

IBM Flying Club Newsletter - November 2000



Clear Prop - Dave Thomas

Well, three months this time between newsletters. I do apologize for the delay, but this has two causes - one is a lack of articles and the second is a lack of time. Although it may appear to be an easy task, creating the newsletter is actually a laborious process which takes a lot of time. I'm sure that previous Chairmen would agree. However, it is always good to see another one 'hot off the press', so hopefully all will be completed this week.

Today is Remembrance Sunday - a sombre occasion for everyone, but it is very fitting given one of the ideas that I want to propose to you all. Some time ago, I noticed an advert at some flying club for an organization called 'Project Propeller'. The idea that they were proposing was that PPLs such as ourselves should get together with ex-WW II Aircrew for a fly-in to Duxford. We, as PPLs, would register with the 'propeller' heads, and they would find us WW II Aircrew living near to us for us to take to a historic airfield. Last year it was Duxford; plans for this year are still in the melting pot. Hopefully food and drink would be made available, and landing fees would be waived, but no guarantees at the moment. I attach some information about the project and some comments from last year's event.

Whilst I have been chairman of the club, I have seen a number of very successful events, ranging from our trip to Koblenz, through to the recent trips to Yeovilton. What I would really like to see is an event that brings all of our pilots and all of air aircraft together in one place, at the same time, in support of a worthwhile cause. I believe that Project Propeller is such an event and I would like to see us supporting it as a club, not just as a few isolated individuals. Further than that, I would like to find a volunteer amongst our members who would be prepared to join the overall organizing team so that we can play a leading role from the inside, rather than just contributing from the outside. Is anyone prepared to volunteer? I have no idea what commitment would be required, but I can see immense satisfaction coming from playing a leading role in bringing together today's intrepid flyers (us) with some of the aircrew who flew in WW II. Furthermore, given our overseas connections, I would also like to see if we can attract some foreign interest together with some overseas visitors; perhaps we as a club can help to make this a truly international occasion.

Who is going to volunteer?

The 2000 Event - as reported on the Project Propeller web page -
www.projectpropeller.co.uk

Saturday May 13th at Duxford saw the Project Propeller 2000 event take place. The weather tried to defeat us but we hosted over 90 aircraft and 20 cars, all bringing WW II air crew in for the day. To stand in the control tower and see the huge line of aircraft parked on the south side of the airfield was immensely satisfying.

Many pilots had to contend with difficult weather conditions to get to Duxford (and to get back home) and we are very grateful to them for their determination. Roughly 180 WW II air crew attended (accurate numbers will be supplied as soon as we have reviewed the day) and enthusiastically entered into the organized events.

The most popular part of the day was probably the complementary pleasure and aerobatic flights - the WW II air crew found it hard to believe that there was no charge for the flights! Twenty four

flights took place and we are indebted to the pilots for volunteering themselves and their aircraft for this extra duty.

Ken Wallis' talk on his Autogyro proved to be very fascinating and well attended. Ken was good enough to arrive and set up early so that his 'machine' was on public view long before his talk took place - and, boy, did it generate a lot of interest!

Flying displays by one of The Fighter Collection's Spitfires and Tony Holden's Dakota added to the excitement of the day. Indeed, when we all realized that there was a potential problem with the Spitfire's undercarriage there was a huge sigh of relief when it landed safely. The Dakota crew gave a beautiful display, showing this graceful aircraft in it's natural element. Whoever designed the wings of this aircraft deserves special praise.

Once the flying displays were complete the visitors began to depart, many facing long flights home in difficult conditions. The day ended at about 18:00 with a smile on everybody's face. A huge thanks to all involved - pilots, aircrew, Duxford, the ATC staff and to the many helpers without whose assistance this would never had happened.

See you all next year!

1999 Thank You Notes 1999 A Veteran's Account

Project Propeller began in 1999 as a scheme to bring together WW II RAF aircrew and private pilots, for a day's comradeship and and flying.

The original idea was created by Gideon Todes, a private pilot based at Elstree. The first event on 17th April, 1999 was organized as a joint effort between Ian Burnstock, also a PPL, and Gideon.

The venue was North Weald aerodrome, chosen for it's wartime links and it's closeness to London.

The original expectation was for approximately 20 aircraft, each with one or two veterans to fly in to North Weald from various London-area airfields, but it soon became clear that there were many more private pilots and Veteran Aircrew who wanted to take part.

Participants had to be limited to 60 aircraft for logistical reasons, nevertheless that meant over 150 aircrew and pilots could attend.

The veterans enjoyed a day of real flying, competitions and some historic aircraft on show, punctuated with frequent visits to the mess hut (the bar!).

T-Shirts/Baseball Caps

Some time ago at a committee meeting (yes, we do have them), we decided that we needed some T-shirts, Sweat-shirts or Baseball caps for the club. But, we also agreed that we needed a suitable logo so that people could recognize us as members of that august group, the IBM Flying Club. But, with the exception of Dave Ashford, we couldn't come up with any ideas - he is the only committee member with any artistic talents to speak of. In order to encourage people to design a logo, we have decided to offer a prize of a £50 Transair Gift Voucher to the person coming up with the best design. The judges will be the Chairman and the Secretary (only) so that the Treasurer has the chance to win the prize. Please submit your entries by the end of November (a short deadline, I know) to the

Chairman - any medium (within reason) will do. Entries must not contravene any copyright laws and be decent. (*WebEd: the design cannot, unfortunately, include the IBM 8-bar logo*).

And finally,

Congratulations are due to Graham Cogle who has now passed his JAA Skills test - '*... it all slipped miraculously into place at the last moment with completion just ahead of the deteriorating weather*'.



Life Raft Training Session - James Mason

Date: Wednesday 29th November
Time: 6:30pm for 7:00pm start
Venue: Pyramids Centre, Southsea

A life raft training session has been arranged with S.E.M.S. providing the training, it will comprise a 1 hour classroom session followed by a pool session (with wave machine) of approximately 1 hour.

The entire session will be covered by a lifeguard (provided by the Pyramids Centre) and you can wear normal clean clothing instead of a swimming costume during the pool session. In fact it is a good opportunity to test the use of lifejackets and other equipment such as immersion suits and there will also be some time after the pool session where we can also use the pool/flumes or test out our own equipment. Non-swimmers can also attend and safely participate in the pool training.

The event will be subsidized for IBM Flying Club members and the cost will be £20 per person for Flying Club members and £40 per person for non-members. Numbers will be limited for this event due to equipment and safety constraints, so apply early to avoid disappointment. Certificates will be available at an extra cost. if you wish to receive a certificate please advise at the time of booking.

If you would like to attend this event please confirm your place by sending a cheque made payable to "**IBM Club North Harbour**" to:

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Interpretation - Irv Lee

Whilst members are on their wide ranging travels, please can they try and 'spot' any obvious misinterpretations of the JAR rules at clubs they visit and report back, please? I went to Dunkeswell

with Ian Abraham the other day and spotted the following sign behind the desk - "*Due to JAR, remember you must now do 3 solo landings every 90 days*". Despite tentative enquires which led to a bit of an atmosphere, I didn't find out who was responsible for Devon's own interpretation of the 90 day passenger rule, but either way, local flyers are probably forking out more than they need to for extra solo circuits!



Christmas Bash - Brian Mellor

Please make a note in your diaries, the event will take place on Saturday 9th December, and format will be as usual. More details nearer the time.



Air-air Photography - Dave Sawdon

In the last newsletter I mentioned the air-to-air photography and said that we hadn't seen the results - here are some of them....





I'd thoroughly recommend the photographer, Neil Lawson, if you want some professional pictures of your favourite steed; have a look at www.whiteplanes.com to see more examples of his work. I've

got some rough costings so give me a call if you want the info, if a couple of people wanted pictures there are significant economies.



Two-centre Holiday - Dave Ashford photos by James



Mason

James and I had planned to fly with Dave Thomas & Clare Grange to Prague for a short break, staying three days, then flying back via Antwerp, stopping there for a couple of days to explore. With an early (07:00z!) Monday morning departure planned, both crews decided to refuel and prepare their 'planes on Sunday evening, however on arrival at the grass park at Southampton it was clear that G-ZERO had a brake problem, there being a small pool of brake fluid below the right brake cylinder. As Grumman Tigers taxi by differential braking it was clear that this was a problem that would need immediate attention - if you lose a brake when taxiing you just go around in circles if you touch the other brake - not a good idea if it happens on the runway at a major international airport like Prague (or a small regional airport like Southampton, for that matter). The earliest anyone could look at the brakes was 08:30 Monday morning, so we agreed that Dave and Clare in G-BYDX would leave for Prague as planned and we would join them later when 'ZERO had been fixed.

Monday morning 08:30 and Osprey Aviation at Southampton leapt into action. Within minutes the problem had been identified as a pin-hole puncture in a brake line, which would take "an hour or so" to fix. James and I adjourned to the terminal for a coffee and to catch up on the weather. A slow moving weather front from the west was already overhead and would cause us problems if it moved too far east. Dave and Clare had launched into the leading edge of the front and I was quite prepared to take an IFR departure from Southampton if necessary, provided that it was good VMC by the time we got to Lydd. We waited. At 11:00 I called Osprey to find whether 'ZERO was ready only to be told that they had been unable to locate the particular type of brake pipe required and so there had been little progress. A call to Maurice Colson at Stockton located some pipe, so I drove the three hour round-trip to deliver the pipe to Osprey. By the time 'ZERO was ready it was too late to depart, so we agreed on another early start for Tuesday, still planning to go to Prague with a refuelling stop at Luxembourg.



Tuesday morning dawned bright and breezy, but the weather forecast revealed that the weather front had only made it as far as the French coast and was now sitting slap bang across our path, preventing any chance of VFR flight in France. 'ZERO was fixed and ready to go,

but with a 700 foot cloud base and imbedded CBs awaiting us, we were less eager to get airborne, so James and I decided instead to drive to Tangmere to visit the museum. It is well worth a visit and the museum staff were fascinated as James told them about our plans for the week and our past trips in 'ZERO. We even tried to arrange a fly-in, but there is only a short section of apron left now, all the runways having been taken up for use as hard-core on the M3 southern extension. Glasshouses now mark out the lines of the old runways. What a great pity. About an hour after our arrival at Tangmere the heavens opened and it rained solidly for the rest of the day - the front had moved back westwards towards us and stopped over the south-eastern corner of the UK. We felt happier now that our decision not to go had been vindicated.

Wednesday arrived with clear(ish) skies and a modified plan to go directly to Antwerp and meet Dave and Clare there the following day. Lines were re-drawn, Flight Plans filed and weather checked prior to departure - the previous day's weather front had moved east again over night, finally clearing through the near continent by early morning. We launched into rapidly improving weather and enjoyed an excellent VFR flight all the way to Antwerp, the trip taking just two hours. We rented a car at the airport and found a Campanile hotel on the outskirts of the city where we rented a couple of rooms and reserved a double room in Dave T's name.

James and I spent a couple of excellent days driving around the area, visiting Grimbergen airfield and even taking a short car ferry ride to Vlissingen in Holland, although I have to admit that I thought I was paying a motorway toll, not buying a ferry ticket! By the time I realized it was too late and we were stuck



in the line for the ferry. We had actually planned to go to Zeebrugge for the day, but I can cope with diversions in a car as well as I can in an aeroplane, so with James' superb navigational help (he was using my aviation GPS as we didn't have any maps), we found our way to a very interesting little airfield at Middleburg (EHMZ Midden-Zeeland) and met a chap - Mr Richard van As - who owned a small museum there which contained several WW1 fighters as well as several [auto gyros](#) which he had built himself. One of them had a very wonky rotor blade which bore testimony to a less-than-successful early prototype. Middleburg would be a good location for a fly-in and Mr van As, who also owns one fifth of the airfield, told us that his wife runs 4 hotel rooms on the airfield and does a good breakfast!



An interesting Hangar at Grimbergen





Exhibits at Midden-Zeeland

The weather conspired against Dave and Clare too - probably the remnants of the front that had caused us to change our plans - and we never actually met up, so our two-centre holiday ended up with one aircraft at each location - not quite what we had planned :-). James and I left Antwerp at 08:00z on Saturday morning and flew home via Calais, where we stopped for lunch, arriving back in the UK at about 14:30z. Although we didn't get to see Prague both James and I had a thoroughly enjoyable time in Antwerp and were pleasantly surprised by Belgium - it was clean, the people were friendly, the food good and restaurants plentiful and the beer excellent. We discovered a pub in the centre of Antwerp with 100 different beers, so we'll have to go back as I didn't get very far through the list! If you are looking for a destination for a long weekend or even just an over-night stop, you could do a lot worse than Antwerp. Approximate costs were as follows:

Aviation Fuel	£0.82 per litre
Landing fee	£12.50
Parking for 3 nights	£9.00
Rental car for 3 days	£58.00
Car petrol	£0.65 per litre
Hotel room	£39.00 per night
Average meal	£15.00 per person
33ml beer	£1.00 - £1.50, depending on strength

"Prague Information - Golf Bravo Yankee Delta X-ray" - Dave



Thomas

That was one of the most exciting radio calls I have made so far in my relatively short flying career. Although I have flown in New Zealand, South Africa, the US and many European countries, there's a different level of excitement when entering the Eastern Bloc for the first time.

Anyway, as most of you know, Clare and I were going to go Prague back in July, but had to cancel the trip because of the weather. The desire was still there and fuelled by discussions at the clubhouse on Friday evening, we decided to give it another go, accompanied by the ZERO boys (represented by Dave Ashford and James Mason). So, charts were bought, lines were drawn, Bottlang trip kit acquired, and holiday booked. Everything was sorted out, but on the Sunday evening before we were due to depart, all four of us went down to the airport to top up the planes ready for an early departure ahead of the front. Unfortunately ZERO's brakes had sprung a leak so a repair was necessary before they could depart. This in turn meant that they were stranded behind the front, giving rise to a new concept in 'two-centre' holidays as described by Dave. So, the remainder of this tale is the adventure of Delta X-ray behind the old iron curtain.

Clare drew the short straw of flying the first leg from Southampton to Luxembourg. Frankly, this was the most challenging, given that we took off and were soon in IMC having obtained an IFR departure clearance. However, having checked the weather, we knew that Shoreham and Le Touquet were clear, and so that as soon as we left the coast, we would be clear of the murk. However, the further we went, the less likely this appeared to be, so we turned towards the coast, and within a matter of minutes the sky cleared, and so it remained for the rest of the trip. The trip over the channel, and through Belgium was very uneventful. We did talk to Charleroi, and had to fly along their Northern boundary, but there was no sign of sky marshals looking out for us, or Cessnas with blue flashing lights. (Those of you who don't understand this comment should understand that for about a year a number of us were involved in long discussions with Charleroi about allegedly unpaid bills, which had been paid before we left to travel on to Koblenz - they eventually agreed!) From Charleroi to Luxembourg we flew over the Ardennes, enabling me to indulge in my hobby of castle spotting - there's a real beauty at Bouillion, which we flew right over. Clare's approach and landing in Luxembourg were everything I would expect from a pilot with a CPL. All in all, an uneventful flight, flying over some rather pleasant scenery.

Before we left the terminal we filed our flight plan, and returned to the plane for refuelling. There is room for improvement in the speed with which the refueller turned up. so much so that we had the manager of the handling agent come out to apologize to us. We then lined up half way down the runway, and took off heading East. We very quickly left Luxembourg airspace and started talking to German Air Traffic. No problems there - standard calls were made and in all we received a good standard of service. We routed to the South of Frankfurt, overhead Schweinfurt (bombed heavily during the war as one of the few sources of ball bearings), and then continued eastwards overhead Bayreuth (home of the Wagner festival each year). Nuremberg were not providing any Flight Information Service, so we listened in on Nuremberg Radar. As we approached Bayreuth I switched to Bayreuth Approach for FIS, and the man on ATC seemed surprised to find us in his airspace. However, after a short while, we left him behind and made the famous call as above.

Silence! So, I repeated the call. Nothing! But, then we heard some calls in English that were obviously Prague Information. I tried again, and the immortal phrase 'pass your message' came over the airwaves. Once contact had been established, the rest was plain sailing. Having studied the charts beforehand, we were expecting to be routed by various waypoints on the way to Prague (Ruzyne) and that is exactly what happened. We were told to report overhead Rakovnik, then Kacice, followed by Brandysek. However, just before we reached Brandysek, we were told to orbit left until advised

on long final to runway 13. The commercials were using runway 24, so we had to wait until 24 was clear as the threshold for runway 13 is the centre point for runway 24. No problem, we thought, until after seven orbits, we were getting rather bored of the same old scenery. I was just about to call up Approach when they cleared us to land. So, just under three hours after leaving Luxembourg we touched down on Czech soil (well it was tarmac actually!). Shortly after we landed, the 'follow-me' truck appeared on the scene and guided us to the old terminal (now the GA and Special) terminal where we were parked in spot 'B52'. No sooner had we turned off the engine than the minibus and the refueller turned up. The service was superb; both the minibus driver and the refueller being extremely helpful. After going through customs our GA escort took us to his office where the usual formalities were completed and then he offered to find us a hotel. This took some time as Prague was rather full. But, he found one near the middle of the city for us, and then (for a fee) offered to take us there. So, off we went.

The next three days were super - we saw all of the sights, found a superb restaurant, and even worked out how to use the trams and the metro. The only problem was that the weather back in the UK had been so bad that the ZERO boys were unable to join us, and had decided to travel to Antwerp in the hopes that we could meet them there on the way back. Although we didn't manage to talk to them directly, we were able to leave messages with their hotel reception, who were very helpful. As you can see from the accompanying article they had a good time as well.

Come the Thursday, we had hoped to leave Prague and fly back to Antwerp via Paderborn-Lippstadt in the middle of Germany. However, the weather was now not being kind to us; it was overcast, the viz was very poor, so we stayed on for another day, and took in the sights of Prague Castle. The following morning, we were assured that the weather would improve and that Germany (in its entirety!) was CAVOK. So, we caught a cab to the airport, and waited for the weather to improve. Our wait was interrupted when a Hercules appeared with approximately 100 British paratroopers which we can only assume were there to help out with security for the IMF meeting that week. They appeared quite normal, but you were left with the impression that it wouldn't pay to tangle with them. Woe betide any troublemakers that felt their wrath. The weather did improve, and so we went to the GA office and asked for our bill. The total, including handling, landing, parking, and navigation came to £54, not bad for a large international airport. For the record, fuel was £0.51 per litre.

We departed on runway 31 which was perfect and headed towards the border with Clare at the controls. The weather was not as good as we had been led to believe so we had to divert on a few occasions to avoid a few clouds. Once we were over the mountains, we were expecting the weather to improve to the CAVOK that we were promised. However, it proceeded to get worse, with the cloud base continuing to drop. We were getting close to Erfurt (one of our waypoints) and without any hesitation we elected to divert there to see what the weather was like en route to Antwerp. Once we called up Erfurt approach, they could not have been more helpful. Initially we were intending to arrive via entry point November to avoid high ground, but they said that we could go for a straight in approach if we wanted (ten mile final). We did and Clare brought us in to a beautiful landing where, once again, we were met by a 'follow-me' truck who took us to some hard standing. At this time we were not sure whether we were just stopping here temporarily or staying overnight so we left all of our stuff in the plane.

Our bus driver took us to the GA office where we were surrounded by helpful people. Our first reception was a phone call from the tower, inviting us up to take a look at their facilities. We accepted immediately, and one of the controllers came down to help us. Firstly, he obtained the met for us and although the rest of Germany was CAVOK, the area around Erfurt was 'C-something' else, and was not expected to clear until late that afternoon, not leaving us enough time to make it to Antwerp to meet the ZERO boys. So, we decided to stay and head for Antwerp the next morning. That decision having been made, we went back to the plane to collect our luggage, which we left at the bottom of the tower while we were escorted to the top of the ten storey building. We met the four

controllers who showed us their facilities which were superb. Radar that could see well beyond the Czech border (how long had they been watching us?), CAT III landing systems, a 2500 metre runway which had just been lengthened, and so on. As they said, all they needed was traffic! While we were in the tower only two planes took off (about an hour). They provided us with coffee, and then found us a hotel near the centre of the city.

After we had been shown their 'equipment' (PCs, networking kit, telecoms kit, and so on, not one bit of it IBM!), one of them took us in the crew bus to our hotel. What service, and all for a landing fee of £8! Erfurt is a beautiful little town straight out of Hansel and Gretel. A place worth a return trip. We even found an indigenous restaurant called the Bombay. The next day we returned to the airport, checked the weather (fine) and filed our flight plan to Antwerp. The previous evening, after our curry, I decided to modify our route to Antwerp so that we could pass over the Eder and Mohne dams (of Dambuster fame). With the aid of modern day navigation aids, good weather and daylight we were able to find both dams with ease; what is must have been like during the war, I hate to think. The dams are a superb sight, in beautiful countryside - it is very hard to imagine the sheer terror that must have been caused when they were blown apart. But, thankfully, they have now been rebuilt, and the Eder now also appears to be used as a huge boating lake. Onward, to the North of Dusseldorf, and over into Holland. Rather amusing to note that a disused German airfield is clearly marked as such on the Jeppesen chart, but is marked as active on the most recent German charts! Anyway, apart from a minor glitch with Air Traffic around Eindhoven, we made it to Antwerp where we were disappointed, but not surprised, to see that the ZERO boys had long gone. We refuelled, having a very pleasant chat with the refueller about his superb Triumph Stag, and then set about refuelling ourselves.

Having checked the weather back home, Clare filed her flight plan for home, going via the Belgian and French coasts, and then along the South coast of England. As expected, the scenery was very flat, but with plenty of features to simplify navigation. Once we reached the coast we had a straight run home except for one strange call from ATC at Ostend who seemed to think that we were going the other way. When we heard the call, Clare and I looked at each other; not a word was said between us; just a polite call to ATC reminding them of our intentions at which time the lady apologized and admitted that she had confused us with another aircraft. Back home, we landed and parked up in the mud, and waited for ages for the bus to take us back to the terminal. A contrast to the service that we had become used to receiving!

That evening we went out for a meal with Dave and James to compare notes about the joint DX and ZERO two-centre holiday. We may do the same next year!

Once again, our summer holiday was a great success, despite a few little problems on the way. As ever, it demonstrates the value of good planning, current maps, a willingness to be flexible, and plenty of foreign currency! But, don't ask either of us to speak Czech!

Anyone been flying around Arizona? - Roger West

Having done Florida and a bit of Southern California (when we flew over the mountains to Borego desert), Verity now wants to do a bit of flying in the deserts of Arizona. I am therefore trying to find a suitable base where we could rent a 172.

I think I have found a possible lead at Chandler Municipal airport near Phoenix. But I wondered if, with all the wealth of experience, a reader might have some knowledge of the area like a good base, or where to go, or indeed where not to go. Please e-mail any advice to me: westrv@talk21.com

Another weather site - Julian Rees

You may be interested in a reference to an interesting met site :

<http://freespace.virgin.net/jack.harrison/STARS.htm#ratings> in the next newsletter. This is primarily aimed at glider pilots (giving a "score" for how good a soaring day it is), but it has a vast number of Aviation and general Met links, including satellite photos, forecast charts, web cams and actual weather reports.

The weather is scored up to one week ahead, and a day of score of 3 or above will normally be a good day for power X-country, so you can get some view of the weather ahead. It's also worth noting that if this site scores the day as a "4" or "5" then there can be up to 1000 gliders going X-country in the Southern half of England, so it pays to keep a good watch out - especially below mature cumulus clouds!



Extract from AvWeb - Dave Sawdon

Approaching Philadelphia some years ago, Approach Control warned me of geese in my area. My not-so-smart question was, "How can you tell?"

The controller's smarter answer? "They're squawking".



Short Final - Dasher

There were several replies to last Newsletter's caption competition. 3rd place goes to Brain Mellor with *"The water bomb, caught here on film, narrowly missing Brian, moments before it hit the poor French lady"*; 2nd place goes to one of our Internet 'lurkers' Geoff Belding, with *"I've eaten the Belisha Beacon pole OK, but how do I get my mouth round the globe?"*; 1st place this month goes to Mike Lloyd:

