



June 2004

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This month - 10th June

Another aviation curio evening! To finish off the first half of the year prior to our summer break, we are repeating this popular event at the June meeting. Last time we did this, several members brought along some fascinating items for general discussion, and many interesting tales were told. So don't be shy! Have a rummage through your workshop, garage or den for anything aeronautical which has a story attached to it. The more items the better, so start looking now!

Last month's meeting – 13th May

The Western Counties Police Air Operation Unit.

Last month a group of Bristol strut members were detained for a short while at the pleasure of the Avon and Somerset Constabulary. The incident was, however, purely voluntary, because we had been granted a unique opportunity to examine at close quarters their magnificent Eurocopter EC135. Based at Filton, the aircraft is shared between the Avon & Somerset and Gloucestershire forces, collectively known as the Western Counties Air Operation Unit. The EC135, appropriately registered



as G-WCAO, is equipped with some of the most advanced technology of any unit in the world, from the zoom-lens/thermal imaging camera system, the 30 million candle-power spotlight, and the 700Watt PA system, to the highly advanced navigation system comprised of digital maps operating to 5-levels coupled with GPS location and tracking systems. PC Phil Scott was number one observer in the crew that evening, and he gave us a superb, well-informed presentation of the unit and how it operates.

The evening actually included a live 'show' when a call suddenly came through that a car had been reported stolen in North Bristol! The chopper was airborne in a smidge over three minutes, and was out for just over 15. On their return to base, the crew were happy to show us around (and in!) the aircraft, demonstrating the powerful camera and thermal imaging system. It was

not possible, however, to turn on the Night-Sun spotlight, because without a slipstream to cool it the paint would be melted off the underside! After the practical demonstrations, we were invited into the lecture room where Phil showed us a selection of video footage taken during actual incidents that occurred in the West Country recently. It was amazing to see the thermal camera in action, and the long-range camera keeping surveillance on a high-speed car chase from 2000 feet with a voice-link to patrol cars on the ground.

All together a worthwhile and fascinating evening, with grateful thanks to Phil and his colleagues, - pilot Ian Kingston and 2nd observer Phil Thornley. Thanks also to Alan for fixing it up for us.

If you would like to find out more about the Unit, click the link here:

Wanted. Space to complete an RV-9A build project.

Unfortunately our RV-9A has to move to a new location. If anybody can offer or suggest anywhere we can complete the construction within reasonable distance of Bath please let me know. We need a secure area about the size of a double garage, with access to electrical power. The project is likely to take around 18 months to complete. We are happy to pay rent for the space, and would be willing to complete any modest renovations to make the space usable.

Offers / suggestions to Dave Boxall - 01225 464520 daboxall@btopenworld.com

Where to go in June.

Free landings in Pilot Magazine: Bodmin, Derby, Fenland, Laddingford – Kent, Manchester Barton, and Weston - Ireland.

Free landings in Flyer Magazine: Carlisle, Derby, Donegal, and Gloucestershire.

13th June - Sunday 13th June 2004 the Today's Pilot US Classics Fly-in at Tollerton (the proper and original Nottingham Airport), hosted by the Aeronca Club of Great Britain.

Anyone welcome to arrive on the Saturday (PPR) and stay over. Food and the bar with music. Airfield open from 10.00am till 7.00pm on the Saturday and Sunday. Call Tollerton on 0115 9815050 (admin) or 0115 9811327 (tower) for more info on arrival or departure outside these times. The airfield has kindly mown the grass triangle between the runways and although this is not licensed it will be available. Thanks to the management at Tollerton all landing fees are FREE, but a small donation to the Breast Cancer Awareness charity is requested instead. Everybody is welcome at the party on Saturday evening, but please call Will Flanagan (airport manager) on 0115 9815050 to let him know how many tickets you require - this is so they can cater for the correct number. The party is being organised by Tollerton and tickets cost £6 to cover the cost of the band - these can be paid on the door. If anyone has any more queries please feel free to call Stephen Bridgewater, Assistant Editor at Today's Pilot office on 01780 755131.

Sunday 20th June will be the KEMBLE AIRDAY. Officially celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Red Arrows Aerobatic Team (and Alan George in a Saab!)

Admission Prices: £20 (£15 in advance) Children 15 and under FREE. Info Line 09063 023320

Kemble Airfield

We have heard that Kemble is going to be open and licenced for training until 2000hrs on Thursday nights from 3rd June. This will be for a trial period of one month. Instructors are available, so please take advantage of the airfield being open. If Kemble does not get enough traffic over the next month, late night opening will cease. Please support this, as it will give Flight Schools some influence in getting Kemble to stay open late, without extra charges, on winter evenings to enable training for night ratings. Maybe we can help their cause by flying into Kemble in the evenings. We can't confirm, at the time of going to press, whether or not fuel will be available.

PFA Nominations

We have received the following from Stuart MacConnacher:

"It is time to nominate those in PFA who have done outstanding work for PFA over many years or in the last year. The nominations required are for the following:

Lois Parker. For service to PFA in helping the organisation.

Chris Paul Trophy. For service to the PFA Rally. (President's Joystick).

Pete Clarke. For Air Safety.

Frank Hounslow. For engineering or as an inspector.

Ted Moslin Award. For best aviation apprentice in light aviation - £350 worth of tools.

Any nominations to me please by mid June. I need a name and a citation plus two members to propose and second the nomination, and a phone number to contact either of the proposers."

To stuart@comper-aircraft.co.uk or 33 Lime Farm Way, Gt. Houghton, Northampton, NN4 7AQ.

Regards, Stuart.

A new Pilot in the Strut!

Congratulations to Sam Edwards who recently returned from Naples Flight Center (Florida) with a shiny new PPL in his hand! Sam learned to fly in a Cessna 152, but concluded his stay with a tail-wheel conversion on a C-140 classic taildragger. He told us he learned more about flying in three days on this aircraft, than the previous three weeks in the 152. Know what you mean, Sam. Well done!

Sam is now looking forward to a conversion on to his recently purchased Sonerai, so we expect to see him zooming around

the skies of Bristol very soon.

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