



June 2004

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Mid Kent Strut* of the



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Mike's Mutterings

Mike Negus -
Editor



Young Eagles

**June Meeting –
Come and
Enjoy**

**Summer
Here
At
Last**



The Organisers at Work

*Exciting things to
read this month*

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

The event this year took place at Rochester Airport on Sunday May 23rd under near perfect weather conditions as several participants with shiny noses and mild sunburn found out to their cost. This year having gone through the learning curve it was decided to go for quality not quantity as the logistics of flying large numbers of youngsters does bring problems in

management particularly when transiting from the flying site to the toilet facilities and café.

The reception tent having been erected in good time and the first volunteer pilots with their aircraft having arrived we awaited the appearance of the first young people. Millen



Young Eagles Volunteers



" All things were proceeding smoothly in an orderly direction"



Young Eagles Aircraft



Aviation based at Rochester contributed an aircraft and a group of youngsters and so commenced their effort early on looking very tiddly in their corporate baseball caps. During the course of the morning other groups arrived as did further aircraft and pilots which meant we were in the happy position of not extending the generosity of the volunteers beyond reasonable expectations. In other words the number of sorties per aircraft was not too prohibitive!

Certainly there was a much more relaxed feel to the occasion and Chris Reynolds was rewarded with a smooth running event and Jaqui Clark with Mike Post (dragged in off the street 'cos he has good handwriting skills) assisting ensured the paperwork flowed seamlessly. Possibly for the first time Jaqui was caught on camera smiling and relaxed instead of being stressed, a novel Young Eagles experience.

Numbers of youngsters flown was 37, down on previous years but a more enjoyable day was had by all. If would be incorrect to single out individuals as always this was a joint Strut effort but thanks to all who took part. As things were proceeding smoothly in an orderly direction once all the youth had been dealt with it was gratifying to arrange trips for some of the adults.

We had everything from a Rans S6 to the Turbo Lance based at Rochester and by the end of the day which effectively was 3.00 pm we were dismantled, packed up and on our hands and knees not through physical exhaustion but Jaqui had lost her car keys, DOH! Half an hour later they turned up in her back pocket and all was well again and it was over to Rochester's Horizon Café for a well earned cup of tea and sticky bun.

Incidentally we will have the expertise of the Café staff catering for us at the July Bar B Q which traditionally we hold at Rochester and replaces the Golf Club venue due to the golfers trying to reclaim their Clubhouse in the light evenings. How Rude.

May's Meeting Brings Talk of Sun'n' Fun

Due to the late cancellation of our scheduled speaker for May with unforeseen medical problems it was decided to give instead a short diatribe on the previous month's journey to Florida by a number of Strut members.

It has been the practice these last number of years for Messrs Dean and Hope to organize

this annual trip and for the first time the logistics and sights to see were related in a four handed talk. Thanks to Bruce Alexander for providing the Power Point projection and to Julian Bone for the screen on which the projector projected we were able to illustrate the talk.

First up was John to give some of the facts and figures on actually getting Stateside and the hiring of both accommodation and cars and when you think by organizing as a group it can be achieved for as little as £450.00 for the week obviously dependent on air fares which given these stricken times are bound to fluctuate quite a lot. It was a big group this time and therefore accommodation reflected that as did the price.

Having got there Brian then talked about flying in Florida which I know some members have done and the photos of the airports and scenery gave a good impression of the sights to be seen from the air.

Of course for those visiting Florida there are other attractions as good as it is nobody wants to visit Sun n Fun every day. Jaqui related her thoughts on this visit with her son Robin, as they had travelled independently but then teamed up with some of the others to visit the inevitable Disney theme parks, shopping malls and the beaches. As Jaqui said the whole Orlando area is a bit like set a film set and is somewhat surreal but viewed in this way can be a lot of fun.

Finally yours truly wrapped up proceedings with some of the warbirds to be seen including the P40E Warhawk labelled as grand champion at Sun n Fun. Incredible to think that until the mid 1990's it was a wreck in Northern Russia. America is like that and for an enthusiast like me to visit Sun n Fun, Fantasy of Flight at Polk City and Tom Reilly's place at Kissimmee was good a reason to visit Florida as any. Without extending this piece any further all I can say is go! It seems that one or two have been so influenced that already names are being given to John for next year. Enioiv!

It's a good landing if you can still get the doors open.

A Change of Direction

by Graham Hammond

Having read the excellent article in the May/June PFA Magazine on Flying in Scotland, and with the PFA Scottish Rally imminent, it seemed a good opportunity to turn Jabi round and head north for a change.

After a word with a few of the chaps at the Thursday Strut meeting we had a formation of five aircraft keen to make the trip - weather permitting - and at that point the forecast was not good.

The original intention was to re-fuel at Sandtoft, but a quick phone call established that they had no fuel (I have been caught out at Sandtoft before), so Brighton, a bit further north, became the fuel stop.



Brighton from the Air

At around 9.30 am on Friday morning we left our various strips in a strengthening southerly breeze that rapidly became a very strong tail wind, so progress was rapid. Surprisingly, we all arrived at Brighton within a few minutes of each other. Brighton is a nice strip with lots of interesting aircraft in the hangers, they made us very welcome, and after tea/coffee and a comfort break we were off again.

The aim was to cross to the coast at Yearby, just south of Teeside, drop down below their ATZ (1500 ft) to clear them and then track up the coast to Holy Island, cut inland and skirt round the mountains which would enable us to cross the Firth of Forth from Archerfield and on up to Perth (Scone).

By now the tail wind was so strong that my

A closed mouth gathers no feet.

ground speed convinced me I was flying an RV and not a Jabiru (I just hoped that it would ease off before we made the return journey - otherwise I would have been blown backwards and ended up in Aberdeen!).

We arrived at Perth in barely two hours since leaving Brighton having enjoyed some good flying and wonderful scenery, including some great beaches. Perth (Scone) Airport is an ex-training airfield, so there are excellent facilities there with B&B on site and plenty more just down the road.

Unfortunately, come the dawn, the weather on Saturday was not good, with low cloud and periods of rain. An awful lot of hard work had gone into making the rally a success, but in the end you just can't buck the weather.

Nevertheless, we made the best of it, with a visit into the city of Perth. Perth is a really nice place with the most wonderful river Tay running through it. The city and river looked good on a dull day, so it should look magnificent on a sunny one.

The dismal weather eased off long enough for a limited air display to be put on in the afternoon, and I was pleasantly surprised by the amount of locals who braved the conditions and drove to the show. They enjoyed a rousing display by the pipers and were able to cast their eyes over classic cars and motor cycles that had turned out to add to the interest. A good number of aircraft had managed to get in on the Friday, and Perth's resident stock of aircraft was incredible, with the biggest selection in any one airfield that I have ever seen.

On Sunday there was a planned fly out to the Isle of Mull. Everyone I had spoken to had said it was "a must" with stunning scenery, but alas with the conditions now very unsettled, we felt we had to make a break for it and head south.

The weather stayed kind to us as we headed back over the mountains, across the Firth of Forth and down the coast until we cleared



A Wet Perth Airfield



"Stunning scenery!!"



Tower: "Delta 351, you have traffic at 10 o'clock, 6 miles!"

Delta 351: "Give us another hint! We have digital watches!"

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Dates for your Diary

Jun 24	Watch this Space
July 29	BBQ at Rochester
Aug 26	Dinner Meeting at Horizon
Sept	Strut Fly-in
Dec 4	Strut Christmas Dinner

Teeside, and then it closed in with a real vengeance. We were very pleased when we were able to put down at Beverley to a warm welcome and bacon sarnies. Thankfully, it wasn't too long before the worst of the weather had cleared and we were able to resume our journey home.

My thoughts on the weekend?
Great! Really enjoyable. We sampled the wine, the whisky, the beer, the food and the hospitality, and they were all absolutely wonderful. It's a must for everyone - I'm already dreaming of my next trip up there.

So, who were the five you ask.....Well there was:-

*Rosy Richard in his Rans
Grumpy Graham in his Jabiru
Jolly John in his Jodel
Funny Frank in his Piper, and
Bonny Brian in his shorts!*

Varieze Hours Build

Mike Roper sent me a picture of his Varieze which apart from looking very pretty if you like aeroplanes that look all back to front has now accumulated 15 hours (up to the 25th May) in flight time and he and co-partner Steve Brown are delighted as it is well up to and some time exceeding book figures. In their own words they are very chuffed!



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Continental Approvals

Karl Martin, fresh from his triumphant flight to Cyprus in now planning things Iberian and has received approval to fly in Spain and Portugal. If you wish to find out how he arranged this and who to contact Karl would be more than willing to in part this information via flyerkarlmartin@aol.com or via committee members who will be delighted to put you in touch with Karl.

See you at the Golf Club
on Thursday 24th June
for another exciting
Presentation

The probability of
survival is equal to the
angle of arrival.



G-VESE