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Bristol Strutter

Newsletter of the PFA Bristol Strut

June 2006

NEXT MEETING— THURSDAY 8TH JUNE

After many enquiries it has unfortunately not been possible to organise an outdoor meeting (with possible Bar-B-Q) at any local airfield. We will therefore still be meeting at BAWA in our usual room for a beer and a chat, but if any members intend to fly on that evening from their base field (weather permitting) then why not contact someone who doesn't have that privilege and offer them a seat beside you? All members have been

circulated by Gordon with a Membership list which indicates those wishing to fly, so choose someone who lives near you or your field, and share your enjoyment of flying with them.

A reminder that we will not be meeting in July or August. We are still in touch with Mark Greenfield from Ultimate High based at Kemble and we hope that he will be our speaker in September. Watch future Strutters for news!

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LAST MONTH—PARAGLIDING

Probably rated as one of the best Guest Speakers we have had for a long time, a well-supported meeting was enthralled by Fiona Macaskill who described her many adventures in paragliding. Assisted by husband Angus, we were treated to a slick audio-visual presentation combining stills with video clips, describing how Fiona first started in the sport and became enthused with competitions and record breaking flights. To begin the presentation, we were all invited out to the sports field where Fiona unpacked her current machine and inflated it in the light evening wind for us to see it in action.



Back in the meeting she recounted some very interesting stories of 'unusual' landings and told us of the kindness offered to her whilst competing throughout the world. Fiona was the Women's British Paragliding Champion in 2002 and then took a couple of years off competing but has recently re-started. We are grateful to her for coming to speak to us and wish her well in her future endeavors.



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Where to go in June

Free landing vouchers in:

Flyer Magazine - Bodmin, Derby, Sandtoft and Sturgate.

Pilot Magazine - Enniskillen, Fair Isle, Huddersfield, Kirkwall, Lashenden and Panshanger.

Today's Pilot magazine: Bodmin, Derby, Fishburn and Islay.

Some interesting places to visit this month. Don't forget to check before going!

10th Croft Farm, Defford - Defford Air Day & Fly-in (PPR) 07769-658041

17th Eggesford 01363-83746

18th Kemble Air Show 01285-771577 or 771177

24th Dunkeswell Cream Tea fly-in 01404-891643

25th Halwell 07850-620801 or 07971-480078

Members News

We have been following Andy Ferrington's progress to become a commercial pilot, and have just heard that he has passed the selection for Oxford Pilot Training School and been accepted onto their course.

He spent a gruelling but very enjoyable 3 days with 8 other applicants sitting tests, simulations and interviews, all of which he passed with flying colours.

The down side of this course is that there is no sponsorship and all training is self funded therefore very expensive. He has been pencilled in to start in October but Andy has also been very busy applying for part-sponsored training. He has got through to the final selection for Flight Training Europe and has an interview lined up with Flybe in early June. If successful, training will start in July in Spain.

Without doubt he has the ability, he just needs the opportunity to prove it and we wish him all the best.

National Council Meeting

The next National Council Meeting will be at Turweston on **Saturday 17th June** commencing at 10.30 am till 4.00 pm - hot lunch will be provided! Our NC Rep, Graham Clarke, has indicated that he can't make the meeting so if you would like to go in his place please let him know as soon as possible so that he can register your attendance. Contact Graham at: CGRAHAM978@aol.com or phone him on 01454 618216.

EASA Airfield Documentation

Charles Henry of the GAAC has forwarded on to us the following link which deserves your attention:

www.easa.eu.int/doc/Rulemaking/NPA/NPA_2006_06.pdf

In order that the GAAC may consider its position on the above consultation document and formulate a response, replies need to be made to info@gaac.org.uk by **30th June** with a copy to Charles at charles.henry@gaac.org.uk

Fly a Teacher

Has taken off! The scheme currently promoted by the PFA to gain the interest of teachers, is already starting to show some success. Devon Strut recently held an event at Plymouth in conjunction with their fly-in, but they discovered that the departure procedures that ATC insisted upon caused unnecessary delays and tested the patience of the volunteer pilots. Although the teachers flown thoroughly enjoyed the experience, it was decided in hindsight that a City Airport is not an ideal venue for this sort of activity.

No such problems existed last weekend when a couple of teachers from Wellsway School had their first flights from Garston Farm in G-DENS. Ian took them to see Centre Parcs and Longleat before flying over their homes, and they were so impressed that the word was spread among their colleagues during the following week. We now have a list of eight more teachers and two Young Aviators to fly!

If you have a spare seat and would like to take a part in this programme, let us know and we will find a contact for the schools local to your base airfield. A leaflet is available for download from our website: www.garstonfarm.flyer.co.uk/pfabristol/FlyTeacherDL.pdf

Click this link to download it, and pin it up in your local school. Also, look up the Y.E.S. website on www.flyers.org.uk and select 'Fly a Teacher' from the menu.

New Members

Welcome to our newest members, Craig Savage and his father, Bruce. They are undertaking the completion of a newly acquired, part built Steen Skybolt and are looking for building space in the Bristol area. If anyone can help please contact the editors who will pass the information on.

The 'Goose' and other aircraft

By Trevor Wilcock

Last month my wife and I visited the coastal area of North America, from Victoria BC to San José CA. We used the convenient Continental Airlines service through Bristol - within 40 min of leaving home, we were sitting at the departure gate.

While in Canada I rented a Cessna 172P from Victoria International Airport and flew, with a local instructor, over Vancouver Island and its offshore islands (and made my first non-tailwheel landing for over 11 years!). We were able to fly over the centre of Victoria, with its downtown harbour. The harbour has a surprising mix of traffic, from a 5000 ton car ferry down to the 12-seat harbour ferry bus-stop service, but of particular interest are the Beaver, Otter and Twin Otter floatplanes of Kenmore Air, Harbour Air and West Coast Air. All traffic seems to mix harmoniously, with the floatplanes taking off and landing from the stretch of water in the right of the photograph, just beyond the narrowest part of the harbour. At peak times there can be 12 floatplane movements in an hour.



From there our route south took us by design to the excellent Evergreen Aviation Museum at McMinnville, Oregon. Evergreen are long-time operators of helicopter, freight and fire-fighting services, and have recently converted a B747 for water-dropping - the ultimate cold shower! The Evergreen ramp included a C-130 and B-26. The Museum opened in 2001, purpose built to house their most famous exhibit, Howard Hughes' H-4 ("Spruce Goose"), which came on show in 2003. The Spruce Goose (actually built largely of birch) dominates the museum, and it's impossible to get an overall photo. The statistics are impressive - the longest wingspan ever constructed at 319' 11"

(compare A380 at 261' 10"), and a tailplane with greater surface area than the wing of the nearby B-17. It was built as a personnel and material carrier, at a cost of \$25 million, but was overtaken by the end of WW 2 and only managed one (unscheduled) flight of a little over a mile, in ground effect. Howard Hughes stored the aircraft, ready to fly, for 33 years at a cost of around \$1M per year; after his death in 1976 it went on show at Long Beach, CA, from 1983. In 1993 it was moved to McMinnville and subjected to extensive exterior restoration.



The SR-71 dwarfed by the massive wing of the Spruce Goose.

On leaving the museum, I was tempted by the sign offering glider rides. At the other side of the airfield, I took a ride in a Schweizer 2-33A. This was the standard US training glider of the late '60s. Large by UK standards - there's a step on the side of the fuselage for entry - its handling is "agricultural", as I expressed it to the instructor. Imagine sitting in a large tin bath on springs, holding the handle of a mop, and trying to adjust the attitude of the bath by moving the water around with the mop. While circling to the right in a thermal, with 40° bank, most of the time I was holding the stick pressed against my left knee! The instructor likened it to a Ford pick-up.



The Schweizer 2-33A training glider

Compared with the UK, where I can think of at least 10 gliding sites within 50 miles, gliding is poorly supported on the West Coast, except at a few sites at prime locations (eg Minden).

However, I have identified one for future visits to the San Francisco Bay area.

Trevor

Thanks to Trevor for this report, and his fine photographs!

It's always interesting to hear what people discover when abroad, and a write-up like this may well inspire others to do the same one day. By definition, readers of this newsletter are air-minded, so if you find an interesting airfield when you go on holiday do tell us so the knowledge can be shared with others. Happy flying!

*Steep Bank:
A Bank that charges pilots more
than 10% interest.*