



Newsletter - April 2001



Clear Prop! - Dave Ashford

Spring has finally arrived and many of us will be dusting off our flying bags and preparing to take to the skies for the first time in several months. Personally I'm looking forward to getting back into the air in my own aeroplane, which is in the final stages of being rebuilt after a complete re-spray, engine overhaul and annual inspection (ouch!). It has been out of action for 3 months and although I've been flying rented aircraft in the interim, I'm looking forward to being back behind the controls of 'ZERO and I'm starting to plan one or two longer trips for later in the year. I'm sure many of you are doing the same and perhaps now is the time to remind you about our Safety Refresher scheme. If you haven't flown for a while you may be outside the 90 day rule so will probably have to do a couple of circuits before you can carry passengers. Why not ask an instructor to join you for the flight and do one of our Safety Refresher flights at the same time? Each Refreshers completed qualifies you for a subsidy which should cover the cost of the instructor's time, so what have you got to loose? You'll have the chance to practice some of those manoeuvres that you may not have flown for a while and it's not a test so you don't have to pass anything. You can do a Safety Refresher with any qualified Flying Instructor in any aircraft in any country - what could be easier? Please see our [Safety Refresher](#) page for more details.

More good news for those of us who love toys: the Club has purchased a Garmin GPSMap 195 for use by the members. This is a moving map GPS unit with the European aviation database and land mapping. We plan to update the aviation database several times during the summer (updates only stay current for one calendar month), however at £70 per update this could prove to be very expensive, so we have decided to make a small charge of £10 each time the unit is loaned out, with a maximum loan period of 2 weeks. The frequency of updates will depend on how often people use it and how much money we have left in the budget, so please be aware that when you borrow the GPS the database may not be current. You should not use it as your primary source of information for flight planning, although as a means of verifying distances and tracks between way points it is still very useful. It is in the air that the true benefit of the land mapping and satellite positioning can be appreciated, although here too a word of caution is required. GPS units can loose satellite signals and so the GPS must only be used to back up traditional methods of navigation. I would recommend that if you plan to take it on a trip you borrow it a couple of days before you set off so that you can work out how to use it properly. Although the interface is largely intuitive you'll get so much more out of it if you have had a play with the unit before you get airborne (it has a very good Simulator mode where you can 'fly' your trip without leaving your armchair). You can also download the User's Manual for free from the [Garmin Web site](#). If you would like to borrow the GPS, please contact [James Mason](#).

Staying with the theme of trip planning, I recently received an Email from Campbell Quinn of the

Prestwick Flying Club inviting Club members to drop in and say hello if they are in the area. Landings at Prestwick can be very expensive if you use the main apron, but if you are visiting the Flying Club it will cost you just £10 (for a single), **provided you have made arrangements with the Club before your visit**. Please see the [Prestwick Flying Club](#) web site for more information or send an Email to [Campbell Quinn](#).

Looking at the Events list I see that we have not received a single new proposal for a Club event since the last Newsletter was published. Are you thinking of going somewhere that may be of interest to others? If so, why not make it a club event and benefit from the Fly-In subsidy which I announced in the last Newsletter? It doesn't have to be a marathon trek to the North Pole to qualify for a subsidy - a fly-in to Sandown for an ice cream and a stroll along the beach would qualify just as well as a long weekend touring the Outer Hebrides. What we need is volunteers to arrange events - if only 5 people offer to arrange something - and it doesn't have to be complicated or time-consuming - then we will have 5 events where you can meet other club members as well as do the thing we all enjoy most, which is flying. Last year the Zero Boys joined a fly-in organized by the Blackbushe Flyers which was a BBQ at a glider strip in the West Country one sunny summer's week-day evening and it was attended by 18 aircraft! I imagine it just took a couple of phone calls to arrange and then some commitment from the participants to turn up. This is not beyond the capabilities of all Club members, so in order to set an example, I'll arrange a BBQ at Compton Abbas for some time in June if enough people (let's aim for 20) make a firm commitment to attend. Please drop [me](#) a note before the end of April if you would attend such an event, probably on a Wednesday evening. I'll accept replies from non-club members as well, but obviously Club members will get first refusal. Let's put the IBM Flying Club back on the map.

And Finally, you may have noticed the new logo that adorns our Newsletter this month. I plan to use this in future as a kind of 'corporate' identity for the Flying Club on Newsletters and our Web site as well as items such as Baseball Caps, T-Shirts, ties and pens. If you like it, or if you hate it, or if you just think it is OK, please let me know. I'd like to get some real feedback before I commit a sizable portion of our budget to having the logo professionally made up and then buying some of the items mentioned above for re-sale to Club members. Would you, for example, buy a Polo shirt with this logo on it (probably about 2cms high)? Please tell me what you think.



Wishing you Blue Skies and Safe Flying.



Two new types: Harvard and Decathlon - Dave Sawdon

At the tail end of last year I needed to be in the US on business and managed to fulfill a long held desire - to fly a Harvard. I was attending meetings in San Antonio, Tx and found an FBO (Stinson Air Center) at Stinson Municipal airport with a T6, Pitts S2 and Decathlon for rent - the die was cast. Unfortunately the meeting schedule, weather, instructor availability and serviceability gods had other ideas - until the last 2 days when gaps in the meetings coincided with sunshine and the "plan" partially came together, except that when the Pitts became serviceable there wasn't a rated instructor available - two out of three isn't too bad.

The Decathlon is very much like a Citabria (quite Cub'ish) but with a bigger engine and C/S prop.

The handling was much nicer than Citabria, Cub, Vagabond, etc although the aileron feel changed markedly through the speed range - apparently a feature of the aileron spades. The performance was better than the Bulldog but it was strange doing aeros with a high wing, unfortunately a low cloudbase prevented anything too exotic (stressed to -5, I think) - circuits from the back seat were straightforward.

The Harvard really is a lovely aeroplane. It's the first type I've flown where it's OK to walk around on the wing! This one was ex-Iran (or was it Iraq?) and still had bits of the armament controls. The only things I could compare it to were the Stearman and the YAK52. The obvious first impression is SIZE, anything with steps built into the fuselage to help you get from the wing into the cockpit has got to be big. The pre-flight is fairly standard except the hydraulic flaps need to be pumped down manually beforehand. Starting is the same as a Stearman (that will help a couple of you - stick hard back, energise starter flywheel, when the prop starts moving turn the mags on after a few blades have gone past and fiddle with the throttle until the smoke and pops stop) except the prop was set fully coarse to avoid starving the engine of oil during the start. Prop set to fine once engine running. Taxiing is fairly straightforward, a slight weave is necessary but not as much as the Stearman, for tight turns the stick needs to go forwards of neutral to unlock the tailwheel. Take-off is easy (half right rudder trim, half fwd elevator trim) although it takes concentration not to over-boost the turbocharged engine and almost as soon as the tail comes up it takes off. The gear and flaps are operated hydraulically but you need to turn on the hydraulic system whenever you want to use it, before selecting gear up you press the hydraulic lever and after a while it turns itself off again - strange. Aerobatics were gentle, big and easy although the engine stops and bangs with any negative g, including stall turns in either direction. Slowing down for the circuit is easy, then hydraulics on, gear down, hydraulics on, flaps down - the approach is surprisingly slow and very stable. The landing attitude takes some getting used to, mainly because of the height, and I can verify that it bounces if you don't get it quite right! Touch and go's are straightforward (hydraulics on, flaps up, hydraulics on, gear up). Shutting down was slightly unusual because the prop is set fully coarse before pulling mixture to ICO to drain it of oil. On the whole it seemed like a Stearman on the ground but a heavy and slightly ponderous YAK52 in the air.

Do fly one if you get the chance, preferably in the states because they are ridiculously expensive in the UK.



Frequently Asked Questions - Irv Lee



If you have a question about flying you may find the answer you are looking for at [Irv's Frequently Asked Questions](#).



RUNWAY DAMP, DAMP, DAMP! - Bob Elliott



I have just finished Graham Coster's 'CORSAIRVILLE'. It is a good read - recommend it. It prompted me to write down my memories of air-things nautical. The first that comes to mind was seeing the Princess taking off from Southampton Water in the early Fifties. I was in the town centre near the Bargate. It would have made a wonderful photograph! G-ALUN was the only one of three to fly and they remained cocooned, two at Calshot and one at Cowes, until 1967 when they were, sadly, broken up. Kermit Weeks says of his Sunderland at the Fantasy of Flight in Florida that it is an ATTRACTION not a museum piece, so what price a Princess?



In the '50s we cycled from Bit Par to Haslemere to get air-exposed in an AS Ai

Oxford. That alone would make enthusiasts of today green with envy, but afterwards we would go down to the beach and walk around the Aquila Airways Sunderland or Solents that were parked on the hard between flights that operated at the time from Southampton to Madeira.

One of the more well-to-do lads that hung around at Eastleigh hoping for 10 minutes in a Tiger Moth in those days was one of the first people I knew who had access to a car! He was also the first of our bunch to get a PPL - I got mine about thirty years later. I remember about half a dozen of us packed in his dad's Morris Minor one day to go to Thame to see a Walrus that was rotting away in a field. We had to climb a fence to get in and we must have been spotted by security (no intrusive cameras in those days) and got thrown out - but not before we had got a picture. Nothing changes! This Walrus was later rescued and restored by my old boss Viv Bellamy, and can now be seen at the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton. The only other Walrus I ever saw was a project at the workshops of Charles Church at Micheldever. This has since moved on and I wonder if it will ever be completed.

My first job was with the Hampshire Aeroplane Club at Eastleigh. Had I stayed there I may not have been here today to relate this tale. My



biggest

regret in aviation is that I never flew in the DH86 or the Spitfire Trainer that we had at the time. I did get to fly in a few interesting types such as the Rapide, Messenger, and Owen Hill's beautiful Stinson Reliant. If I had been offered a ride in the SCAN 30 (a French-built Grumman Widgeon) G-ARIX, that I had seen covered in dust at Croydon many years before, but had been bought by Bruce Campbell, a Hamble boatyard owner, I'd have jumped at the chance. In the event, Viv Bellamy filled it with instructor Jimmy Dowse, his secretary Joyce, chief engineer John Brittain, and Donald Campbell of speed-record fame. It took off from Eastleigh and went off towards Hamble. On touching down the nose broke off and it disappeared under the water! They all managed to scramble out through the hole and were picked up by Bruce Campbell's speedboat. I can't swim, so perhaps it was fortunate that I had left the Club six months previously. It was Bruce Campbell's boatyard, incidentally, that was the base for the trials of the Wet Wot. The second post-war Currie Wot, G-APWT, was used for a number of experiments - another was the Jet Wot when a Rover gas-turbine engine was installed. I was on fire extinguisher duty one day when it went up in flames! I froze, and Viv Bellamy was out of the cockpit and put the fire out before I could move! The Wet Wot wasn't a great success, but this and other experiments are well-chronicled in John Isaacs excellent book 'Aeroplane Affair'.

I gave up aeroplanes for the next 25 years when football and cricket took up all my leisure time, but nevertheless kept a record of every flight I ever made. Strangely, the three pleasure flights made between the early 60s and being caught by the Mellor carrot of a trial lesson in 1990 which led to my PPL, all had tenuous nautical connections. John King took me up in Cessna 172 G-BAEY in 1982 to see the start of the Tall Ships Race. My Concorde experience was in G-BOAC in 1982 at the Calshot Air Display which commemorated the Schneider Trophy races of yesteryear. Our Captain on this flight was Captain Olibar whose father flew in the Race in the 1930s. On the 7th of September 1977, though, we managed a forty five minute flight from Calshot round to St Catherines Point - back round to Ryde - and thence to Calshot in VP-LVE, as it was then, the Sandringham that now resides in the Southampton Hall of Aviation. Our pilot that day was Captain Charles Blair who was later tragically killed in a flying-boat accident in the Antilles.

A Sunderland had appeared back on the British register in the mean time, and this one would fly. The only other examples are in the museums at Hendon and Duxford. I went to see it at Rochester where it was damaged in the 'great storm' of the late eighties. The restoration continued, though, and it was later sold to Kermit Weeks, and left for Florida.

In 1990 I went to visit the Queen Mary at Long Beach. My dad was a cook on her for many years - I still have his 'log book' - and this got me and a pal free entry and a look round the great liner. Parked next door, of course, but not now, was Howard Hughes' Spruce Goose, which we also visited.



Getting my PPL in 1991 opened up new horizons. A fly-out to Mull led to a ride in a Cessna 206, G-SEAI. George Cormack, the well-known Scottish aeroplane person had brought it to Glenforsa and I negotiated a deal

for him to whisk us off to a nearby lake for a few splash and goes. I remember that Mr Mellor got the short straw when the count-up of those willing to shell out for this unusual experience exceeded the capacity of the 206 by one! Barbara Flint got the right-hand seat on this one.

This whetted the appetite. The CFI thought up a Mellor Master Plan to get a sea-plane rating whilst we were visiting the Sun 'n Fun at Lakeland. So, it was off to Jack Brown's and the J/3 Cub. The best 50 dollars worth with my trousers on that I ever spent. Six touch and goes and never above 500 feet. Wonderful.

Talking of the Sun 'n Fun and floatplanes - you just have to go to believe it. Apart from Seabees, Twinbees, Lakes, Mallards, Gooses, (or is that Geese?!), and Albatrosses, you get a few oddities - Dakotas, Beech 18s, Cessna 208 Caravans!!

Two years later Brian had to renew his sea-plane instructor rating and we were back at Jack Brown's. There were no Cubs available so we had a go in a Cessna 182, N6374K. I went first and the instructor suggested we go visit Kermit Weeks at Polk City! Not to land, of course, but we did two fly-by's and got to see the Sunderland again! Back to a nearby lake for three splash-and-goes and a mid-lake change that had me out on a float whilst Brian transferred to the left-hand seat. That was more than two years ago - time we went again!!!



Sawdon finally gets a grip on someone else's chopper - Dave



Sawdon

Many of us go through periods of needing to experiment with something new, for me this natural desire has manifested itself in some strange ways over the years. In student years I did what students did (do?). Twenty years (or so) ago I decided to become a folk dancer, this lead into becoming a Morris Dancer (and, surprisingly, into getting married) and then to fire eating and other forms of exhibitionism. When I joined IBM I got seriously into Gliding again (rekindling a teenage dalliance) and then power flying and instructing and aerobatics. But through all this the idea of fiddling with choppers has been lying dormant and recently I finally gave-in to my urges - despite my wife's pleading!



Those of you who have already fiddled with a chopper will know that they are tricky chaps, and that they are only really happy when thrusting downwards. They tend to leap around a bit and seem to have a mind of their own, you need to get a grip with both hands or goodness knows what they would do. If you are too violent

they get bent so a carress
is the best touch to develop. I've even been told that Women are often better at handling them than men - but (apparently) not all men agree with that.

Despite all this, after a surprisingly short period of time with someone else helping me to keep a grip on it, I've just managed to cope with it by myself. Picture the scene: Thruxton airfield, Sawdon, alone with a chopper - and all the world looking on!

It was good fun having someone else help, it was even more fun doing it by myself. The problem is that it was SUCH good fun doing it by myself that I now want to do it again and again and..... We all know that would make Mr NATWEST (we all use pet names for them, don't we?) very tired and Audrey is worried that there wouldn't be much of Mr NATWEST left for her. The little devil between the horns even wonders if it would be more fun playing with my own chopper rather than someone elses - but I don't think Mr NATWEST would like that very much!



Chilbolton Airfield - Brian Mellor

Chilbolton disused airfield is no longer as easy to spot as it was, partly because all the hard surfaced runways have been taken up, and the land is now mostly used by the farmer again. Apart from the bit that the radio telescope sits on, and the grass strip which is still used occasionally. I used to really enjoy flying from there, and although there are very few buildings of any description left standing, I used to wonder what sort of stories it had to tell.

Well, if anyone else knows Chilbolton, and had the same curiosity, they should get one of two books out of the Hampshire Libraries - both by the same author. One is called "English Airfield - Chilbolton Memories, 1941-1945", and the other is "Memories of Chilbolton Airfield 1940-1941", both by Eleanor Lockyer.

Chilbolton was a satellite airfield to Middle Wallop, and there are stories of all kinds of aircraft using the field, including Harvard, Hurricane, Spitfire, Curtis Tomahawk, Walrus, Dakotas, Thunderbolt, Blenheim, and even a Heinkel 111 - captured, and later used by the Brits (flown by the RAFWAFPE!).

There are some interesting names associated with Chilbolton, too. Ginger Lacy, the highest scoring "ace", and a Squadron Leader Blackadder. (Sorry, no mention of any batman called Baldrick).



Auster D4 Shares - Chris Thompson

Two shares for sale in an [Auster D4](#) based at Hook International (J5 on M3). Recent zero-timed engine and painted in original manufacturers colour scheme. Reason for sale is that two members want to concentrate more on a L4H Piper Cub. This is a well run group with one member being a

CFI examiner with 1000 hours on type so conversion training would not be a problem.

Contact Chris Thompson via thompsoncr2001@aol.com or telephone 02392 597965 (evenings) for full details.



Cherokee 140 Share - John King

One fifth share available in the IBM Flying Club's first syndicated aircraft. [G-BHXX](#) is a 1967 PA28 - 140 based at Thruxton and has been in the same group ownership since 1988. Next C of A due 2003, Annual in May 2001. The sale price will include my share of the banked maintenance/engine fund.

Please contact me for further details.

John King. Tel 023 8026 5992 - email JXK@compuserve.com.



ANR Kits - Dave Sawdon

A couple of months ago there was a mention in Pilot of an ANR (Active Noise Reduction) kit for modifying David Clarke and similar style headsets, I bought one from Adams Aviation and thoroughly recommend it. Fitting the kit is straightforward and only requires elementary soldering skills, they say it takes a couple of hours and that's about right. You remove your old earpiece inserts and wadding, drill a hole and make less than 10 soldered connections. You also need to change your ear seals to the gel type, if they aren't already, so that's an extra (but very worthwhile) expense. The kit comes with a remote battery/switch box but I hate having extra cables and gizmos around so made a small rectangular hole in the earcup for a slider on/off switch and fixed the battery to the mic boom. It works well and is much neater (beauty is often in the eye of the beholder!). The performance is astonishing and well worth the 100 pounds or so. The radio and intercom appear so much louder that you need to turn the headset volume right down, because of this everything is easier to hear. There's just enough background noise left to be able to hear the engine note. The kit is made by Headsets inc. (US), if enough people wanted one it might be possible to get a better price direct from the manufacturer. If anyone wants to see how I saved the separate box and cable I'll take a pic and post it on the website.

Airlite 62 headsets for sale

It's not that long ago that we all accepted Airlite 62 headsets, I've still got 3 (I think) which are for sale to anyone who offers what the attached plugs are worth.

Skyforce Locator for sale

I've had one of these nifty things for several years but don't use it any more. It plugs into a GPS and automatically decodes the Lat/Lon output into "1.5m North East of Winchester" or similar. I used it with a GPS55 but it will work with any GPS with an output port. Offers?

Contact [Dave Sawdon](#) if you are interested in any of the above items.



Events - Jim Hull

If you are planning on organizing a trip, please contact Jim Hull either by Email at jahull@tcp.co.uk or by telephone on 01962 882270.

Date	Event	Organiser	Pilot/Notes
19 May	Project Propellor		** CANCELLED DUE TO FOOT AND MOUTH **
25 May	Glenforsa Mull Fly In week end with possible mass fly out on the Saturday.	Chris Thompson 02392 597965	http://members.aol.com/thompsoncr2001/Text/Events/Events.ht
25 May	Black bottle challenge	Jim Hull 01962 882270	Info pack from 01586 553797 land at Tiree Islay and Campbeltown within 24 hours.
26 May	Coast guard Base Lee on Solent Fly in and safety briefing	Paul Eathorne 023 9256 5593	Need Crown Indemnity of £7.5m prior to visit Arrive at 14:00 - detailed brief of arrival / parking procedures to follow. 4 aircraft attending
May/June	Farnborough F1 Project Richard Noble	Paul Goodman 01962 816610	details to follow
June	Fly-In BBQ to Compton Abbas	Dave Ashford	mid-week evening - min 20 people required
23 Jun	Avranches Fly In France looks like becoming an annual event for us.		maybe Silvie Hardy sfcrd@liberty.surf.fr Club Tel 00 33 2 33 58 02 91
15 Jul	Perranporth cream teas Fly In	James Mason	Maybe this year we'll get there. We have a good week end offer from Rose in Vale hotel

Spare seat? Want a trip? Let me know and I'll try and match up. Jim Hull tel: 01962 882270.



Short Final - Dave Ashford

As the result of a complaint I received from one of our lady club members, I have removed the item that was originally posted here. Whilst I do not agree with her sentiments, I accept that the intent of the item may have been misunderstood and could have caused offence. Please accept my sincerest apologies if you too were offended by anything in this Newsletter as that has never been my intent.

