



August 2004

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Mid Kent Strut* of the



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Mike's Mutterings

Mike Negus -
Editor



Chailey Airshow

**August Meeting –
Come and
Enjoy**

**Dinner
at
Rochester**

Exciting things to read this month

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



The Aviation Bookshop for as long as I can remember has been based on the Holloway Road in North London and is an absolute Mecca for all things as the name implies aviation and I can distinctly recall always managing to divert that way when returning from trips up North. But no more, they have moved to leafy

Tunbridge Wells and my chum Mike went down for a look and came back very enthused as the premises were a vast improvement on their previous address. He also came back with a flyer advertising the 2004 Chailey Airshow. Reading on, Chailey was a wartime advanced landing ground put in about the same time as Lashenden, Deanland and about 5 others. Chailey

Don't forget the August Meeting is dinner and chat night at the Horizon Café, Rochester. Phone Jaqui on 01795 830378 to reserve your place



Parked at Chailey Airshow



*" Turbs from the
Tiger Club
acquitted
themselves well"*



Line up at Chailey



for those few short months prior to D Day was home to three Polish spitfire Squadrons who operated subsequently on and beyond the Normandy campaign from the field.

In 2000 a memorial to the Poles who flew from the Strip and Martin Sargeant in his Harvard became the first aeroplane since 1944 to use the field. The original East/West had been mown in at the exact location courtesy of the enthusiastic land owner to enable this event to happen.

Subsequently the event has grown and even several surviving Spitfires with either direct connections to Chailey or their Squadrons have been traced and include the two seater Mk 9 operated by Caroline Grace, Ray Hanna's OFMC operated Mk 9 and the Mk 5 operated by the Duxford based Historic Aircraft Collection and flown by Charlie Brown all of whom put on spirited displays in the afternoon.

Put in a couple of lovely Hurricanes Rob Davies and Maurice Hammond displaying their Mustangs a Thunderbolt with a quartet of Harvards and you had a fine mix of warbirds representing the heavier end. Not to be outdone the Turbs from the Tiger Club acquitted themselves well and delighted the crowd.

We had flown down in the Luscombe, all of a 25 minute flight from Rochester, to find the strip was very rough but interesting and we joined about forty other light aircraft including my first Luscombe G-BPPO looking very nice and up for sale, a snip at £13500 (he will take an offer) after nine years with its current owner, also down for the show. The weather was good all day despite warnings of thunderstorms due in the afternoon the front seemed to stall long enough for the show to finish and everyone got away OK.

We had the privilege of being able to watch what was going on from airside and it was very interesting sitting in on the display pilots briefing watching the good and great in action. Hard to imagine Ray Hanna is nearly 80 and has been displaying Spitfire MH434 for half of those years. We bought the book and the souvenir mug had a jolly nice day and do you know what, I would love to do it all over again next year.

Brooklands Museum Sunday 31st October 2004

Even though you might have visited this museum in the past, it is well worth a revisit as new exhibits arrive from time to time.

More noticeably the first British production Concorde G-BBDG has arrived at Brooklands and once reassembled will be on display. Transport will be by car to arrive at Brooklands for 11am. Let Mark Balding our events co-coordinator know if you wish to go and if you need or can offer transport.

Mark's contact details
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Future Meetings

Lined up for your delight and delectation is Gordon Mcdill who is coming in September to talk on all things Rans and Rotax so we will be back at the Golf club then and for the foreseeable future.

October will hopefully see the welcome return of Dick Richardson, Manager of Popham Airfield who gave such an interesting talk last time, so one not to be missed.

November brings on Andy Sephton who is the Chief Pilot of the Shuttleworth Trust Collection based at Old Warden near Biggleswade in Bedfordshire. Andy has flown most, if not all the aircraft in the collection and we should have an interesting evening and so on to Christmas, yes I know it comes round quicker every year. Put it in your diaries for 4th December. Details to follow nearer the time (we don't want to be thinking about it too soon!)

Rochester Airport Hanger Dance Saturday 4th September 2004. Always a popular do these events but this will be Rochesters inaugural hanger Dance under RAPLC. Dancing will be to John Miller and his Orchestra (whom I think is a nephew of the late, great Glen Miller) so you can gather the music will be swinging from the 1940's and dress from that era is encouraged to be worn on the night. Starting at 8.00pm tickets are £25 per head including light buffet and there is to be a bar.

Tickets available from the Airport Office tel:01634 869969 or e-mail enquiries@rochesterairport.co.uk for further information.

**The nicer an airplane
looks, the better it
flies**

Little fish taste sweet.

By Brian Hope

As some of you know I, and my Farty Corner colleagues, enjoy nothing better than to travel to fly-ins and Rallies around Europe. During the summer months, every weekend when the weather looks good, and some when it looks positively awful, we'll probably be heading off to some distant event. The actual flying is, after all, what it's all about, isn't it? Well perhaps not, or at least not always anyway. Having been up to the Scottish Rally the previous weekend, and made plans to go to Alderney the following weekend, John Dean and I were wondering what to do in the interim. I suggested a Dutch Homebuilt Fly-in at Drachten but John was otherwise engaged on the Saturday, and Frank for the entire weekend. OK then, let's make it an epic to Deanland near Hailsham, for their 'D' Day BBQ and fly in. I wangled an invite and at 1030 on Sunday, in glorious weather, we headed down to this lovely little Sussex airstrip which is all of 20 minutes away.

Naturally we turned up at their busiest time, with half a dozen other aircraft arriving from a variety of points, but we slotted in and landed without embarrassing ourselves. We discovered that the mown parking area was already full and we had to push back into the long grass, we really should try to make earlier starts! Down outside the main hangar the BBQ was in full flow and a large number of visitors were sitting around enjoying a jazz quartet playing in the picnic area.

Inside the hangar was a small but very interesting display about Deanland's wartime history (it was an Advanced Landing Ground), and all the accoutrements for the splendid lunch that was soon to be served were neatly laid out.

A number of aircraft, including a Tiger, Yak 52 and a Pitts, exploited their aerobatic potential, and I bumped into a number of old and new friends with which to pass the time with the usual sarcastic banter.

About mid afternoon a short but poignant ceremony was held by the local vicar in commemoration of those who had paid the ultimate price all those years ago, and as the afternoon rolled on, visitors drifted away

having enjoyed a splendid, informal little fly-in.

When we got back to FC John and I agreed that this had been a wonderful day, on a par with another fairly local trip to Northrepps near Cromer, where we bought some dressed crab and stopped off at a friend's strip in Essex and ate them with a lovely salad and homemade mayonnaise. You really don't have to travel to the ends of the earth to have a great day's flying you know!

p.s. there have been a few comments recently that the newsletter is a Farty Corner benefit. This is only because too few of our Strut members want to submit a bit of news or a short article. This issue, as with so many lately, has a FC content because, with a couple of days to go before publication, our esteemed editor Mike Negus had to ring me to knock something together to fill a space. Not that I mind in the least of course, but I do think the 'FC benefit' criticism is a bit off when all we're doing is filling the 'apathy' breach.

Strut Fly Outs

Now the idea of the Strut Fly outs at the end of the month, usually the weekend after the Strut Meeting is to suggest somewhere to go if at a loose end and part of the feedback is most of the destinations are unsuitable for types like the Cozi's and Varieze's operated by some of the members, so, Bembridge was a suggestion for the 1st August, it having a hard runway and eating houses nearby. Now here is a little tale of what can happen to these plans.

Amongst the Committee members is one Mike Tooze whom it is well known has operated his Varieze these last 21 years and when these dates and destinations were proposed, championed the aforementioned Bembridge. Following an e-mail from one of our members Anthony van Eldick operator of a very pretty Europa G-FLOR, based down at Pent Farm, at the next Committee meeting a straw poll was taken to see who went to Bembridge. Now Graham Hammond said he was planning to go but he had just got back from holiday and was busy sorting himself out after that, his mate down at



Tony van Eldick's Europa



"short but poignant ceremony"



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

Skill is successfully walking a tightrope over Niagara Falls. Intelligence is not trying

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Dates for your Diary

Aug 26	Dinner Meeting at Horizon
Aug 30	Fly-Out to Popham
Sept 12	Strut Fly-in at Laddingford
Oct 3	Fly out to Abbeville

Headcorn would have gone if Graham had but hadn't. Derek Browning was thinking about it too but with the weather a bit hazy didn't go BUT Mike Tooze WAS going and went to Biggin Hill to fly out with his Varieze, HOWEVER, contrary to Mikes usual call to his ground crew to ready his mount and remove it from the Hanger it being a bit quiet and all didn't and duly arrived to pull it out himself.

On opening the hanger door he found the aeroplane stuck behind of all things a Cessna Citation (these are the circles he moves in don't you know) but not to be put off he decided to open the other door which would have given room. But the door stuck halfway and wouldn't budge. Deciding it was all getting to much he went home which just left Tony van Eldick and his Europa to enjoy a nice little fly on the 1st August. However from all this we have some nice pics of his aeroplane and the possibility of a more organized flyout to Sandown with the promise of a nice lunch in prospect.....watch this space.

More Fly Outs: Popham and Abbeville

We are suggesting Popham as a destination for the 30th August and I know Tony is going to give it a bash but make a note for the 3rd October for an organized fly out and lunch to that ever popular destination Abbeville. Popham for those who have never been, and I can't believe there are many who haven't is a friendly airfield with a pleasant little Café and usually a Bar B Q during the summer months.

Abbeville is always a popular outing and a chance perhaps to enjoy the last cross Channel trip of this flying season in the company of other Strut members.

Those of us unfamiliar with this airfield will find it on the southern chart about 25 miles Southeast of Le Touquet. You may wish to carry the corresponding French chart if for some reason you lose your way or need a diversion airfield off the map! Currently the hard runway is closed and to fly direct to Abbeville 24 hours notice is required for customs.



www.solleysicecreams.co.uk

Lunch will be at 1o'clock French time.

Please contact Mark Balding (contact details on this page of the newsletter) if you intend going as we need to give the restaurant some warning of numbers. Remember to fax details of your aircraft type, registration, pilots name, number of passengers and estimated time of arrival to Abbeville on fax number 0033 322 312438 , 24 hours before arrival.

Strut Members Aircraft: Tony van Eldick's Europa

G-FLOR (named after my first grand son Floris) an Europa Classic with a Rotax 912 - 80 hp and airmaster constant speed propeller. Build started in February 1996 and first flight September 1999. My inspector and mentor David Machin. To date 135 hrs - mainly short local flights. Solo climb 1100 ft. At all up weight of 1370 lbs 700 ft. Normal cruise at 60 % power is 110 knots with a 15 ltr/hr consumption on Mogas (Shell Optimax) Stall clean at 52 kts and full flaps 42 kts. It is a nice and nimble aircraft with excellent directional stability. In the cruise and properly trimmed no need for rudder. The monowheel is not much different in its ground handling from the Jodel Mascaret I used to fly. She is easy on grass and demanding on tarmac and in a grosswind one needs to be vigilant until standstill. The 80 hp engine runs like a sewing machine and I receive many compliments on how quiet the aircraft is.



G-FLOR at Bembridge