

IBM Flying Club Newsletter October 1997

Clear Prop! - Jon Butts

The big news since the Sept Newsletter is that two of our members have initiated themselves as Transatlantic ferry pilots! Brian Mellor and Chris Thompson flew a Cessna 172 over to Southampton from Boston (USA) via Canada, Greenland, Iceland and Scotland. "How do they do that?". Well, it all seems to have gone swimmingly (!), but I've not received any trip reports for you yet. When I last heard from Chris he seemed to be stringing enough words together to equal the distance flown, and Brian (he of regional TV news stardom) might have something for you to read next time!

Sept Newsletter readers may recall a request for any help getting a US visitor some UK flying. I heard that Chris Thompson kindly provided a flight in the Auster at Hook (aka "strip alongside the M3, if you dare"), so Thanks to Chris for that.

The IBM/CAA Safety Evening at Hursley on Nov 6th is not far off now. A special logbook stamp will be yours if you remember to bring your logbook. A CAA medical person will also be presenting. I request that all bonfires and fireworks of the season remain outside the building Bob. Around 30 IBM Flyers have told me they'll be along, and we've put posters up at Carill, Solent, Sarum, Goodwood to encourage all pilots in the Southampton/Winchester areas to join in.

Paul Eathorne is having a more difficult time now that we have rumbled he also leads a double life as Dave Sawdon. (Over many years "Paul" and "Dave" have attended many of our events, but never the same ones, and they have never met. We have tried to disprove the theory, but instead it proved impossible to get them both in the same place at the same time. Now and again Dave turns up unexpectedly whereas the expected Paul doesn't, and vice versa, suggesting that the strain of double lives overlapping at the flying club is becoming too much).

Anyhow, now exposed, he, the Paul version, has decided to simplify the deception, and reduce travelling to his Swiss based wife by going away there on assignment (allegedly). So, we will be seeing even less of Paul it seems. If it is true, then of course we will also hardly ever see the Dave Sawdon version either. Then again, if he's not really going then we could be seeing a lot more of Dave. We will just have to wait and see, but expect an IBM Flyout to Switzerland next summer to see if we can find Paul there.

Overheard at a local flying field - Anon1

Whats the definition of a total aviation person? Well I bumped into a person recently who qualifies, (I'll call him 'John Brown' to avoid embarrassment and possible mutilation) I hadn't seen this chap for a while and met him out by the aeroplane in which he has a share at Southampton. After a few minutes of aviation chat I thought I'd enquire as to the well being of his wife...so I said "and how is the good lady?" To which he replied "well, shes just had a 50hr check and a new vacuum pump fitted..."

No names, no packdrill, my lips are sealed.....

IBM Flying Club Events 1997.

Well we are into the Autumn season, and ground based events back in the diary. The next flying event will most likely be another of our New Years Day flyouts.

OCT 22nd. RAES Society Lecture. Aerodynamics of Indy Race Cars.

Southampton Uni, Physics Block, Lecture Theatre A. Off The Avenue, then left into Highfield, left into Hawthorn, left into Chamberlain.)

NOV 6th. CAA SAFETY EVENING at IBM Hursley, 1930 start.

NOV 18th. RAES Society Lecture. Air Accident Investigation. At HMS Sultan, Gosport. Car details required in advance: to Danny)

For both RAES lecture bookings/info call Danny Elliot on 01705 799148.

Addition to the IBM Virtual Fleet - Peter Short

I have now bitten the bullet and signed up with a C-150 syndicate at Popham (G-BAYP). Availability seems OK despite 15 members (scattered around Middlesex, Surrey and Berkshire). Share price was 1300 UKP, monthly 30 UKP, and 30 UKP an hour. (Ed: Congratulations Peter!)

Rutan LongEze For Sale (OR, preferably, a quarter share) - Irv Lee

Nik Shaylor has been trying to sell his share in the Rutan LongEze for some time now, but being permanently out of the country doesn't help. He can now put the plane up for sale, and if anyone meets the 'agreed value' (18000) it goes. We would rather of course sell the share, (Thrupton based) as the rest of us have no reason to want to give it up. Presumably though, that is a good selling point! If anyone wants his share in a fun well maintained hangared aeroplane within a well run group, there is probably a great bargain to be had. Esp as there is money in the bank that would be inherited with the share!

More New members - Jon Butts

The membership list is still growing, as is the 'Friends of the IBM Flying Club' distribution list (for people who dont qualify as members, eg sub cons, but who would like to keep in touch and/or join in our events). All welcome to join in the aviation chit chat and drink at the Hursley Clubhouse, Fridays about 9pm.

Additions to the Membership List in September and October are: Julian Rees, John Woodley and Andy Coulson. Welcome!

New member intro - Kevin Westwood

The type of flying which I indulge in is best described as not nearly enough. (ed: Hurrah! Well put that man! Kevin for Chairman...)

I gained my PPL on an intensive course in New Zealand in '93 (ed: Dave Thomas did that, you might like to compare notes). I first spread my wings with the gliding fraternity at Dorset Gliding club. I try to keep both activiites going although my gliding is suffering. I'm "type-rated" on PA-38's and more recently on the C150, flying out of Popham.

I'm hoping to move up to a C172 soon in the hope that it will be less exciting than trying to get the Tomahawk into the air or onto the ground at Popham. My longest trip to date has been to Haverford West and back, discovering just how optimistic the quoted fuel-burn rates for a Tomahawk are. Having said that, since the weather never lets us VFR bods fly higher than 3000' and hence lean, I suppose that's not strictly fair. After the C172, my next modest ambition is to learn to tail drag.

New member intro - Andy Astley

As a new member to the flying club and also new to flying I thought I would write a few words describing who I am why I took up flying and my progress so far.

Well, I'm 24 and have been working for IBM for 3 years now, at Warwick, Hursley and now at a customer site in Havant. Some of you may well know that I work on the same project as Jon Butts, and for the last 6 months the same team. I knew he was a pilot and one afternoon (ed: must have been during a long compile job) I spoke to him about why he had chosen to take up flying. A number of people have asked me why I began taking flying lessons, I suppose I can partly blame Jon for putting the thought into my head, and I guess that it was because I wanted to do something different, something that would be a challenge and would always remain a challenge, to be built on in the future. I was inspired enough by our conversation to go and find out for myself if this was the thing for me. The next weekend I drove down to Southampton airport, picked a flying school and walked in. Due to my height (6' 7") my first question was if they has a plane with enough leg room for me (a big problem with cars). So it was out onto the apron to try the planes out for size, the Cessna was too small but the AA5A was fine, so my first flight was booked for the following Friday.

I used my trial flight to determine if I had any violent reactions to flying a light aircraft, I think if I did I would have found out on this occasion, because as trial flights go it was slightly (ed: very) unauthodox, it was a really great flying experience with some very hard banked turns which my guest passenger described as worse than any roller coaster ride he'd been on. Because I hadn't been sick on this first occasion I decided to pursue flying as a hobby, made a appointment for my next lesson, and started to read 'Flying Training'.

One of the first things that I did was to arrange a medical, as there seemed no point in wasting my time and money if I was unable to go solo, and ultimately get my PPL. With this passed over the next few weeks I began to go through the basics of straight and level, climbing, descending and turning. I'm sure that I don't need to tell a group of pilots about the thrill and experience of flying a plane, but I was definitely hooked.

Some amusing moments from my course so far. I once commented about how fast the clouds were moving, the instructor politely pointed out that it was not the clouds, but the plane that were moving so fast. Having tried to start the engine with the magnetos off, I then asked the tower for a radio check and taxi, but with the radio switched OFF - my instructor saw this coming because, over the intercom, he pretended to be the tower and gave me my holding point etc! I have realized the error of my ways and learned not to repeat these mistakes.

My training continued until I was in the circuit, with four hours in the circuit I was still making occasional mistakes on the radio, and also having difficulty flaring properly when coming in to land. This I guess is the progress so far, as it was at this point in my training that I went on holiday for 3 weeks, since my return I have not had a lesson, but have instead been reading up for my flying law exam which I am determined to pass before continuing the lessons any further. (ed: Oh oh, best get airborne again asap, continuity is key!).

Kirkwall Trip Report - Jon Butts

All summer I had a craving to go flying long-distance (since dwarfed by a certain ferry flight of course!). I just wanted to go somewhere, anywhere, for its own sake. As long as it was far enough away I would get the same sense of freedom and achievement I used to from all my flying.

Anyway, having threatened it for a few weeks, I led Neale and Dasher astray recently. (Well I admit I led Neale astray, but Dasher? No I think he is probably permanently astray, certainly when it comes to flying).

We took a Friday afternoon off and took advantage of a weather window to head North. Inverness

must have looked far enough away to do the trick; I've completely forgotten why we chose it. Briefly...

Date	FROM -> TO	FLT TIME	CAPTAIN
15/8	SOUTHAMPTON -> CARLISLE	2:10	Neale
	Over Birmingham, east of Manchester, great ATC RT. 50min fuel stop (ok price) interesting based a/c.		
15/8	CARLISLE -> INVERNESS	2:00	Jon
	Over Prestwick, Mull, past Ben Nevis, along Loch Ness. Tailwind. Soton to Inverness 5 hours elapsed. B&B.		
16/8	INVERNESS -> KIRKWALL	1:10	Dave
	Over Wick, Old Man of Hoy, Scapa Flow. Great VFR, bit breezy. Refuel.		
16/8	KIRKWALL -> DUNDEE	1:50	Neale
	Wick, and down east coast past Aberdeen. Refuel. Friendly place, lift to chippy by fire crew!		
16/8	DUNDEE -> TEESIDE	1:25	Jon
	Over RAF Leuchars (MEDA), St Andrews golf course, Newcastle, Durham cathedral. Rwy 18. £18 fee!		
16/8	TEESIDE -> SOUTHAMPTON	2:00	Dave
	home via GAM, TNT, CPT. DA. Self-vectoring ILS, balloons over winchester. (Could have come home direct from Dundee fuelwise.)		

Of course we were lucky to be able to do and share a trip like that, but I must say I really am hooked on flying in Scotland and cant wait to go again. If you get half a chance, go. If you dont, try to make one. Here are a couple of moments from the trip:

Neale can, and likes to, negotiate transit of Class D airspace, rather than dog-leg around if they are in the way of his straight line route. Having got clearance through Birmingham's airspace, Manchester was next. Neale made the standard call, with request. One heavily pregnant pause later came this response from ATC.

"Errrrr, Romeo Oscar, I'm afraid that at this time on a Friday afternoon, if I were to clear you through the zone, it would mean us stopping all of the inbounds and all of the outbounds for Manchester! If you can descend I'd suggest the low level corridor to the west of the airfield".

Well, none of us had heard such a non standard, but amusingly good natured, call like that before. I guess it was actually rather nice of him to take the time to explain rather than just say no. ATC seemed to think that Neale was a bit amateurish just for requesting a transit. Ironically, if only they could have seen how well Neale maintained his composure with Dasher and I sniggering away they would have thought how thoroughly professional he was when replying to them.

'Romeo Oscar has an alternate route to the east and will remain clear, request flight information service'. This 'no-transit' was not going to be a problem for our Neale, who of course had planned a route around just in case of this very thing.

We got the flight info service and trundled up over some beautiful countryside. We were north east of the zone and not getting any chat from Manchester. Neale figured we might as well talk to the next place (Leeds), so made his next call: "Manchester, Romeo Oscar request change to Leeds on xxx.xx."

'NO NO NO! Dont leave me! Dont leave me!' the controller implored. 'I have traffic all around you. Please stay with me'.

Well, that was definately the best call Dasher and I have ever heard, we were in stitches with that one. Slightly disconcerted Neale advised RO was staying on frequency.

As if to make the point ATC soon advised of an inbound 737 crossing not far above. He must have feared we would clear his frequency then climb into his airspace. (We wouldnt have).

So, there is obviously more to ATC at Manchester than we appreciate - just asking for a north south transit appears to have lost us all credibility - but transits are normal at other Class D's. We've been through (yes, with clearances!) Gatwick, Cardiff, Bristol, Southampton, Luton, Bournemouth, Newcastle, Teeside, Glasgow and others. Maybe some Manchester SIDS route out over the VOR, or they stack on it - anyone know? Still, talking to them had great entertainment value, certainly for the passengers!

In the taxi to Inverness we asked the driver to take us to the B+B area. Obviously planning ahead again, and, as usual, thinking of practicalities, Neale piped up with 'I dont think I've slept with you yet have I Jon?'

The driver did well to hold his nerve! Especially when Dasher chipped in with 'Nor me Jon... ..or was that Irv?'. We piled it on, recalling who has slept with who in the past; (Irv and Dasher, me and Paul Eathorne, ...). We didnt let him stew for *too* long before explaining we only really mean in terms of sharing a twin room! (Yes, truly!)

Despite this teasing the driver did find us a great B&B in a tourist filled Inverness. This was at one time the Bishops Manse. A grand, solidly constructed building with very thick walls - conclusively proven by the fact that I could only hear Dasher's infamously loud snoring by listening out carefully for it. Apparently Dave slept with his windows open, so I guess I was better off than the neighbours!

Neale didnt embarass me by telling me if I snored or not, but I am just wondering Pat, if you would agree with me that Neale even snores neatly? Or maybe these things are just relative. :-)

Overheards - Anon2

Clare: I did an ILS into Cardiff today and the needles never moved. Irv: Try turning it on

Anon: I hear Southampton controllers are being offered well paid jobs by the Russian Space Agency in the hope that they will keep 'Mir' orbiting far longer than anyone expects.

(Ed: with apologies to the ATC people, just to keep scores even, the next one is a pilot bodge!)

G-ABCD: "Southampton Tower, G-ABCD request radio check and taxi"
 ATC: "G-ABCD, strength 5, what is your position?"
 G-ABCD: "On the ground, G-CD"
 ATC: "G-ABCD, what is your... ..position?"
 G-ABCD: "On the ground, G-CD"
 ATC: "G-ABCD, what is your p o s i t i o n?"
 G-ABCD: "On the ground, G-CD"

ATC get on with the other planes wanting to fly that day, and come back five minutes later with: "G-ABCD are you still on frequency?"

No reply, G-ABCD was shutdown, with crew investigating radio transmit failure! After all, ATC obviously hadnt heard a single one of their "on the ground" transmissions!

(ed: For our 'tyros'/student pilots; ATC wanted to know WHERE on the ground the plane was, in order to know where the taxi would be from and to - they dont necessarily know where a plane is parked).

Not Shetland (again) by Dave Ashford

For a while now I have had an ambition to visit Shetland. On one trip I and two other Zero Boys made it as far as Kirkwall on Orkney but we didn't have enough time to go those extra few miles (about 100) to Shetland. I did suggest to the others that if they couldn't get an extension on their weekend flying passes that they could take a scheduled flight back and I would go on alone. The controller in the tower at Kirkwall thought it was a good idea (he must be single too), but Neale and Jon declined and so we came back south without crossing 60 degrees North.

Last week the weather forecasters kept telling us that the High over the UK would be staying for a while and the forecast for the weekend was looking good, so Neale and I prepared ourselves for the journey. By early Saturday morning I had arranged for an extension to our 50 hour check (we had 12 hours left and the journey would take 6 hours each way), made insurance arrangements with the Highlands and Islands Airports authorities to allow us to use their airports out of hours (just in case), planned the route, fed and watered the pilots and fuelled G-ZERO ready for the off. The only problem was the weather.

The High pressure system had been with us for several days by Saturday and it had become very stable, leading to early morning mist and fog, particularly in the Midlands and North, which was the problem for us. We would have nowhere to land and refuel en-route. We waited until 11:00 and the Metars still looked the same so I called Perth and Wick to find out how accurate the Metars were and both told me that they were fogged-in. Although Lerwick closes at 14:30 on a Saturday the controller had offered to stay on and give us a weather report when we got near the airfield, so I rang him to say that we wouldn't be coming after all. He said the weather in Lerwick was fine and eminently flyable! What a shame (or words to that effect)! Oh well, perhaps another time.

So we went to France instead. Three hours later Neale and I were sat in a bar at Reims(Prunay) airfield drinking beer and eating saucisson (sp?) sandwiches. Life can be hard sometimes, but that day was not one of them! The temperature was in the mid 70s (25C for our younger readers) and we watched gliders thermalling near the field whilst waiting for our taxi. I would thoroughly recommend it as a destination for a "weekender".

Sunday morning we arrived back at the airfield to dense fog, although the weather had been lovely when we left Reims (only 15mins by taxi). By 11:00 the fog had dissipated and under clear blue skies and 70 degree temperatures we set course for Chatellerault, a small airfield about 40 miles south of Tours. For some time our vacuum gauge had been indicating on the low side of healthy at idle although it was always in the green at cruise power settings so we were not too worried about it. Besides, the weather was great so it would be no great problem if it failed. En-route to Chatellerault, however, I noticed it was indicating a suction just below the bottom of the green, so I wrote it up on the tech-log, knowing that the aircraft would go for maintenance as soon as we got home.

There is 800m of good tarmac and no landing fee at Chatellerault so this is another destination I would recommend. You have about a 20 minute walk into town for something to eat, unless you get one of the locals to drive you there, like we did. Then all you have to worry about is the 20 minute walk back on a full stomach in the warm sunshine. It doesn't get much better than this....

From Chatellerault we flew to Le Havre to clear customs and refuel for the return journey to Southampton. We arrived at Le Havre as the visibility was dropping and so departed very soon after checking the Soton and other UK weather. Crossing the Channel was fine and we got to Seaford before the vacuum pump gave up completely. Neale (who was P1) noticed it when the AI started to show that we were descending, even though our eyes, the VSI and ASI said we were flying straight and level. A quick check of the vacuum gauge showed no suction, which was the real give-away. At this point our IMC training kicked in, particularly the limited panel bits, and Neale covered the AI and DI and set himself up for the approach. By now we were above cloud so he called Solent and

asked for vectors for the ILS. He informed them of our situation, asking for an expedited recovery but declining the offer of declaring an emergency. A quick double-check of the "UNOS" rule and it was an uneventful descent through cloud and onto the ILS for a safe return to home base.

I'm not going to draw any conclusions from our experience other than to say that the pump could have failed at any time in any conditions, but it chose to fail on a Channel crossing when we were above cloud with a visibility of 6k at our destination. Murphy's Law held true once again.

Old friends... - Paul Eathorne

Some of the Southampton regulars will remember Fay, an extremely bubbly character who used to work in Flight Briefing at Soton. (anyone having trouble remembering the name might recall a blonde girl who talked at 90 mph, was very 'enthusiatic', lived on a boat and was doing what flying training she could afford on the low wages FB clerks earned)

Anyway, Fay applied for and was accepted as a cadet by British Midland and we last heard of her going through training at Oxford.

Well, a friend of mine is married to a Bmid first officer who arranged a jump seat ride on the 1810 Heathrow-Zurich flight last night ...and it was a very pleasant surprise to find Fay in the right hand seat, now with 2 stripes and a 737 type rating

They'd come straight of a Paris flight, and were night stopping in Zurich. Very strange to see Fay, the person I remembered taking booking out details at Soton do the take off and landing, with 9kt tailwind. Good to see the professionals having trouble finding the parking slot too!

She asked after everyone, (Dash, you get a special mention!) and sends her best wishes and I've told her that all of us who rememebr her would be delighted at her success.

(co-incidentally she met Georgia - who used to work for Carrill aviation but now flies charters with Titan - in Naples recently)

PS apologies to non-Soton based readers to whom these names mean nothing but I know many of you will remember and would be interested to hear)

(Ed: Never mind Fay and Georgia, who is this Paul Eathorne bloke anyway? We hardly get to see *him* these days!)

Brittany Trip - Irv Lee

We have just had an excellent 3 days in the Rutan in France - flew to Cherbourg for lunch at Luc's bar there, whilst we checked the weather to see where to go from there - South West to Brittany or South East to Chartes or the Loire? The weather looked good in Western Brittany so we chose Lannion, close to the 'Granite Rose' coast which seemed like a good place to be. As a sideline, if you haven't been to Cherbourg airfield, weather and flight plans can be accessed in the usual 'minitel' way, but for anything else, Luc (the bar/restaurant owner) is Mr-Fix-it for "les ros-bifs" - his English is excellent and he knows everyone around. Once we needed a hire car there on a French bank holiday, and despite everywhere being closed, it just wasn't a problem.

We flight planned for a direct (over Jersey) route, and set off. Jersey Zone eventually handed us on to Dinard, as the area control for where we would cut the French coast again, near Paimpol. Also coming on frequency was an AA1 pilot with a very English, "retired Colonel" voice who made a fairly good radio call in that he included all the 'required information' like aircraft type, position,

time, etc, but his 'departed and destination' raised a smile: 'Inbound to Dinard from ENGLAND'. Sounded like he might be colonising them on arrival. This became more interesting when later he reported he was near Granville and wanted to know if they had fuel, as he was running out and couldn't make Dinard. I couldn't help thinking 'Who cares if Granville have fuel, just land there!!!', but Dinard spent about a minute checking as requested and came back with the information that Granville did have fuel, so armed with that information, our retired Colonel finally made the decision to divert in!

Dinard now told us to report "Ile de Brehat" and I searched the French chart again and again, but couldn't see it. The French usually want a definite report on 'coasting in', so I guessed it was somewhere en route by the coast, rather than miles off-shore. I told them I couldn't find that reporting point but was planning to cross the coast near Paimpol. This they said was fine, as the Brehat was where we reached land on that track. I STILL couldn't see it marked on the chart. That evening, over a beer, I again looked for it and still couldn't find it on the French chart - Jill picked up the Hertz map we got with the hire car and it was very prominently marked on that!

Anyway - Lannion - picked at random, and what a choice! Small french town, very close to a spectacular coastline, excellent runway, modern terminal building for small commuter and air taxi operations to get people out and into Western Brittany quickly, and best of all, in it, a Hertz rent-a-car man sitting, bored out his mind, waiting for someone like us. We spent two days on the nearby "pink granite" coast - found some great hotels and restaurants - the coastline is just superb there. (I think I might have said that already!)

Saturday afternoon and time to return via the Guernsey fly-in and fuel at under 40 pence a litre. However, before departure, the Lannion fees had to be paid: Landing and 2 nights parking at Lannion - under nine pounds total!

Visibility flying to Guernsey and later back to Thruxton was incredible. I could see the Dorset chalk cliffs before we reached Alderney on the final leg. I haven't heard of anyone from the club going into Lannion before. I can definitely recommend the area, and you can fly direct there with 24 hours customs notice. (We used that facility to leave to Guernsey). Likewise, as I've said in previous articles, flights from the Channel Islands direct to UK non-Customs airfields are allowed with 24 hours notice.

Newsletter Feedback, Aborted TakeOff - Paul Eathorne

For any of last months readers wanting to know " What was wrong then?".

Basically the problem was a loose exhaust baffle. This had the effect of partially blocking the exhaust, limiting power output at high settings. As mentioned before, this was not apparent during power check(s) at the hold, but acceleration on the take off run(s) was not so good, and the two take offs aborted. All fixed now.

Newsletter Feedback, Prop Swinging - Richard Valler

Thanks to Dave Sawdon for the explanation of hand-starting on left-mag; neither the Champ nor the VP have impulse mags, and on both l/r mags are timed the same which could be making starting more difficult. I think both left mags will be retarded over the winter! Its very difficult to get proper instruction re how to hand-swing a prop for the first time (perhaps its something to do with liability if something goes wrong? Perhaps Dave would organise a session if there was enough interest??). I was petrified the first time I swung a prop, on a VW engine as it happens, which even though its a low compression engine with a wooden "toothpick" prop can still dislocate fingers if it kicks back on the unwarynever curl finger-tips behind the prop trailing-edge! And I always wear thick padded gloves for prop-swinging, essential on the Champ which has a metal prop with quite a sharp trailing

edge, and a sensible precaution for the VP. One other problem is that the VW and British/European engines in general are swung clockwise (facing), while American engines go the other way round....one or other feels cack-handed depending on what you're used to.

Not the Final Word on Radio - Irv Lee

On the 'radio' front, I see a new CAA Safety Leaflet has been issued dealing with the problem of bad r/t usage and terminology. It's a good read, although a couple of things in it made me smile. We will have to make sure there are plenty to be given away at our CAA Safety Evening. It gives an example route and script for the old type of radio exam, when students had to 'fly' a route in a ground radio simulator. It also gives an example of how your r/t technique might be the difference between being allowed a transit of Controlled Airspace or not. Amusingly, for the pilots who fly in this area, it picks 'Solent' as the example. I must say firstly that I have never had a problem with transits, but I know others do. I remember one military man out of Odiham complaining that when he flew nearby in his RAF Helicopter he was treated with all the professional respect he could wish for, but when he flew his weekend plane anywhere near the same route he was treated like a complete moron. The basic trick with Solent is (as the leaflet says) to give a 'good' call, but also to recognise they have a VFR route now (but you still need a clearance) Romsey-Bishops Waltham and reverse. If you can't use that, take note of their active runway direction. They are very unlikely to allow you to cross their approach path inside their airspace, but they might be happy to let you across the climbout, as very few commercials go straight out, but they all go straight in! With Ranjit the other month Solent had no problems letting us across Winchester west to east at 2500 feet as they were on runway 02. If it had been 20 it would not have been so. Transit via their overhead in any direction usually stands a better chance than any other route, as they consider that to be the safest place.

Just to illustrate a problem with r/t terminology, the first point I read in the new leaflet was that you must never say 'ON FINALS' - firstly, the word is FINAL (don't get put off, this is NOT the best point the leaflet makes!) but more importantly 'ON FINAL' can be misheard as 'LONG FINAL' (ie: between 4 and 8 miles out) and the controller might be fooled into believing he or she can launch another departure. So sitting at the breakfast table reading this newly arrived leaflet, and having learned that the CAA insist that you should say 'Final', and never 'On Finals', my eyes strayed to video about the PFA 1996 Cranfield Rally, loaned to me the previous day by Ranjit for my air cadets. The video's title chosen by the PFA is 'On Finals'. I think there is a long way to go with this radio thing, but at least the leaflet has made a start!

RT debate

Last month we asked... "Do you have any views on R/T? Is it really that bad? Would you be happy to be re-tested? Were you ever tested? Please write up your views, your favourite phrases, tips or hints for others". Richard Valler has got the ball rolling...

On the subject of R/T, I've never forgotten the placard on the wall in front of the "simulator" when I took my R/T exam..."ENGAGE BRAIN BEFORE OPENING MOUTH".

On the subject of re-tests (and this applies to any kind of re-test, having passed 3 post-licence GFTs due to lack of hours) I take the view that they are a good thing for the licence-holder (if you can't pass a re-test, perhaps you shouldn't be flying!?) as long as they do not lead to commercial exploitation; all of us who are not perfect acquire bad habits over a period of time, and re-tests do focus the mind again.

My pet hate on the radio? ".....EERRRMM....."

Stearman Flight Thanks - Irv Lee

A big thanks to all of you who contributed and presented me with a voucher for a Stearman trip for the work in running the club over the last few years. We were planning to take the flight in late September, giving anyone who wanted to come along a bit of notice, but things changed. We were going away for two days for my birthday (early September) but this all had to be cancelled at the last moment when most towns closed down for anything except 'The Funeral'. Despite the short notice I managed to arrange the flight, in what turned out to be perfect weather, post cold front conditions on the Friday evening. We managed to alert a few people, and Dave Ashford was able to join us, with a special interest because his family have also given him a similar present for his birthday, and that is yet to be taken up.

Apart from the 1993 "IBM Goes to Russia" trip (ed: Tis true! Coup in progress, tanks in Moscow, but we did go) with Wilgas and Ant-2 flying, and a 'treasure hunt' navex at Middle Wallop in a Moth, my tailwheel flying has been somewhat lacking since RAF Chipmunks in the 70s. The only ('only!') aerobatics since then had been the Russian Yaks and Jets so when asked what I wanted, I decided to try to perfect loops and stall turns, but also I wanted 2 or 3 circuits to try out the tailwheel. I think its fair to say I got the loops, stall turns, and landings fine, but I didn't quite crack the touch-and-go take-offs, getting exactly the right tail angle at the right speed, so the two I tried were more 'staggers' into the air than anything else.

So, THANKS to everyone for the gift - a very enjoyable way to celebrate my birthday.

Huddersfield Crossland Moor Fly-In - Dave Ashford

Sunday 7th Sept Neale Fray, Paul Goodman and I went to the Huddersfield fly-in and then on to Seething. Huddersfield said we came the furthest distance that anyone has ever come to one of their fly-ins! A good reception, friendly people and good burgers - the first one was free, as was the landing fee. Shame about the weather: overcast and light drizzle over the field and blowing 20 knots. The top of that big concrete mast (1000'+ agl), which is nearby, was in the clouds. The weather West of the Peaks was apparently even worse - nobody made it in from Lancashire, but East of Sheffield it was blue skies and sunshine.

The runway at Huddersfield is interesting - a steepish slope to start which gradually reduces to almost flat at the top. There is a quarry at the down-wind end which provides some interesting wind conditions and very few options for an engine failure after take-off if you were to take-off downhill. There is an offset threshold which is about halfway (really!) up the runway and they advise you to land long due to the wind-shear. With 20 knots blowing on Sunday we understood why - it was a pretty bumpy arrival until over the end of the runway. Their fly-in is always the first Sunday in September.

Seething was pleasant if a little unexciting, but the weather was perfect from Sheffield onwards (o/h Sheffield City Airport), so we had a good trip across the flat lands of the East. Paul brought us home via Biggin o/h.

At Huddersfield I think I must have come close to feeling how Jon must have felt in Caernarfon when it all went "pear-shaped". When I started the engine the fuel pressure dropped right off and turning on the fuel pump made no difference so, with Jon's experiences in mind I said to Paul and Neale that if it stayed like that on the power checks we would have to get the bus back. Then the engine died.

Have you noticed that it runs for much longer if you turn the fuel on? I blame Neale for turning it off after he landed - don't you just hate tidy people? :-).

(ed: Yeah, usually, but the ones without unnecessarily burned out airplanes arent so bad! THANK YOU to ALL this months Contributors. Anyone else feeling like putting a few lines together for next

month Newsletter? Please do - it will be very welcome, cheers all, Jon)