FLYING FARMERS ASSOCIATION

August 2025 newsletter no. 149



CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS

Harvest has caught us all out this year in North Yorkshire, starting on July 11th, a full 2 to 3 weeks earlier than normal. I returned from holiday the day before, so it was straight onto the combine, and as I left Mallorca, my son in law James, was on an aeroplane out to Mallorca, expecting harvest to be at least 10 days away when he booked.

However, in three easy days the 160 acres of Winter Barley were wrapped up and unusually for us, it was all 13 to 14.5% moisture. But with much needed rain coming in as we finished, the straw wasn't baled, as it's only James that knows how to operate the big baler!

Then the next day the problems started and I wondered if I should have stayed in Mallorca. Firstly one of our three chicken men handed his notice in after only being with us a year. Then one shed of chickens broke out with a very nasty virus, originating from the parent flock. Up to now we have lost 23% of the birds in 5 days and still counting. It will probably end with over 30% dead. Luckily it is only one shed and the hatchery admit it is a known problem with others suffering the same symptoms.

The third problem that Monday morning hit us at 06:11am when a chicken shed alarm call got us out of bed as the electric supply was flickering. The cause soon became apparent as the corn store where we had just put about 700 tonne of barley, burst into flames. The cause was obvious as it started in the fan control room with the electrics. This was crazy as there was absolutely nothing switched on as we hadn't even started cooling the corn. The store is an on the floor set up with a wooden clad control room and fan room sat above the wooden drying tunnel blowing under a wooden aerated floor.

Within 10 minutes the flames were coming out of the cement fibre roof as the fan shaft acted like a Venturi. After turning the electric off, I made pathetic attempts to dowse the flames with fire extinguishers but it was a waste of time. The fire brigade were amazing, the first pump arriving in 25 minutes and within 35 minutes there were 5 units in the yard with about 20 firemen and women.

I was most concerned that the fire would start travelling down the drying tunnel, then under the wooden floor as the barley would soon have ignited as it was so dry. However, they had it out within minutes and it ended up that all the damage was contained to one end of the shed, completely demolishing the electric room, the drying fans, the biomass hot water radiator system and part of the tunnel.

The firemen had accessed the control room through a personnel door, but now wanted the roller shutter doors open, but of course the motors were burnt out and there was no electric anyway, so I just stuck the forklift under them and buckled them up.

Now my thought turned to what to do about the wheat and beans in the coming weeks as they are all dried and stored on this floor. NFU insurance came to the rescue and they immediately answered all my worries. They said sell the corn spot, getting it dried if necessary by the merchant at their expense. Then the insurance will make up the difference between the spot price and the futures price in the months when I normally sell. But then if the price goes up more like it did when the Black Sea shipments stopped, they will open the book again and pay me more!

Back to FFA. We really enjoyed the FFA tour to the South of France. We saw mustard being made, lavender, loads of vines and tasting of course, we learnt a lot about the Camargue region with their fighting bulls and Camargue horses with demonstrations from the cowboys and girls. Then we looked at rice production and other crops as well as a host of cultural visits.

What struck me was how long will it be before we are growing crops like vines, sunflower, soya etc. with the way the climate is changing and how long before crop growing will be impossible in the Mediterranean countries as they get hotter and run short of water. In the Camargue region, the Rhône river is huge and supplies water for the paddy fields – but for how long?

What a tour! It was well thought out by Helen Cobb with a little help from her partner, Charles Course. She stuck to a tight budget which is difficult in the South of France. I think the time has maybe come when we will have to lift the budget as it makes it almost impossible to maintain the standards of accommodation that we are used to.

Well done Helen!

Paul Stephens

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www.ffa.org.uk
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Joined Since April 2025

8840 N. Smith from Danehill, East Sussex
8842 C. Rolls from Midhurst, West Sussex
8841 C. Delacherois-Day from Stamford, Linconlshire

Departing Members

8534	P. Beckwith from Gloucestershire	Lapsed
8748	A. Wheatley from Lincolnshire	Lapsed
8574	R. Harrison from North Yorkshire	Lapsed
778	D.A. Howard from Wales	Lapsed
500	C.R. Reynolds from Kent	Lapsed
8692	J. Owen from Lancashire	Lapsed

FFA Committee Meeting – Wednesday 28th May 2025

The Summer committee meeting is always a difficult one to arrange as there is so much going on in June / early July and getting all committee members to find a common date in their diaries is not easy. However, on the FFA Tour this year to the south of France, we had all but one actually on the tour. It made sense to set a couple of hours aside and hold the meeting in our lovely hotel on our second stopover near Valreas.

The hotel was appropriately called the Ferme de Grignan, where we found a quiet room and our one member not on the tour – Giles Abrey - joined us by Zoom. So we had a full compliment.

One of the main purposes of the summer committee meeting is to finalise arrangements for the forthcoming AGM. Suggestions for a suitable venue had been discussed previously, but a visit to our member Lord Edward Manners' residence - Haddon Hall in Derbyshire, has been put on hold as his strip is very short which would mean a bus journey from not very local airfields. Incidentally, he is the younger brother of Lord David Manners who invited us to hold one of our largest AGM's at Belvoir Castle in 2022.

The other suggestion was to return to Duxford, but their charges for the room have gone way out of our budget. As it happened, Charles Course and Helen, who organised this tour, had it thrust upon them to accommodate us at Charles' airfield - Elmsett in Suffolk. He has welcomed us with open arms and I am sure it will be a very good venue. Martin Robinson, CEO of AOPA will be the speaker.

Andrew Cragg, our hard working Treasurer and Membership Secretary, announced that there were 418 members, albeit with an ever increasing age. This is remarkable considering we are a fairly laid back organisation, in an era when the number of UK PPLs are declining and would be declining even further if it hadn't been for the plethora of more economical Rotax powered lighter aircraft. Perhaps this is why we don't get many young applicants as they just aren't taking up flying.

Another matter discussed and appropriate to the Tour we were on, was whether we are covered by the NFU Home and Lifestyle Insurance which has an Annual Travel Cover built in. An endorsement can be added to the policy for flying a light aircraft which some will say is added free of charge, whilst others say there is an additional fee. In my own case, it is added but it isn't clear whether I am being charged extra for the endorsement as it has been in place for so many years that it has become part of the policy.

Look forward to seeing you at Elmsett on September 25th

Paul Stephens

GASCo Safety Evenings

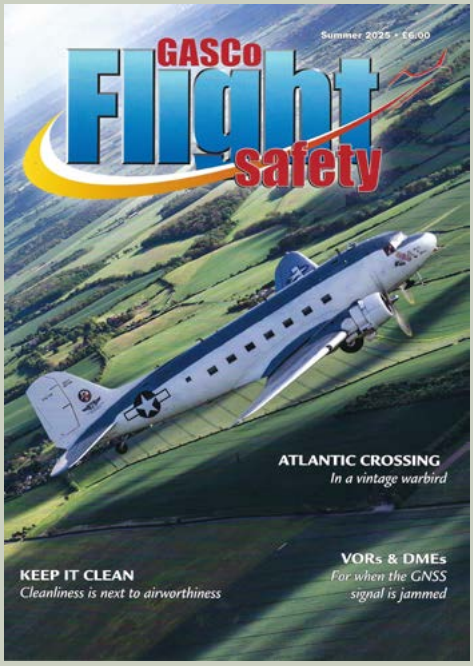
Wycombe Air Park
TBA - Wednesday 3rd September 2025
Contact: TBA
Wickenby
TBN - Thursday 25th September 2025
Contact:
Peter Disley 07968 698144

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

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https://www.gasco.org.uk/flight-safety-magazine/subscribe



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

General Aviation Partnership (GAP) and General Aviation Advisory Council (GAAC)

This was the spot where relevant proceedings of these two meetings were dutifully reported.
With so much important and interesting stuff happening both in and outside these meetings it seems sensible to just report here on "stuff" that is relevant to members that has "happened" since the last newsletter.

Accordingly, a challenge is hereby issued to members to give this spot about stuff happening a new name. A prize may be offered but perhaps avoid the more ecclesiastical "Andrew's Address" or salubrious Craggy's Cravings". The "Treasurer's Telegraph" might better reflect the more refined and cultured nature of our organisation. Answers on an email please to info@ffa.org.uk

Refused crossing clearance?
This is an issue that appears to be getting worse particularly with a shortage of controllers. You may not know but pilots who think they are unreasonably refused access to airspace or refused an Air Traffic Service may report this by using CAA form FCS 1522. Like all useful things it's not easy to find.

You'd think you'd just have to Google "CAA form FCS 1522" but no, In this case try Google "CAA Airspace classification". (https://www.caa.co.uk/commercial-industry/airspace/airspace-change/airspace-classification/airspace-classification/) and the link is halfway down the page.

New Air-to-Air Channels for General Aviation
Two channels 123.065 and 123.135 have been assigned for Air-to-Air communications. These channels should be used to share important safety information between pilots, where information is not provided by other services, such as ATC or FIS, mainly in uncontrolled airspace.

The channels will eventually be allocated European-wide. **SafetyCom (135.480 MHz)** remains specifically for use at aerodromes that do not have a notified ground radio channel. While **123.45 MHz** was previously used unofficially for air-to-air communication, it is no longer a designated frequency and should not be used.

Medicals
AOPA met with the CAA Chief Medical Officer (CMO) recently. The CAA case was based on safety and the use of "improved" techniques to assess future health risks. AOPAs viewpoint, based on evidential data, is that there has been no safety risk identified that supports the need for the changes. Indeed, it will result in pilots moving to a PMD and no longer being examined. AOPA will continue to oppose these changes unless there is clear data based evidence of need. Unfortunately, in the meantime the demand for stress ecg's will continue.

Electronic Conspicuity (EC) Update
The CAA is determined that EC will be the solution for separation of GA and autonomous drones in unsegregated airspace (ie Class G or not in some special restricted airspace created for purpose) It's a contentious subject as the Amazon launch of drone delivery trials in the Darlington area, within restricted airspace created for the purpose, has demonstrated. Trials are ongoing with many different scenarios but the feeling is that while drones will have to see and avoid, GA will have to step up and make itself visible which may involve minimum EC equipage. The message today is if you're thinking of upgrading your transponder maybe leave it for a while.

Licensing and Training Simplification Project
A Review of UK pilot licensing regulations started in 2022 conducted in three phases. Phase 2 has recently completed and changes come into force on 1st October 2025.

- There are pragmatic changes to the PPL(A) syllabus which will not affect many of us like reduced minimum flight time and training for moving maps and partial power failure.
- There is also a rationalisation of licence types. The UK will cease issuing the LAPL(A) and the NPPL(A) will become the single UK 'sub-ICAO' licence. Existing LAPL(A) licences remain valid although from October 2026 they must be revalidated as per PPL(A) or NPPL(A). The privileges of NPPL(A) remain the same.
- A new Combined licence which both Part-21 (the old EASA types) and Non Part-21 aircraft (microlights and vintage) ratings to be endorsed onto a single licence document.
- Changes to the refresher training. Unfortunately, while many of the proposed changes are welcome, the proposals include significant changes that AOPA believes will change the original intention and nature of the refresher training and that do not simplify the revalidation by experience regulation, rather the opposite. More on that when the details are clearer.

Flying over gliding sites
Having recently had an airprox over Challock, which I was unaware of until the email arrived, had diligently diverted around and seen nothing on Pilot Aware, it seemed appropriate to signpost the recently refreshed CAA "Flying over gliding sites information page" Google "CAA gliding sites"

Potential aviation issues created by Solar Farms
GAAC are fielding a number of cases of Solar Farms affecting airfields. The following issues have been identified. Rather than go into more detail here, there is a lengthier document on the FFA website news page.

a. Loss of land for EFATO / Emergency Landing
b. Glint and Glare
c. Turbulence
d. Wildlife

NFU insurance – Travel and Public Liability
We have previously highlighted the inconsistency which NFU Mutual agencies had exhibited in relation to whether to allow airfield cover in their Farm Select Policy. Following some high level discussions with the Mutual there is now no reason why they should not issue an endorsement to include public liability for your airfield. There yet remains an inconsistency as to whether there is an additional premium but where applied it appears to be insignificant. [Don't be thrown by the wording - my policy shows two endorsements : one to exclude airfields and another to exclude that exclusion!]

With regards to Annual Travel Policies, some may not know that they will typically exclude flying yourself. With the cost of a European tour and the prospect of being taken ill in the middle of it, many of us may have been winging it with regard to cancellation, medical expenses and repatriation. Further NFU inconsistency with regard to their Annual Travel policy was identified with some covered and others not. There is no reason why existing NFU Annual Travel policy holders should be refused cover when flying themselves, again, sometimes for an additional premium. Sadly, perhaps, NFU are no longer writing annual travel policies for new customers.

Cost Sharing update

Not a big issue for many members but for the record the rules are being tightened up and come into force on 1st October 2025. A new CAA cost sharing website will be available soon

- Share direct costs only – no change there but there is clarification on definition of 'direct costs' being fuel, oil, airfield costs & rental fees
- Requirement for pilots and passengers, up to a maximum of 6, to pay equal shares
- A mandatory passenger declaration form – making clear that a flight is not of an equivalent safety standard to a public transportation flight
- New requirements for advertising flights:
  - Advert must be placed by pilot
  - Must include start and end locations
  - Must include planned dates for flight
  - Pilots must declare type of licence and medical held.
  - Advert must include details of pilot experience (both total hours and hours on type in previous 3 months)
- Removal of age limits

Andrew Cragg

IMPORTANT Membership Matters

Item 1 : Subscription Overpayments

Thank you everyone for your continued membership this year.
25 members who have moved to Go Cardless direct debit have still not cancelled their Standing Orders. 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.

Item 2. Flying Farmers Emails.

We now use emails to send you important regulatory information, requests from members and most importantly, details of events and booking links. 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.

Calendar of Events 2025/26

29 – 31 August	LLA Rally	Leicester Airfield
6 – 7 September	Battle of Britain Air Show	IWM Duxford, Cambs
11 – 14 September	Warbird Weekend	Compton Abbas, Dorset
18– 21 September	Warbird Weekend	Compton Abbas, Dorset
20 – 21 September	Pistons and Props	Sywell, Northants
27 – 28 September	Steward's Cup and King's Cup Air Races	Wellesbourne, Warks
4 October	Flying Finale	IWM Duxford, Cambs
5 October	Race Day	Old Warden, Beds
14 – 19 April 2026	Sun N Fun	Lakeland, FL, USA
19 – 21 June 2026	Real STOL Fest 2026	Breighton Airfiled, Yorkshire
20 – 26 July 2026	AirVenture 2026	Oshkosh, WI, USA

An earnest plea to all male members

Dear friends and male members,

If you haven't had a PSA test done - do so . It is so easy , just a blood test (I have mine done every six months) and mine has been watched for 14 years and last year I had a TURP . Brilliant

Cancer doesn't just happen to other people. I have just lost an acquaintance aged only 57 , and it could have been avoided. I have another ,similar age, who is now waiting for results of a biopsy. Pretty scary stuff.
Don't let this happen to you !!!

Mike Cuttell FFA 27

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

Don't stop flying until the wheels have stopped turning

A few years ago I was coming back from Mallorca in the day, but hit headwinds making it a longer, more turbulent, tiring flight than expected. It became obvious that we wouldn't make North Yorkshire before dark, so we diverted into William Procter's in Essex.

William contacted Border Force for us and alerted them of our change of plan.

On landing, I relaxed and committed the sin of not concentrating until the wheels stop turning and drifted off the centre line. The wing tip just caught the tall oilseed rape bordering the strip. Luckily I wasn't going too fast at the end of the landing run, but it was just as though I had thrown an anchor out of the left hand wing tip and it ground looped us into the crop.

No damage other than my pride! After a bit of manhandling the aeroplane was back on the runway.

Then whilst having a cup of tea, there was a hard knock on the door and there were 4 customs officers stood there who had come out from Southend. They explained that they had only come to thank William for doing the right thing and alerting them of my change of plan and that I had done the right thing not to push my luck and run out of daylight! They never even asked for passports or wanted to see if we had brought any contraband in.

Paul Stephens

Aged farmer's flying experience

In 2005, I was in the USA fixing some engineering problem (AA, BA, AB, BB); i.e. upside down or the wrong way round. It was in Utah, not far from the Idaho border.

At the local airport was a Murphy Rebel for sale with 250 hours on the clock. It was moderately painted with an unfussy interior. The builder had fitted an unknown engine which on the test flying had low oil pressure so he bit the bullet and replaced it with one with a $12,500 ticket. I flew it for about 20 hours after work, liked it, bought it and shipped it back to the UK.

The Rebel, with its wide track aluminium undercarriage and tail wheel, is very stable on rough ground. It needs to be. In a previous model, I had been flying down the West Coast of Scotland but could not find the strips on the east side of Jura. Up-and-down we flew but we couldn't spot it. So off to Colonsay and its feudal Lord. It has a sort of a landing strip across the golf course with a little green hut to the side and a hill and fence to the East.



In Arizona I bought this 150HP PA20. I did my FAA Bi-annual with a local inspector. What a lesson! Perhaps more later on his "shot duck" full power stalls. He taught me how to fly the A/C. It was kept on N reg with no problem. I did have a US licence

The wind was out of the West so in we went with a 15 kt tail wind, that's about 80 miles an hour over the threshold. Halfway down the number four fairway, about 250 yards in, we were rolling quite fast towards the fence and the hills. A go around was out of the question. I had raced quite a lot of sidecar motocross so switched that bit of the brain on. Heavy left brake, stick back and I managed to slide off the last 30 miles an hour and stopped facing the little green hut. Try doing that in a J3 or a Pitts.

Jump forward to 2012, G-REBB is in the UK, rigged and running. We checked it out and decided to fit new struts to give it a max all up weight of 1650 lb plus the upgraded tail spring. Having my own shed and airstrip did help. That's why I live in the North East of England, there is room to do things. Also, willing to lose money, I have become a farmer, some say so I could join the Flying Farmers Aassociation (FFA). I was also a gas safe plumber and later a woodburning biomass boiler troubleshooter (200kW, heat a house, flat and cottage via a 60 meter heat pipe). I also play trombone in two street bands but not at the same time.

Independent observers might have spotted these things don't add up, not enough time.

Anyway, in 2017 after lambing, we got to work on G-REBB with the help of Noel Robinson (retired airline pilot and CAD expert) and Bob Harrison (retired CAA engineer plus Mustang dog house design designer and builder) we obtained a permit for the Rebel.

I did the test flying. I don't pretend to be an expert but my strip has its challenges. It faces Northwest/Southeast. You take off Northwest downhill at about 10° slope. You land uphill to



This is what happens when an ex public school, ex short service commission RAF pilot and practising barrister pays a visit. He never paid the landing fee donation. His last words "See you in court".



Here is the AVID FLYER on the lawn at our stately home. It was the first to fly in the UK. Reg G-OVID.I just used it like an Enduro bike to visit surprised farmers with long fields.

the Southeast usually with a tail wind. A 440 V electricity pole lurks to the Southwest. The strip is 420 m long.

If you do a conservation of energy equation to the problem, that gives you about 600 m straight and level, enough for a DC3! (Children and young parents get your ONC Mech Eng grandad to explain this for you). There is also a farm with sheds in the valley about 200 m from the threshold. Overflying this, depending on the wind direction and velocity, strange things can happen. Let's just settle for 500 feet/sec up or down for a few microseconds. With no go around possible, you grin and bear it, hop over the fence and run up the hill. You never use more than 300m.

I don't encourage visitors. Harry, from Fishburn airfield, a retired granite worktop importer, would pop in. The soul stranger was Steve Parrish, the super bike racer, often on telly and a low hours pilot. He actually listened to my briefing, put those barn door flaps to max drag position on his 172 and kitted down, using only half the strips length. That explains why he was British champion a few years ago. He picked up his daughter who was a student at Northumbria University and flew away to his dacha in the Deep South.

Students of grass cutting may notice the summer long grass length on part of the strip. I don't own the strip. The farmer, who once was in my rugby team, likes his grass. Grass is energy and sells at £35 a round bale (£50 in Surrey). So I cut two approximate 250 m strips, adequate for takeoff. Landings, with a tail wheel, are a bit different. Years ago, before fear intervened, I used to do tailwheel checkouts for pilots and got the syllabus down to 6 sentences, three for takeoff and three for landing.

So landing in (or on) long grass, over the hedge at 60 miles an hour (or 1.3 times the stall speed if you read lots of books) was number one. Keep it straight and fly 1 foot above the ground, number two. Then altogether stick back and flare and get those feet dancing on the rudder pedals, number three and keep it straight.

I modestly held my own record. A long time ago, still racing motocross (solo), and I owned an Avid Flyer, the first in the UK. It was a tailwheel model otherwise Newtonian laws (all three of them) would have ruined the exercise. I kept it at a local Laird's farm (I moved in high circles) in a Dutch barn. I would pull it by hand, with the wings folded, up the country lane to the hayfield. Unfold the wings and triple check the wing pins were in position along with their locking clips. (I often had nightmares of whizzing along at 80 miles an hour and 1200 feet and the wings folding, putting us both into kestrel diving mode with no happy ending).

Anyway, winter was a doddle, apart from puddles and cowpats, the grass was short. Come spring (that's May in the north) the grass would grow, just like lambs and children. My record in the silage field was 14 inches (356 mm) grass length for takeoff and landing. The Avid had a 582 two-stroke motor that peaked at 6800 RPM. Much higher than my Husky Enduro bike. Anyway, takeoff was full throttle, full flaps down, stick forward keep it straight with your feet and feel it off the ground. Great fun but you need to know your aircraft. I never took passengers, much too dangerous. Landing was as before, but with lots of stick back.

Back to the Rebel. September 2017 it got its first permit. I flew about 25 hours until September 2018. It then rested until March 2019 when we got it ready for its permit renewal. We had run it on a weekly basis over the winter. I realise this article is many months late but like Christmas, it's more fun if you wait awhile. G-REBB was sold on Afors, April, 2019. Why you might ask? Well, in the 40 foot container was something else along with 2000 feet of used 4 x 2 SME lumber. You may have to wait a while before all is revealed.

Ps. The average age of farmers is 61. All named people in this article are the wrong side of 70. Young people seem to find it more exciting to walk down pavements, looking at their phones and bumping into lamp posts.

HIM UP NORTH

He has a small farm near NE21, with a few Shorthorn cattle plus calves, cross bred sheep plus the odd litter of saddleback pigs. All are Pasture fed (not the pigs). He sells delicious well hung meat. Is he the only FFA member still alive in the North East?

Mike Stow

We are always greatful for your stories and experiences for this column, please email us anything you think might be of interest to flyingfarmersnewsletter@gmail.com

Programme 2025



By the time you receive this Newsletter all the main events this year will have taken place, with the exception of this year's AGM.

This year's FFA's AGM will be held on Thursday 25th September at Elmsett, by kind permission of Charles Course. Our Guest speaker in the afternoon will be: Martin Robinson – CEO of AOPA. Full details will be on the website.

The Committee and I would like to thank all organisers that have hosted events this year, with Helen Cobb organising the Tour to France (Thank you Helen) Nigel Edwards & R. Howard running the two events postponed from 2024, and all others. The events are one of the main attractions of the association, members meeting up and seeing other farms etc..

I would like to thank Alf, for setting up and running the " WhatsApp " groups for this year's events. This has worked so well, running up to the event, and during these events.

We have updated the "Events Organiser's Guide" which is now in the events folder on the website and is available to all organisers. Looking ahead to next year 2026, we have a programme of events coming together, these will be announced at the AGM. A huge thank you to David Keene who has organized our "Pop In" visits, they are so successful and enable us to meet up during the Autumn / Winter months, I know we are all looking forward to more to come in 2025/26. For all Pop-Ins, details will be on the "Website " As these are confirmed. If any Member wishes to offer their Airstrip for a Pop-In, please will you contact me directly, and we will try and fit them into the programme. Neville.stops@gmail.com

Neville Stops

◉ Events for 2025/26

- 25th September – 2025 AGM – Elmsett.

◉ **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 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 December newsletter is 30th October 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..

The 51st FFA AGM, Elmsett Airfield, Thursday 25th September 2025

The FFA Committee give notice that the 51st AGM of the Flying Farmers Association will take place on Thursday 25th September 2025 at Elmsett Airfield, Suffolk by kind permission of Charles Course.

We will gather for tea/coffee by 10:30 and the AGM will start promptly at 11:00. We are being provided with a room, buffet lunch and speaker, who this year will be Martin Robinson, CEO of AOPA.

Although the FFA will cover most of the cost of the day, we do ask members to contribute £30.00 per head for any guests they bring, as the funds for the day are derived from members' subscriptions. We will leave it to your discretion how you classify 'guest', as the FFA membership does cover your family but some partners can also be classified within the family membership.

The closing date for entries will be 13th September 2025.

Landing fees are free, thanks to Charles Course, owner of the airfield.

- 10:00 – Arrival
- 10:30 – Gather for tea/coffee by this time
- 11:00 – The AGM will start promptly
- 13:00 – approximately, a buffet lunch will be available
- 14:00 – Speaker
- 15:00 – Depart at will

In turn, Alf Oliver and Rebecca Rayner will stand down from the Committee in order, but both are willing to stand for election again.

If you would like to nominate any full member (with their permission) or to nominate yourself (with a proposer) to stand for election as a committee member, then please send an email to Paul Stephens **(chix@farmline.com)** or by post to **Moor Farm, West Heslerton, Malton, North Yorkshire YO17 8RU**, nominating this person no later than 3 days before the date of the AGM. The letter should be signed by both the proposer and the proposed.

If you would like any items placing on the agenda, please send to Paul Stephens at the above email or postal address.

Look forward to seeing you on the day
Paul Stephens, FFA Chairman

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First Aid 30th April





When Neville mentioned to me of the possibility of a CPR training day for the FFA it immediately brought to mind a very serious medical emergency a close friend of mine (Stephen) had last October. He was standing in the kitchen of his home talking to a friend when he suddenly without warning collapsed with a cardiac arrest. To all intents and purposes dead. VERY FORTUNATELY a decorator working in another room rushed to his assistance. He (the decorator) was a very fit amateur long distance runner and had CPR training. He immediately commenced CPR on Stephen whilst emergency services were called. He continued non stop for thirty minutes until the Air Ambulance and land services arrived and took over. Stephen was then whisked off to hospital for further treatment.

To cut a long story short Stephen remained in hospital for two weeks or so and made a full recovery with no damage to his heart or other major organs. He was later told his heart had stopped beating for 28 minutes. A fantastic outcome against all the odds as without the decorators timely intervention Stephen would have undoubtedly died. So a CPR training day was a definite YES for me. Wednesday 30 April as forecast was a very sunny and warm day with light winds, perfect flying conditions for the 15 aircraft which arrived to Martin's immaculate strip in good time to enjoy tea and biscuits before the 10.30am start.

Martin kicked off the proceedings by welcoming Adam Carr and Jon Steven's from the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Service. Adam and Jon then began to give us an insight into some of the sobering facts and figures associated with their work. They told us there are approximately 35,000 cardiac arrests per year of which 33% did not receive CPR. Every minute without it gives a 10% less chance of survival. The survival rate is 8-10% in the UK whilst in Europe it is three times higher, where CPR training is mandatory in schools for over 12 year olds. The UK is just starting to implement training in secondary schools. We were then talked through the basics of what to do if confronted with a collapsed person. We were told to think: DOCTORS ABC.

- **D** Danger: Make sure area safe
- **R** Response: Are you OK? Try to rouse them.
- **S** Shout for help.
- **A** Airway
- **B** Breathing: Listen, feel and look for signs of breathing.
- **C** Call for help: Ring 999
- **Then start CPR**

We were then all then given a chance to practice what we had learned on the many dummies placed around the lawn.

Under Adam and Jon's guidance we were shown how and where to place our hands in the right place over the heart. It's important to press down to approximately one third of the chest depth two times a second . This is very tiring so, if there is someone else to help, change over every two minutes. It's very important not to stop as the whole point of the exercise is to do the job of the heart (which has stopped working) to pump blood to the





brain to keep it functioning.They likened it to pumping air into a tyre with a hole in it. As long as you keep pumping, blood pressure to the brain is maintained, if you stop it is lost.
After some 30 minutes of furious pumping activity by us all, confident we had all saved our respective patients we adjourned for drinks and a delicious lunch served in Martin and Annette's house. Well fortified we reassembled for the afternoon session. This was to be a lesson on how to use a defibrillator.
After a short talk on the do's and don'ts we were let loose to try our luck on the dummies. We were taught how to switch on the machine and listen to its instructions. It would then Instruct the user how and where to place the electrical pads whilst a second person continued to give CPR. When the defibrillator decided a shock was necessary it would give a warning to stand clear. After much hilarity and some serious learning Adam and Jon drew the day to an end by declaring most patients had been saved whilst one or two were read their last rights. Martin then gave a vote of thanks to Adam and Jon, presenting them with an FFA clock and a further donation of £390 collected at lunch. He thanked them for making it such a fun day and giving us all the confidence of knowing what to do if confronted with a collapsed person. All aircraft then departed barring one which developed a rough running engine. Martin (as always) came to the rescue by flying the occupants home, leaving the poorly aircraft at Stones to be recovered later. A big thank you to Martin and Annette for hosting us at their beautiful home and arranging such a splendid day.

Gordon Bellerby



Dear Martin and all members of the Flying Farmers Association,

Your kind donation of £742.00 will directly help the people of Essex & Hertfordshire when they need it most.

On behalf of all the people who your support will assist, we would like to say a big and heartfelt thank you – your support is very much appreciated.

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance, unlike NHS emergency services, is a charity providing a free life-saving Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) for the critically ill and injured of Essex, Hertfordshire and surrounding areas. Your generosity and goodwill saves lives by helping us remain operational.

If you would like to find out more about the positive impact you have made, we would be delighted to welcome you to one of our Visitor Centres at our North Weald or Earls Colne airbase. To book a tour please visit www.ehaat.org/visitor-centre or call us on 0345 2417 690.

Once again, on behalf of us all, a very sincere thank you. We hope that you will continue to support us in the future.

Warmest Wishes,

Sarah + Liz

Sarah Crawley & Liz Fox
Supporter Care

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Fischer Farms Upright Farming & Team Lotus 14th May

A Day at the Food Enterprise Park and Classic Team Lotus

Wednesday, 14th May dawned bright and breezy, with a dozen aircraft arriving from around the UK at Seething airfield (EGSJ, just southeast of the Norwich zone). After enjoying coffee and pastries, a group of 23 people boarded a local minibus for a short drive to the new Food Enterprise Park (FEP) east of Norwich. Ed Howard, the day's organiser, added to the journey with a commentary over the bus PA, sharing interesting historic facts about Norwich and Norfolk. (Did you know that during the Middle Ages, urine was collected from the multitude of pubs in Norwich to help in the manufacture of dyes for the wool industry?)



At the FEP, we were greeted by Clarke Willis MBE, one of the leading figures in agribusiness in East Anglia and a director of the FEP. Our first visit was to FlowerVision, a hi-tech flower wholesaler. We learned that every single container of flowers is photographed automatically as it is taken into stock, with the photos uploaded directly to the website so that florists can choose the actual items that will be delivered the next day.



Clarke then guided us around the Food Innovation Centre. (Tony's trip in June will visit Condimentum, the state-of-the-art mint and mustard mill.) He gave a fascinating presentation about the purpose of the FEP and its showcase occupier, Fischer Farms. On a 5-acre site, the company is revolutionising the future of farming with a large-scale vertical farming and hydroponics facility. The £30m unit can produce as many crops per year as 1,000 acres of conventional land, yet uses 95% less water. Food for thought…



The group then returned south of Norwich to the Bird in Hand at Wreningham, the 'local' for sports car company Lotus at Hethel (former home to the USAF 389th Bomb Group during World War II). After a delicious buffet, we visited the home of Classic Team Lotus, a stone's throw from the Lotus Cars factory. This location is arguably a shrine to one of the great names in motorsport. The building is brimming with priceless racing cars and memorabilia spanning the entire history of Lotus and the fabled drivers drawn to the team by the brilliance of founder Colin Chapman. Pride of place went to the championship-winning Lotus 79, resplendent in its distinctive black and gold livery, which introduced the concept of ground effect.



We enjoyed a very humorous and insightful illustrated talk and tour by long-time Lotus employee and aficionado Richard Parramint. We were also honoured to be greeted by Clive Chapman, the founder of Classic Team Lotus and son of the late Colin Chapman.

After lots of discussion and questions, and a mandatory visit to the CTL shop, the group returned to Seething to travel home.

Many thanks to Ed Howard, Clarke Willis, Clive Chapman, and Richard Parramint for a splendid, interesting, and insightful day.

Patrick Peal

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

Day 1: Condimentum* 17th June

The Colman's factory (Condimentum Ltd.) is based at the Broadland Food Innovation Centre, Norwich, which is a 100 acre park with 14 small scale food industries. The Centre was first established during the Covid lockdown in 2022 and offers special facilities including conference rooms, test kitchens and meeting spaces.

At Condimentum they produce premium quality English Mustard (Colman's Mustard in the distinctive yellow tins with red writing) and mint sauce. Condimentum Ltd. was formed by mustard and mint growers in 2017 after years of sole Unilever ownership. Originally there were 17 farmers supplying mustard seed to Condimentum and now there are 37. They are all shareholders and partners in the business and they have created a sustainable supply chain for the future along with safeguarding the Norfolk connection.



We were given a short talk and then we were kitted out in red hairnets and white coats. No jewellery or watches or even pens and notebooks can be taken into the factory to avoid any risk of contamination as factory hygiene is an absolute priority.

The investment in the new Centre was huge, around £11 million from various sources, which took the site from a muddy field to a fully operational food factory in just 11 months. Large building developments are planned on the site which will continue to expand Condimentum in the near future.

The mint for mint sauce is processed fresh from the fields within two hours of collecting. Simply mixed with water and vinegar allowing the retail buyers to add sugar tailored to their customers' tastes.

The mustard seeds are supplied direct by the growers and the mustard is uniquely fine-milled to produce the mustard flour. We learned that there are two types of mustard seeds which are used in the process. There are white/yellow mustard seeds and oriental mustard seeds (brown), both grown in the UK. The seeds are blended together to produce the distinctive Colman's taste. Condimentum now also produces Dijon mustard after extensive battles with the French producers.

The products are prepared at the Food Innovation Centre and then shipped out in bulk to their retail buyers who pack it in their own packaging and carry out the marketing.

A fascinating visit to a state-of-the-art food factory pushing forward with new technology but retaining their individual small scale charm and traditional identity and very importantly, supporting British farmers.

Anthea Brown 1st July 2025



*The term "condiment" ultimately derives from the Latin word "condimentum", which means "spice, seasoning, or sauce".

Langham Dome visit 17th June – Part 1



After a pleasant lunch stop at the Chequers at Binham, we boarded the coach for the short drive to Langham airfield. On arrival we were greeted by Henry Labouchere the renowned de havilland moth specialist and pilot who had brought his wonderful Austin 7 to show us.

We all admired the replica spitfire, which had been placed on a large pedestal next to the dome,as a memorial to Richard Younghusband who sadly died in a spitfire crash near RAF Langham in 1953.

Entering the Dome for the first time Mark Glaister author of Attack and Defence gave us a detailed account of how the dome had been used to train anti - aircraft gunners by using moving images projected onto the inside of the Dome. Conceived by Henry Christian Stephens, a naval officer some 45 domes were built in the UK but over 300 worldwide.

Built in 1942 the Langham Dome is one of only six remaining domes left in the UK, and is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument thanks to a group of enthusiastic locals and funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and a variety of other grants.

Having flown over the Dome and admired it from the air the week before, and then visited it with the flying farmers on a beautiful summer's day, most of us would agree that Langham Dome Museum is well worth a visit.

Charlie Papworth FFA member 789.

Langham Dome - Part 2

After leaving the impressive new factory of Condimentum, we travelled north to Bingham for lunch and onto Langham Airfield. This has primarily reverted to agriculture and chicken houses although in one small corner remained a wartime building. This happened to be Langham Dome.

The purpose of the dome was to train anti-aircraft gunners. Prior to this time, gunners were just aiming directly at the aircraft which of course meant that when the bullets arrived at the aircraft, the aircraft had already moved on and escaped the shells! Presumably, not many air gunners had been pheasant shooting.

The inside of the dome is curved and by a clever projection system, an image of the aircraft moving across the sky was created. Also, they were able to create the position of the bullets from the machine gun so the instructor could identify where the line of fire was going and where it should be redirected. This essential training meant that the gunners success rate increased three or fourfold. It was apparent that some FFA members needed a little more training!

Forty-five of these domes were erected around the country for training all the services. Six remain intact but Langham is the only one that has been completely renovated. This was only possible with the help of local trustees and the Lottery Heritage Fund.

The concept was the precursor to virtual reality and the Americans were keen to use the idea for IMAX and 3D cinemas. The main inspiration of the concept came from an RAF



officer called Henry Stephens. The invention has been compared to the great Alan Turing of Enigma fame, both inventions contributed to the saving of many Allied lives. Henry's family is descended from the Stephen fountain pen ink family. Henry's nephew now runs the Cholderton Estate which incidentally is our neighbour at Grateley.

Stephen and Karen Goddard

Day 2: Radar Museum, Neatishead 18th June



Mike Cuttell at RAF Neatishead

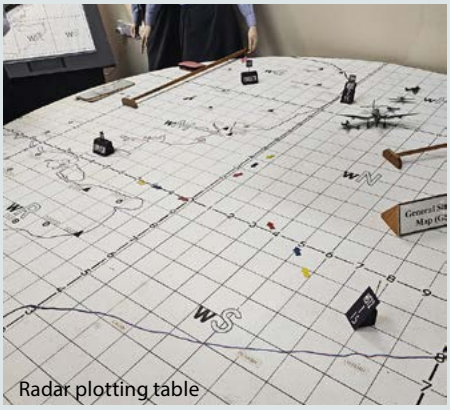
Yet again the weather was perfect and having had a very agreeable breakfast at the Sprowston Manor Hotel we boarded our bus again. Just by way of explanation, our bus was double decked with us all upstairs and luggage below and in all ways its size was challenging when on anything but motorways but our driver Mark was one of those unflappable people who took everything in his stride as we gradually became aware since a lot of this journey was along twisting ,narrow roads which at one point was barred by roadworks entailing our driver, without the assistance of a rear camera, having to reverse some 200 yards or more. However an alternative route was available and , somewhat late, we duly arrived.

RAF ADRM, Air Defence Radar Museum , as it is known is known is now a charitable trust. It comprises an extensive operations block, partially underground, ancillary buildings and various outside exhibits. It also has a huge round dome housing an active radar reflector monitoring the skies to the east of Britain and was part of the Chain Home system developed to protect our country during WW11 . It played a pivotal role in the Cold War era.

Leading up to the building of this complex was work carried out by several immensely skilled radio pioneers whose initial work had been carried out in 1928 by Charles Wright a naval officer and L S Alder, but then came along two scientists named Wilkins and Sir Robert Watson-Watt and it was they who were responsible for discovering that radio waves could be distorted when they came into contact with metal objects and working with some incredible looking radio valves (on display for us to see) they were able to develop a primitive radar system by 1938 although ,initially they could only establish the distance of an incoming object, it took a little longer to establish the height of that object and it was through guidance from Neatishead that a Czech pilot from 68 squadron was able to make his first kill.

We were taken to sit in the Control Room still equipped with radar screens in a double bank providing info to WAAFs writing on the event boards as info came in. This, just two years into the war, assisted interception of enemy fighters and bombers. RAF Neatishead continued to provide a service for 45 years until more modern and more efficient electronics met the ongoing Cold War needs. This part of the station was manned by 40-70 people.

It became a Master station until 1966 when a tragic fire destroyed the control room in a fire so severe that the whole complex had to be flooded to extinguish the blaze which was started as a prank by a member of staff in a dustbin, but it cost the lives of three firemen and the villain was sentenced to seven years in prison and it was not until 1992 that the underground element was operational once again and it closed finally in 2004. Yet, it opened as a radar museum in 1994 according to their history sheet



Radar plotting table



Radar scoring board

We had a very comprehensive and realistic briefing by Mark and Vince assisted by Lydia and Stuart as we all sat at the consoles in the control room. One could just imagine the high level of tension experienced by those operatives as signals came and were relayed to RAF Bentley Priory and elsewhere for onward distribution to fighter stations.

There was a great deal to see here and each of the ante rooms had been well stocked with priceless artefacts including some of the original and extremely primitive looking electronics from whom today's highly sophisticated equipment has been derived. I was left wondering how they knew just how to design a , seemingly complicated ,radio valve like those on display to produce what their experiments required . We have come a long way since those days but one cannot help but marvel at what those early pioneers achieved.

Outside we saw a Bloodhound surface to air missile, a rapier missile and their respective launch cabins.

Mike Cuttell. FFA 27

Visit to Strumpshaw Hall steam museum



Strumpshaw village, in which the museum is to be found is situated about 6 miles south east of the city of Norwich. The museum itself is in the grounds of Strumpshaw Hall estate, owned by the Key family, and is housed in a collection of converted former farm buildings.The main house was built back in 1839, is a Grade 2 listed building, and looks very grand.

Back in the fifties Wesley Key, an extraordinary man, a farmer, agricultural engineer of some standing, and entrepreneur with a love of steam, started it all. He had been amassing a private collection of steam engines and finally brought them to where they are now and in 1964 the museum was opened.

Wesley's son Jimmy, and eventually his grandson William, took on the collection after his death in 1995 and with the help of an enthusiastic band of volunteers, it grew. Sadly they both died early in life and the responsibility passed on the Wesley's only daughter, Kiki who is running it to this day, still with help from the enthusiastic volunteers. So that's the background.

We arrived at the estate and were immediately impressed by the welcome from the volunteers who run things day to day. As they only open on Sundays and we arrived during the week they opened especially for us. In the grounds as we arrived there was a Foden D-type steam wagon of 1931 vintage, in full steam waiting to take any of us [mostly the ladies] on a "fun" ride around the paddock. We all also had a ride on the narrow gauge train "Jimmy". This took us on a short tour around the house grounds. With such lovely weather the outdoors was very enjoyable.

But the main event was indoors. I don't quite know what I was expecting, but I wasn't quite prepared for such an eclectic collection, from massive steam road rollers to vintage cars, to huge steam pumping engines and a vintage threshing machine. Not just that, there were two lovingly restored [a massive labour of love over many years] working fairground rides - a galloper carousel ride, and another ride who's name escapes me, but you go round and round and up and down, It's like a "walzer" but without swivel seats. Anyway it was plenty fast enough for me. The amount of work required for the restoration of this piece of kit could not be overstated. It seems it took 5 years in the hands of one very knowledgeable chap [I believe he was called Malcolm] and he explained that every part had to be dismantled and inspected for flaws. It was then painstakingly restored and reassembled having been brought up to modern safety standards. It gets an MOT every year.

Oh, I forgot to mention the theatre organs of which one is a massive fully working Christie Wonder Organ; you know, the sort that rises out of the floor in front of the stage or screen with the guy already at the keys - very Art Deco. Behind the scenes are all the pumps and pipes, and moving vanes. We were treated by Steve to a mini concert, just for us, playing such oldies as "roll out the barrel", "my old man said follow the van" and "blue birds over the white cliffs of Dover". Great nostalgic stuff.

The museum itself, although, not massive, was certainly big enough and was full of surprises with such a wide range of exhibits, some of which have not been mentioned. For me it was a great place to visit and an even greater privilege. I say that because we had a chance to speak with the enthusiastic and selfless volunteers, without whom the museum could not have existed. One guy actually drives up from Croydon each week They could not have been more welcoming to us and facilitated a great, informal, and exceptional visit. A thank you to Pip, Carol and all the others for looking after us so well.

For anyone interested in this museum they are open only on Sundays and Bank Holidays from 10.30 to 3.30. Entrance is only £6.00 (a bargain) and I thoroughly recommend it. There is also a small campsite there. However they do host a massive steam and classic car rally and other events throughout the year. They have an interesting website which has more specific information about their history, exhibits and activities. A great visit.

Ray Friedlander.

Day 3: Caister Car Collection 19th June

If you have even the slightest love for cars or motoring history, Caister Castle Motor Museum is absolutely worth a visit. The collection is extensive and beautifully maintained, with something for every car enthusiast – from vintage classics to unique rarities.

What really stood out were the volunteers – incredibly knowledgeable, friendly, and clearly passionate about the vehicles and their histories. Their insights added a lot to the experience and made the stories behind the cars come alive. The museum has a strong sense of nostalgia, and it was a treat walking through so much motoring history.

The Caister Car Collection is housed in a purpose built museum in the grounds of the 15th century Caister Castle. The castle, a picturesque moated ruin and one of the earliest buildings in England to be built of brick, was built by Sir John Fastolf in about 1432.

The Caister Castle Car Collection at Caister Castle Car Museum is believed to be the largest collection of privately owned motor vehicles in the country. The collection contains more than 120 cars and over 100 bikes which range from the first real car in the world - an 1893 Panhard et Levassor - to a customised 1990's Harley Davidson motorcycle. The museum proudly displays fine and rare veteran, vintage, classic and sports cars including British Formula One racing driver and world champion Jim Clark's Lotus, a Cadillac once owned by Christine Keeler, a pair of Rolls Royce two seat racing cars built for the film Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, and the BRM driven by Sir Jackie Stewart. There is also the very first Ford Fiesta that came off the production line. The collection is complimented by displays of touring automobiles, bicycles, motorcycles, horse-drawn vehicles, baby carriages, pedal cars and other related items.

Caister Castle was commissioned in 1432 by Sir John Fastolf. The 90 foot tower remains intact and visitors can climb to the top for a magnificent view of the castle ruins and the surrounding area. The castle is of historical interest both because it is one of earliest buildings in England of importance to use brick as the main construction material and because of its connection with Fastolf and later the Paston family.

Sir John Fastolf: Sir John Fastolf was an important English soldier during the 100 year war. He drew inspiration for the design of his castle whilst fighting in France. Whilst in London, Fastolf became friends with John Paston who later became his lawyer.

The Paston Letters: Caister Castle was left by Sir John Fastolf to his lawyer, John Paston, in his will. Fastolf's other heirs, Yelverton and Howes, did not accept John Paston's ownership of the castle and legal battles ensued for many years. Eventually Yelverton and Howes sold their rights to Caister to the Duke of Norfolk. In 1469, the Duke of Norfolk took advantage of the war to try and seize Caister, his 30,000 men sieged against the garrison of 30 in the castle.



Highly recommend stopping by if you're in the area – it's a fantastic way to spend a couple of hours!

Neville Stops

FFA visit to Rendcomb Airfield and Miserden Estate 26th June



Unfortunately, the weather first thing on the morning of June 26 was not very favourable for Flying due to low cloud base from about 750 feet up to about 1500 feet with intermittent drizzle and a south south Westerly wind gusting 10 to 15 knots. Five members braved the skies and flew in that morning, and two members flew in the previous afternoon making a total of seven aircraft. As quite often happens the cloud had almost cleared by 10:30 am, the rest of the day being glorious sunshine but with a strong south wind. I must say a big thank you to everyone who decided at very short notice to drive to the event which meant a very early start for some people. One member drove for 4 1/2 hours to the event and then did the same for the home journey making it a very long day!

It was extremely kind of Vic Norman to allow FFA members to land at Rendcomb airfield and let us use the renovated original Officers Mess for coffee and biscuits on arrival. Vic Norman came to meet members and then gave a short talk about his aviation career and how he learnt there and how it had originally been a WW1 airfield at Rendcomb. Vic went on to explain that he eventually managed to buy the land, turning the fields back into an airfield and renovating some of the derelict buildings on the site. A very interesting talk and much appreciated by all of us at the Officers Mess.

We then boarded the coach to take us the 10 miles to Miserden. On arrival Nicholas Wills gave us a brief history of Miserden Estate which was purchased by his great grandfather Captain FNH Wills in 1913. The estate totals 2900 acres – 1200 acres of arable land and 400 acres of permanent pasture are farmed in hand, the rest is woodland and a farm let to a tenant farmer.

After leaving the army, Nicholas took over running the Estate from his father Major Tom Wills in 2017. After a few years, he realised that the very shallow marginal soils of the in-hand farm arable land would benefit from a more regenerative system of farming. Therefore, in the autumn of 2023 Nicholas came to an agreement with contract farmer Toby Baxter to contract farm the arable land.

Toby is a first generation farmer who started contract farming about 23 years ago. Toby is unique in our part of Gloucestershire because he is the only contract farmer who farms grassland with his flock of sheep as well as taking on arable farming. With the move towards regenerative farming being driven by the changing way farmers are being partly subsidised by the Government and farmers/land owners wishing to improve their soils, Toby's sheep come into their own. Toby now direct drills as much land as possible to improve the structure and organic matter of the Cotswold brash soils that he farms. His flock of sheep consists of 1500 easycare ewes and 2700 Romney ewes of his own and they are all lambed outside during April.

John Vickery (Agrii) is the agronomist for Miserden Estate, and he explained the arable cropping as we toured around the fields on trailers.

For this 2025 cropping year, oil seed rape has been replaced by herbal lay fallow as the Sustainable Farm Initiative payments make the herbal ley fallow a more financially viable proposition than winter oil seed rape.

The winter barley variety at Miserden this year is Maris Otter, an old malting variety which is used for traditional type beers. Maris Otter suits the Cotswold Brash marginal soils which never produce high malting yields even in the best of seasons and Maris Otter is a shy yielder even on better soils.

Three fields of semi organic winter wheat being grown are branded "Wildfarmed Wheat", potentially for milling into flour, providing the wheat meets the grade required. The

"Wildfarmed Wheat" is a blend of different milling varieties. No pesticides, fungicides, or herbicides are applied to the growing crop. Glyphosate can be used to kill weeds before the crop is sown. A small amount of fertiliser and trace elements can be applied to the growing crop. A companion crop of beans was also sown with the wheat, in theory to put a bit of nitrogen into the soil, but unfortunately the crows took a liking to the undersown beans! The rest of the winter wheat being grown conventionally is feed wheat.





Hugo White the Miserden shepherd explained, the sheep enterprise of 1200 Romney ewes plays an important role at Miserden, as the mobs of sheep graze the steep permanent grass banks and parkland, as well as the recently introduced herbal leys.

The lambs we saw grazing the herbal leys are progeny from the Romney ewes crossed with a Hampshire Down ram. Lambs are fattened on the herbal leys, without the aid of any supplementary feed, and are slaughtered when they achieve the required weight and grade. Many miles of electric fence are used to prevent the sheep encroaching on the wide field margins, which are included in environmental land management schemes.

Nicholas has 12 Galloway cattle to graze some of the very steep banks that are partly scrubland, as well as grazing awkward slopes alongside the Miserden Valley stream. Over the years Nicholas and the researchers he has been working with have found that the selective grazing of the scrubby banks by the Galloways has increased the butterfly population on the areas grazed.

Toby has an arrangement with the Estate to use a shed at Jackbarrow Farm Buildings to fatten beef cattle for an Irish beef company called " Buitelaar". The cattle are grazed off site, this is to try and prevent any Tuberculosis infecting the Galloways at Miserden. The beef fattening enterprise fits in well as it utilises screenings from the grain store, turns straw into valuable manure, and utilises the silage from the herbal leys, all part of the regenerative farming ethos at Miserden.

While Nicholas was gradually taking over the running of the estate from his late father, he instigated the idea a centralised heating system for a big percentage of Miserden Village Estate properties. The large project was eventually installed and entailed building a large purpose built shed to house two 360 Kw biomass fuelled boilers, a 20,000 litre insulated hot water tank, two hot water pumps (for pumping the hot water around the village), ancillary equipment, and wood chip storage. It was a massive undertaking and made financial sense in part due to the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme available at the time. The hardest part of the project was the laying of 2km of twin insulated pipes under the extremely stoney ground to the 38 individual properties in the village that were close enough to be connected to the system. At the same time the opportunity was taken to lay ducting for other services in the future especially fibre optic broadband cables. The scheme is expected to pay for itself in 12-15 years from when it was commissioned into operation. Nicholas admits the economics of the system hinges very much on energy prices and he explained how they charge tenants. The boilers use approximately 600 tonnes of wood chip per year, which at the present time is utilising Ash dieback trees from the estate, and in the future Nicholas is hoping they will be able to harvest enough thinnings to provide the wood chip.

Nicholas was extremely good at answering questions about the project and we appreciated being able to visit the boiler building and see the unique method the estate is using to heat a big percentage of a village. It is such a large project to discuss, that if any FFA member needs more information, I suggest they contact Nicholas Wills at the Miserden Estate Office who I am sure would be willing to to discuss the finer details of the system/project.

As a finale, Nicholas allowed us to walk around the beautiful Miserden House gardens at our leisure. What a relaxing way to bring what I hope was such an enjoyable day for all of us to an end.

The journey on the people trailer along the narrow lane back to Gaskills Farm was proof that managing Miserden Estate is logistical nightmare in the 21st century.

I would like to express a big thank you to Nicolas Wills and his team for their time and allowing us to visit Miserden Estate AND a big thank you to Vic Norman for letting us fly into Rendcomb Airfield.

Rendcomb Airfield and Miserden Estate two "quintessential gems of rural England".

Nigel Edwards

During an intermission on our Miserden Estate Walk, Jonathan Trotter of Agrii gave us a hands-on demonstration of his Drone. Impressive, in many ways, but on such a gusty day this machine was rock steady. I felt I was witnessing a new era as this machine performed a preset course around the field in front of us. Agriculture has a reputation of quickly taking to new tech, especially as it is so affordable. Field walking, shepherding stock, broadcasting seed, spraying and other uses come to mind. The best was still to come, he let me have a drive, I was flying, controlling it with pin point precision including landing with seconds of tuition. Amazing demo Jonathan!

Alf Oliver



Special Notes: Many thanks to Alf for setting up the "What's App Group" for the event, brilliant idea, and one that should be repeated for all events.

Neville had the good idea of putting the event organiser's mobile phone number with the event details picture. This facilitates direct contact with the organisers should members wish to know last minute details and find overnight accommodation if required.



Air Force Valley 3rd July

Many of our The Flying Farmer visits this summer have been fraught with poor weather; we have become more like the Driving Farmers than the Flying Farmers. Our visit to Royal Air Force Valley on Thursday, the 3rd of July was similarly afflicted. The forecast was for gusts over 30 knots from the West on the day. Eighteen members elected to go to Wales the day before. Richard Howard had negotiated for us all to stay in the Royal Celtic Hotel in Caernafon. Flying Farmers events are always good fun. As a group we are mutually interested in each other's farming lives so the conversation flows easily and much valuable information is exchanged; of course there is fun and laughter too.

Wednesday 2nd July was a beautiful day but with a strong westerly. I flew through the most turbulent conditions I have flown in since Paul Stephens' visit to Italy when I banged my head on the cockpit roof crossing the Alps. Caernarfon was surprisingly calm when I arrived for lovely tea and cake before we were all coached to our hotel.

Drinks, dinner and early bed was the order of the day. The RCH does a good breakfast and it is recommended. Our coach collected us and took us back to the airfield to pick up the morning arrivals then on to Royal Air Force Valley in brilliant sunshine and a gentle breeze over the beautiful Menai Straits.

On arrival we were met by our two guides, Tom and Reece who are a flying officer and a pilot officer having both graduated from Cranwell as commissioned officers. We lined up under the gate guardian of a Hawk for a photograph to be taken by RAF professional photographers with our backs to the sun. The photo attached is one of our own taken looking into the sun, helpful as we can see the faces of those attending.

It was unfortunate that our visit was very shortly after the incident where two intruders on electric scooters were able to spray paint into the engines of two aircraft at RAF Brize Norton. As a result security was tight. We were told to switch off our mobile phones and no photographing was allowed, at all, anywhere.

RAF Valley is home to Number Four Flying Training School which receives successful graduates of Elementary Flying Training at RAF Cranwell on the Grob 120TP (Prefect). The Prefect, with its turboprop power, digital avionics and retractable undercarriage is quite an advanced first aircraft type when compared to previous EFT trainers such as the Tutor, Bulldog or venerable Chipmunk. Students move on to Basic Flying Training using the Texan T1 advanced turbo-prop trainer which prepares students for Advanced Flying Training on the Hawk T2 jet trainer, the final phase of Fast Jet training for the RAF and Royal Navy.

We were told that 150 students are being trained to fly at various levels on the base, including fixed wing, rotary and search and rescue.

25(F) and IV(AC) Squadron are housed in a modern building owned by a commercial company and leased to the RAF under the Private Finance Initiative where we were met by Squadron Leader Nik who is one of the instructors on the fast jet fighter pilot course. Nik told us that in his time in the Royal Air Force he had been on operations in various theatres. He is a serving officer and does not know where he may be going to next so the less that is known about his history the safer it will be. Need to Know!

Squadron Leader Nik had a nickname attached to his left chest. The RAF has adopted the American habit of referring to individual pilots by nicknames which I can understand is valuable as it is a way of referring simply to different pilots who may have complex and difficult family names to understand on the radio. There are 28 Hawk T2 aircraft at Valley with 40 students being trained on them. On questioning about the throughput of students it became obvious that there are some difficulties with the modern system of MOD employing commercial corporations to carry out differing functions on the same RAF base. The problem being of course that the corporations are profit driven whereas the RAF and RN staff are output driven. Contractors we saw on the station include Ascent, BAE, Babcock, Airbus, Lockheed Martin and some others. It is a real Heinz 57 mix of competing enterprises. With so many different corporations operating on the Airfield it has acquired the nickname of Valley Business Park.

It takes between three and five years and can be as long as seven years to create a fully trained fighter pilot. Some use is made of synthetic or simulated flying, but there can be no substitute for real flying. We were treated to some insights of the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Rich Knighton KCB ADC FREng and his opinions on modern warfare including the use of drones and his dislike of the Hawk as a trainer. Close attention is being made to drone warfare in Ukraine against the Russians.

The average sortie for a pilot in training is about one hour but that may be shortened if the objects of the mission are met earlier. Most students take about 70 hours of Flying time to complete their basic flying training. Students will have completed 45 hours on the Prefect before coming to Valley where they will continue training on the T6 Texan and finally on the Hawk T2. The Hawk will be finished in frontline training by 2040 and the replacement aircraft has not been selected yet.

On the station, there are four waves of training every day, weather permitting with all types of aircraft. The station is right on the coast of Anglesey in the Irish sea where there is a risk of low cloud and icing so these aircraft which are not equipped with de-icing equipment cannot operate on icy days which reduces training days in the winter. We heard that training days are reduced due to a lack of serviceable aircraft as the Hawk T2 requires frequent servicing and while it is no more prone to failure than any other; its use in frequent high energy manoeuvres requires regular maintenance and checking.

Engines time expire rapidly due to high usage and they are sent to Safran in France for overhaul. Hence CAS AVM Knighton's recent statement that Hawk T2 is only producing about half the students that it should be and his drive to replace Hawk T2 as soon as possible. Students who are unable to be accommodated at Valley are therefore being sent to Italy, North America and some at RAF Leeming on a Qatari funded Hawk venture to complete their fast jet training. Sdr Ldr Nik was proud to share that feedback from the frontline confirmed that the RAF Valley output standard is above that of the international options.

Further good news at RAF Valley is that, for the first time in decades, the Defence Budget is increasing in real terms and the review of the flying training system called for in the Strategic Defence Review is generating a completely new 'world class' flying training system within the UK. One that not only accommodates our national demand but with significant training of international students too - no longer will be the need to outsource UK military flying training. The instructors at Valley are already heavily assisting in designing this new flying training system and the intent is that the new aircraft will be built in the UK under license. Sqn Ldr Nik confirmed the new system looks very appealing!

At this point we broke for lunch and were taking to "the crew feeder". This was a tiny restaurant with a choice of three hot meals and soft drinks available to be bought by air crew. Lunch was £3.20 for one dish and a bottle of water.

After lunch we had an opportunity to visit air traffic control where we saw a busy little crew of six people providing a service to the aircraft in the area and on the drome. These controllers can monitor and control aircraft from the surface up to 26,000 feet. There are a number of Danger Areas which are similarly monitored. The intention is to provide instructors and students with the space to be able to carry out all manoeuvres in safety.



Some discussion was given to the difficulties of identifying drones around the airfield and how they can be dealt with should they intrude. Our instructor invited us to do a practice pan with Distress and Diversion as they enjoy the practice. Best to listen in to ensure they are not engaged on a real live D&D first though!

Controllers can take 18 months to be trained before being sent out to other stations for finishing training. RAF Shawbury is the main base for ATC training. We were shown the way in which traffic appears on the screen and goes off it also! The Talk Down system was shown and it is wonderfully simple and effective. More exciting was watching how to monitor traffic going through the Mach Loop. Our excellent visitor guide was Sergeant Kalli whose enthusiasm was infectious. An interesting extra person in the Tower was an instructor from the wave that was using the air field at the time as they are able to communicate directly with their fellow instructor in any aircraft which may require clarification.

We then moved onto 72 squadron where we were greeted by Flight Lieutenant Simon who is the adjutant. We were given a brief history of the squadron through its life from the first Royal Air Force squadron to be taken over from the Royal Flying Corps in the WW1 through an illustrious history flying Spitfire in the second world war then meteor and vampire, rotary in the 70s. 72 squadron has the unique distinction of being the only squadron to have flown both rotary and fixed wing.

72 Sqn is teaching students on the T6 who take nine months before being passed off to move to the Hawk. Groups are split into three flights with a mentor for each.

In the lecture room that we were addressed there was a 7 foot tall slightly mangled propeller blade, with about 20 tiny swastikas pop riveted onto it bearing the name of pilot, the date and the place where a German aircraft was shot down during World War II by 25(F) Sqn. This propeller had been "borrowed" from 25(F) Sqn. We were shown the crew room which had a bar made of a Tucano wing which with its sloping surface must make it difficult to balance a beer on. There are 14 Texans being used by 72 Sqn each at a cost of £8 million. They attempt to complete 40 flights per day and they had eight serviceable aircraft on the day of our visit.

The FTS appears to be short of instructors so there is a mixture of military and civilian Instructor staff as a result. There was some discussion about the Prefect. The RAF name for a Grob 120 turbo prop and its suitability for the task of ab initio training. The squadron gets through eight courses in a year with a change of students every six weeks.

Mounted on the wall in the central atrium of the building is a list of all the students and along the top is a list of the 133 tasks which must be satisfactorily completed in order to complete training. It sounded like fun as I noticed there was one course which is elementary tail chasing among all the other indecipherable and dull sounding tasks.

We heard that a number of the students come direct to the squadron from the University Air Squadrons, which is heartening to know that some use is coming from that source.

Our final venue was the Search and Rescue lecture crew room where we were addressed by Molly who is one of the brave people who hang on the wire from search and rescue helicopters collecting casualties in the SAR. Molly is over 60 years old and extremely fit and very sharp. He enjoyed telling us some of his exploits one of which involved having the wire cut by his colleague in the helicopter when he was clasping the top of the mast on a sailing boat. Any lesser man would certainly have fallen to his death But not Molly he was able to hold onto and slide down the mast on the pitching vessel removing all the expensive equipment fixed thereto to the dismay of the yachts owner. SAR is not for the faint hearted.

We had somewhat extended our visit probably due to the interest shown by our group and the number of interesting questions which gave our guides an opportunity to expand on their work and their experiences. We were ushered out to our MOD bus which took us to our coach which took us back to the airfield and we dispersed forthwith. I flew back to Salisbury and Bill Miazek flew back north to Aberdeen by coincidence both of us arriving within minutes of each other on a beautiful calm clear smooth evening. What a difference a couple of days make.

This was a most interesting and worthwhile visit. I am pleased to say that our president Martin Gosling was able to give a vote of thanks to Richard Howard for the effort he had put into organising the visit for us which due to various complications none of which were of his making took a long time and I would like to add my personal thanks to Richard for an absolutely excellent day, thank you.

I wrote separately to Flying Officer Tom expressing our gratitude for all his effort in making our visit such a success.

Roger Bell

FFA's 2025 French Study Tour

"The Flying Part"

Monday 26thMay
Eleven aircraft headed to Beaune Challenges airport, most clearing customs at Le Touquet braving a sporting crosswind. Others clearing at Albert Bray, Chalons and Troyes, all arriving safely in the afternoon in time to board to the coach to the hotel. One other aircraft had arrived a day earlier, making a grand total of twelve for the week.

Wednesday 28th May
Late morning take off to Valréas Visan airfield. A straight forward flight except for a restricted area 800ft - 6500ft twenty five miles south of Beaune. Fortunately for most of us the area became inactive just before we reached it. Everyone arriving at the lovely grass airfield of Valreas to be met by Ian Watts (our local contact) who provided us with very welcome cool drinks to accompany our packed lunches which were consumed under the shade of aircraft wings or trees before boarding the coach to the hotel.

Friday 30th May
Flight to Le Castellet. This flight was a little more complicated (airspace wise) and the arrival notes for Le Castellet were quite onerous.

On takeoff most aircraft elected to head north east and climb to FL65 to avoid military restricted areas before turning south. The weather was CAVOK so everyone was able to enjoy the stunning scenery en route before arriving at Le Castellet which is at an altitude of 1391ft.

Just over the fence from the airport is the Paul Ricard motor circuit, which aircraft are not allowed to overfly. I'm pleased to report that everyone followed the arrival procedures faultlessly to arrive in good order to a deserted airfield barring the odd helicopter and local club plane.

Those needing fuel were topped up very efficiently by the resident fire crew. Others taking shelter from the heat in the air conditioned terminal to eat their packed lunches before boarding the coach to the hotel.

Sunday 1st June
This flight I suppose was the most complicated because of military restricted areas en route. The shortest route being direct looked impenetrable. But being Sunday most military restricted areas are not active so some aircraft elected for this route begging for transit as they went. Most elected for the low level route along the coast which is a tried and tested VFR route through the military restricted areas. Some parts aircraft need to be at 700ft amsl giving stunning views of the coast before making a ninety degrees right turn north towards Nimes Courbessac some twenty or so miles inland.

Courbessac is situated six miles to the north of Nimes Garons a large international airport, and is in its airspace. ATC at Garons were very helpful and gave us the runway



in use for our destination as there was only À/A radio (in French) at Courbessac.

On arrival at Courbessac a huge grass airfield pilots gave a very plausible rendition of left hand downwind, turning final etc. in French.

All arrived safely, fuelled and eventually boarded the bus for the hotel.

Tuesday 3rd June. The home run
All I can report on this is that some made it home in the day, braving some quite inclement weather in the UK. Some stopped overnight in northern France and others in more southerly parts but all eventually arriving home safely.

Thus bringing to a close another successful and very enjoyable FFA European Tour.

Gordon Bellerby

Hospices civils de Beaune


Courtyard

The first trip of the tour involved a short walk from the hotel to be waiting at the entrance when it opened at 9 o'clock. There, armed with the ubiquitous guide wand, we spent 2 hours wandering through and hearing about this remarkable medieval building.

The Hospices de Beaune was founded in 1443, when Burgundy was ruled by Duke Philip the Good. The Hundred Years' War had recently been concluded but massacres continued with marauding bands still roaming the countryside, pillaging and destroying, provoking misery and famine. The majority of the people of Beaune were destitute, and the area had recently suffered an outbreak of plague. Nicolas Rolin, the Duke's Chancellor, and his wife Guigone de Salins, responded by building a hospital and refuge for the poor but not before getting permission from Pope Eugene IV in 1441 - seems planning permission was slow then too!



The room of the Poor



Chapel with famous alter piece

In conjunction, Rolin also established the "The Nursing Sisters of Beaune" religious order whose nuns would look after the sick.

The first patient in 1452. Elderly, disabled and sick people, with orphans, women about to give birth and the destitute have all been uninterruptedly welcomed for treatment and refuge from the Middle Ages until today.

The first thing you notice in the cobbled courtyard between the two main buildings is the magnificent coloured glazed roof tiles set like a mosaic forming complex diamond patterns characteristic of traditional Burgundian architecture. Then into the main hospital ward with cubicle beds called the "Room of the Poor". At the end is a small chapel with a magnificent alter-piece by Flemish artist Rogier van der Weyden dating from the 15th century commissioned by the founder Nicolas Rolin which has therefore been an integral part of the Hospices de Beaune from the outset. Its fifteen panels depict the Christian theme of the Last Judgment; not a great encouragement to the patients!

Passing through the museum in the building opposite, you come to the apothecary's room where medicines were created, and the pharmacy where they were stored in jars around the walls. Finally, the kitchens; on the wall, a statue to St Martha, the patron saint of housewives. Bet you didn't know there was one! She would be blissfully ignorant of the fact that, today, that role would be too gender specific - I understand she is soon to be re-purposed as the patron saint of housepersons.

The Domaine des Hospices de Beaune is a non-profit organisation which also owns around 61 hectares (150 acres) of vineyard land donated over the years since 1457, much of this classified Grand and Premier cru. Sale of the wine has supported the hospital over the years but since 1859 a charity auction has been arranged taking place on the third Sunday in November amid a three-day festival devoted to the food and wines of Burgundy. More recently, with bidding by professional and private buyers and auctioneers from Christie's and Sotherby's, the barrels attained prices well in excess of the current commercial values providing funds to support the hospital.

The Hospices de Beaune ceased functioning as a hospital in 1971. While a modern hospital was built in the same year, the last patient left the Hôtel-Dieu in 1983, and it was fully converted into a museum by 1988. Since then it has been the location for a number of films including the 2023 film "The Three Musketeers : Milady"

Andrew Cragg



Patron Saint of Housewives



Apothecary's Room



Kitchen

Chateau de Savigny 27th May



After a lunch at Les Pinardiers restaurant in Savigny, we walked the very short distance to the Chateau de Savigny-Les-Beaune, owned by the family of Michel Pont.

The Chateau is, first and foremost, a vineyard producing some excellent Côte de Beaune wines, but, in his lifetime, Michel had a passion for speed and a passion for collecting.

He died in 2021 at the age of 89, but during his lifetime he became an active participant driving for the Fiat Abarth team. Abarth was the performance division of the Fiat car company and they were used primarily in hill climbing, rallying and endurance races. And this seems to be where his passion for collecting began. He saved almost all of the cars that he raced during this era, and in a loft in one of several outbuildings were an extensive collection of some 36 Abarth cars, some of which he personally raced and rallied.

At the further end of this loft were an equally extensive collection of early motor bikes and in the centre section of this large area were glass topped display cases of hundreds of model motor bikes.

A further building then housed a large collection of early vineyard tractors and machinery - some clearly of no practical use in the vineyard but from which development clearly came. The dilapidated state of many of these machines, of which every one had tyres that were flat and destroyed, was sad to see - but how do you continually keep on top of such a large and ancient collection which is not a museum with the attendant maintenance staff, but merely a collection of old machines displayed to show the progress of development over the years?







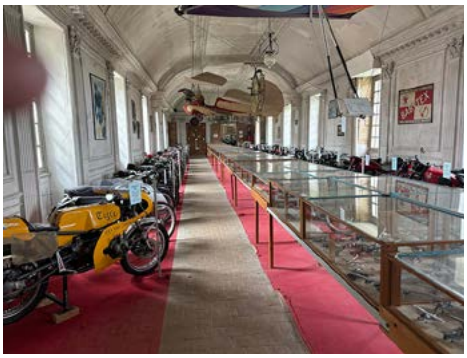


From here we went to see his collection of aircraft in the 'garden'. Imagining there to be maybe be a dozen or so semi modern aircraft such as the Tiger Moth and perhaps a few older Cessnas and Pipers, I was astonished to witness a collection of no fewer than 110 old warplanes from a variety of countries - mostly from the USA, the UK, France, Germany and the Soviets. Nearly all these aircraft were destined to be scrapped or destroyed, but Michel's persuasive nature and extensive contacts within government managed to secure this vast collection - which according to the Guinness Book of Records makes him the worlds biggest private collector of fighter planes. It has to be said that they all looked rather tired and neglected - but, remember, these are a collection and it is not a museum - and they were all destined for the scrap heap anyway.

On our way back to the Chateau, lo and behold, another collection. This time of old fire engines!











Surely this collecting enthusiast could not have any more tricks up his sleeve, and so we wandered back to the chateau itself. In the lower cellar area was yet another collection - this time of an extensive collection of hand tools from a by-gone age, mostly relating to vineyard maintenance, the great majority of which I had never seen before.



Leaving this lower area, we went up the grand stone staircase to the upper floor where, you've guessed it, another collection of motor bikes and old pedal bikes going back to the very earliest of days!

In the middle of this long room were rows and rows of more glass-topped display cabinets showing model aircraft and tanks of every conceivable design from every age of aviation, some displays showing aircraft that participated in particular theatres of war, such as WW1, the Battle of Britain, the D-Day landings and the Vietnam war, to name but a few.

There was one particular design shown in the accompanying photo, of a German aircraft that was so weird in its concept, that one has to question the sanity of the designer - and indeed the team that actually brought it to production!

It got me thinking as to how many hundreds of trillions of pounds/dollars/francs/roubles must have been spent over the last century designing and building a vast array of ever more technical aircraft specifically to perpetuate - and defend against - warfare, and how that vast amount of money may have instead been used in the benefit of mankind. Sadly, mankind is too focussed on warmongering and defending against it. And now we seem to have come full circle with the preferred method of warfare being the sophisticated drone, which removes the danger element to the human attacker, and is many thousands of times cheaper. Much food for thought there.

Then it was wine tasting time again to sample the delights of the production from the Château's vineyards before re-embarking on the coach for a free evening for all.

Undoubtedly Michel Pont was an eccentric collector of almost everything during his lifetime and coupled with his love of speed and danger, clearly lived his life to the full.

Martin Gosling

L'Essentiel de Lavande Estate 29th May



On the fourth day of our 2025 summer tour, we travelled on the coach from our beautiful Hotel La Ferme Chapouton at Grignan through the typical Drôme Provençal clay-limestone landscape of undulating pastures, fields of red poppies, yellow broom, tall thin cypress trees and ancient stone farm buildings to L'Essential de Lavande Estate.

We were warmly greeted by the owner of the farm, Eric and his team who led us into the farm buildings where we were given a talk on the process of how the lavender flowers are distilled and the oil is removed. A model of the distillation process showed exactly how it works. The distillation process is now carried out by a local co-operative. The farm is small scale and organic and labour intensive as the crops are mainly weeded by hand.

Eric explained the difference between the two main types of lavender: lavandin, which is the stronger smelling lavender often used for cleaning products and also as an insect repellent and in aromatherapy as it contains camphor and acts as a stimulant; true lavender, which has a more subtle aroma and can be used in cooking and for perfume and is generally soothing and relaxing.

At the farm there is a small, well stocked shop selling delightful lavender products including the lavender honey produced on the farm from their beehives. There are 15 permanent hives and around 100 extra hives that are imported every summer.

By now the long tables had been set for lunch under the shade of the trees overlooking the sunny valley where the lavender plants are grown. We were slightly too early for the lavender to be in flower but the scent was all around us. We enjoyed a delicious long, lazy lunch of local products including the special rosé wine.

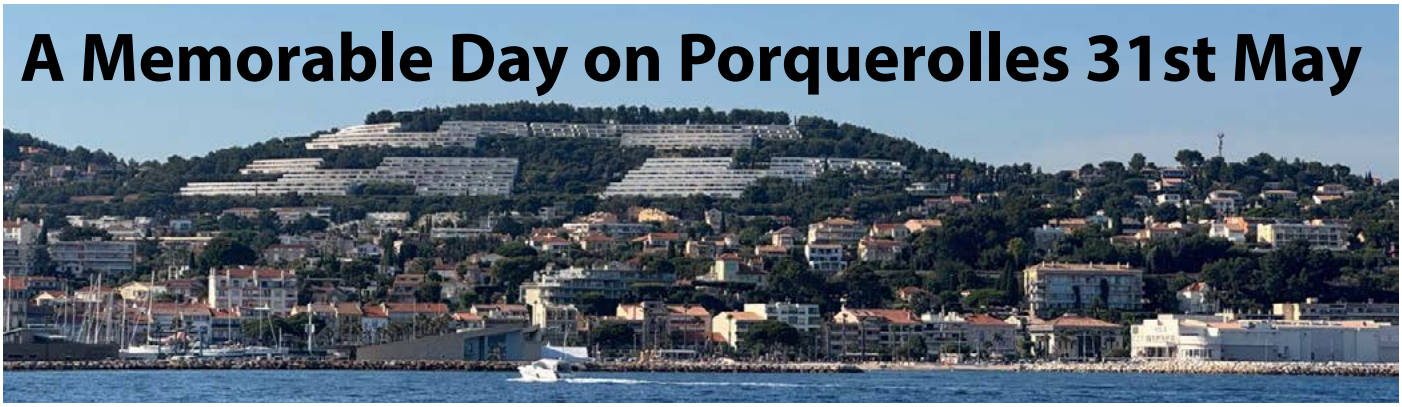
When I told a friend about it she responded that it was an experience that could well be described as "enjoying the best that life can offer" which I thought was very apt.

Anthea Brown





A Memorable Day on Porquerolles 31st May



The Flying Farmers' 2025 tour around France delivered yet another standout experience as we set sail from the port of Bandol at 9:00 a.m. aboard Atlantide 1, a sleek 24-metre catamaran built in 1991. With its two powerful Volvo engines, the vessel cruised smoothly at 16 knots, a spirited start to the day even though we are used to a slightly swifter ground speed.

Bandol's marina offered a picturesque departure, filled with an enviable mix of yachts and sailing boats. Along the charming esplanade, market stalls were just beginning to stir to life. We passed a fisherman preparing a magnificent fresh tuna, his work drawing curious onlookers and setting the tone for a day full of colour and flavour. As we left the harbour, we looked back to see the apartments built gracefully into the hillside, a postcard-perfect farewell.

Upon arrival at the island of Porquerolles, we collected our transport for the day, a fleet of electric bikes. In our case, it was an electric tandem, adding a bit of fun and teamwork to the island tour. Others took off solo, and soon we were all exploring this breathtaking island.

Porquerolles is the largest of the Îles d'Hyères, stretching 7 km long and 3 km wide, and has formed part of the Port-Cros National Park since 2012. With only around 300 permanent residents, it's a tranquil and a well-preserved gem with a doctor, a school, and year-round shops, though visitor numbers are now capped at 6,000 per day due to past peaks of up to 12,000 causing overcrowding.

Our first stop was Fort Sainte Agathe, a 16th-century fortification built during the reign of Francis I. This strategic site was later used by German forces during WWII and offers sweeping views over the Courtade plain, vineyards, and the stunning Notre Dame beach. On the descent, we passed the Moulin du Bonheur, the island's last remaining Provençal windmill, which still turns once a year during heritage celebrations.

We continued on to Domaine de la Courtade, one of two vineyards on the island. Producing red, white, and rosé wines, this estate was acquired by the Carmignac family in 2000, who also established a contemporary art foundation with rotating annual exhibitions. The second estate, Domaine de l'île, founded in 1911, is now owned by the Chanel Group and also produces all three wine varieties. The vineyards serve a dual purpose, acting as natural firebreaks during the high-risk summer season.

The route led us next to Notre Dame beach, crowned Europe's most beautiful beach in 2015. With pine and eucalyptus trees lining the shore and crystal-clear waters, it truly lives up to its reputation as a serene, unspoiled haven.

At Cap des Mèdes, we encountered another former military battery, built in 1811 and once occupied by German forces. Today, it's a nesting site for seagulls, fiercely protective during breeding season, and offers panoramic views over the harbour of Hyères, the Îles du Levant, and Port-Cros. These three, along with Porquerolles, are known as Les Îles d'Or or The Golden Islands. Local legend tells of Prince Olbianus's four daughters, exceptional swimmers who were tragically turned to stone by the gods to save them from pirates. The three furthest became the islands, and the youngest, still reaching for her father, became the Giens Peninsula.

We concluded our exploration with a well-earned lunch at Il Pescatore, where the seafood was as fresh as the morning's breeze. The return journey to Bandol aboard Atlantide 1 was a refreshing end to a day that perfectly blended nature, history, and camaraderie.

Winston Lee



Electric bikes, Porquerolles



Fort Sainte Agathe



One of two vineyards visited on the island



Notre Dame beach



Cap des Mèdes



Il Pescatore, sea food restaurant

Camping les Bois Flottes de Camargue 2nd June



On 2nd June, we congregated at the entrance to Camping les Bois Flottes de Camargue with Rebecca commenting that we were all "caked up" with deet after being attacked by mosquitoes the previous evening and we didn't want to get caught out again. With the help of a superb coach driver and a useful coach with a lift, we arrived at Domaine de Beaujeu with a cordial welcome of croissants, coffee and pomegranate juice (perhaps an acquired taste for some).

The Cartier family were excellent hosts with son Julien driving the tractor and trailer through some of their 2000 acres of vineyards, grassland, fields of rice, sorghum, sunflowers and pomegranate orchards. The grapes and pomegranates were both processed and bottled on the farm. Their neighbour, Laura, gave us a guided farm tour with her excellent English and answered many questions along the route. All the farmers on board agreed that this was a superbly run organic farm and that French farmers clearly face the same administrative issues and red tape as we do in the UK.

Laura's neighbouring farm had worked the land for 9 generations, but she informed us that on the death of every generation, 50% of the value had to be handed to the state although there is an option to purchase back. This was putting huge financial pressure on most farming families wishing to expand. Many farms had sold out to bigger businesses so that 4 large conglomerates now own or rent vast swathes of The Camargue growing melons and tomatoes under plastic sheeting. Laura complained that these big enterprises have managed to remove hedgerows and are destroying the biodiversity within the area.

The farm has 4 acres of 3 different varieties of pomegranate which are grown on very salty land in which they thrive. They produce better crops when there is little water, and the fruit is harvested between September and October. We drove past their beautiful reddy orange blossom.

Rice has become an integral part of farming in this area because it helps to control the salt levels within the soil. Rice is planted and then the field is flooded, the water is allowed to drain away with the plants roots following the water. The fields are then re-flooded lowering the level of salt into the depths of the soil.

In order to produce organic rice (which can only be in a 7-year rotation) the farm grows 4 years of lucerne followed by Winter Durum Wheat and then sunflowers or sorghum

The farmers have huge problems in the rice fields with moles, wild boar and perhaps more surprisingly with flamingos. These large birds used to migrate and were not an issue but now 20,000 have settled in The Camargue Wildlife Reserve. The fields are full of large white plastic bags shaped to look like swans which apparently the flamingos do not like and so they act as deterrents.

Grassland is as important for the farm as the rice, being harvested for hay to feed the bulls. Laura explained that there were no sheep in the area any longer as, following the sinking of The Rainbow Warrior in Auckland Harbour in 1985,










President Mitterrand felt compelled to make an apology to the New Zealand people by allowing their lamb into France and hence destroying the French lamb industry.

We walked to see the water pumps at the side of the Rhone and had the good fortune on a flying farmers tour, to see aircraft practicing their water scooping for fire defence.

Interestingly, the French have apparently stopped drinking so much wine and the farm has taken 23 acres out of wine production. Just like UK farmers, French farmers appear to need to diversify and examples of this on this farm included riding lessons on the Camargue horses, gites, farm shops and tourism.

Before we left, we were treated to home-grown red, white and rose wine tasting together with a charcuterie board. A truly memorable farm visit with wonderful hosts.

Alf Oliver







Mas Daussan fruit farm 2nd June





This 100 hectare farm was our last farm visit. It did not disappoint. We met the third generation owner Stephan in the shop while he recanted its history and answered questions after a short trip of parts of the farm.

The 100 ha were mainly apples (Pink Lady the most popular) but they were already wine growers/manufacturers but diversified in 2009 to 100% organic starting with apples then 17 types of fruit. They have 30–40 French workers with 80 North African workers for 6 months who have accommodation nearby that they find themselves.

All harvesting is done by hand and they use Facebook/Instagram/Chef for promotion. Mainly grow for Paris restaurants for a small premium. They spray copper against aphids.

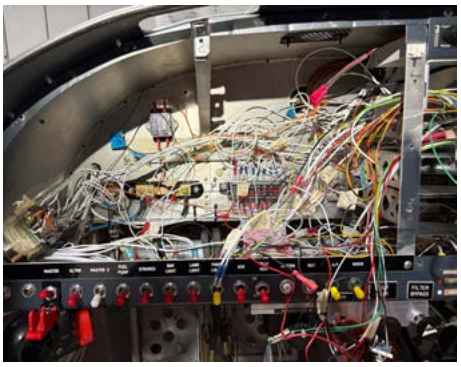
They work with other farmers e.g. a refrigerated packhouse, and their main threat is agri businesses. Water is a huge factor-£100/acre per year to take water from the rivers, and the high salt content in the earth. Ideal condition is 5º–10º winters and no frosts. Being very environmentally friendly they are keen to promote birds and butterflies. Lastly the flying farmers bought some of their produce in the shop-the cherries were delicious at breakfast the next day!

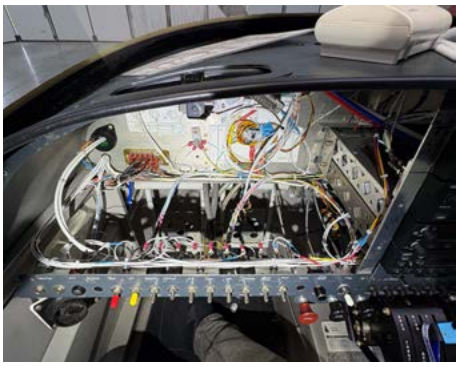
Rick Holt





FFA Tour May 2025 - A newbie's account









Snip snip went the wire cutters, removing a mass of tefzel spaghetti and suddenly the die was cast, get this plane rewired or you ain't going on tour… no pressure then.

How did I get into this mess you may wonder and here is a brief account: Lucy & I are new farmers and with an airstrip. It was a no brainer to join the FFA, however, until now we have stayed on the sidelines.

We've enjoyed GA flying in a Jodel D140, Europa, Glastar and most recently a Vans RV10, generally doing our own thing with occasional hops to France or the Channel Islands.

I had read many accounts from tours by the Europa Club and latterly the FFA, but always had a good excuse not to join in, lack of time being the favourite. Recently retired, excuses were running out & replaced with more of a "now or never" mantra so around October time we signed up.

The RV10 was acquired last summer as a capable tourer, just needing a modern autopilot which we intended to fit over the winter. Unfortunately, after peeking behind the panel, realisation dawned that our new toy was going to require substantial rewiring to change from automotive style spaghetti to aviation style wiring loom. Never mind, 4 months until departure, so plenty of time, or so it seemed…

Of course the job expanded to fill the time available and then there was a hiccup with the paperwork which threatened our attendance.

I contacted Helen & was then called by a member offering help to get the paperwork through, such a thoughtful gesture and typical of what we were to enjoy throughout.

The spaghetti was eventually tamed and after a thorough autopilot flight test and 2 shakedown flights we were off.

Weather was kind & Helen's careful planning delivered a well balanced week, two days in each location with plenty to do and still time to relax.

There was a rhythm to the journey, arrive at destination, compare flight experiences over a drink, dine, spend a clear day with arranged visits and freestyle exploring, discus flight plans over dinner, sleep, then set off again. Very satisfying with great company and plentiful support from those with previous experience.

In a nutshell, from a newbie viewpoint, the May 2025 FFA tour was a resounding success, even gov.uk supports the tour and offers a tax rebate on your first tank of avgas departing UK, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/excise-claim-for-drawback-of-duty-paid-on-oils-used-as-fuel-on-foreign-goingaircraft-ho60

If you are tempted to tour then I urge you to give it a try, you'll be glad you did.

It's a joy to fly and best shared, please look us up on the members list & pay us a visit at shipleyairfield.co.uk

Best wishes,
Roger & Lucy Sheridan



Farmstripflying South West Tour 2025 – Matthew Coles



Above main picture: On the ground at Dunkeswell after refuelling for day 2.

Below: Michael Porter arriving in his Kitfox into Wing Farm.

Following on from a disappointing weather cancellation last year, eyes were firmly on the forecast in the run up to this year's Farmstripflying tour of the South West. The weather was looking perfect with plenty of haymaking occurring across the country, surely we could relax and assume blue skies for our weekend away?!

The tour was organised to take in as many strips as possible, combined with an overnight stay at the gorgeous Bolt Head airfield near Salcombe. A beer on arrival, walks along the beach and camping under the wing was the idea. At the same time, offering an opportunity to visit some more challenging strips and support the fields visited by way of a significant contribution to the mowing fund!



PPR is always a vital part of planning these trips and it was imperative that owners were made to feel comfortable that their property be treated with respect. Recent legal proceedings and battles with locals over noise have highlighted a how important it is to obtain PPR and a thorough briefing. Understandably, some strip owners were not to be convinced, especially when faced with the prospect of 10 aircraft descending on them! To mitigate this we spent a great deal of time planning the route and agreed to stagger the departures, such that there would only ever be 2 or 3 aircraft on the ground at any one strip. We planned in 'catch up points' at slightly larger airfields where fuel and refreshments would be available and to allow the slower aircraft a chance to feel part of the group!

The day got off to a slow start, cloud cover over the Cotswold ridge made getting into Kemble, our start point, a little tricky. In fact 3 actually aircraft diverted into Staverton, not the ideal way to kick off! This didn't dampen spirits and the rest of the tour met over a cup of tea for a briefing and slice of cake. The original presentation speaker and full English had fallen by the wayside by this point. We were around 2 hours behind the original schedule so we decided to finish our slice of cake and head for Wing Farm, the first strip on our tour. Weather conditions had improved by this point and we all taxied out in a group for departure.

Wing Farm, officially a microlight strip in Wiltshire, offers a 500m strip that's quite difficult to spot and with some trees at the approach end of the runway, certainly gave our tour something to think about, as well as some crosswind component from the south.

From here we departed to Compton Abbas, not technically a farm strip but certainly a nice spot for the aircraft to gather. Home to a refurbished cafe and fuel, it's certainly worth a visit if you haven't been recently.

We organised our departures to Newton Peveril, another microlight strip, this time in Dorset which hosts a very interesting arrival procedure onto the westerly runway. An almost 180 degree reverse turn from downwind to final, lining up with the 450m runway was the perfect playground for several piper cubs joining us on the tour. Thank you to Tim who was extremely friendly and helpful, making sure he was around to see us all off.






Weather further south was looking a little suspect but we ploughed on to Dunkeswell for some lunch. As previously mentioned, several strips are facing 'challenges' from local residents. This meant that destinations we'd originally planned on dropping in on, including Watchford Farm, Farway Common and Branscombe Farm, were unable to accommodate us.

After a late lunch, and some avgas at Dunkeswell, we set off for our overnight stop at Bolt Head. Again, the departures were staggered and as such, the quicker aircraft soon advised that the visibility at Bolt Head was unsuitable for the rest of us. Around we turned and landed back into Dunkeswell where we quickly set up camp and enjoyed a well deserved glass of lemonade. The evenings beach activities were swapped for a curry in the local town.

Day 2 got off to an equally gloomy start, low cloud and poor visibility allowed a slow wake up for most of our happy campers. Some taking slightly longer than others after a late night sat around the campfire!

Around mid morning, things started to improve and we set off for Bolt Head. Everyone assembled for a cup of tea and a brownie on this iconic airfield, where we were graciously hosted by Keith, Alice and the team. A real shame that we were unable to spend more time there to explore the local Salcombe town.

From Bolt head, we headed north towards a few strips in Devon and Somerset, of particular note, Barton Farm and Stoodleigh Barton, offering our tour pilots an interesting challenge. We then congregated at Brown Shutters farm after flying past the incredible sight that was Glastonbury Festival, a view that made even the nearby city of Wells look small!

Over a fantastic afternoon tea at the Farm shop, sited just a short walk from the strip at Brown Shutters, we had a debrief of our experience and chatted about some of the gorgeous countryside we'd flown over, as well as the challenge of flying into the various strips. It's fair to say that everyone had a great time and enjoyed the tour, despite not quite sticking to the original plan! It fills us with some confidence as we're heading up to Scotland in August for the second Farmstripflying tour of 2025.

A huge thank you to all farmers and Landowners who trusted us to act with respect and courtesy as we visited their strips. In this world of litigation and legal battles, I would love to encourage FFA members to continue to allow visitors into their airfields. It's disappointing when pilots do act in a way that discourages our desire to grant PPR but I was genuinely impressed with the professionalism and conscientiousness of our tour pilots. We really are so fortunate to have access to this world of adventure and freedom so it would be such a shame to continue to see the decline of the world of strip flying.

So, as we try to educate and inform pilots about the extra challenges of strip flying, including the need to behave in the correct way, please continue to consider PPR for those of us who enjoy the excitement, freedom and adventure that they provide!

Farmstripflying, a small flight training organisation based at Croft Farm in Worcestershire, offers Tail-wheel conversions along with Farm Strip and formation training. It was set up by Matt, who runs a flock of Pedigree Texels, as an alternative to the way big flying schools operate. Run by passionate aviators, the intention is to offer value for money flight training in the real world environment. It offers a glimpse into the extraordinary world of strip flying for those who may not ordinarily have experienced anything outside of a licensed airfield.

Above left to right:
Some of our tour aircraft getting ready to depart Croft Farm on the Saturday morning

The lovely South Coast of Devon.

Four of the Piper Cubs on the tour lined up at Bolt Head on the Sunday.

Departing Bolt Head heading east on the Sunday Morning.

Below:
The tour attendees



STOL'ing About – Fastest growing crop!
by Ed Smiley-Jones



CREDIT: Real STOL Fest, Breighton

STOL Fest 2025 attracts a huge gathering of back-country planes, pilots and enthusiasts.

Set between the East Coast of England and Leeds East Airport there is an enticing grass runway and a set of buildings that was a World War 2 air base called Breighton. It was the home of Vickers Wellington, Handley Page Halifax and Avro Lancaster bombers.

Now Breighton is the home of the Real Aeroplane Club - a thriving and bustling airfield which houses a beautiful selection of classic aeroplanes and is becoming the home of STOL UK (Short Take Off & Landing).

Over a weekend at the end of May the Real Aero Club hosted STOL Fest, a gathering of STOL and backcountry planes from around the UK and Europe. Over the two days there were 75 planes, 85 pilots and 600 on foot visitors. A few pilots decided to attend by road as the 15+ mph (plus gusts) cross wind landing was very challenging…

The event was truly international, there were visitors from the USA, Germany, France, Ireland, Poland, along with England, Scotland and Wales. They included; Kamil Skorupski, CEO of Cub Crafters Europe, Josh Richling who's based in the USA and is Steve Henry's Crew Chief. Steve Henry is one of the leading competition STOL pilots in the World and flies a plane call Yee haw! Along with many pilots from the STOL Europe community.



CREDIT: Real STOL Fest, Breighton



CREDIT: Real STOL Fest, Breighton

It's worth taking a look @SteveHenry on Youtube to see the extraordinary capability of 'man and machine' working together.

'We consider the Real STOL Fest as a stepping stone towards the evolution of STOL and backcountry flying in the UK. As with many things, the event is made by those who support it, so to all of you who did attend, a massive thank you from the Real STOL Fest team.'

William Newton, Event Director.



This year, STOL Fest decided not to have a STOL competition as it was a new event - they wanted to methodically build their presence, ability and credibility to host this type of event with the CAA. For 2026 they're hoping to have a STOL competitions along with spot landing demonstrations which should be extremely exciting.

Instead of competitions, STOL Fest organised a series of talks from some key STOL Backcountry individuals for instance;

- Nils Jamieson from GASCo (The General Aviation Safety Council) spoke about general aviation safety topics. Nils is very keen to come along to one of our events to share his experience.
- Matt Coles and Arthur Williamson (of Flying Across Britain, Channel 4) about their tailwheel training business called Farm Strip Flying (www.farmstripflying.co.uk). As the name suggests their focus is to teach students the art of tailwheel flying, off airport missions, dealing with short farm strips, obstacles and much more.
- Josh Richling talked about the National STOL events in the USA and how the series is expanding rapidly across the country. If you'd like to get a flavour of National STOL it's worth following them @NationalSTOL on Youtube to see the competitions.
- Maxime Compagnon (STOL Collective Germany) gave a fascinating account about mountain flying in Europe and his unfortunate Alpine crash and recovery.
- I was invited to talk about backcountry flying. In particular, how we plan trips, future opportunities for backcountry flying here in the UK, along with how we can encourage the next generation of pilots into this fast growing sector.



There was a fantastic mix of STOL backcountry planes at the event from; the beloved Piper Cub of which there were many, from the J3 through to one in particular a 1952 Super Cub owned by FFA member Graham Oliver. Along with some other beautiful planes; such as one of my favourites, the Cessna 180 Skywagon II, a lovely looking Cessna 170, Highlander, Zenith, many Kit Foxes and Carbon Cubs. There was an impressive highly modified Maule and a superb example of a Cessna Bird Dog owned by Alex Monk of the Heritage Hangar, Biggin Hill.

The weekend was an absolute delight, as this was the first time this niche flying group gathered to swap stories, talk adventures, see a wide variety of STOL and backcountry planes and generally have a fantastic time. In the evening food was served, followed by a party, live band and plenty of refreshments too! As many of us camped overnight, I'm extremely pleased to say the weather held in our favour. Plus we had a great bonus… the airfield cafe, serving a delicious breakfast! If you can't wait until STOL Fest 2026 then drop in at Breighton for lunch or tea as the Cafe is excellent and remember the landings are free too!

The STOL / backcountry pilots community is a fast growing niche here in the UK especially with the younger generations. The FFA are very well placed to be active participants and have the opportunity to support and promote it to the next generation of potential young farming-orientated pilots.

A final word on STOL Fest 2025. It was a well organised event with lots of interesting things happening. The real exemplar of the weekend was the people - a super enthusiastic group of STOL backcountry aviators from across Europe, all wanting to share their knowledge, adventures, and build a community of like-minded people. I would highly recommend going to STOL Fest 2026.

If any members have any questions or thoughts about STOL and backcountry flying then please reach out to me at ed@hinterlandpilot.com or Instagram @hinterlandpilot



For Sale

Aviat Husky A-1B Pup (160hp)

Price: £110000

Location: Edzell, UK (or elsewhere by arrangement)

Contact Jeremy on 07786 545556

Or email : j86918031@gmail.com

Description: G-OGGY is a fabulously simple aircraft. Fixed pitch, no flaps. Takes off and lands in 150m. Great payload: full fuel, 2 adults at 95kg and 25kg baggage is close to MTOW. Uses 20-25lph, so 7-8hrs endurance.

Registration:	G-OGGY
Year of Manufacture:	2004
Airframe Hours:	1023
Engine Hours (SMOH):	1023
Propeller Hours:	1023
Engine Type:	Lycoming O-320-D2A (160hp)
Prop Type:	Sensenich 74DM6S8-0-58
Avionics:	Garmin G5 Becker AR6201 VHF radio Bendix King Transponder (Mode C)

Aircraft Highlights

- True STOL capability – handles grass strips and backcountry airstrips with ease
- Robust taildragger design – ideal for off-airport landings
- Excellent visibility from tandem seating
- Hangared & meticulously maintained
- Privately owned
- Recent maintenance – Annual/ARC (May 2025); Mag inspection (May 2025); New exhaust (April 2025); Cylinder overhaul (April 2024); New tyres (March 2021)

Specifications

- Max Takeoff Weight: 2000 lbs (907kg)
- Empty Weight: 1236 lbs (560kg)
- Fuel Capacity: 50 US gal (189 litres)
- Cruise Speed: ~90 knots
- Range: ~700 NM
- Climb Rate: 800 ft/min
- Useful Load: 764 lbs (347kg)

Avionics & Equipment

- Garmin G5
- Becker AR6201 VHF radio (8.33 kHz)
- Bendix King Transponder (Mode C)
- VFR panel, night lighting
- Dual controls

Additional Information

- Full logs available
- Next Annual/ARC due: May 2026
- All ADs complied with
- Extras: door locks, tow bar, rear storage bag











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

2500 Litre Stainless Steel Tank

Used for 25 years to hold Avgas.

Mounted on and old Ferguson trailer chassis but easy to separate if it is easier to transport.



Not bunded.

£1500 ono

Contact Richard on 07968 862518

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





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		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.





Profile: Rebecca Rayner, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

By Rebecca Rayner - It is my turn to speak this time!!



Here I am stood in front of the Cessna 172 which I half own and fly.

My early days…

I was born on Christmas Eve 1970, which got my mother out of cooking the turkey for Christmas Day! Raised at Glebe Farm, Kings Ripton, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. We had a mix of arable, a Hereford Beef Herd and indoor pigs. My father loved pigs and I loved feeding the pigs with my Clark's shoes!!

My family…

My mother and father met, married and had humble beginnings, renting an abandoned farm in Raunds, Northamptonshire. In 1970 they bought Glebe Farm and another farm near Cambridge. and coupled with my own, and my brother Philip's expensive education, we had debt around our ears!

I went to Kimbolton School, Cambridgeshire, Westwood House and Oundle School for 6th form. I was one of 10 girls with 800 boys! Naturally I was the target of a lot of jokes! I loved team games at school and there was always a pony to ride through the field tramlines back home. Like most farmers kids we got up to mischief and I loved climbing asbestos roofs and jumping into grain heaps from great heights!

My introduction to farming…

I was keen to work in agriculture and my father said "Go and learn how to be a price maker and not a price taker." They sent me off to Newcastle University to do a degree in Agriculture and Food Marketing, followed by a Masters Degree at Silsoe College.

I then did a 2 year apprenticeship working in four fresh produce companies in packhouses supervising foreign labour and then a solo back packing trip to Australia, so was toughened up to take on the wider world!

My father encouraged us to 'have a go' in whatever we did, but he sadly passed away at 64 years old from a farming accident in 1994. Mum and I ran the farm for 2 years together. My brother Philip was still at engineering college and interested to work in industry.

The career path I took….

I was keen to add value to the farm, and had seen many farm work experiences. I tried organic farming, Farmers Markets, storing caravans, and converted farm buildings into rented units.

Selling bread at Farmers Markets I found a demand for gluten free foods. I developed gluten free bread and cake mixes and grew gluten free oats. My brother came back 8 years ago and we now have a £20 million business manufacturing gluten free porridge oats, granolas and oat milk, selling to food manufacturers, into Morrisons supermarket and food service outlets. Philip mans the oat business and I look after the lettings and the peripheral businesses.

My start to flying and getting my PPL…

My influence into flying was by my partner Marc and his love of metal detection. We found the remains of two WW2 aircraft under our fields, a Wellington and a Mosquito. As a salute to the brave airmen who lost their lives we brewed two beers, Wellington Bomber Porter and for the Mosquito, Night Mission ale.

A friend bought me a birthday present to trial a tri-axle microlight and then a small plane. I loved the plane flight and learnt locally at RAF Wyton and Conington, Peterborough. I fly a black and gold (John Player Special) coloured Cessna 172 G-BONO.

How I heard about the Flying Farmers Association…

I was introduced to the FFA by Sam Raby near Conington and saw the notorious Farmers Weekly article. I met the team about 5 years ago and Neville Stops invited me to join the Committee. Roger Bell invited me to fly with him on 2 wonderful FFA French tours.

Interests other than flying...

The elderly beloved horse with only one horse power has been nudged over as I do like machines with large engines. I have a modern 5L Mustang, and two 1970's Corvette Stingrays, one with a 7.4L V8 engine.