



September 2005

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Mid Kent Strut* of the



Contents:

Old Warden	1
St Omer	2
Oshkosh	4
Contacts	4
Diary Dates	4

Mike's Mutterings

Mike Negus -
Editor



Successful Outing to Old Warden

By Jaqui Clark

September Meeting – Come and Enjoy

Talk by Alan Twigg

Exciting things to read this month

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

The Shuttleworth Collection Strut Trip - A Great Day Out for All

After variable weather forecasts all week the day of Saturday 20th August dawned fair, although a little breezy. This was the day chosen for the Mid Kent Strut outing by road or air, to Old Warden Airfield in Bedfordshire, home of the Shuttleworth Collection.

Although 10 visiting aircraft slots had been pre-booked for Strut aircraft, only four aircraft had booked slots

before the event and on the day, due to uncertain unsettled weather only three eventually flew in. However, with others attending by road our party became 14 and we met in the Collection Café about 11:15 where we had a leisurely cup of tea before enjoying a guided tour of the Collection starting at 11:30. Although The Shuttleworth Collection was formed in 1946 it has only been open to the public since the 1960's and now contains several unique examples of motorbikes and cars as well as aircraft. The atmosphere and the smell of the



Listening to the Expert

place is heaven to vintage aeroplane fanatics as all the aircraft are kept in airworthy condition and a feeling of 'aircraft just sleeping' hangs in the air. Some aircraft are undergoing routine maintenance or longer restorations but it is the aim of the Collection to keep everything in working order. The famous De Havilland Comet, Grosvenor House is nearing the end of its refurbishment and should be flying early next year, something to look forward to. The only airworthy Westland Lysander lives here and is a regular at

Look forward to seeing everyone at the Golf Club on the 29th September for the first talk of the new season.



Lined Up for Display



*"Climbing Roses
and Honeysuckle"*



Patriotic Tent at St Omer



Shuttleworth displays and sometimes attends other events as a way of raising funds for the Collection. Up close, this is a BIG aeroplane.

The tour of the hangars finished at 1:30 which coincided with most of the aircraft being 'pushed out' ready for the evening display, hence the need for a quite early start to our tour, otherwise we would have been looking at empty hangars! John Dean had come along to take part in the tour of the aircraft only and was flying home before the evening display, so the group now became 13. Lunch had been booked at the local village pub so I made two trips with my people carrier (nicknamed 'The Jelly Bus' as its soft suspension wobbles its way round the country lanes) in order to get everyone there as quickly as possible. I had originally booked a table for 6 people as I was uncertain how many would be wanting lunch so I think the 'Hare and Hounds' were very accommodating in extending our booking to 13, although we did have to wait a while for our food to be served. If you find yourself in this area I would thoroughly recommend this pub, which is more of a restaurant, for its choice and quality of food. Most of the group then decided to take the very picturesque 30 minute stroll back to the airfield in order to walk off a bit of the lunch. The return journey takes you past thatched cottages and stereotypical English Village houses, strewn with climbing roses and honeysuckles. Most, if not all, of the properties of Old Warden Village are owned by the Shuttleworth Trust and rented to people involved with the Trust or locals. The latter part of the walk takes you through the grounds of Old Warden Park estate where you get sweeping views of the parkland and Mansion House.

The evening flying display began at 5:30pm, the aim of the organisers being that by the end of the flying programme (8pm) and just before sunset any breeze from earlier in the day will have dropped and the conditions will be suitable for the very old aircraft known as 'The Edwardians' to go 'play with the sky'. Today was to be no exception.

The flying programme included the newly refurbished Sopwith Pup and the Sopwith Triplane, with its rotary engine making the most peculiar noise and a climb rate akin to a homesick angel plus the always popular Hurricane (Sea Hurricane to be precise) and Spitfire. On this occasion the Edwardians that flew were the Avro Triplane, the Boxkite and the 1912 Blackburn monoplane - fantastic!

**Model Flying Show at the Hop
Farm at Beltring - 17/18 Sept**

These events are always attended by professional/amateur photographers who post their pictures on the web at the two following websites (www.pprune.org/forums and www.forum.keypublishing.co.uk). Follow the 'historic aircraft' or 'air show' threads.

If you are interested in visiting the Collection, a total of 40 slots for visiting aircraft are normally available on flying display days. The normal display entrance fee is payable per person so I guess you could say the landing fee is free. Visiting pilots will need to read joining instructions and other special conditions carefully as non-radio aircraft regularly operate from the airfield and often air tests of the Collection's aircraft may be happening prior to a display (full details available from the Shuttleworth Collection website www.shuttleworth.org)

Jodel Meeting at St.Omer 3/4th September

For once the signs appeared to be looking favourable for a jolly over the Channel after a fairly grim spell of weather only a couple of weeks before so arising on Saturday it was a tad disappointing to find fairly misty conditions with wispy low cloud but after meeting up with Simon at FC on the nearly appointed hour we persuaded ourselves that things, in the words of the New Labour Anthem, can only get better but on the other hand I was never persuaded by that hijacked optimism.

Light wind of course blowing the wrong way down the runway meant a short hop to Rochester to pick up my partner keeping under the low clouds at about 800' and a tight circuit to land on 02. After taking off the vis looking down sun appeared a little better and by the time we had picked up the M20 we were more comfortable at 1600' but in to a 10kt headwind which against our 80kt cruise tends to impede progress a bit but all trimmed out we were happy enough and settled in for the hour or so it would take us.

Arriving at the Channel coast the haze intensified or so it appeared necessitating a descent to about 1000' to keep in sight of the surface and a concentration on what passed for a horizon and making sure that any shipping appeared at least close to horizontal ensuring we were roughly



Not a Jodel - but it went anyway

straight and level until at last out of the murk appeared Cap Gris Nez pretty much on track. The journey in through Calais zone kept us again quite low to keep what viz there was but about 5 miles out there was a clearance of sort and our destination hove in site and before long we were on the deck and taxiing for fuel.

A couple of Brits were already there having arrived the previous day including a CP 301 from the Cheddar Gorge area and John Cook in his Wassmer from Nayland. A sprinkling of Jodels, as befitted a Jodel fly in but also a few Robins and a Stampe were obviously the vanguard.

Booking in we peeped at the manifest to see a number of familiar names were due in plus a contingent from Rochester albeit for the Sunday. A call to John revealed that he was en route home but Brian was due in a couple of hours so we had a coffee and settled down



St Omer

for a natter with a few of the blokes whilst watching what was going on in the hanger as regards the planned evening festivities which for us was academic as we were only there for the day. As it happens moules was on the menu and with the thought of missing those and the sight in the bar of those lucky blighters staying quaffing ice cold St Omer biere blonde did put the thought in mind to phone the missus to say the aeroplane had gone tec so we could stay the night, but thinking this tempted providence common sense prevailed

but next year, next year. A steady stream of arrivals, a goodly British selection including a Tiger Moth from a strip behind Eastbourne, Chris Lodge in his Taylor, RV6 and RV8 making a bit of a splash carrying some of the British Gliding Team plus some Jodels believe it or not so I suppose some 40 aircraft had arrived. A very nice tuna salad roll was enjoyed for lunch and a pleasant afternoon passed until it was time for us to emplane and head off home with Simon this time at the helm and of course as we were climbing out so we heard Brian calling to join for landing, oh well c'est la vie.

Simon likes to go on top whilst I prefer underneath in a manner of speaking so we climbed steadily through the haze until we got above at 4000' but were unable to raise Paris Info and as Simon likes to talk when he is on top and getting no reply descended again as we tracked to the coast and so we headed out once more this time maintaining about 800' or so but with the benefit this time of a tailwind until landfall bang on track at Folkestone and an uneventful run back to Farthing Corner.

As I said to Simon for entertainment value it ranked fairly low but you can't always have clear blue skies, I think we'll stay over next year so at least I get my moules and biere



Our Co-ordinators son, Robin, now old at 16!!



"Brian was due in a couple of hours"



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
john_dean@tiscali.co.uk

Membership Secretary:

Graham Hammond 01622 891466
g@twelveacrefarm.freeseve.co.uk

Newsletter Editor:

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



Committee Members:

Mark Balding 01959 523825
Brian Hope 01795 662508
Mike Tooze 01634 865516
Derek Browning 01622 736626
Bob Chequer 01634 668276
Stephen Solley 01304 374337
Norman Willouahbv 01634 314739

Dates for your Diary

September 29 Alan Twigg
October 2 Lunch at Abbeville
October 27 Jumping with Jane
November 24 Dick Richardson Talks

Oshkosh 2005 by Mike Roper

Oshkosh was superb & with the exception of the first day when the weather was terribly humid (sauna-room humid) it was wall to wall sunshine. It was my 6th visit and so to some degree I had seen it all before, but having said that there is always something new to marvel at. This was, my partner in our Varieze, Steve's first visit and he was quite gobsmacked and astounded by the sheer scale and variety of vendors and also the quality of the lectures we attended. The reasons we all went this year were many anniversaries. Steve was 50, It was 20 yrs since he first met me (His words), It was 10 years since he broke his first Varieze and lastly, but certainly not least, it was the 30th anniversary of the Varieze being announced to the public!!!



RV10 Under Construction

The showstopper was the arrival of White Knight with Spaceship One slung underneath. The visual impact on the fly-by and climb away was huge. During the lecture/talk Burt gave later regarding the development he said that nothing they had done was 'out of this world' and that all approaches were from an engineering point of view, conservative. In fact, he said it wasn't Rocket Science!!! Naturally, this caused quite a laugh.!



Later in the week, Global Challenger with Steve Fossett



turned up which was another highlight. He gave a talk on his round the world flight and mentioned that because of a tank-vent problem he had lost about 1000 lbs of fuel and the flight was more exciting because of that. He then announced (with Branson) that the next flight would probably be the last with this aircraft and it would be a maximum endurance and distant attempt. The aircraft already holds the distance record even though it lost all that fuel!!!

We met up with Gary Hertzler from whom we had purchased one of his 'Silver Bullet' props. He had already forwarded this to where we were staying. He had made and despatched it without any deposit or advance payment!!! What a super guy!!!

I am having difficulty in remembering everything we saw (probably my age) but I did take a couple of pics of a superb Pietenpol (?) which will please a certain member and which I will send separately. One of the things I didn't see (although I expect they had to hide it/them away) was any of those funny french things with bent wings. There were lots of Warbirds (11 Mustangs alone) which not really my bag but I had to admire the enthusiasm they seemed to generate. One can't imagine how much they take to keep up to scratch and fly!



Vintage at Oshkosh

**Strut Meeting
September 29th
See you there!**