

October 2004

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This month's meeting – 14th October - Strut AGM

Our AGM will take place at 7.30 pm and we are sure the business will be dealt with swiftly. Alan has informed us that he is likely to be transferred soon to Toulouse for the next 2 years so unfortunately will be unable to continue as Strut co-ordinator. We would like to express our thanks to Alan for all the hard work he has put into the position over the last 2 years, arranging interesting speakers and outings for us, and representing us at various PFA HQ meetings. We are sorry to see him go and wish him well. His departure will obviously leave a vacancy so please consider carefully if you could take on the job for a year or so. You will receive lots of help from Gordon with the finances and Ian & Mary with the Bristol Strut Newsletter. At the AGM members often suggest speakers or visits which help to fill the year's timetable.

An Agenda is attached at the end of this newsletter together with a copy of the minutes of last year's AGM (for members only) so that they can be taken as read and accepted quickly. Gordon will present his annual Balance sheet and we may need to discuss membership subs.



Last month – The Europa

Everyone assembled around David Joyce's Europa in the car park at BAWA on a still warm evening on 9th September 2004. There was much interest in both airframe and under the cowling and David answered many impromptu questions fired at him. We all then watched as he proceeded to prove that the Europa XS is truly a transportable plane by removing and stowing the wings and then pushing the fuselage carefully into the trailer ready for its journey back to Gloucester. The whole process took about 15 minutes – and David admitted that he doesn't do it very often as he has hangerage at Staverton. Once safely tucked away we retired to our usual meeting room, via the bar, and had a very informative meeting. Alan started the meeting with speculative questions

about 'why choose a Europa?' then David filled us in on further information about 'living with a Europa', followed by Rowland Carson and Nigel Charles offering tips on building an XS, with examples of foam sections showing the light but strong composite construction. A very good evening to start off our new season of monthly meetings.

Want to know?

Have you ever had an aviation question to which you can't find the answer?

Bristol Strut member, Richard Ward, operates an Aviation Information Service that may be of help to you. Richard is a mine of aeronautical information, and offers this search service. Contact him on 01179 253566 or e-mail him: avinfo@tiscali.co.uk

Advance notice - Bristol Aviation Enthusiasts' Fair

Sunday 31st October 10am-4pm

Taking place at BAWA, Southmead Road, Filton, Bristol (where we hold our monthly meetings) this event will feature stalls buying, selling and exchanging any aviation related items. Models, books, magazines, airline postcards, slides, photos, tickets, videos and memorabilia etc.

Admission £1.50 Enquiries and stall bookings: Jack Thomas, Tel 01278 760448, Mob 07949 064720 or e-mail: jack-thomas@tiscali.co.uk

Aviation Lectures 2004 at Kemble

AV8 Bistro & Restaurant

Every second Wednesday of the month, Guest Speakers, starting at 8.00 pm

Weds 13th Oct Phil 'O Dell "Rolls Royce Spitfire pilot"

Come and listen with a glass of wine or enjoy dinner at the same time.

Doors open at 7.00pm Admission £6.00 (payable on the door)
Refreshments available, booking essential **Tel: 01285 77 11 88**

Where to go in October:

Free Landing Fees in October:

In Pilot Magazine: Bodmin, Cromer, Huddersfield, Old Sarum, Shipdham and Le Touquet

In Flyer Magazine: Gloucestershire, Goodwood, Sherburn-in-Elmet and White Waltham.

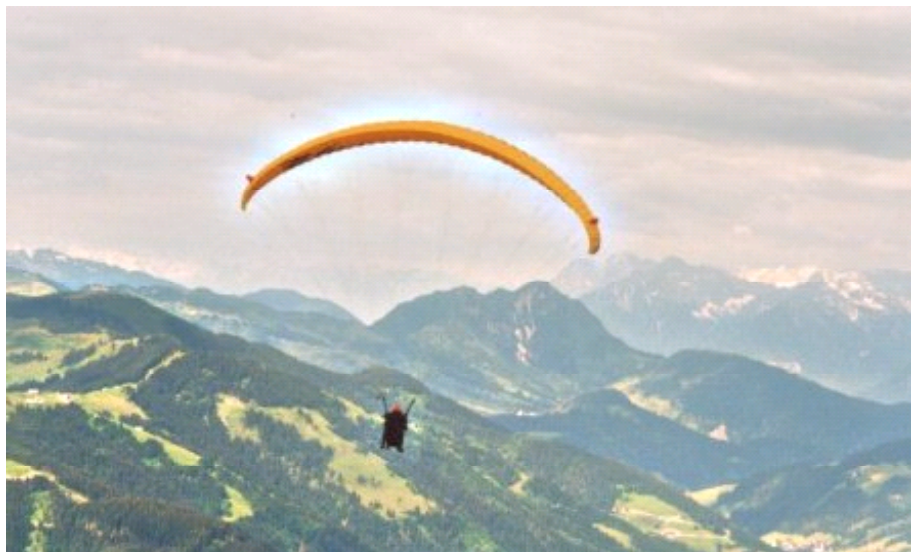
Where we went in the holidays

Continuing on from last month's 'holiday visit' we have received an article from Roger Holman who has also experienced aviation in Austria.

Paragliding in Tirol

After reading about Ian and Mary's flight in the Austrian Tirol, I am minded to report that whilst in the same area, I indulged in an alternative form of aviation which had grabbed my attention during a holiday in the Italian Dolomites last year. I had watched with envy, paragliders descending through several thousand feet of staggering scenery in total silence.

In common with the vast majority of those involved in aviation, I had always thought it somewhat stupid to leap out of a perfectly serviceable aeroplane with a parachuteBUT...these guys were not encumbered with the sickening wait until the canopy opened.



On the mountaintop, the breeze gently lifted and inflated their canopy before they stepped into space. No feverish rushing ... just a gentle couple of steps and off.

This year, I was with a walking group at Söll in Austria with Crystal Holidays, and their helpful rep arranged for me to meet Otto, an approved paraglider pilot. Our nearest mountain launch point was the Hohe Salve, whose summit at 6000 feet permitted some 5000 foot gliding descent to the main valley floor and landing site, over beautiful hillsides and smaller valleys, with a grand view of the Wilder Kaiser Mountains flown over by Ian and Mary.

07.30 hrs. and up in the cable car to the summit with Otto... closely followed by my pedestrian companions complete with wives ... some concerned for my physical safety, and all apparently with my sanity! At the summit they stood back some 50 yards to watch like vultures, convinced we would plummet to our deaths, or at the very least suffer a heart attack.

Conditions were not perfect, the wind eddying round the roughly conical mountaintop, causing the canopy to collapse at about V1 on our first Take-off attempt (about 3 paces down a steep slope). The canopy and lines recovered, we tried again... this time success... Just 3 paces and we were off... an initial lift and then sink to gain flying speed... lift again to avoid the cable car lines and out over the soaring ridge some 4900 feet above the main valley floor....

On meeting me at the cable car, Otto had explained that in Austria, all passenger flights had to be registered with the authorities, and I was a passenger and needed a ticket and boarding pass! This, he said, would be an official flight on a subsidiary of Austrian Airlines.

When I burst out laughing he looked quite hurt, so I shut-up while he solemnly stamped up my boarding pass and told me to retain my half of the ticket. I was also the baggage handler as well as passenger however, because I had to carry the paraglider on and off the cable car and over to the launch site. This comprised a padded tandem seat with harnesses, lines, and canopy in a large "sail bag", which was rolled up and stowed in a zipped compartment under the lower passenger seat, forming the undercarriage. The whole aircraft weighing some 25 kilos... quite a lot to lug about some 6000 feet AMSL. Nevertheless, I felt absolutely calm and relaxed as we wafted away from the mountaintop... much more dignified than taking off in a PA 28 from Filton... up here the only traffic pattern was a possible buzz from an eagle.



At first, a gentle descent to a level for ridge soaring, plenty of time to take video and still pictures. Otto also had a 35 mm camera on a long pole for "air-to-air" shots. He then commenced some violent pendulum manoeuvres during turns, pulling some quite severe 'g'... (I think he said that the lines and canopy were cleared for 4g), but I quickly advised him that I was more interested in photography than aerobatics, being aware that we were descending very fast during these manoeuvres, and I wanted the flight to last as long as possible... He said "not too long, because I have other passengers on other mountains".

The landing area was clearly marked with an orange wind sock as we circled some 500 feet over Söll's magnificent baroque church before turning on finals... no annoying RT up here!

At this point it is worth mentioning the largely

unsanitary policy for sewage disposal in Tyrol.

During the winter when all is covered in beautiful white snow, and with no ocean to pollute, Austrians save their sewage and that from the enormously enlarged skiing population, together with all the farm slurry, (the cows live indoors in winter), in large tanks. Now in June, the grass is encouraged to grow for the enormous cows to recycle by spraying the raw sewage now matured into ghastly brown slime, over the fields. In short, the entire countryside is covered in excrement by wicked great tractors towing tanks whose evil contents pervades the valleys with slime and stench, particular attention being given to the landing place onto which we were rapidly descending!

Hold your breath... a gentle thud and roll onto one's side, trying to keep one's face and cameras out of the drying slurry. Otto expertly positioned himself on top of me to avoid the brown stains, and the flight was over... 35 minutes of great pleasure slightly clouded by the smelly landing, then back up in the cable car to resume walking.

Now I know what it is like under a parachute without having to jump out of an aircraft... but at 90 Euros for 35 minutes - rather expensive... I won't be doing it again!

Roger Holman

Thanks to Roger for his holiday report.

Next month we hope to hear from Ron and Lynn who flew their Smaragd to the Friends of Jodels Fly-in at St. Omer.

Also, we will learn how Edwin has progressed with his ever-growing list of new types during the year.

*Has anyone else done anything interesting in the holidays?
We would be glad to hear about it!*





PFA AGM at Turweston

Summary by our retiring co-ordinator Alan George.

This year's AGM took place on the 4th September 2004 at Turweston. I attended on behalf of the Bristol Strut with thanks to Steve Neale for giving me a lift along with Dave Hall. What follows is my unofficial summary of the meeting, picking out the points I believe of interest to Strut members. It was a well attended meeting and I estimate over 100 members were present.

Chairman's Report

Cliff Mort gave a summary of achievements over his first year in office. He believed the move to Turweston had gone very well considering the upheaval.

The appointment of Andrew Moore as Head of Engineering meant that systems and procedures were now in good shape. The move from paper based to electronic records of aircraft had resulted in more efficient access but there was a cost involved.

The notorious case involving the inspector whose work had been the subject of a court case had been resolved with the inspector being reinstated and the other party leaving the PFA. However the owner of another aeroplane had successfully sued the PFA for negligence by an inspector and the PFA's insurers had paid out £10,000.

The Rally in 2003 had been a popular success with 1900 aircraft and 10,000 visitors but had made a financial loss. In 2004 they had tried to break even but had a disappointing number of visitors and exhibitors with the poor weather taking some blame. The total was 1000 aircraft and 6,500 visitors. However the Rally had not lost money but an appeal to a wider audience was planned for next year. He was probed on the 2003 Rally loss, whether this was mainly due to the costs of the move from Cranfield. However he could not separate these costs from the overall loss.

Chief Executive's Report

Graham Newby's report seemed to have little structure but was more a list of salient points.

The new building was stalled in the planning phase as there had been a particular objection to aviation development at Turweston. However most locals enjoyed the airfield, witness the number attending VAC events, thus he thought the application would progress in the future. The new staff had settled into the current building and he was intending to start builder's and inspector's courses.

EASA and Mode S transponders were occupying a lot of time and effort. The safetycom frequency was coming to fruition and a frequency would be allocated. A major threat was Eurocontrol and their plan to charge GA for airspace access, this needed us all to actively oppose it.

Financial Report

The accounts are in the AGM notice but Colin Mitchell presented a summary in a clear and understandable manner.

For 2003 the PFA made an operating loss of £122,000. This was due to the number of debtors being up, the Rally losing £30,000, the cost of electronic records and the moving costs and redundancies by coming to Turweston.

For 2004 the picture was looking better as debtor numbers were down and creditors were low. The Rally made about an £11,000 profit so he regarded it as a definite success. Also the Engineering department had made a £4,500 surplus.

Engineering Report

This was begun by Andrew Moore the Head of Engineering.

There had been changes in the CAA wording of the 'Permit to Fly' allegedly to bring it in line with the definitions of Rule 5 in the ANO. This had been discussed on the Bulletin Board and if he is to challenge these changes he needs examples e.g. of private strips that require an approach over what is considered a congested area.

The definition of EASA was showing up anomalies in the UK. Orphan C of A aircraft where the company had disappeared e.g. Austers, had the CAA as their type approval holder. This was against EASA rules so there is discussion to get them moved to a PFA permit. Conversely factory built vintage aircraft, currently operated on PFA permits should really be on a C of A according to EASA.

He noted that there had been a reduced level of service for some time so proposed methods to improve this. He was introducing standardisation of mods, repairs and concessions, and propeller substitution.

For mods there is a leaflet on applying a standard mod, this would remove engineering from having to approve the individual application of the mod leaving it with the inspector. For the future there is a leaflet on creating a standard mod if you have a new idea. As yet this process has not been taken up in large numbers so he encourages its use.

For new types he wanted to introduce selection criteria so that there would be a benefit to the membership of the engineering time expended. This was a contentious point for the members in case it stifled the development of new types. Andrew suggested lobbying your NC representative with your opinions on the process.

Francis Donaldson the Chief Engineer continued with a word on the, actually, many new types that were coming through to approval at this time including the 4 seaters RV10, J400 and Mission. Others were the RV9, Pioneer, Storch, Spitfire 26, Silence Twister and Ibis canard. Of interest to the Bristol Strut is the Escapade being available as a Group A aircraft as well as a microlight. Vintage aircraft were the ANEC Lym pne trial competitor, SkyJeep and Miles Hawk.

AAIB investigations had uncovered repairs done on PFA Permit aircraft without paperwork. This has led to the CAA taking an interest in the PFA procedures, the state of the fleet and maintenance requirements.

Gyroplanes once again had a proportionally large number of accidents. Thus the AAIB are re-investigating the airworthiness requirements and testing.

Elections to EC

This was being done as a postal ballot rather than the previous show of hands. Since the meeting I have discovered that something like 850 ballots were cast, out of a membership of 8,000, which is either a poor response or everyone is happy with the way things are run presently.

Motions

That PFA aircraft owners should compulsorily be members of the PFA was a contentious motion according to the mood of the Bulletin Board recently. The objections already raised were dealt with succinctly by the stand in proposer Barry Plumb. However the same weak points were raised by the audience ie: 'How to enforce it?' 'It would cause financial hardship', etc. The motion proposed was not the one printed in the AGM notice that came with Popular Flying, which due to a typographical error, did not include the compulsory membership paragraph, nor was it the same wording as the seconder had last seen. Thus, whilst I agree with the idea, I voted against it as a procedural point, but the motion was carried by 30 votes to 15. There were fewer people left by this late hour but the number shows that the Bulletin Board debate was not representative.

The 'Engineering Services Supplement' then came late in the day. Brian Hope, the proposer, felt there was not time to adequately debate the motion so he withdrew it.

Many thanks to Alan for this report and also to Steve and Dave for attending on behalf of the Bristol Strut.

Nigel Hitchman's Report on NC Meeting in September

Airspace Consultations: Lots of new rule proposals keep coming out from EASA/Eurocontrol etc many with short consultation times all adding excess bureaucracy. PFA are responding to everything as they can and information is being put on the PFA web site and Bulletin board to try to get the word out and get PFA members to respond. In order to try to get a more concerted effort and to get people to also lobby their MP/MEPs new EC member Jeremy Davey is going to write up some information and put it on the web site. There will be a more organised/concerted effort to get people to respond.

Mandatory Insurance- Mandatory third party insurance will be required from May 2005. PFA/BMAA are negotiating together with the insurance underwriters to try to get a good deal.

European Homebuilt/Vintage aircraft federation- has been formed to try to harmonise efforts of the national associations and make it easier to have aircraft cleared in one country accepted in another. Lots of work to do, a start has been made.

Engineering Audit of inspectors. All 400 inspectors are to be audited in 4 years, about 100 have been done already. Ken Craigie reports the process to be going well, with good feedback from the inspectors. It is a good opportunity for inspectors to clarify things with engineering and confirm their understanding of the rules, as well as for PFA to learn what problems or difficulties they have.

New PFA Aircraft and Engine Logbooks are now available from the PFA office. This can be used instead of the CAA logbooks and are tailored to PFA aircraft use and simpler to use. Price is same as CAA logbooks.

Sorting out the PFA Engineering mods system is currently the top priority, to clear the backlog of current mods and also make standard mods available. One problem is the poor standard of mod applications, making them difficult to approve, particularly if they are going to be made available to other builders.

A temporary graduate engineer is helping out on the administration of mods.

Finances.

The current year surplus is approx £40k so far. The Rally made a profit of approx £10k

Flying for Fun 2005 Dates July 1, 2, 3. Rally committee are working hard to improve the rally and get more exhibitors and more people to come. Pilot magazine are confirmed as sponsor. The prices for exhibitors and for public coming through the gate will be reduced from 2004 levels; there will also probably be a small flying display on Saturday afternoon, inc fly-bys of PFA types.

Magazine

The magazine will be monthly from Jan 2005. At first it will be a 48 page magazine (compared to the current bi-monthly 72 pages) Although this will cost the PFA more money than this year, printing costs have reduced so much that the PFA will actually pay significantly less for the magazine than they did for a bi-monthly magazine 5 years ago. The recent change to IMAX for production/printing/distribution saved £19k per year. There were problems in the last issue with the quality of the reproduction of some of the photos, which looked good before printing, this has resulted in a different printing sub-contractor

being used by lmax.

John Broad again asked for Struts to provide details of their monthly meetings.

The Build a plane project is continuing to attract interest; the almost completed aircraft was displayed at Farnborough and some other recent event. It lives at Manchester Barton in a Bus. Volunteer drivers are required to drive the bus to a few events. Any volunteers please contact PFA HQ.

The Isaacs/Armstrong Award gives sponsorship to young PFA members to get their PPL. So far this year there have been no applications, doesn't anyone want free flying???

The Ted Moslin award is for a young person going into light aircraft maintenance, it provides money to pay for tools etc it hasn't been awarded for the last couple of years due to no applicants, isn't anyone interested?? For both of these, apply to PFA HQ

PFA new HQ building

The planning application, submitted in Feb, still has n't been approved. It would appear that the planning officers will recommend the committee to approve it, but it is thought that the committee (or councillors) may reject it due to other Turweston problems. This would lead to an appeal, where, we are told, PFA would undoubtedly win approval as it will be on technical grounds, not emotional and the council would have to pay costs. It seems that they are stalling because of this. Peter Kember, PFA's planning expert is soon due to have a meeting with the Council's Chief Executive to get things moving.

The problems are occurring because of one local resident who moved into the area a couple of years ago and has since been waging war against the airfield's owner. He has employed someone to constantly monitor the airfield counting all movements and brings up anytime the maximum movements per day is exceeded. He is very vocal in stirring up the local councillors and has at least one in his pocket.

Aircraft on a CAA owned type certificate.

Owners of all of these aircraft, which include Austers, Condors, ARVs and a few others are being written to by the CAA, to say that the CAA are going to stop supporting them and that the aircraft will have to operate on a PFA permit, or the owners will have to set themselves up as some sort of support organisation to support them.

It is understood that the DGAC (French CAA) are doing a similar thing, which will affect aircraft such as Jodels currently on a C of A.

PFA priorities.

Harry Hopkins, in consultation with some others, has produced a list of what we think the PFA's priorities should be. We are asking strut members to comment on this and perhaps add their own priorities, to then feedback their list for the next NC meeting. The list should contain a maximum of 10 items. When I get an email copy of the list I will forward it on for the newsletter. This could make for some interesting discussion at a forthcoming strut meeting.

Any questions anyone would like to raise for the next meeting, it is Dec 11th

Bristol Airspace changes.

Airspace changes are on the way which will be of interest to Bristol Strutters. The proposed changes, which some of us had heard about already, have now been circulated amongst Bristol Councillors for comment, and members of the public can download the consultation leaflet from the Bristol Airport website – www.bristolairport.com – click on 'General Info' then 'Airspace Consultation'. You can also download a set of maps which adequately illustrate the proposed new airspace around Bristol.

Essentially, the idea is to expand the current Class D airspace, which we all know and love, as far as the Lyneham Zone to the East, and combine it with an enlarged Cardiff Zone to the West. This will allow the larger jets with large turning circles to be vectored in and out of both airports from the adjacent airways without leaving controlled airspace at all, so providing enhanced margins of safety and regulated separation. Although the dialogue indicates the top limit of FL65 will increase to FL105, it doesn't make it clear what the lower limit will be. We are told "the bases of each of the CTA segments have been designed according to international standards and have taken into account aircraft climb and descent profiles". I have asked Bristol ATC about this, and it seems the base levels will vary from 1500 close-in, to 2000ft and 3500 working outwards. The large area to the north will probably start at 4000 feet. Special arrangements are in hand to facilitate gliders operating from Halesland just south of Bristol, but however the new structure turns out we are assured that full co-operation will be extended by ATC to those of us who wish to manoeuvre around the zone underneath the stubs.

If you have a comment to make on these proposals, the Team will welcome your feedback. Send your views to Kevin Cooper, Airspace Project Team, Control Tower Building, Bristol International Airport, BS48 3DY before December 3rd. You can e-mail for further information to airspace@bristolairport.com or phone **01275 473754**.

PFA BRISTOL STRUT

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held at 8pm on Thursday 9th October 2003 at BAWA

There were 21 members present, including Strut Co-ordinator, Alan George and Treasurer Gordon Pritt.

The Minutes of last year's AGM have been included with the October newsletter received by Strut members, but it was considered inappropriate to publicise them on the web. Local readers interested in the life of of Bristol Strut will be welcome to visit us at BAWA, Filton, on the second Thursday of each month. The forthcoming meeting will include the AGM, the Agenda of which appears below:

PFA BRISTOL STRUT

AGM – October 14th 2004

Agenda

Acceptance of last year's minutes

Co-ordinator's report on what we did last year - Alan

Treasurer's report, plus what to set the subs at for this year - Gordon

Brief report on Rally 2004 - Aircraft 4 Sale – Steve Neale

Elections

Future events - we need some ideas/delegation for November 2004 onwards. December Quiz?

Any other business

Close

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October 2004
