

IBM Flying Club Newsletter December 1997

Clear Prop! - Jon Butts

We've had a very active and fun time in 1997, almost too many fly-outs and get-togethers to recall! Brian's bash (next article) will round off the year, and we'll start '98 by joining in the North Weald New Years Day Fly-in - weather permitting of course. Let me know if you plan to tag along; you will have the perfect excuse - all those new socks, jumpers and gloves to christen!

We've gone a little more 'public' too this year, through the internet, CAA safety evening, and a number of mentions in Pilot magazine, who also printed letters/articles from Bob, James and Irv. I wonder if anyone else spotted Irv and Jill Lee in one of the other popular glossies? (10 points). In Octobers FLYER magazine can/did you spot G-AZWD? (100 points), or G-ZERO (500 points)? (Answers at end of newsletter).

Rather than sitting here editing text in SCRIPT format for VM mainframes its probably about time we prepared the newsletter primarily for the internet - then we can include pictures and links etc. Those of you who receive hard-copy versions could still so, and those without internet, but who receive this as soft-copy could still do so, and use an internet browser locally to read it. Let me know if you have any views, or can see any problems with the Newsletter source going internet (HTML) style.

I'll take my last editorial chance of 1997 to wish you and yours a very merry Christmas, and a happy new, aviating, year!

BM Christmas Bash - Brian Mellor

In case anyone didn't get the last newsletter, I am putting on the usual Christmassy bash at the IBM Clubhouse in Hursley, on Saturday, 13th December, at 20:00.

I haven't had too many replies so far, here is a list of people who I know or assume are coming -

B. Mellor 4 J.Hull 2 J. Butts 2 J. Moreland 1 D. Sawdon 1 G. Horn 2 J. Flint 2 B. Elliott 1 D. Elliott 2 C. Thompson 1 J. King 2 D. Ashford 1 D. Thomas 2

The following have said they will not be able to come - P. Russell, Irv/Jill Lee

If your name is not on the first list, AND you want to come, can you please let me know, so that I can get the food arrangements right.

In case anyone has noticed, it has been quite a while since I contributed anything to the newsletter, although it is not as though I haven't been doing anything. Also, at the last AGM, I said I would try to set up a trip to visit one of the altiports of France (either Courchevel or Meribel) at the back end of this year. I am afraid that never happened, although I did have a good excuse - I was engaged in bringing my "new" C172 back from the USA at the time.

That will be the subject of a chat at the bash above, and then later in the new year, I will try to contribute a little more often to the newsletter. By the way, I would now like to try again for the French trip, in the Spring, probably to spend a night or two in Albertville, and then back. More details next year.

CAA Safety Evening Reviewed - Irv Lee

Just a few words to thank Jon B for the excellent safety evening in November - Jon started to organise this on his own, has put a lot of work, and probably got out some grey hairs in the year since he first suggested it. On the night, it couldn't have gone much better in any respect (says a raffle winner!) - numbers were right, facilities were right, etc.

We had people there (including the CAA) who were getting their first look at us both as a club, and by inference, the company. They must have left pretty impressed whichever way they looked at it.

On the talks themselves, and to stress "Personal Opinion" here, the The Safety Group in the form of John Thorpe was his usual value for money and left a warm feeling. As you know though, some of our members have had problems with the CAA medical department 'shooting from the hip' over the last year or so. Whilst the medical presentation at the evening couldn't really be faulted I did not get my fears allayed about the attitude of the department as a whole - there did not seem to be any concern for individuals trapped wrongly by 'general rules' and there almost seemed to be a pride in the fact that there was 'no appeal' over the CAA medical department's decision on anything, no matter how arrived at. I hope this can be turned around in the future, but it will take some time, no doubt.

Again, thanks to Jon Butts for the efforts - with John Thorpe of the CAA safety group retiring in the next two years, we are not sure who will be presenting these evenings in future - whoever does it will have a lot to live up to - the present members of the CAA Safety Department really do a magnificent job.

(ed: The CAA Safety Group were again very good. The Doc's pitch was very funny - such a dry sense of humour; and we really did appreciate the airplace piccies).

New member Intro - Julian Rees

To introduce myself I should start by saying that these days I'm primarily a Glider pilot. I fly a Nimbus 3DT Open Class glider (26 Metre wingspan, 60:1 glide angle for those who've not seen one) from Nympsfield, Gloucestershire. I have around 1400 Hrs gliding and about 70 Hrs PPL(A). Unfortunately my PPL(A) is now lapsed; when I was more active I flew with the Wiltshire club from Old Sarum (Jodel, 172's and PA28's) and tugged at various gliding clubs (Auster, Bellanca Scout).

These days my power flying is mainly "P2" with a friend who operates a Robin ATL from Staverton, and mainly in Winter (out of the peak gliding season!). If anyone is interested in learning more about glider tugging or mixed operations I would be happy to help out. Otherwise I'm generally interested in aviation topics of all sorts. Cheers

Julian Rees Consultant, PSS Bristol 0117-9295951,

Club spending - Dave Sawdon

I just came across this blurb, if the club has some spare funds it could be justified as a safety aid (price is \$99). I'll happily pursue it if "t't committee" gives the go-ahead.

"Pilots over age 40 are probably painfully aware of how quickly our ability to see other airplanes deteriorates as we age. A big part of the problem is that the eye muscles that we use to focus and scan lose their tone. But now there's an effective way for pilots and other vision-critical professionals to keep their eye muscles from getting "flabby." It takes just 10 minutes a day, and it's really FUN! The patented VISION AEROBICS program includes software that runs on your PC plus a set of special stereo glasses, and includes over 40 videogame-like exercises designed to condition your eye muscles and vastly improve your ability to see and recognize moving objects. The software logs your scores and tracks your progress. Vision Aerobics software is used by the USAF, American Airlines,

the FAA's Office of the Air Surgeon General, and dozens of government agencies and flight departments to improve scanning ability of their pilots." More info at <http://www.avweb.com/sponsors/vision/>

The RT Debate- Bob Elliott

Heard at Heathrow:

BA1234: Director, BA1234 with you.
Director: Roger BA1234. 17 miles to run, number 7.
BA1234: Soo-pah!

Museum Update (ed: Spotters corner) - Bob Elliott

We've visited most of the Museum and preservation sites that can be flown into over the past couple of years. Cosford probably needs a re-visit as half of it was closed when we went. (ed: there always one, isnt there! But yes...) I am trying to find out if we can fly in to East Fortune.(ed: its a long way, it'll costa fortune).

In the past couple of weeks there have been a number of interesting additions and re-locations at places we have visited:

- Boscombe Down's Comet 4 that was popularly thought to be destined for Hatfield has landed at Bruntingthorpe. The 747 there has been blown up!
- At the Yorkshire Air Museum, Elvington, Channel Express has donated one of its last airworthy Heralds to complement the Handley Page connection.
- The BBMF at Coningsby is set to get another Spitfire. Restored at St Athan, it used to be the gate guard at RAF Locking.
- The only surviving (ed: , airworthy,) Bristol Britannia is at Kemble, to be looked after by the Bristol Aeroplane Collection. It came from South Africa but is an ex-Cubana machine. (ed: with many ex's before that).
- The Dutch Douglas Association has its DC-4 receiving care at Air Atlantique at Coventy. Younger members will have never seen a DC-4! (ed: too right Bob!) We ought to go!

Twin Refresher - Dave Sawdon

I'm trying to arrange a little twin refresher with Cap'n Brian sometime in the next few weeks, anybody interested? The current scheme is to take a Seneca II to somewhere (Alderney?) to do some circuits and get some duty free "goods". If I could find a couple of others to do the same thing and share the transit cost then it would be a very efficient trip and we could claim the relevant subsidies.

Give me a call ASAP. Dave ext 246120

Don't argue with Druids, especially when they're disguised as CBs.

One of the benefits of a club like ours is the exchange of information and experiences. I'd read about windshear but recently experienced its effects for the first time. Here's my account, I look forward to comments and other views.

The trip was a flight test so I was fairly up-tight (I hate practical tests), the aircraft was a tailwheel C152, the weather was blue skies but unstable with big CBs around but none close to Old Sarum, Runway 06 was in use.

Just before the start of the take-off roll the wind was a light crosswind with a small tail component,

as we started to roll I noticed the windsock hanging limp but thought no more of it. The roll didn't feel right in some way and the tail didn't come up as usual despite eventually having the yoke almost all the way forward, at this point my reasoning brain cells ought to have shouted loud enough for my motor reflexes to have closed the throttle, braked and investigated but I guess with "exam nerves" the messages got suppressed. Eventually (rather late) we got airborne but then suddenly found ourselves back on the ground with insufficient room to stop, the only options were to close the throttle and have an accident or to continue and try to avoid one. By this time "wind shear" had entered my brain and "fly max angle of attack" had popped out from somewhere in response but I found that this doesn't work when you're near/on the ground in a tailwheel aircraft as it just dumps the tail on the ground and adds drag.

Eventually we hopped over the fence by a VERY small margin, sank over the next field whilst accelerating and then climbed away. It took me several minutes to put the event behind me and concentrate on teaching my "student" to intercept and fly the Boscombe ILS.

On the ground I discussed what had happened with my "student" (a very experienced instructor and BA 777 pilot), he agreed that although the CB that we had seen was a long way off the most likely explanation was wind shear and that under the circumstances there was nothing else that I could have done.

Later discussions with bystanders revealed that 2 minutes after we took off it was windy and raining heavily with the rain "falling at 45 degrees" and the wind blowing from the SW.

So what is the message:

- 1 Trust your instincts about whether something feels "right" and don't let a particular situation suppress them.
- 2 Always calculate and check your abort point (85% of lift-off speed by 40% of the runway) at any airfield where the amount of runway available doesn't fall into the obscene category EVEN if you've flown the same aircraft from the same airfield a 100 times before.
- 3 Don't take-off with a CB behind you.
- 4 You can't fly the "max angle" wind shear technique close/on the ground in a tailwheel aircraft so keep the level attitude to minimise drag and maximise acceleration

Why the title? "Don't argue with Druids" was a popular saying during my developing years, I've found that it fits many situations in life. Despite all this I'm delighted to say that I even passed the test!

Anyone want a share in a Bolkow Junior? - Brian Mellor

One of my flying acquaintances has just bought a Bolkow Junior (G-ECGO), in which he wants to sell a 40% share, to one other person. There will be lots of availability, the aircraft is in good condition, has a very good write-up in the Pilot road test, and can provide some cheap, fun (including limited aerobatics) flying. It is intended to be kept at Lee on Solent, and the entry price will be around £7000. Let me know if you are interested, and I will put you in touch with the owner.

"You're going to wear it out Dave!" - Dave Ashford

That was the cheeky radio message from John Nutter one afternoon last year as I was taxiing back in after a trip in G-ZERO. I forget where we had been, but it made me smile and also made me think about how much flying we do in G-ZERO. So one wet afternoon recently I spent some time going back through our logs and came to the conclusion that John may well be right! Since we bought 'ZERO in June 1995 we have visited 154 different airfields (most of them several times), 5 countries (if you count Wales, Scotland, England and N. Ireland as one country), made 727 flights and flown

on 353 different days!

This year alone we have made 222 flights on 102 different days and visited 85 different airfields - and 'ZERO was out of action for nearly 2 months on its annual maintenance earlier in the year. Mind you, we still have a month to go, so I'm sure the 1997 totals will rise further.

We have done low-level trips along the South Coast to Exeter and Plymouth, flights in Wales and over the Scottish highlands at FL050 and above, climbed to FL100 over the West country, gone Island-hopping in the Hebrides and Orkney, flown over to Ireland and back, experienced the arrester wires at an RAF base (NOT a good idea) and of course made many trips across the Channel in search of a good meal and a glass or two of wine (not for the pilot flying the return leg, of course). And because the Zero Boys tend to go places together, we keep our costs down by flying a portion of the journey each - or we go further afield than you might if you were doing all the flying yourself.

Most of our flying has been day trips (we did have one or two "over-nighters", one particularly memorable unplanned one in Cardiff) or evening flights after work (both day and night). The vast majority of our flying has been VFR (or SVFR at night) and although a couple of us have IMC ratings, we have rarely needed to use them, which means that what we have done should be well within the reach of all PPLs. We've had a great year's flying so far and plan to continue right through the winter and spring, when it appears fewer people like to go flying. Even in the summer we often found that we returned to Southampton to be told by the "Osprettes" that most of the other aircraft based there had been tied down with their covers on all day and hadn't flown. What a pity - their owners have missed out on some great flying. (ed: yeah, but who knows what else that might have been getting up to...)

"So what?" you might ask. Well if you're not part of a syndicate, this article should have given you a taster of how much fun and how rewarding syndicate flying can be. If you already have a share in an aircraft this might whet your appetite for some more adventurous excursions. At the end of the day however, the choice is yours and you can choose to fly as little or as often as you like or can afford. Many of our trips have been planned the previous evening in the Clubhouse (we meet there most Fridays from about 20:00 onwards) or on the day - often we meet at the airport early(ish) and look at the weather, deciding where to go based on where the best weather will be. Take a look at the list of places we have visited this year and decided for yourself if this is a winning strategy:

Albi, France	Alderney	Andrewsfield
Barton	Belfast - Aldergrove	Benbecula
Bergerac, France	Biggin Hill	Blackpool
Bordeaux, France	Bournemouth	Bristol
Caen, France	Caernarfon	Cahors, France
Calais, France	Carcassonne, France	Cardiff
Carlisle	Châtellerault, France	Cherbourg, France
Compton Abbas	Coningsby (RAF)	Connington
Cranfield	Crosland Moor	Culdrose (RNAS)
Dieppe, France	Dinard, France	Dublin International
Dublin Weston	Dundee	Dunkeswell
Duxford	Earls Colne	Edinburgh
Elvington	Exeter	Fairoaks
Fowlmere	Gamston	Glenforsa (Mull)
Gloucester	Guernsey	Halfpenny Green
Haverford West	Inverness	Islay
Isle of Man	Jersey	Kemble
Kirkwall	Lannion, France	Lashenden
Le Havre, France	Leeds	Leicester
Limoges, France	Middle Wallop	Newcastle
Newmarket Heath	North Weald	Old Buckenham
Old Sarum	Ostend, Belgium	Pembrey
Plymouth	Popham	Prestwick
Reims (Prunay), France	Rennes, France	Sandown

Saumur, France	Seething	Shipdham
Sleap	Southampton	Stornoway
Sturgate	Swansea	Swanton Morley
Teeside	Tours, France	Wellesbourne Mountford
Yeovil		

Some of the trips above have been on IBM Flying Club fly-ins, but often we were the sole aircraft going to these places. If you are looking to expand your flying but are nervous about going somewhere new, why not tag along with the Zero Boys - we'd love to have some company. We can't guarantee good weather (yes, there were weekends this year when we didn't fly) but generally it works out well and sometimes it is so good that you'll never forget the trip. We've had a couple of trips like that this year, but of course the rest of you will just have to look at the photographs :-).

The day Paul and I went to Sleap together - Dave Ashford

Sunday 30th November looked like a promising day for flying, so Paul Goodman and I agreed to meet up at Southampton at 10:00 and plan a trip somewhere. I fancied going to France for a bite to eat and a glass or two of grape juice, however Paul had forgotten his passport (and all his flight planning gear, headset etc - what were you doing Saturday night Paul?), so France was (legally) out of the question. As you may know, the Zero Boys visit France on a fairly frequent basis and we are seldom asked to show our passports. Indeed, we seldom see anyone at any French airfield, ATC included, particularly if you arrive between 12:00 and 14:00 local time, but we decided it would not be worth taking the risk.

Anyway, back to today's flight. The weather forecast was favouring a trip to the North or West so after studying the chart for a good ten minutes we spotted Sleap, an airfield near Shrewsbury that neither of us had visited before. Pooleys suggested PPR was required so I made a quick call on the number given and obtained permission. In fact the lady I spoke to was rather surprised I had called and said yes, it would be lovely if we visited them. I know you can obtain PPR on the radio, but I like to phone ahead, just in case there are any special instructions that need to be followed, and of course to get a weather report. So I drew a few lines and made a few measurements and we headed up to Osprey (the Southampton handling agent) to check the weather again. The weather at Southampton was not as good as it could have been and we met a couple of other crews returning from local trips with tales of poor viz, low cloud, drizzle and generally poor weather. My phone call to Sleap had confirmed they had 25km viz and clear skies and other en-route METARs showed good weather, so with a local report of 4500m viz and cloud broken at 1200' (but a TAF of improving weather) I booked out IFR and we headed out to the aircraft.

We were airborne at 12:00 and the local weather reports had been pretty accurate - we entered cloud at 1500' and stayed IMC until we reached Chilbolton, where we sat between layers for a short while and then the cloud below us cleared and we flew all the way to Sleap, via Brize overhead, at 3000', passing near Evesham, Worcester and Telford en-route to Shrewsbury and our destination. The clouds became fewer all the way there and we arrived overhead at 2000' in almost clear skies.

Sleap is a lovely airfield - cross runways which are tarmac and both of a decent length. There is a very friendly bar/restaurant which serves an excellent all-day breakfast (the staple food of many pilots it seems) and a good selection of other less dangerous meals. The Shropshire Aeroclub is based there and they have superb facilities - a map room, briefing room, office and bar/restaurant which all put Southampton to shame. There were current Met reports on the walls in the briefing room as well as Notams and local flying information, all available for a landing fee of £5.00. It makes you think what we get for our money at the larger airports compared to what a club can provide when they have GA interests at heart.

Over lunch we watched gliders launching (aerotow) and a wonderful display from a model Vulcan that must have had a wingspan of at least 20' and from where we sat you could have easily mistaken

it for the real thing.

The return trip was via Fairford overhead and sure enough, the weather had improved sufficiently for Paul fly us back VFR all the way, although the Southampton ATIS was giving weather reports that were much worse than the actual conditions, but still within VFR limits. We had a good day out and I have added another airfield to my list of good places to eat. It took us 1hr 20mins to get there (25 knot head wind) and 1hr 05mins to get back.

RAES Lecture - Air Accident Investigation Board - Jon Butts

This was an absolutely superb presentation, by the top man at the AAIB himself; whose name I have embarassingly forgotten, but whose career I could definately envy! However I do remember almost all of the pitch, as I, along with the audience of mainly engineers, was absolutely riveted from start to finish - nose to tail even.

I wont give a full account of the evening - you had to be there - but we were first treated to a history of UK aviation accident investigation (which can be traced back to the first world war) and the evolution of the AAIB. The AAIB, its role, operations, and organisation structure were also covered, illustrated with many anecdotes, fascinating facts and examples from recent investigations, including Lockerbie, the Shetland Chinook accident and an RAF Jaguar crash. Black (orange) box designs were reviewed and many questions taken - but we could have gone on asking them all night.

Some facts that stuck in my mind; Black boxes are built to withstand a 1000G impact, and immense temperatures. One hour after the Lockerbie explosion, small fragments of aluminium were still evident on radar recordings, falling from Flight Level 310, and blown by 115 knot winds out into the North Sea. The wreckage and debris covered an area of some 840 square miles - which the RAF covered with photo-reconnasance missions to enable the location of all significant debris. The world Chinook fleet was grounded within 24 hours of the Sunburgh crash - to achieve a recovery from sea of the failed components (front gearbox) in such a short time was a remarkable logistical feat.

Throughout all, the utmost dedication and professionalism of the AAIB was evident and quite inspirational. The high level of co-operation and support to and from other agencies, eg RAF, RN, BAe, Boeing, FAA, ..., means that truly world class resources are combined to form superb investigative teams, as and when the need, unfortunately, arises.

Many thanks for making the lecture accessible to us Danny.

Hixon - Peter Short

Can anybody help Peter find out the airfield info for Hixon (Midlands)? Its not in Pooleys etc, but would be a very handy place for Peter to use as a future destination. (Suggestion from Neale Fray, Peter, call the club at nearby Tatenhill - they may know/use Hixon).

Clear Prop! - answers

1. Irv, Jill and G-BLMN - Nov-Dec Popular Flying, Page 51.
2. G-AZWD Oct Flyer, Page 10, lower right corner.
3. G-ZERO Oct Flyer, Page 53, Haverfordwest photo, plane at top right corner of hanger. (Trust me. I was there! If you've really good eyesight you can see Dasher and James are doing the ground-handling).