

February 2003

# SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Mid Kent Strut* of the



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## Mike's Mutterings

Mike Negus -  
Editor



## Vagabond Arrives at Farthing Corner

Dodging the rain showers and low cloud Vagabond G-BRSX, now owned by our very own Paul Newman (no not that one) and accompanied by Jim Stevens as check pilot made an uneventful arrival at Farthing Corner on the 8<sup>th</sup> February from Manor Farm. Looking very perky in a green and yellow sort of way it looks very much at home already. As you can see by the picture it would appear to be a tidy example and trust that it



## PFA Credit Card

Don't forget you can help the PFA to the tune of £10.00 simply by applying for your PFA credit card a donation is made of that sum to the Association coffers. Think! If everyone in the PFA took one out and cut it up straight away many thousands will be raised. I have mine - apply today to Shoreham or speak to any of us on the Committee. It will cost the price of a stamp.

## February 27th Meeting

Talk by Malcolm Moulton on Kent Aviation History. It would also be good to side track our speaker on projects past, present and future within MAPS history.

Aviation  
History at  
Feb Meeting

March is  
Safety  
Evening

## Lots to read this month

- The Speaker at our February Meeting comes well recommended. Aviation History in Kent is his subject.
- Book your seat to Duxford.
- All material for publication welcomed



gives Paul a lot of happy hours flying. Don't forget the Turbulent owned by Paul is at this time still for sale, details appeared in last months Newsletter.



Clear February days !!



*“Report on  
January’s  
Annual General  
Meeting.”*



*Mike Wells’ Woody  
Pusher*



## Annual General Meeting

Thirty five brave souls defied the snow on the 30<sup>th</sup> January to attend the AGM. The depleted committee gave their report to the members. Jaqui Clarke as Strut Co-ordinator remained bullish about the Struts performance over the year which had seen a lot of involvement in activities such as Young Eagles, Cross Channel Flyout, Bar B Q’s etc., The Newsletter has taken a step forward the decision now reached to produce monthly in colour which gives a more professional feel and the ability to make use of digital photography which is becoming more readily available to members. A proposal to raise the subs from its current level of £10.00 to a new level of £12.00 with effect from January 2003 was approved. The current level of subs has been constant for a number of years and the increase will help with the production and distribution costs of the Newsletter. The events organiser Mark Balding reported on mixed success of activities for the year as always weather related. The Committee put themselves up for re-election pending anyone stepping forward to claim the privilege however none did so the present incumbents soldier on for 2003 - Jaqui stated that she would stand down at the next AGM so the hunt is on for a replacement. A hard act to follow !

Extra copies of “Skywritings” can be downloaded from the Website

## Group Flying

Mike Negus gave a short personal view on operating within the group concept. Coming from a sole owner to a group of four enabled a balanced insight in to the pro’s and con’s of operating solo or group. The meetings attention was drawn to a PFA publication written by Steve Petter on forming and operating Groups a number of copies were sold at the meeting. It was very interesting to hear from Frank Lissimore that following his recent enrolment into the Strut and discussions with various members he bought a Jodel now based at Biggin and has formed a group of five around the aircraft. Since commencement some engine problems have been experienced but no doubt will be resolved to enable a full seasons flying. At least the benefits of Group operation means a 5 way split on cost not the whole lot! Hopefully the discussion has resurrected some deep felt urges to get involved and get flying. As always the biggest step is the first one. Or as my Dad used to tell me when in doubt make a fool of yourself. There is a microscopically thin line between being brilliantly creative and acting like the most gigantic idiot on earth. So what the hell, leap! But, whichever you do don’t look back - something might be gaining on you.

“Because of their size, parents may be difficult to discipline properly.”

## New Members

**Chris Ward** who has recently joined the Strut operates an L4 Club. Built in 1941 this example was one of many that saw wartime service on the Continent in 1944/45 and after military service remained on the French register for a number of years. G-BHVV sports an olive drab overall scheme and is based at Rochester.

Chris decided to pay Farthing Corner a visit on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February and wisely came by road for a look see. Having had a chat with the incumbent Boys Club members a donut and cup of tea the strip was walked. A bit like the Grand National at Aintree with the big hedge at one end standing about 2 metres tall it has to be seen to be believed. A couple of hours later the burble of the 65 hp Continental could be heard and the Cub made a fine short field landing demonstrating why they could operate out of small Normandy fields in 1944. Another cup of tea and donut and a return to Rochester again off in a very short distance. Chris's other interests subject to confirmation are sailing, motor bikes, old cars (he owns 2 MGB's) and interestingly live music, playing not listening. We could have our next turn for the Christmas Dinner and Dance.

**Robert Armstrong** has also joined us having been dragged in by Graham Hammond. Robert has been interested in aviation since a kid but along with a lot of us, thought it was beyond reach. Having tried gliding

he found it very cliquey spending too much time waiting to fly, getting a short flight, mostly flown by the instructor until the thermals kicked in, then watching one of the Club hotshots take up the glider until the thermals subsided whereupon the students were allowed to fly with no lift again. Ten years after 'his life begins at' birthday Robert started flying with Cloudbase Aviation at Redhill and went solo before hitting the big 50 and bought a Shadow which is kept at Headcorn which he has owned for some 18 months. He also belongs to the Kent Microlight Aircraft Club.

To both of you a big welcome to the best Strut in the PFA.

Incidentally the reason I first heard from Robert was regarding 'E' mailing the newsletter.

This was something again which has been discussed and certainly may become a possibility in the future.



*"Started flying with Cloudbase at Redhill."*





## Committee Contacts

### Co-ordinator: Jaqui Clark



New Orchard Farm,  
Sittingbourne, ME9 0QL  
Tel & Fax: 01795 - 830378  
E-mail: [JaquiC@pfa.org.uk](mailto:JaquiC@pfa.org.uk)

### Treasurer:

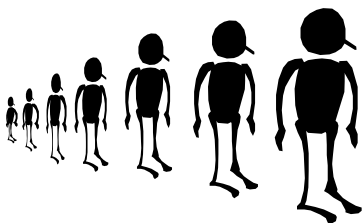
John Dean 01892 822776

### Membership Secretary:

Graham Hammond  
01622 891466

### Newsletter Editor:

Mike Negus 01634 364396  
57 Ploughmans Way,  
Rainham, Kent, ME8 8LH  
E-mail: [mike@negus8.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:mike@negus8.fsnet.co.uk)



Mark Balding 01959 523825  
Brian Hope 01795 662508  
Mike Tooze 01634 861591  
Derek Browning 01622 736626

### Dates for your Diary

February 27	Kent Aviation History
March 27	CAA Safety Evening
April 24	Quiz Night
March 2	Trip to Duxford
May 3 & 4	Cross Channel Fly Out
May 18	Young Eagles Day
July 6	Pancake Fly In

### Over hear again!

We should be able to welcome to our February meeting once again the personage of Diane Earhart, she with the familiar name. Diane for those who have not met her on previous visits is an American pilot and air traffic controller and friend of the Strut. She has delighted audiences young and old with her tales of aviation humour including this Strut. For the first time an audio CD of her humorous talk "Say Again, Over?" will be available at the 27<sup>th</sup> February Strut meeting. This was recorded live at the Georgia Wings Weekend and for a mere £5.00 you can own this CD to listen to time and again. ALL proceeds from the purchase of this CD will benefit flying scholarships for the disabled. Each time you laugh along with Diane you'll know your purchase has helped someone worthy to be introduced to the love of aviation that we all share. Please come and support Diane and buy a CD and wish her a 'Happy Birthday' (3 days late) and she looks forward to seeing everybody.

### Duxford Trip Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March

Why not leave the decorating or your aircraft's winter maintenance programme for just one day and join your fellow Strut members on a visit to the Imperial War Museum Collection at Duxford. Always an interesting venue and well worth a revisit with its superb display of aircraft, armour and other exhibits. Transport arrangements have been left to individuals so should the weather be kind, those with an airworthy machine can avoid the traffic and fly to Duxford. If your means of transport involves the horseless carriage come to the Strut meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> February to make car sharing arrangements with your fellow members. From the Dartford River Crossing, Duxford is under an hours drive, overnight arrangements should only be necessary in the event of snow on the M.11 !. ETA for Duxford should be 11.30 whereupon we should all meet outside the gate to take advantage of PFA discount for parties. If you need further information call Mark Balding on 01959 523825 (Evenings)

### CAA Safety Evening in March - Early start at 19:30 hours

Did you hear the one about the pilot, his Woody and a bit of carb icing, Look out for the complete story from Mike Wells in a future edition of our sister publication Popular Flying.