

October 2005

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Mid Kent Strut* of the



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Mike's Mutterings

Mike Negus -
Editor



Switzerland or Bust

And we nearly were! By Mike Negus

October Meeting – Come and Enjoy

Jumping with Jane

Exciting things to read this month

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

Simon had suggested that we might take a run to the Swiss Homebuilt Rally at Raron. Kind of optimistically, and still remembering an article of Julian Bone's from years ago, I have never forgotten it as it seemed so whizzy at the time, and still does, when he went in the Kiss to two destinations in Switzerland and back in 12 hours I thought we could at least go down on Saturday and then back on the Sunday. I was very soon persuaded that although the Luscombe is a slippery little thing it was a tad ambitious. By then Frank and Brian had decided to go as well and we found ourselves duly assembled at Abbeville on the evening of the 18th August planning a number of legs to take us to Raron the following day.

I don't know what it is about me and Abbeville but the number of times that in the past I have been weathered in going out or coming back are not infrequent and so it was that, despite a not too pessimistic forecast for the weekend, we found ourselves patently not going anywhere for the foreseeable. A decision quickly made, in to Abbeville for a walk round, lunch and back to the



Stampe at Dieppe

field. Improving yes we thought so and we decided to give it a crack only to be back on the deck within 20 minutes. Patently the weather was not good going south therefore another decision, Switzerland cancelled, we will go West instead to a field at Bagnole where Simon and the others had been before.

The weather that way was looking better, honestly. Off we went Brian and Frank pulling away but the clag and low cloud giving cause for concern but with the advantage of the chat

**Look forward to seeing everyone at the Golf Club on the 27th October for the talk on Parachuting.
Or Why People Jump out of Perfectly Good Aeroplanes**



Flying the Simulator



"Don't go any lower, Simon said"



Nice Flight Home



between the two front runners getting ever more pessimistic and from what we were seeing, or not, Frank called the break for a divert to Dieppe. By now we are getting down to the deck fortunately following the valley leading to Dieppe and at 300' on the QNH, don't go lower Simon said, why said I, Brian is just going underneath, oh OK. Follow that Jodel! Dieppe runway lights in sight and down.

In the clubhouse 10 minutes later the rain comes down in stair rods and thus ends flying for the day.



Waterspout at Dieppe

Another decision, easy this time, into town and find a hotel and look forward to a convivial night out with ones chums. Pleasant enough hotel on the front coinciding with the 63rd anniversary, practically to the day, of the failed reconnaissance in force by British and Canadian forces testing Hitler's Fortress Europe. A pleasant meal and an early night by the other two, very wise, left Simon and I ensconced in a bar by the harbour watching the world go by and wondering about the propensity of French girls coming in to the bar buying fags when not one French man did. Strange.

Back to the Hotel and in to bed in a bit of a haze and so to sleep fortunately anaesthetized against Simons snoring, poor old Frank not in quite the same state of release as I had to endure the combined nasal harmonies of Brian and Simon and for all I know me as well. We were in a four bed room you see. I empathized with Frank having endured Simon the night before in our fortunately twin bedded room. Nonetheless after a satisfying breakfast and a quick stroll on the beach it was back to Dieppe where preparations were in hand for a Fly In there.

We spent a happy hour having a wander

Trip to Duxford Museum planned for October 30th.

around the exhibits and military re-enactment camp, waterspout spotting as one appeared in the Channel and flying a Mirage Fighter Simulator. Simon and I both had a go at the landing approach the only difference was that he piled it in off the field and I managed to prang all the hangers. Good fun.



Bagnoles in the Misty Morn

Finally off to Bagnole which lived up to expectations after a fairly uneventful flight there and a relatively fly back home on the Sunday. Switzerland is back on the agenda for next year.

Last Months Meeting - Air Scouting and the Popular Flying Association

Chris Shaw stepped in at extremely short notice to give what turned out to be a very enthusiastic and thought provoking talk on the above which was very well received by those members present.

Chris occupies the position on the PFA Youth Education Strut and is also the National Coordinator for the Air Scouts. The talk was given about progress over the past two seasons in bringing together the two organizations to hopefully benefit both by promoting the aims of the PFA whilst giving a practical line of assistance to the Air Scouts both in flying and ground schooling.

It is to be hoped that any Strut wishing to be involved in the scheme would 'supply' hopefully a flying site in the form of an airfield or strip preferably with the ability to house a couple of dozen scouts and leaders under canvas. The scouts would undertake to organize the logistics of the transport to and from site, the campsite and catering, the supervision and itinerary. The participating Strut would supply aircraft and pilots commensurate with the level

of activity planned which could mean all day Saturday and possibly some time Sunday morning dependant on weather and other factors. The camp would be set up on the Friday evening and be struck on Sunday lunchtime.

Objectives for the Scouts would be to gain proficiency badges in aeronautics, navigation and meteorology.

Chris left us with a copy of the activities and training schedule for two of these events held recently at Lower Upham and at Henstridge and it has to be said both demonstrated a great deal of forethought and planning and interest is already being expressed by several Struts for next year so certainly food for thought as historically we as a Strut have been prominent in the Young Eagles programme and this looks a good extension to that.

Alan Bennett-Turner and The Oldest Harvard

Nice to see a bit of recognition in the monthlies for the efforts by Alan Bennett-Turner and MAPS in returning to the air a 1941 Noorduyn built T6 Harvard.G-BKWZ was brought to Rochester by a Hong Kong based owner in 2003 and has been subject of a 4000 hour rebuild back to its original spec.

AB-T Aviation undertook some of the engineering tasks that MAPS were not licensed to carry out and on September 1st it took to the air. It is reputed to be the oldest Harvard on the British register and it is nice to see it based locally particularly with that distinctive growl hopefully will become a familiar sight and sound for some time to come.

Up and Coming

DO NOT MISS Octobers meet when we will be

entertained with Jumping with Jane courtesy of Headcorn Parachute Club so Thursday 28th October is the night.

Dick Richardson is still scheduled for the November Meet on the 24th November believe it or not and will be a fascinating final talk to conclude this year's list of speakers about the plans that were for Popham.

Christmas is here again or so the shops and newspaper ads would have us believe but nonetheless it will be here in 10 weeks as I write this and the plans for this years Dinner are elsewhere so put this date in your diary 17th December 2005.

Duxford 30th October 2005

What about a late run up to Britain's Premier Aircraft Collection if so contact Mark Balding who is trying to gather a number of like minded souls from the Strut to meet up at about 10.30 to 11.00 am there under their own transport either drive or fly . Interested call Mark on 01959 523825

Bonfire and Fireworks Night 29th October 2005 at Farthing Corner

Haven't done it for a few years SO if you fancy come to Farty Corner with your Bar B Q food and please a selection of fireworks , we aren't licensed either so it may help if you wish to drink provide your own alcoholic imbibement, we can do teas and coffees though. Shall we say 6 for 6.30 on the night then and don't forget it's a family affair.




Waiting the weather at Abbeville



"Reputed to be the oldest Harvard in the UK"





Directions for Farthing Corner
 Going towards Dover on the M2, leave at the services exit and turn immediately left and go to the T junction. Turn left and across the M2 bridge. Entrance to Airfield will be on your left after the houses and just as the tree canopy ends.

Going towards London, leave the M2 at the services and follow the road round to keep the filling station on your right and the hotel on your left. Along to the T junction and turn left. Follow road as above

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Dates for your Diary

October 27	Jumping with Jane
October 29	Bonfire BBQ
October 30	Duxford Trip
November 24	Dick Richardson Talks

Dave Machin



It is with very deep regret that we have to report that Dave finally succumbed to the illness he had fought head on with typical stoicism and a refusal to give up until the very end. He passed away on the 4th October and I can report that at the cremation there was a very good turnout from not only Strut members but from PFA headquarters and others who had known Dave within the PFA circle.

I did not know Dave as well as other people but the conversations we did have gave an insight into a man who was passionate about all things mechanical and who could come up with answers or at least suggestions for most problem solving.

Those who knew him will obviously be more aware of his lifetime achievements than I and I will not attempt to chronicle them here but he obviously had a zest for the fast life on land, sea and air and with the completion of the

extension to his house recently pretty much completed his life's goals according to his family.

Brian and I were fortunate to see Dave about a week before he died and we found him in good spirits and still with an optimistic take on life so it came as a shock to us that he deteriorated so quickly. As a Strut we would like to take up a collection to two causes suggested by the family both of whom were a great help through the illness and they are the Blackthorn Trust and The Friends of the Wisdom Hospice so we would appeal for you to be as generous as possible and any donations can be sent we suggest to our treasurer John Dean details on the back of the Newsletter or given at the next Strut Meeting.

These can be collated and sent on in due course. To Janice, Russ and Tina we send our heartfelt commiserations for their loss and for ours Dave is irreplaceable.

MID KENT STRUT

CHRISTMAS PARTY MENU

SATURDAY 17th DECEMBER 2005

1900 for 1930

STARTERS

CREAM OF TOMATO SOUP
WILD BOAR PATE
SMOKED CHICKEN SALAD

MAIN COURSE

STILTON TOPPED RIB EYE STEAK
ROLLED ESCALOPE OF TURKEY
PEPPER AND MOZZARELLA STACK

(All the above served with seasonal vegetables and potatoes)

DESSERTS

TRADITIONAL XMAS PUDDING
DOUBLE CHOCOLATE BAVAROIS
WOODLAND FRUIT CHEESECAKE

£22.50 PER PERSON

or

£27.50 PER PERSON TO INCLUDE ½ BOTTLE HOUSE WINE

INCLUDING PARTY POPPERS, HATS AND CRACKERS

TO BOOK

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WHERE : COBTREE MANOR GOLF CLUB



DON'T FORGET

JUMPING WITH JANE – STRUT MEETING 27TH October 2005

BONFIRE BAR B Q SATURDAY 29TH October 2005

DUXFORD TRIP 30TH October 2005

CHRISTMAS PARTY COBTREE MANOR GOLF CLUB
17TH December 2005

RAFFLE ON MEETING NIGHTS

WE ARE COLLECTING FOR DAVE MACHINS MEMORY SO
PLEASE BE GENEROUS