating on extremely rocky areas.

When it's wet, muddy and sandy. Running at lower pressures and with tyre dimensions of 31' height x 13' inch wide provides fantastic flotation. My strip suffers from wet patches and mud in the winter and the tyres float across without any effort unlike the 8.50's that struggled.

Smooth tyre surface. The smooth tyre surface reduces stones, mud and debris from being flung-up and hitting the underside of the wing and flaps - the Husky's flaps are fabric so could be prone to damage.

Added suspension. My Husky is fitted with standard landing gear and bungees and I generally perform short field landings which means a steeper approach, lower speed and a firmer landing. The 31's absorb a significant amount of extra landing energy removing the bounce and protecting the airframe from any jolts and potential damage.

Unknown landing environments. When landing off airfield onto an unfamiliar field you never know what's lurking under the surface or surrounded by long grass, even though you may have completed a low level inspection pass and a drag.
This is where bush tyres come into their own, as they can roll across unexpected rocks, rabbit earth and much more, preventing landing gear damage or a propeller strike.

Protecting your propeller. The added tyre height will provide extra propeller protection, firstly from a propeller strikes e.g. undulating surfaces, grass and from drawing up small stones when operating on gravel and sand. These tyres provide more ground clearance when wheeler landing, and if you should need to upgrade to a larger propeller.

Engine out. If you should have an engine out these tyres will provide you with so many more landing options from grass-land to uneven surfaces and even plough for all of the reasons I mention above.

Extra weight, centre of gravity and cruise speed. The Alaska Bushwheel tyres weigh in at 36lbs per tyre (total weight of 72lbs) and my 8.50 tundra combined weight was 36lbs - I have lost 36lbs of cargo load.
My cruise speed has dropped by circa 3mph to 5mph and there's no change to the centre of gravity.

Pavement landings. These tyres are made from a soft compound to provide you with the flexibility to roll-over rough surfaces, however the downside is they are prone to wear on pavement surfaces. To keep the life in the tyres its best to avoid excessive pavement landings and pivoting on the tyres on asphalt as they will wear quickly.

In summary. The Alaska Bushwheel tyres have some downsides, but on the upside they deliver significant advantages which span from operational safety, propeller damage, and could protect you from airframe damage along with the obvious - that highly valuable, Ramp Appeal!

So if… FFA members are the backcountry pilots of the UK it might be time you invest in a set of bush wheel tyres?'

Events.
Breighton Airfield will be hosting the Real STOL Fest on the 17th - 18th May 2025 to celebrate STOL and Bush Flying.

Breighton have offered FFA members the following.

1. Free landing fees at Breighton Airfield all year round unless a specific event permits an entry fee.
2. Priority PPR on the waiting list for the Real STOLFEST 2025 when you email - realstolfest@gmail.com (must state you are part of the Flying Farmers to get at the top of the list).

YouTube films worth watching.
Mike Patey is a genius experimental builder who built Draco which was based on the PZL-104 Wilga platform. This plane is probably the most capable experimental STOL plane ever built. The original series can be seen on YouTube Mike Patey Draco - he is now building Draco X which I'm sure will be an even more extreme Wilga.



For Sale

Aeroprakt Vixxen A32

Aeroprakt Vixxen A32, Built March 2022, TT 83 hrs. Airmaster c/s Prop, AV30 Navigation equipment, Trig radio and Trig transponder

Nav lights and Strobes, Landing light. Paint work 10 out of 10 with new permit. Always hangared

Contact Ray Everitt on 07974 952118 to discuss this further.



For Sale

Garmin Avionics Equipment

Description: Garmin GTX330 mode S transponder; Garmin 430W GPS/Nav/Com; Garmin 530W GPS/Nav/Com; Original manuals for all.

Contact Neil Sanderson direct on 07721 880232
or email neilsanderson@ramco.co.uk



BIGATMO™
Sunglasses with altitude



Bigatmo sunglasses are designed for aviation. Our lens development program focussed on the extreme high contrast environment of the cockpit. Our lenses are made from Trivex/NXT, have excellent optical properties and mechanical strength. The lens technology provides excellent colour acuity, especially important when reading flight deck instrumentation, and our specific tints help to keep your eyes relaxed. The sculpted titanium frames will fit your head, stay in place and be extremely comfortable – even after long periods or when using a headset. Genuine flight deck/pilot feedback was used throughout the development process and continues to be listened to as we make improvements and refine future designs. Many of our customers need prescription sunglasses and eyewear. We make varifocal and single vision prescription eyewear, so if you'd like our help or advice, just get in-touch and we'll be very happy to chat with you about some possible choices:

15% DISCOUNT ON SUNGLASSES WITH STANDARD LENSES (CODE FFA15)
10% DISCOUNT ON SUNGLASSES WITH PRESCRIPTION LENSES (CODE FFA10)

Email: info@bigatmo.com or call +44(0)1622 844030

Tested and trusted by pilots.



2025 Renewal - FLYING FARMERS – PRICING MATRIX

SECTION 1 and 3 – PREMISES and PRODUCTS LIABILITY
Limit of Liability (any one accident 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!

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 (old stock)		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
Baseball Caps			£8.00
Ties			£15.00
Clocks			£30.00
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. Reduced prices are on old stock with old logo. Prices do not include postage. 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.

NEW FFA name badges

£3.00 each plus £1.50 postage and packing.

To order please email: charliepapworth@gmail.com
with the name you would like on your badge and the address if you require it to be posted.





ANNIVERSARY PEN
Free of charge to members who request one. As there's a limited number this will be on a 'once they are 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

Profile: Andrew Cragg
By Rebecca Rayner



Andrew Cragg, stood in front of his G-TECT a Tecnam P2006T

Andrew, tell us about your early days…
I grew up on a farm in Romney Marsh. Prep school was run by an ex-RAF officer who served in Palestine. He had gathered together a team of talented ex-servicemen each with their own brand of capital punishment. Largely unscarred by that experience, I left as head boy with a scholarship to Cranbrook School in Kent. A state boarding grammar school with public school ambitions, it was founded in 1518, given a Royal Charter by Queen Elizabeth I in 1574 and sported boaters and fagging until only a few years before I started in 1972. Cranbrook had the most extraordinary selection of extra-curricular activities, a great distraction from academic achievement but I got the grades and after a gap year in France on an apple co-operative in SW France, I went to Nottingham University's faculty of Agriculture at Sutton Bonnington (in Leicestershire!) In those days it was like being back at school with a rigorous timetable of face-to-face teaching, a few free periods and games on Wednesday. There, strangely enough after some early basic agriculture, I majored in applied computing and statistics using the university mainframe which occupied the space of a small house and possessed a fraction of the power of my iWatch.

What happened when you returned home to farm…
I had two elder brothers, neither of whom had shown interest in farming, so from an early age I was subject to a constant subliminal suggestion that I was, or even, had to be. Forgoing the usual rite of passage of working away before coming home, in 1980, succumbed to the call. My father was not an easy man to work for, egotistical and arrogant, he always had to have the last say even if different approaches (mine being one of them) had the same outcome. Nor was he a good teacher. For example, I would propose to cultivate; "you don't want to do that, when that rains it'll go like snot"; so next day I plough; "you don't want to do that, if it stays dry, it'll go like concrete". My resignation in 1987 precipitated succession planning and separation of the business into arable (me) and horticulture (him).

Tell us about your family
Our family have been farmers since farming was invented although I am only the second generation on this farm. My grandfather was a small tenant farmer in Gedney near Wisbech who had farmed through the depression and couldn't wait to retire. This and the outbreak of WW2 rendered the outlook for my then 18 yr old father very uncertain. However, after the war in 1946, he went to Sutton Bonnington and in 1948, along with many others, found himself in Romney Marsh where the war had created new opportunities to buy and rent. He started on a small 100 acre assignable tenancy from Christchurch College which through drive and determination became the 1400 acres that it is today. I live there today with my wife Anne. We have two children, Edward, 38 and Emma, 36. Edward has a degree and masters in advanced electronics and worked in Manchester before embarking on round the world travels just before Covid. Emma has a degree in Psychology and masters in Psychotherapy and worked in Liverpool in care until she too decided to follow her brother's example and travel round the world, again, just before Covid. They had both independently and coincidentally arrived in Vietnam when Covid struck and have been home ever since. That said, Emma has just gone off to New Zealand for a year to learn about equine therapy (using horses to assist in human mental wellbeing) by working and volunteering on farms doing this with a view to setting up a similar venture back home.

When did you start flying and getting your PPL…
Like many young boys I had done my share of Airfix model warplanes but never had a desire to fly them. I had a girlfriend at college whose father was a WW2 Polish bomber pilot who had stayed in England after the war and married a local girl. On the one time I visited in Newcastle, he, Tad Hemsley (he had taken his wife's name, his being unpronounceable), now an air taxi/TV/pleasure flight operator, took me for a flight in his 172. I had a little go, like you do, and then thought nothing more of it until someone asked me what I wanted for my 21st birthday. Flying lessons followed at the Cinque Ports Flying club, the oldest flying club in England, with a war veteran ex-army artillery spotter who would always make me look both ways before entering the runway "in case some mad German's coming in the wrong way!" In 1981, the club was full of young people learning to fly, a few self funders like me, a cohort on the self improver route making their way to the big job, Air Traffic cadets (in those days they used to fund 75% of the PPL course) and air cadets. IMC, Multi, FAA IR followed and the rest is history through a C172, C182, C310, C340, PA30 Twincomm to the Tecnam P2006T which I have today.

How did you hear about the Flying Farmers Association?
It was in 1984 but I'm afraid I simply don't remember. I didn't know any FFA members; apart from Chris Freeman at Headcorn I was probably the only member in Kent at the time.

Do you have any other interests other than flying?...
I have and still do spend quite a lot of time away from the farm with roles in the wider industry for organisations like HGCA, AHDB, NFU, NIAB and United Oilseeds particularly in the area of research. I guess that says I have an interest in farming outside the daily grind. Other than that, I have been a governor of Cranbrook School for 24 years although the constant, inconsistent and irrational demands of government on the school system has made that job much less "interesting" of late. Other than that, I don't "do" golf, hunting or shooting, rather, lots of different things, when I feel like it, and never very well like cycling (better now we have e-bikes), tennis, genealogy, books & films (especially sci-fi). Finally, I have count among my interests, my role in the running of the Flying Farmers Association.