



January 2004

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Mid Kent Strut* of the



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Mike's Mutterings

Mike Negus -
Editor



Christmas Dinner Success

There being no meeting in December, a good number of members, although not as many we would have liked and their guests attended the Annual Christmas Dinner at the Golf Club and from reactions gleaned subsequently it would appear that it was one of the best in recent times. The food was excellent, the sprouts for this year having benefited from being cooked from November onwards and the "turn" to replace the usual musical variety in the form of a magician



Party Revellers

kept people amazed and amused particularly during the balloon modelling at the latter end of the evening. Certainly some members seemed to take to making all sorts of dogs and other assorted animals in their stride whilst others went for the more flamboyant look. The raffle went well and thanks to your generosity infused the Strut coffers with a welcome dollop of cash. Hopefully this will set the trend for more variety.



Editor Brian



Editor Mike

January
Meeting –
AGM

Look forward
to seeing you
at the AGM

Exciting things to read this month

- RV6
- Pictures of Strut Aircraft particularly needed
- Please let Editor Mike have your articles for inclusion in the Newsletter



*Mexican Banner Towing
Microlight - "Wots the 500ft
rule Guv"*



*A pretty sunset - unless
landine towards it*



RV6

RV6 et al

You may recall in the November Newsletter Karl Martin gave us an insight into the purchase and operation of his RV 6 G-RVIB and he emailed to enquire if anyone out there in Strutland can help with the following topics.

1. European Regulations re aircraft and pilots licences for touring on the mainland.
2. PFA inspectors with RV experience (very topical).
3. Hangerage in West Kent.

If anyone wants to contact Karl please feel free to do so at

flyerkarlmartin@aol.com

As a footnote to his request the aircraft now owned by Karl was built by Ian Belmore who is currently building an RV7.

On the 17th December whilst pre-flying the Luscombe at Farthing Corner an RV6 dropped in flown by the redoubtable Maurice Darlington who is based at High Easter in Essex. This aircraft being his new mount and replacing his well known Chipmunk G-ADZP the one with the sharks mouth painted on the nose (a la wartime 112 squadron Kittyhawks and Mustangs) and from his enthusiastic comments, he is well pleased and impressed by its performance. Maurice has been flying for many years and owned the Chipmie for a considerable number of those years and is well known to the likes of John Dean and Brian Hope who regularly tour with him.

Hopefully he and Karl will be able to swap notes on the performance of their respective machines and with Gary Smiths RV 8 currently under construction whatever happened to cruising at 80 knots?



**Never fly anything that
doesn't have the paint
worn off the Rudder
Pedals.**

**Why do you have to click on
"Start" to stop Windows?**

December Committee Meeting



Well here we are again another year past, another year to look forward to. As you can see from the photo your committee entered Christmas with a great joie de vie or bon jovi depending on taste and the cold tea slipped down a treat courtesy of our Strut Co-ordinator. Our meetings are not always like this sometimes we actually attempt to take decisions , but it does not prevent light hearted badinage particularly around the season of good will.

**Annual General Meeting
January 29th 2004**

Once again the AGM is upon us and once again the cry goes out resign! resign! Well perhaps not it seems that there is an air of complacency in letting the incumbents get on with it, which we are happy to do. However if any one from the rank and file has the wish to put themselves forward your involvement would as always be most welcome.

On a more serious note feedback is always required and desirable on the performance of the Committee over the past year and this is not an excuse to seek plaudits but constructive criticism is healthy. We don't get things right all the time. We have this year introduced the Newsletter in colour, electronic delivery, monthly flyouts, a subscription increase and a change in format to the Christmas Dinner. Did these work for you, let us know when we see you on the 29th.

We particularly need to know your thoughts on the Newsletter which has been in a colour format for the last 12 months. If we are to

**I like my women to be like
my Landings:
Bumpy, cheap and
predictable!**

continue with this, it will involve an increase in the subscription rate. Is that what you want? Please come along to the AGM and make your views known.

December 17th - THE Day

What a cracker with weather nigh on perfect it would appear that the Gods had smiled down on the aviation fraternity allowing a goodly number of us to take advantage and fly. I saw Gary Smith fluttering overhead in the Vagabond whilst Brian and Jaqui took the opportunity to visit the new PFA headquarters at Turweston, how apt !

Oddly the significance of the date still appeared lost on most people and interestingly there was not too much in the media with a distinct lack of coverage particularly television with not one programme celebrating the fact, at least on the terrestrial mainstream channels. The abortive recreation at Kittyhawk however was well reported in the press and TV news and that coupled with the Beagle 2's noble failure kind of caused the aviation century to fizzle to a quiet close.

Alright I know missions to Mars don't quite fall into Earthbound aviation but you get my drift. Locally both Headcorn and Rochester were flat out all day; our group Luscombe did a few turns round Rochester and were witness to very busy activity around the field. All rather exciting really.

Matthew's First Solo Landing at Farthing Corner



Matthew, a recent resident to Farthing Corner, had his first solo landing at the strip captured on film as he came in to land on the westerly runway. Not the easiest strips to land at, he did not take too long to master the technique. Well done Matthew.



Gary Smith in good form at the Christmas Party



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 865516
Derek Browning 01622 736626
Bob Chequer 01634 668276

Dates for your Diary

Jan 29	AGM
Feb 26	Watch this Space
Mar 25	Watch this Space

NOTAMS

You may or may not be aware that you can check NOTAMS (and you do, don't you!) on the aptly named website www.notamcheck.com which has recently (28 November 2003) finished its latest update to V2.23. You can download and use free for one month thereafter it is £10.00 to register which is cheaper than Notampilot or Avbrief.

Congratulations or Commiserations ?.....

To several of our members celebrating significant birthdays Alan Cooper (50) in December on the 17th no less, it was almost as if his career was pre-ordained with such a significant date and Jim Stevens (a little bit older) in January. Welcome to the over the hill club boys!

Caught up over Christmas with ex Strut member Martyn Snelling currently driving 737's for Easyjet for a living out of Stanstead. Martyn used to own an ARV 2 which went some way to fund his CPL but I know he still hankers to fly light aircraft.

Our American Stalwart Fred Smith came over from the States for the Christmas Dinner and seems to have become something of a tradition. Fred is a very affable guy and something of an anglophile and is involved with others in the operation of a strip where he flies from back home. I must get him to put a little article together about his experiences on strip flying.

Whilst not a Strut Member it has to be well done to Colin Campbell who flies the Piper Arrow G-DIZY out of Rochester who it would appear had the misfortune to suffer power loss causing a wheels up landing near Bluebell Hill shortly after take off on the 5th January. From the picture in the local paper it would seem not too badly damaged but more importantly Colin walked away with just cuts and bruises. Rotten start to the new year but as they say, any landing you walk away from.....

Talking of Rochester

Paul Richardson issued a newsletter in December confirming that a new five year lease has been negotiated for the airport so the Conservative manifesto has prevailed and offered a better future for the staff and users. Paul has advised that there are some



maintenance issues to be dealt with such as re surfacing the main apron, tree lopping and fence remedial, which will cost round about £50,000 so we are to expect increases on the services provided which have largely been held over the last 4 years. At least the year ended on a positive note and no doubt those of us that use the facility will continue their support to assist with the viability.

Tail Piece

A few thoughts passed on from Dave Partington via Malcolm Jefferson one of our away members.

"The only time an aircraft has too much fuel on board is when it is on fire" *Sir Charles Kingsford Smith sometime before his death in the 1920's.*

"If you've faced with a forced landing, fly the thing as far into the crash as possible" *Bob Hoover.*

"Never fly in the cockpit with someone braver than you" *Herman Junior.*

"The three best things in life are a good landing, a good orgasm and good bowel movement – the night carrier landing is one of the few opportunities in this life to experience all three at the same time" *Anon.*

"It takes only two things to fly – airspeed and money" *That could have been anyone who flies!*

KR Project still For Sale
- All woodwork done
with many parts -
£1000
Phone Steve Solley on
01304 347100 for more
details

MID - KENT STRUT

BALANCE SHEET FOR YEAR ENDING 31 DEC 2003

	2003
	£
Balance in Lloyds Bank at 1/1/03	2538.27
Credit from Profit & Loss Account	-445.16
 Balance at 31/12/02 in Lloyds Bank	 <u>2093.11</u>

MID - KENT STRUT

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDING 31 DEC 2003

2002	INCOME	2003
£		£
216.00	BBQ	160.75
2.04	Bank Interest	19.82
141.00	Raffle at Christmas Dinner	0.00
21.50	Rochester Fund	0.00
1248.00	Christmas Dinner	0.00
250.00	Young Eagles	0.00
0.00	Fly-In	44.52
0.00	Donation	42.00
980.00	Subscriptions	1197.00
2858.54	Total	1464.09
 EXPENDITURE 		
250.00	Meetings	200.00
314.42	Newsletter	1245.88
108.95	BBQ	61.23
15.75	Quiz	15.07
30.00	Raffle at Christmas Dinner	0.00
1353.58	Christmas Dinner Deposit	50.00
0.00	Fly-In	13.82
246.75	Miscellaneous	210.75
250.00	Armstrong Isaacs Foundation	0.00
93.00	GAAC	112.50
196.09	Excess of Income over Expenditur	-445.16
£2,858.54		£1,464.09
		£1,464.09