



April 2001

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This month's meeting: 12th April 2001.
Special Branch - Flying light aircraft overseas.

Got a feeling you've read this before? It's okay, it's not a misprint! Those of you who attended last month's meeting will know that the Special Branch visit was postponed, so we have the pleasure of their visit for April's meeting.

In light of recent changes to the rules when flying light aircraft overseas, our local department of Special Branch has been in touch with us to arrange a visit to bring us up to speed with the new regulations.

I get baffled by rules at the best of times, so having someone who knows their stuff come along to talk to us should be a real help.

Last month's meeting. The Bi-annual Flight Review.

Stepping in at very short notice to fill the gap left by Special Branch, Ron Perry and Pete Turner gave a very educational presentation on what to expect with regard to the new BFR.

Ron went through the main points of the flight test, pointing out that the flight is an opportunity for both pilot and coach to find weak areas and concentrate on improving them. All of those present agreed that the new BFR requirement was a good thing.

Following on from that, Pete made us all think long and hard about engine failure after take off and in the cruise, plus refreshed our obviously tired memories about stall/spin scenarios. My guess is that many of us left the meeting with a stark realization that we'd all forgotten a lot since we'd learnt to fly!

I'd like to thank Ron and Pete for their efforts, especially given the short notice.

RV-6 Update.

Big news since the last newsletter is that the fuselage and both wings got assembled together for the first time. As we had thought, one wing tip needed to poke out through the garage doors, and of course we ended up doing this on one of the coldest days in February, but a temporary tent over the open doors kept most of the heat in. After setting the incidence (we got it accurate to within 0.1 of a degree!) and the wing sweep (try and have no sweep at all!), we drilled and reamed what appear to be two very successful rear spar bolt holes. Big relief, as if you mess up there is no easy fix....

We are now attending to a number of tasks in the wing root of the right wing, as well as playing with aileron pushrod lengths and some preliminary flap fitting.

As you read this, I'm hopefully having fun in Texas photographing RV's, but I'm intending to come home having spotted lots of ideas and having learnt some new skills to apply to BZRV when I return.

Bye for now

Ed

Forthcoming events: <i>Always call before setting out!</i>			
April 14th	Aeronca Club fly-in	Branscombe	01297 680259
April 16th	Andover Strut fly-in	Middle Wallop	PPR 01980 674421
April 22nd	VAC Daffodil fly-in	Turweston	01280 705400
April 22nd	Wessex Strut fly-in	Henstridge	01963 364231
April 22nd	Airmanship Awareness Day	Sywell	01604 890512

Advance notice: Wessex Strut are planning a fly-out event to Haverfordwest over the weekend May 12 / 13th. The two scenarios proposed are to fly there and back either Saturday or Sunday; alternatively to camp overnight and make a two-day event. If any of our readers are interested in joining the fun, please call Anthea Beck on 01747 860474.

Foot & Mouth update

27 March 2001 - Report from the Bristol Evening Post by John LeCouteur:

The first case of foot and mouth has been confirmed at a farm on Bristol's doorstep. Ministry of Agriculture officials discovered the disease in a herd of 60 to 70 cattle at Oldbury, near Thornbury. This is the first case in South Gloucestershire. A quarantine area has now in force around Church View Farm in Oldbury, which is farmed by Ivor Stafford. He declined to comment on the situation but vets are expected to supervise the slaughter of the cattle early today.

Until yesterday the nearest three outbreaks were about five miles north at Berkeley where about 1,200 cattle are being slaughtered. NFU spokesman Robin Winfield said: "The first outbreak in South Gloucestershire has been confirmed by MAFF. "The virus appears to have jumped the short distance from Berkeley and no doubt the ministry is seeking to find a connection."

The new outbreak is close to farmer Roger Staley and his Kington Mead Farm, which was given the all-clear earlier this month. He will now have to wait and see if his 4,000 pigs contact the disease or are slaughtered as a protective measure within the five kilometre quarantine zone. There are several other large pig farms within the Thornbury area plus dozens of dairy and beef cattle. The affected areas seem to be on a steady march southwards from Gloucestershire where the number of outbreaks is well into double figures. Farmers believe it is being passed on by birds or other airborne methods.

At the time of writing, there have been 690 cases confirmed in GB, including new sites in our area. Please make sure, if you fly, to check the NOTAM list before planning your route. The [FLYER](#) website has a convenient link, and has also published the following notices from GA organisations:

PFA advice on Farm Strip Flying

The [Popular Flying Association](#) has issued the following advice to pilots:
"Foot & Mouth Disease Containment Problems. Due to the current 'foot & mouth' disease situation in the UK we ask you not to fly from 'farm strip' locations until such time as the present situation is resolved.
If your flight is unavoidable do not visit other 'farm strips'.
Be aware that the virus can be airborne at approximately 1500 feet and in a 2 mile radius of infected areas (see NOTAMs on www.ais.org.uk).

British Gliding Association bans cross country flying.

Having initially recommended a halt to cross country flying, the British Gliding Association (BGA) has now gone one step further and banned all cross country flying in gliders. This decision has been taken, the BGA say, for a number of reasons. Gliders have a much higher chance of 'landing out' - in farmland - and any glider which does so in a restricted area could well be grounded for the duration of the crisis. In addition, the gliding community enjoys good relations with farmers, and the BGA do not wish to jeopardize this in any way. In fact, the document which announces the ban suggests that gliding clubs contact their local National Union of Farmers branch to register their

The Popular Flying Association thank you for your co-operation in this matter".

concern. For the moment, this is not a total ban on all gliding activities, just cross country flights (but it does include motorised gliders and turbos). The BGA is hoping that by instituting such a ban now, a complete shut down of gliding activity will not be necessary in future. The full document is on line at www.gliding.co.uk

BMAA issues 'urgent notice'

The British Microlight Aircraft Organisation is advising its members that 'all flying from farmland should cease immediately', and that in the event of an outlanding on farmland the farmer or landowner should be contacted for advice before the aircraft is moved. It may be that disinfectant or other measures may be necessary. Members can contact the MAFF 'Foot and Mouth Helpline' on 0845 426153. More details and the warning in full from the BMAA website at www.bmaa.org.

BHPA issues advice - avoid farmland!

The British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association is advising its members that they "should keep away from any livestock or farms." It is also asking them not to use any sites which may have, or have had, livestock. This includes farmland, moorland and mountains. It is also telling pilots not to fly cross country, pointing out that the disease can be transferred easily in a number of ways. Full details of BHPA policy can be found on its website, which also contains a copy of a letter from the National Union of Farmers thanking the BHPA for its support in helping to tackle the disease.

On a lighter note, we have received this excellent report from Mike about a trip he made to Ireland last summer with some friends. Enjoy!

To Birr and Back - an article by Mike Wells.

I remember taking my air law exam, which as you know is of the multiple choice answer type. I thought that the best way would be to think of the answers and then see which of the choices most closely resembled mine and circle the appropriate letter accordingly. I handed in my exam paper with a quiet confidence.

"You have failed" says the superior instructor.

"Oh?" says I, somewhat surprised.

"I don't know why you're so surprised, surely you must have had a clue when all your answers were A". Ever since then I have disliked multiple choice exams based on the fact that I can fail exams well enough on my own. However, as a sort of revenge I shall set a similar type test during the following article. Setting off from Watchford Farm on a lovely summers day in an open cockpit aeroplane, the Woody Pusher, has to be one of the great aviation experiences. How I pity other aviators enclosed in their perspex, wings blocking most of the view and all those knobs, levers and switches to snare you when the going gets tough.

On the climb out the engine is loud enough to wake up Bleriot but will soon settle into a rhythmic hum that will be so comforting during the upcoming sea crossing, and already I can see the north Devon coast as I level out close to over head Taunton.

Question 1. How close is a permit aeroplane allowed to a large settlement?

- A. You must not over fly & be able to land clear
- B. Does not apply to Europe as all settlements are in the third world.

Striking out across the Bristol Channel, the sea looks calm and inviting and halfway across I can't resist the temptation to mock dive bomb a passing ship that was minding its own business, crossing the rest of the channel at around 150 feet wishing I had floats!

Question 2. What does rule 5 mean?

- A. Low flying rule, must stay 500 feet clear of any person, vessel or vehicle.
- B. No one knows except a couple of plane spotters who happen to work for the C.A.A.
- C. Not allowed to fly within 500 feet of Heathrow.

Climbing back to a sort of legal height to pass by Swansea, I pick up the railway line and motor way that I shall track to Haverfordwest. I can see clearly the high ground to the north, I believe the Welsh call them mountains but I have never seen snow on them.

At Haverfordwest I shall be meeting Steve Leach in his Taylorcraft, 60 years old, but as sprightly as ever, the Taylorcraft that is, not Steve, who is barely over 40 and creaking at the edges. During the winter when I recovered the fuselage and tail end of the Woody, Steve very generously allowed me the use of all his facilities of his powder-coating factory. He then blasted and powder coated all the metal bits and when the fabric was on, he then sprayed it. Still not content, when back at Watchford I whined at him until he stuck on my registration letters for me (knowing what a cock up I would make of it). Thanks Steve.

The registration letters went on a treat, reported Steve, and I got them from A.B Signs: Tel 01634 365473.

- C. As close as you like providing no one spots you.

My first stop is Haverfordwest and as I cross the north Devon coast at Minehead with Butlins to my right I reflect on the holiday makers below spending their hard earned cash, getting their vicarious thrills on roller-coasters and helter-skelters, when they would get far better value flying with me.

Question 3. If you own a powder coating factory do you:

- A. Let the aviation world know and sell your services at extortionate prices.
- B. Don't let anyone in the aviation world know.
- C. Just let your friends know, work for free, put them up at your home so they can better use all your facilities and then ask them not to tell anyone.

I found Haverfordwest quite easily thanks to excellent flight planning on my part, and providentially the airfield was staging a rather large agricultural show. Whilst on finals I heard Steve call up giving ten miles to run.

Parking by the fuel pumps I shut down and climbed out feeling quite pleased with myself. I was the first to arrive and Steve was on his way. John Dean (Jodel) Martin and John (Jodel) were to meet us from Kent, Brian Hope had cancelled at the last moment due to the passing away of his Dad, a smashing bloke who made me smile.

"Did you let us know you were coming?" asked the refueller.

Now call me cynical, but I've been in this aviation lark long enough to know questions from anyone remotely connected with aviation should be treated with suspicion. I am quite willing to answer questions from anyone else, happy in the knowledge that they wouldn't have a clue and I can show off to boot.

"Yes", I replied.

"When?"

"When I was on finals of course". Not a flicker of a smile from the refueller. "You are supposed to get prior permission".

"Oh yeah", says I, "who says so?" and then adding for good measure "I am a rate payer I hope you know".

"It's in the A.I.P." which rather stumped me!!!

Question 4. What does A.I.P. stand for?

- A. Aeronautical Information Publication.
- B. Aged Impaired Pilots.
- C. Anyone In Prison.

It was once said that the last refuge of the scoundrel was patriotism, then I am sure the first refuge would be the A.I.P. and that my exchange with the refueller was over a moot point, as I was down and Steve was by now taxiing in having committed the same heinous crime. However, when Steve was asked the same probing question, without blinking or hesitation he blamed Brian Hope.

Having sorted out the prior problem and refuelled, we booked in and started to fill in flight plans for the trip across the sea to Kilkenny. Then a major flaw appeared in our plans; Special Branch Clearance!!!

Question 5. How much notice is required for Special Branch Clearance?

- A. 24 hours
- B. None, just say Brian Hope has done it and it's not our fault if their bureaucracy can't cope with Brian.
- C. None, wait until you are arrested and then take your case to the courts of Human Rights at the Hague.

I must say that the refueller and his colleague now came up trumps sorting out our embarrassing omissions and making sure everything was in place for our departure (I think they were glad to see the back of us). Thanks Lads. John D, John and Martin had now arrived so by around 3.30pm we were ready to go, (by the way, there is an excellent café at Haverfordwest). I had phoned Kilkenny to let them know we were coming and asked if it was ok to camp on the field.

"You're most welcome to pitch your tents, but it's an interesting notion, us with 23 hotels" came the answer.

Crossing the Irish Sea can be a lonely business, you don't see much in the way of shipping and somewhere about the middle I was out of radio contact. The plan was to coast in at Wexford and then find our way to Kilkenny. However the closer we got to the Irish Coast the lower the cloud base became. I found myself flying up and down the Irish Coast looking for a gap through the hills as by now the base was down to around 700-900 feet.

Question 6. What is a cloud?

- A. Collection of water vapour which reduces visibility
- B. Something that's white and fluffy that you can just fly around and generally pick on
- C. Something that's white and fluffy until he joins up with all his mates and then gets his own back for what you did in (B)

Then I heard John D's voice over the radio requesting permission to divert to Waterford.

"Come on in, it's sunny here" came the reply.

You've never heard such relieved voices over the radio as us four as we diverted for Waterford.

Question 7. How many alternates are there on the flight plan?

- A. Two
- B. You can put as many as you like providing you don't actually show up.
- C. Don't know, always get someone else to fill it in.

Stayed the night in Waterford, in a bed and breakfast that was out of the 1950's. Within ten minutes tea was made for us by our hostess, which considering we turned up on spec, and given our recent travails, was most welcome.

I pondered that our hostess would have been a young lady during the 50's and had opened with excitement her small business, after no doubt furnishing and decorating to the latest fashion.

Now confident in her tastes and having seen no reason to change anything, an attitude that Home base and employment in England would view with horror, I have to say it was very comfortable and scrupulously clean and the breakfast was great too.

The rest of Waterford contrasted with our B & B; the town was buzzing with Pubs, Restaurants and Clubs, lots of people out on the streets having a good time, lots of youngsters and older people mixing quite happily. The following morning we awoke to grey skies and rain, not daunted we got our selves up to the Airport. The people at the Airport could not have helped more, giving us the free reign to use their computer to get the weather which was predicted and did improve after lunch, we left there at around 1.30pm for Birr.

Birr was practically due north and about 60 miles away, with the weather improving the further north we went. I was really enjoying the flight; Waterford's leaving procedures seemed a bit over the top especially after our informal arrival, apparently it depends on who is on duty.

Question 8. When leaving Waterford, is a flight plan necessary?

- A. Yes.
- B. Necessary No, required Yes.
- C. Find out who is on duty!

The Scenery from Waterford to Birr is beautiful and there is not much in the way of towns between Waterford and Birr, they do not need them as most of the Irish live in London! I was now enjoying myself and, flying along, reflected on the previous winter, stripping down the Woody for recovering in a cold farm building. Now it seemed all worthwhile.

This is what the P.F.A. is all about, I mused as I flew on towards Birr, the people who had given freely their advice and time. Brian Hope who traveled from Kent to Plymouth on at least 3 occasions and without whom I would still be camping out at Steve's. Cheers Brian. Gay, who came down with Brian just to help hold a wing up while us men did the hard bit and put the bolts in. Cheers Gay.

Erni, who popped in for ten minutes whilst we were covering the fuselage and stayed for 10 hours, and for all those things that can drag any project to a halt, always sorted without fuss. Cheers Erni! Jackie who had the time and patience to teach me how to rib stitch, even though I turned up on the night of the Kent Strut Christmas bash. Cheers Jackie.

Gary Smith of Exhaust Competition winning fame, who exhausted himself on my exhaust (cheap joke) Cheers Gary. Brian Anning, owner of Watchford Farm, provider of slings, block and tackle, stands and willingness to turn his farm over to the likes of us aviators. Cheers Brian.

Trevor who helped me through the complexities of weight and balance. Cheers Trevor.

And by no means least, Les, PFA Inspector and brand new Pilot at the age of 125 who made keeping me on the straight and narrow regarding common-sense and officialdom look easy. Cheers Les.

The thought crossed my mind that I might do the wings this winter but none of the above are returning my calls. Strange!!!

Question 9. When carrying out major works to your permit aeroplane should you:

- A. Inform PFA engineering, send drawings, calculations, get approval, carry out work, inform inspector at all stages, submit for final inspection, etc.
- B. Casually mention it to your inspector at the next strut meeting.
- C. Try not to worry them, you know how busy they are.

Birr is a grass Airfield running North/South with a small strip East/West. The 5th Great Vintage and Classic Anglo-Irish Fly in was being held there which

We shared a table with some Pilots from Galway, we ate, we drank, we talked, we drank, we talked some more and drank some more. Somewhere along the way I was awarded a plaque for what I am not sure. I like to think it was for the best landing, but more likely for just turning up! (Little did they know I was lost).

The following morning came as a bit of a shock, not the weather, it just came before I was ready to wake. The news from Wales was not good; no they had not declared War on England, it was our common enemy the weather. Suffice to say getting across the sea was not an option. A dispute now arose whether we should return to Waterford with all the facilities, which was probably the common sense thing to do, or go to Kilkenny, which is what I wanted to do. I did what I normally do on these occasions, threw a tantrum and stamped my foot, and hence we turned up at Kilkenny.

Question 10. When sourcing weather information do you:

- A. Check TAFs & Metars etc.
- B. Phone the wife and ask her to look out the window.
- C. Count the number of days already lost

came as a bit of a shock as I thought I was going to Schaffen Diest. I knew that GPS was faulty...

After a slow start, due to weather in the west of Ireland the number of arrivals began to increase with a good showing. We spent the afternoon chatting and wandering around, our Irish friends making the art of conversation an art! If you have any preconceptions of Ireland get rid of them, we were warmly welcomed everywhere we went and engaged in lively conversation.

We walked into the town of Birr, a place that, like a lot of French towns, has architecturally stood still, and found a spit and sawdust pub. Within minutes we were talking to locals, apparently one of the lads worked on the Bath bypass. After downing one or two pints of Guinness we left for the shindig laid on for us at the Rugby Club.

since St Swithen, then subtract the number of days to Christmas; if over 30 go flying. If under 29 chance it.

Pat Nolan at Kilkenny fuelled all the aeroplanes and then piled us all into his car and gave us a lift to Town. We quickly found a couple of rooms at the above mentioned 23 Hotels and went exploring Kilkenny.

The Town is dominated by Churches and Pubs. We found a smashing Restaurant and had a good meal, good conversation, good wine, a good night. After another wander around the Town which really is worth a visit, we got ourselves back to the Airfield; however, the weather at Haverfordwest had still not improved. I telephoned every half an hour for further information and by the end of the day I felt I knew the person at the other end quite well, even advising him at one stage to stick with his marriage.

It is at times like this that one comes to appreciate one's traveling companions. John D who has seen it all before, Martyn first time to Ireland with his passenger, John who as an ex high-ranking Policeman kept reminding us of our legal responsibilities, Special Branch, Customs, etc. without actually insisting we do anything about it. Steve who admits to getting nervous before crossing the River Plym, wondering what the hell he was doing in Ireland. We all spent a frustrating 4-5 hours without breaking into a fistfight.

After many phone calls I put the phone down and said "They got 1500 ft at Haverfordwest". What followed was not unlike a Spitfire scramble. Flight Plans activated, we were airborne within 30 minutes of my 1500ft announcement.

Question 11. How much notice is required before activating a flight plan?

- A. One hour.
- B. Try begging the person at the filing agency, you would be amazed how quick you can get off.
- C. 9 months 3 days.

They have these reporting points on the chart in the middle of the Irish Sea marked by triangles and called Slany, but I never saw them. So I did my usual thing, waited for what I thought was a decent interval and reported anyway.

"My, that Woody Pusher is fast" came the reply.

We knew that we were flying into worsening weather and I wondered when the appropriate time would be to let the others know that the 1500 ft mentioned earlier was the distance they could see down the runway and not the cloud base; they all seemed so keen to get away I did not have the heart to disappoint them. In the end I decided not to tell them on the grounds that they always shoot the messenger.

As it turned out, apart from some mucky stuff over the coast we crept into Haverfordwest with about an 1100ft cloudbase and quite good viz. By the time we refuelled the sun was doing its best in trying circumstances to shine.

Whilst I was studying my map/chart (I'm never sure which) pondering on the chances of getting back to Watchford, this chap came up to me and asked how much I would take for the Woody. I looked at him and thought "oh yeah, another dreamer", he was old enough to be my dad, and Saville Row was unlikely to have seen much of him.

"You couldn't afford it mate, its not for sale."

"It's a lovely aeroplane, I bet you have a lot of fun". I now warmed to him and we discussed the merits of the Woody. I'm easily flattered and only need half a chance to extol of the virtues of my beloved Woody (It's ok, since my wife Pam's psychiatric treatment and medication, she's overcome the worst of her insane jealousy of the Woody!).

John D and Martin with their longer journey back to Kent decided to call it a day, and the chap who I had dismissed as a dreamer put them up in a caravan. It turns out he owns about half dozen aeroplanes, twin included, and looked after the lads really well. They had an uneventful return the following day.

Steve and myself thought it was worth pushing on. We stayed together as far as Swansea, and to be honest it did not look too promising, but I kept going anyway.

Thinking I could always get back to Haverfordwest, I said goodbye to Steve over the radio and crossed the Bristol Channel following the natural Valley down to Taunton at around 1300 feet. I could see the top of the Blackdown Hills, where Watchford Farm is at 850 feet, I snuck in up the hill and feeling quite pleased with myself, landed.

Brian Anning came over to me and said, "This is the best it's been all day". Now feeling cocky, I replied "Nothing to a skilled aviator like me". Nauseating, what! I hung about until it got dark just in case Steve turned up in his attempt to get to Plymouth, then my mobile phone rang, and it was Steve.

"Got as far as Chivenor and I'm down safe". He paused,

"Well maybe not safe, there's some rough looking military types, armed and coming towards me!"

"Tell them you're a tax payer Steve", was my only piece of, I thought, helpful advice. The phone went dead.

Question 12. An aircraft takes up position ahead and to the left and rock its wings, what does this mean?

- A. You have been intercepted, follow me.
- B. The chap in front obviously hasn't seen you.
- C The chap in front is drunk.

If you answered mainly "A" you should have passed, you might be a bit of a stuffed shirt, but well done anyway and I am pleased to see you used the same theory as me.

If you answered mainly "B" you shouldn't be flying.

If you answered mainly "C" you shouldn't be allowed out very often!

Safe flying?????

Mike

Occasionally, airline attendants make an effort to make the in-flight safety lecture and their other announcements a bit more entertaining. Here are some real examples that have been heard or reported:

Coming back from Vegas to Austin on Southwest Airlines, the 737 was for the most part filled with business-type suit and tie guys. We were all getting settled, digging for magazines, pulling out laptops, joking, chatting, etc when the flight attendant announced over the intercom, "Did anyone lose a brown wallet?" All talking and all commotion instantly ceased as hands instinctively went for back pockets and eyes went forward to where she was standing in the cabin, which was now completely silent. She continued, "Now that I have your attention, I'd like to point out the emergency exits located on either side of the aircraft..."

Pilot: "Folks, we have reached our cruising altitude now, so I am going to switch the seat belt sign off. Feel free to move about as you wish, but please stay inside the plane till we land... it's a bit cold outside, and if you walk on the wings it affects the flight pattern."

And from the pilot during his welcome message: "We are pleased to have some of the best flight attendants in the industry ... Unfortunately none of them are on this flight...!"

Attendant: "Folks, we have someone celebrating his 65th birthday today by taking his first flight." {round of applause follows} "So on your way off the plane, be sure to stop by the cockpit and wish Capt. Jones a Happy Birthday."

And, after landing: "Thank you for flying Delta Business Express. We hope you enjoyed giving us the business as much as we enjoyed taking you for a ride."

SHORT FINAL.

A few months ago at Downtown Airport in Kansas City (MKC):

Controller: "Archer 1234, your Mode C is not operating."

Archer 1234: "I'll recycle it."

Archer 1234: "Are you receiving my Mode C now?"

Controller: "I have 1,400 indicated."

Archer 1234: "I'm showing 1,450."

Controller: "That's close enough for government work."

Unidentified pilot: "If I could just get you to do my taxes..."

- ***Don't forget that all newsletter contributions (big or small) are gratefully received.***

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Last month's Newsletter

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