

May 2003

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Mid Kent Strut* of the



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Mike's Mutterings

Mike Negus -
Editor



Hot Cross Bun Fly In at Rochester

Rochester hosted their Good Friday Fly In on the 18th April with free hot cross buns to arrivals. A steady stream of aviators from near and far arrived to take part in the Spot Landing Competition being held at the same time. After final adjudication the winner was declared, some local bloke whose modesty prevents him being named but the aircraft was a type with all of the wheels in the right place! The Horizon Café under new ownership with John Luck at the helm was doing a brisk trade and deserves our support to keep this long needed facility at the



Cross Channel Tyro's

For the second year running, several members of the Strut headed up by John Dean and Brian Hope ably assisted by Graham Hammond, Steven Solley and others met a number of pilots who had made their way to Rochester on Saturday 3rd May to cross the Channel for the first time in many cases. Although numbers were down on last year a creditable number were assisted through the form filling and tricks of the trade to enable a smooth passage to the other side. Typical of those helped were Steven Knight and John Shepherd who came down from Netherthorpe in their Emeraude G-AYEC for their first trip abroad. Following their return an E-Mail was sent to John Dean expressing their thanks and stating how much they enjoyed the experience. Confidence now established they are looking forward to further trips. It was a long day trip but worth it. Makes you grateful that we are based so close to the Channel !



airport. Noted was Bob Sharps Aeroprakt Foxbat now flying regularly from Rochester, certainly a fine looking machine. We could do with an update to see if performance lives up to expectation.

Did you help at "Young Eagles" - If not, make a note to help next time.

**May Meeting -
Graham
Newby
PFA CEO**

**May is the
PFA Boss
talking**

Lots to read this month

- What do you know about Spatial Disorientation? Read all about it inside.
- Pictures of Strut Aircraft particularly needed
- All material for publication welcomed



May Blossom



*“Good news for
Rochester Airport.”*



A very wet Aerofair 2003



Quiz Night

The annual test of brainpower was held at the last meeting with yours truly trying to maintain some sort of order (and credibility) whilst the rules were sorted out. Once a few dissenters had been dealt with things calmed down a bit and off we went. The winners of the subsequent closely fought competition were the “Plastics”, a loose affiliation of the “Ranch” and other hangers on. I think they outnumbered all the other teams 2:1 but, however, they proved popular winners and after the liquid prizes had been handed out the serious part of the meeting resumed. Anyway thanks all for a good night and your support.

Local Elections and Rochester

Excellent news from the Medway elections is that the Conservatives have now gained a respectable working majority over the opposition so hopefully some of our antagonists have got their comeuppance. What ever your political persuasion this is at least an optimistic result for the airport as the Conservatives have stated publicly that they will maintain things as they are, however time will tell. We can only hope, they are, as we all know, an honourable bunch!



Young Eagles Balloonists -
See report on page 4



Cross Channel Newbies Line Up

Fly-Ins - Various

Talking of Rochester by the time this newsletter has been distributed our Young Eagles event will have taken place but on June 15th there is a Father`s Day Fly In at the airport, a good enough excuse to seek permission from the family to go aviating. There will also be an aerojumble, military warbirds, the Army Historic Flight and the return of the pleasure flying Rapide. On July 6th for something more genteel, our own `Pancake` Fly In will be held so bear that in mind as usual help on the day is always welcome. Full details of all PFA Fly Ins, and others of course can be found in our Sister publication Popular Flying.

Further afield our next informal fly out is to Old Warden, home of the famous Shuttleworth Collection and planned for Saturday 31st May. The Aeronca Club are also holding their flyout to Old Warden on the same day so it is strictly PPR on 01767 627288.

Do not miss the chance to quiz the PFA's Chief Executive at the May Meeting. We are sure he will be happy to answer any questions you might have. Usual venue at Golf Club.

Spatial Disorientation

(Some thoughts by Dr Bandoi)

Spatial disorientation is a term used to describe a variety of incidents occurring in flight where the pilot fails to sense correctly the position, motion or attitude of his aircraft or of himself relative to the earth. Shortly after man's first flight, Wilbur Wright made a comment that pilot orientation will be difficult to maintain. Since that time, man has spent many hours in the air. With that experience the truth of Wilbur Wright's statement has become evident.

All pilots experience illusory sensations of aircraft attitude and motion, or fail to appreciate the orientation of the aircraft repeatedly during their flying career. Such incidents are quite normal, for they are usually caused by physiological limitation of sensory mechanisms. But, when one attempts to determine how often aircrew suffer from spatial disorientation, the incidence is very much influenced by the individual pilot's concept of the term. Some will say that they never suffer from disorientation because they always know the aircraft's correct orientation on referring to instrument displays, even though their "seat of the pants" sensation does not accord. Others will say they have some form of disorientation on almost every flight, though they like their colleagues who do not ostensibly suffer from disorientation, successfully resolve the perceptual conflict and maintain correct control of the aircraft. Disorientation is more common in student pilots, particularly during the early phases of instrument flying training. With experience, and probably some adaptation to the motion stimuli of flight, aircrew attend less to sensations which are not of use in controlling the aircraft and, as a result, are less aware of the sensory conflict.

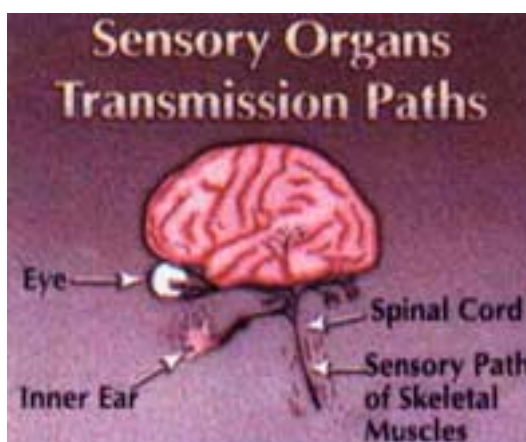
Don't forget to put the PFA Rally date in your diary and remember it's Kemble this time

Significance of Spatial Disorientation.

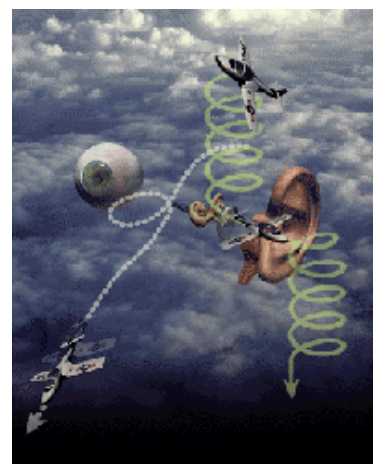
By far the most important consequence of spatial disorientation is loss of control. Fortunately, only a small fraction of disorientation incidents experienced by experienced aircrew lead to loss of control. Nevertheless, particularly in the area of general aviation, aircraft do crash each year and aircrew and passengers are killed because the pilot failed to perceive correctly the orientation of their aircraft.

There appears to have been little reduction in the proportion of accidents attributable to spatial disorientation, in contrast to the reassuring decrease in accidents due to mechanical or structural failure.

It is a very sobering thought that around 90% of general aviation mishaps in which disorientation is a cause or factor are fatal.



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.



Graveyard Spin



" 90% of general aviation mishaps in which disorientation is a cause or factor are fatal."



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Dates for your Diary

May 18	Young Eagles Day
May 29	Graham Newby PFA CEO
May 31	Old Warden
July 6	Pancake Fly In
Sept 7	Laddingford Fly In



Laddingford 7th September

Peter Kember has generously thrown out an open invitation to all Mid Kent Strut Members to Fly In to Laddingford for a free Bar BQ on the 7th September but this will be a fly in, car attendance is to be discouraged, so we look forward to this event. Coincidentally Nigel Read sent in a couple of pics of the Europa that he co owns with Tom Eaton. They have fitted a new engine and prop and are sorting out a couple of niggles prior to Dave Machin their inspector issuing a flight release certificate. Having first flown in 1996 it has done 150 hours having been previously resident at both Rochester and Redhill at various stages of its career it is now based at Laddingford.

Nigel Read's Europa



'Tissue Paper' Hot Air Balloons - April 27th

It has always been the PFA's intention that the Young Eagles program should be more than just a flight in a light aircraft and other activities could/should be linked with these events under the broader umbrella of 'Education'. I have been working behind the scenes for sometime now trying to put together suitable activities but without sufficient time to properly address the issue the extra activities have been slow in organising. Finally, with the help of a PFA member from Coventry I have acquired the necessary information to organise a simple workshop to make hot air balloons from tissue paper.

So our 'pilot' (excuse the pun) workshop took place on Sunday 27th April at Rochester Airport, involving young people from various NACYP groups who will be returning to take part in the Young Eagles day. Strut member Paddy Jordan helped produce the necessary templates and worktops, with Rochester kindly making sufficient space for us to organise the activity in their large hanger.

The day dawned bright and breezy and after an initial safety briefing in the newly revamped Café the participants headed for the hanger and further instructions. Separated in to 8 teams they were given just over an hour to complete their balloons, choosing their own colours and working according to their own skills. At the end each balloon was launched individually and times recorded to enable prizes to be awarded.

From the smiles on everyone's faces you could say they all enjoyed the activity, especially the grown-ups! We look forward to welcoming the youngsters' back at the Young Eagles day on 18th May.

Meet your
Committee
Members-

John Dean

