

April 2003

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Mid Kent Strut* of the



Contents:

Mike's Mutterings	1
New Season	2
Propaganda	2
Young Eagles	3
Nice Thoughts	3
Sun n Fun	4
Diary Dates	4

Mike's Mutterings

Mike Negus -
Editor



A V.I.B (Very Important Birthday)

Our popular co-ordinator Jaqui recently celebrated the above and whilst preparations for the "do" were going on, in dropped Robinson R44 G-BZTA owned by the guys who are doing work on the farm. Apparently the cost new is £240k but this was picked up second-hand, a snip at £180k

OUCH! Anyway Many Happy's and we look forward to a certain other person's significant birthday. (No names, no pack drill, nudge, nudge, wink, wink)



PFA Rally Kemble 11/12/13th July 2003

If you haven't already made a note of the above please do, the Strut will be looking for some volunteers to man the media marquee so if you can spare a few hours let Jaqui know so that she can collate numbers.

PFA Website.

Has now been updated by the Webmaster and new events have been added, try clicking to www.pfa.org.uk/events. I know some of you have been a bit critical of the site let us know what you think. Any comments can be sent direct on webmaster@pfanet.co.uk

April is Quiz Night – bring your brain

May is the PFA CEO talking

Lots to read this month

- The Quiz evening is on the 24th April. All are welcome to vie for the huge prizes.
- Pictures of Strut Aircraft particularly needed
- All material for publication welcomed

Whilst Jacqui's name is in the frame she 'E'mailed me to say that on May Bank Holiday (5th) BBC Radio Kent is doing an entertainment programme entitled "The Extremes of Kent" (highest, lowest, warmest, coldest) and she was roped in to doing a bit about flying (from Rochester). It was all very light-hearted with some 'proper facts' thrown in for good measure - so listen out on Radio Kent -although you will have to consult the press to find out what time it goes out

Can you volunteer to fly "Young Eagles" - If so phone Chris Reynolds.



April Showers



“Propaganda from the Bad Guys.”



Headcorn Flight Simulator



Emergence Into The New Season

One by one the Stoneacre Boys Club Fleet are coming out of hibernation with permit renewals proceeding apace. Latest off the stocks is Luscombe 8 A G-BSNT “Beryl” and as illustrated, Paddy Jordan looks suitably pleased with himself after taxing trials around the field proved the tail wheel refurbishment was all OK. He also took the opportunity to try out the sumptuous new blue leather (whoooo!) upholstery, carried out by Bruce Alexander, which has spruced up the seating and side panels no end. Brian Hope’s Jodel is at least looking more like an aeroplane again rather than a Airfix Kit.

The newly arrived Vagabond, as reported in February issue, owned by Paul Newman is also having a pre-season dolly up so all in all most people should be looking forward to a full seasons flying except Poor old Rob Brown owner of another Jodel who had the misfortune to snap his Achilles tendon whilst playing Badminton recently which has put him in plaster for 3 months so with the help of John Dean his newly overhauled engine has been put back in the aeroplane and there it will have to wait until he’s fit again. Bad luck Rob!



Taxi Trials

Further Rochester Propaganda from the Bad Guys

Rochester also came up when a letter from Cllr Derek Munton Labour Transport Spokesman was published in the Medway News on Friday 21st March and is worth reproducing in full so that those of you who missed this load of twaddle can see what is still in the minds of the Lab/Lib Alliance at Medway. This coupled with an editorial published in Medway Kent Messenger this time by Roger Shade, Lib Dem Councillor also twisting things around to suit their end objective. The letter to the Medway News was countered by several people including John Luck who eruditely put the alternative and correct point of view. The enclosed extracts show exactly what is still in the Councils mind therefore we must be ever vigilant and willing to respond when given the opportunity and of course with the Local Election coming soon all those of us resident in Medway have the chance to vote where it hurts!



Happy Luscombe Owner

Do not miss the Quiz Night on 24th April - Bring your family to help you. All are welcome at the usual venue

Young Eagles

Chris Reynolds has sent out to 25 'E' mail addresses calling for volunteers and whilst this doesn't represent 25 aeroplanes it does represent a potential number of people to once again give generously of their time for this very worthwhile cause. If you've not received an 'E' from Chris you can contact him on cr.reynolds@farmline.com. Chris puts in a great deal of effort to get this day up and running and it behoves all of us that can help either on the ground or in the air to do so. Thanks! Yes of courseits on the 18th May (Sunday) at Rochester.



Young Eagle

Nice Thoughts

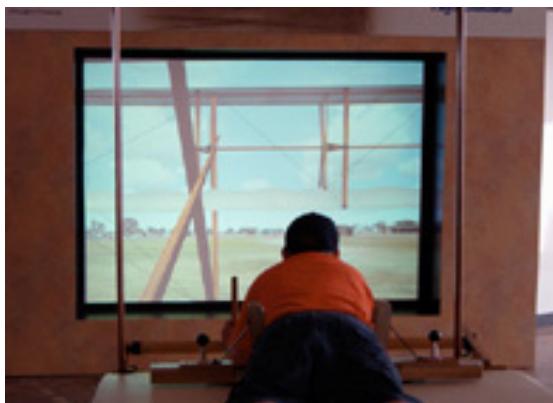
Gary and Kate, those well known Vagabond drivers wrote to remind everybody that the ever popular Spalding Flower Festival 2003 is on the 3rd May (Bank Holiday weekend) at Spalding in Lincolnshire. The nearest airfield is "Fenland" and they usually run a bus to and from the event (approximately 3 miles) but it would be wise to confirm this with the airfield. The flower parade starts in town at 2pm and finishes at 5pm. From their experience there will almost certainly be other street entertainment throughout the weekend but there will be no accommodation if you wish to stay overnight (this is booked up 12+ months in advance). They have been twice and it really is worth a visit.

More Nice Thoughts

Following the attempt to get some informal fly outs going, the first unfortunately thwarted by the weather the following dates are mooted together with the destination. These are very much same way same day but hopefully will give a few of us some visits to plan.

Sunday 27th April North Weald, Saturday 31st May Old Warden (Aeronca Club Fly In, strictly PPR) Sunday 29th June Old Sarum, Sunday 3rd August Old Buckenham. These venues can be discussed at the meeting immediately prior to those dates at which time the weather and numbers for example can be more accurately gauged.

We are also trying to arrange a "Liferaft" evening which if it can be worked out will involve some of us leaping into a swimming pool with all sorts of buoyancy aids.....watch this space.



What's this? See next page for details on this Flight Simulator

Do you know about the monthly fly out?? Same way, same day. Takes place on the Sunday after the Strut Meeting. See Diary Dates for places and phone Jaqui for further information.



"Propeller making at Sun n Fun."



"Flower Parade starts in Town."



Committee Contacts

Co-ordinator: Jaqui Clark



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

Treasurer:

John Dean 01892 822776

Membership Secretary:

Graham Hammond
Aviateur@pfanet.co.uk
01622 891466

Newsletter Editor:

Mike Negus 01634 364396
57 Ploughmans Way
Rainham, Kent, ME8 8LH
Mike@negus8.fsnet.co.uk



Committee Members:

Mark Balding 01959 523825
Brian Hope 01795 662508
Mike Tooze 01634 861591
Derek Browning 01622 736626
Bob Chequer 01634 668276

Dates for your Diary

April 24	Quiz Night
April 27	North Weald
May 3 & 4	Cross Channel Fly Out
May 18	Young Eagles Day
May 29	Graham Newby PFA CEO
July 6	Pancake Fly In

SUN 'N FUN 2003 - A

brief note from Brian Hope

For John Dean and me Sun 'N Fun has become something of an annual pilgrimage, I think this year's event was our eighth on the trot. That may sound rather excessive but in reality making the trip to Florida is not overly expensive, certainly under £500 each for flights, car and luxury villa for the week. Each year we have been accompanied by at least two fellow travellers, this year Strut member Simon Pratt and his partner Christine joined us.

SNF has the distinct advantage over Oshkosh of being located in a busy tourist area. For wives or partners not in tune with aviation there is plenty of alternative entertainment as Orlando is less than fifty miles away with its Disney, Universal Studios, Sea World and other fantastic theme parks. Oshkosh is EAA Airventure full stop. Hicksville USA outside of that so you only go there for the show, and being mid summer you certainly won't do it for anything like the price you can do SNF.

This year certainly seemed quieter than usual. The event was a week or so earlier this year but my guess is that the goings on in Iraq has caused a bit of a down turn in tourism. What of the show itself? Well you'll be able to read about it in Popular Flying but I can tell you that it was as interesting as ever. I'm always fascinated by the car engine conversions and this year there were Corvair flat six, Harley V twin, Suzuki three and four cylinder in line, Mazda rotary, Subaru flat four and of course VWs to wonder at.

John did a session in the fabric workshop, covering a rudder in Poly Fibre. I can only think that once he sees how nice my Jodel will look after its tart up that he is going to rip the fabric off his own and start again!

Speed seems to be the name of the game in the US homebuilt

scene at the moment. Turbines of all kinds are finding their way on to the front of some of the fastest kitplanes like Glassairs, Lancairs and even RVs. This year the Wheeler Express four seater was sporting a turbine which reportedly gives it a cruise of no less than 265 knots at 18000ft. I can't even begin to think what PFA Engineering would say if you told them you wanted to build one here. At the opposite end of the scale are the microlights at Paradise City. The Ultralights, as they call them, are pretty well unregulated in the US but can only be single seaters under about 263 lbs. For years three axis ruled the roost in the States, the complete opposite to here where flexwings have dominated, but trike manufacturers are now starting to get a foothold there too. Powered parachutes, both strap on and wheeled are also all the rage, certainly cheap flying with many costing under \$5000.

Very impressive was the EAA's Countdown to Kitty Hawk exhibition. Sponsored by FORD and Microsoft Flight Simulator amongst others, the display occupied two enormous marquees and featured the EAA built Wright Flyer replica that will reconstruct the Wright Bros flights at Kitty Hawk exactly one hundred years to the second. Of great interest to kids of all ages, some well into retirement, were the MS Flight Sim Wright Flyer simulators. You could lie on the 'aircraft' and operate it just as Orville and Wilbur did, watching your virtual progress on a large screen. Numerous other exhibits relating to the birth of aviation were also on display and I couldn't help but draw a parallel to the almost total apathy there seems to be in the UK to celebrating this singularly most important event of the last century.

John and I will almost certainly be heading to Florida again next April so if you fancy coming along then just let us know.

Meet your
Committee
Members-
Graham
Hammond



