



January 2006

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Mid Kent Strut* of the

POPULAR
flying
Association

Mike's Mutterings

Mike Negus -
Editor



Happenings at F.C

Winter Work under Way By Brian Hope

Getting back to work in a cold hangar is always difficult after a break such as Christmas but the residents of Farthing Corner are now heads down and preparing their aircraft for the summer ahead.

Malcolm has had more than his share of problems with the C90 engine in his Jodel. Despite having shelled out enough money to buy a good second-hand car, it still evokes the puker factor occasionally when it misfires on climb out. The barrels have been taken off and sent to Richard Isenberg for a once over, and they are about to be refitted in the next week or two. While all this



Luscombe Engine in Pieces

is going on Malcolm has removed his rudder, which is crying out to be recovered.

The saga of the Luscombe valve guides is, thankfully, drawing to a climax now that the third set to arrive

has proved to be the correct over-size. All being well the head specialists will have them fitted and the pots can go back on in short order. The lads are taking the opportunity to bring the Permit renewal forward while the aircraft is out of service.



Malcolm's Jodel

John Dean's Jodel has remained very active, though he will shortly be filling the space in the workshop hangar vacated by either Malcolm or the Luscombe Group, in order to carry out his Permit inspection work. No doubt the other slot will be taken by Frank Rothera's Piper Colt as he does his C of A Annual.

Karl Martin's Vans RV6 is due to go to co-owner Peter Gormon in Ireland for a while, but poor weather has caused Karl to abort two planned trips across the Irish sea thus far. No doubt it will be away just as soon as there is a weather window.

The Sonerai of yours truly is making

Jan Meeting at the Golf Club — 26th January

steady progress, Having fiddled around making cowling bits I decided to junk the lot and buy a new cowling from the States. With a pair of spats and a pair of wingtips, the bill came to a not unreasonable £640, and the quality of the parts is excellent. Overweight was a major problem with this particular Sonerai, it weighing 25% more than the 520lb prototype, and the new cowlings shave another 13lbs off that figure. Most of the 'issues' are now resolved and practically all parts are to hand, so fingers crossed we don't run into any major snags and it will fly later this year.



New Cowling for the Sonerai

Naturally while I'm working on the Sonerai, my poor Jodel sits in the hangar awaiting my attention. Plans to go to the New Year's Dat fly-in at Popham came to nought as Frank, John and I sat in the not forecast mist and murk at the strip until midday. It appears that only our SE corner was affected, as over 80 visitors made it into Popham from all corners.

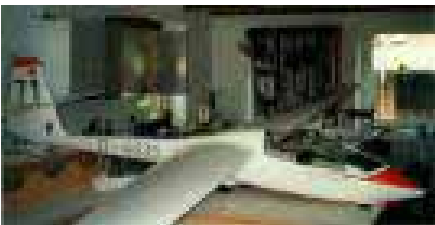
OK, next month I want to know what's happening at your strip or airfield. Drop Mike a line and share your news with the rest of the Strut.

Some Check Ride by Karl Martin

Mike introduced himself as a glider instructor, examiner, and holder of an FAI gold badge with three diamonds. As a bronze badge holder, with 50 hrs logged during 100 flights, I thought he might be more than I need for a check ride, but I would be in safe hands and could learn a lot. I had no inkling that within an hour he would nearly kill me.

Mike suggested conditions were just right for a triangular cross country task. "Fine" I said "This is your back garden. I'll rely on your local knowledge and judgment regarding weather."

Releasing the tow at 500m in strong lift, I circled in a thermal to 1600m before heading south in clear blue skies along a major road. Dolphining as I went, we were at 1500m when we reached the end of the first leg about 13 Kms from Pappa Juliet. Not bad, I thought. Conditions were good, lots of blue thermals. The Puchaz was easy to fly and Mike's infrequent comments



were constructive. A solitary cloud caught my fancy. I climbed under it to 1800m before heading West on the second leg. If I could keep this up, a successful check ride would be on the cards. This is fun.

Now, still in blue skies, thermals,

which had been frequent, were absent. With the stick forward to reach inter-thermal speed of between 100 and 120 kph, we approached the village of Kappa, located about 15 kms from the airfield. Here, Mike suggested I try some conspicuous ploughed peat fields for lift, as by now we were down to 900 metres. I circled, but could not gain altitude. Lift was weak and fragmented. Then, Mike tried, also without success. Thereafter, he was in sole control of the glider.

At an altitude of 700m, I said an out-landing was likely unless we found some strong lift soon. I was looking at a large field with an easy approach at 12 o'clock. Even I could land in it. Mike said he had already chosen a field at 6 o'clock. Relaxed, he tried to work lift over some rocks by a river, still with plenty of altitude to spare.

Then, finding no further lift, he turned downwind for his chosen field. It was short, about 300m, triangular and had mature fir trees up to the threshold. They were 15m tall, removing about 120m from the field's effective length. Gosh, I thought, this is not a good choice. But then Mike had said he had made many out-landings. I was reassured that Mike's qualifications, experience, badges and diamonds would result in a safe landing. How wrong I was!

Mike made a radio call to the aeroclub, confirming an out-landing, as he turned base for what looked like a perfect setup to land. But the field looked even smaller as he turned onto final. At this lower altitude a large part of the field beyond was obscured by the intervening trees. This is looking tricky. It is a short field and trees will force us to be high over the threshold. Some nifty control inputs will be required to land without running into

vegetation at the far end.

Only then did I realize there was a greater dominant issue approaching - an isolated pine tree, 15m tall to the left of final approach, but well inside the wingspan. It was between us and the field, but off to port. Clearly, we would hit it at about 3m from the top with the wings midpoint if no evasive action were taken. I said nothing, thinking it must have been as obvious to Mike as it was to me. He continued his final approach as though the tree was not there. He neither rolled or climbed to avoid the tree. He took no evasive action whatsoever.

The tree hit the port wing, just beyond the airbrake with an inevitability which I found both boring and alarming. What a prat I thought. So this is what a Gold badged instructor does. Still intact, the Puchaz spun slowly through 180 degrees while continuing on a trajectory towards a gravel road. It landed tail first. Then the nose hit the road registering 11g. I blacked out.

2006 A Year of Change?

On behalf of the Committee we hope you all had a joyous Christmas and a peaceful New Year although from a flying point of view there has not been too much to get excited about but hey Spring is just around the corner so hope springs eternal and all that.

January's meeting on the 26th is the Annual General Meeting and the chance for the membership to vote a new committee so we look forward to your participation. Our esteemed Strut co-ordinator Jaqui is looking to stand down but we hope enough pressure

from you will prevent this however we already have a prospective candidate in the wings should this not come to pass but we would be very pleased to hear from any others out there willing to take this on and for that matter any other posts currently held.

To enable the Strut to move on there needs to be a commitment to service the needs and aspirations of us all so have a think about it and let us know on the night if necessary.

Dinner and Dance - December 2005

The annual bash at the Golf Club was well attended and we enjoyed I think the best meal we have experienced in years of going there, I hope you agree and with the music a little more restrained the atmosphere was a little less frenetic. King's Fishers the name of the music turn only stepped in at the last minute so well done to them and well done to the catering staff.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the raffle both supplying prizes and of course buying tickets, winners of which for a change seemed to be more evenly spread around the tables!

November Meeting

Well we had waited 2 years to the month but well worth it to hear Dick Richardson's particularly humorous talk on his association with the Strathallan Collection and in particular the purchase and delivery flight of an ex RCAF Avro Lancaster back to Scotland. From the sourcing of its whereabouts and his almost single handed effort to get the

machine airworthy in Canada to the landing at its new home in Scotland the talk was liberally sprinkled with amusing anecdotes .

In these health and safety ridden times one wonders whether a trip under the same circumstances would be allowed or even contemplated today. You do wonder if we are seeing the passing of these people willing and wanting to take such risks. Notwithstanding the old Lanc made it back after a few wobbles on the way and underwent a course of TLC which smartened her up by which time the Strathallen Collection was in decline and the machine was bought by Charles Church who determined to spend a considerable amount of money to bring her back to airworthy status. What a prospect! The fuselage having been contracted to British Aerospace for refurbishment suffered disastrous damage after the collapse of the hanger it was in and following a long period of litigation and the unfortunate death of Charles Church killed when the Spitfire he was flying crashed the remains of the Lancaster were sold to the redoubtable Kermit Weeks and now resides in several containers at his facility at Polk City , Florida. So ended Dicks career with Strathallen and the Lancaster and his move to Popham .

Well illustrated with slides taken at the time it gave a fascinating insight to aircraft preservation in its early years thankfully leaving the benefits we currently enjoy.

Further Update on Projects

Due to the proverbial Freudian slip whilst mention was made the text

failed to find its way in regarding Graham Hammonds latest project details of which are paraphrased below.

So, what made me decide to build a Jabiru J400?



Well, I first saw the J400 at Sun 'n' Fun in 2003 and was to say the least very impressed with it but at that time the thought of building another aircraft could not have been further from my mind. Then , during the dark Winter days of 2004/5 I decided to start looking round at what was available for me to build - but more to the point - what I would enjoy building and flying.

On the building side there is a huge selection of aircraft to choose from, but on the flying side, for me, there isn't. It was while flying a Europa on a sunny but not particularly warm day in May I was reminded that low-wing aircraft were not for me. I have spent most of my working life in glass houses with the sun cooking me day after day. Sitting inside that Europa, though a smashing aircraft, convinced me that it had to be another high winged aircraft - I just couldn't have the sun constantly on my head.

That decision reduced the options by

about 75%. In June I arranged a test flight of the J400 with Kevin Pearce of ST Aviation. It flew as good as it looked. I was instantly at home with it. I found it lively and responsive, there was absolutely tons of room and it was a Jabiru. What more could I ask for?

The kit started to arrive a few weeks ago (this was written on the 4th November 2005.Ed) so I am really only just getting in to it. From what I have seen so far it looks pretty good, though I am expecting to get cross, disgruntled, frustrated and fed-up as well as being happy, content, jubilant, satisfied and pleased - in fact all the usual feelings you get when building an aircraft. Only time will tell !!!

One Second in the Life of a Racer by Tom Fey

Ever wondered what happens in a high performance racing engine then read on courtesy of this piece forwarded by Gary Smith ...

The Unlimited's go flashing through the racecourse, engines howling, air shearing, heat waves streaming. Four hundred and eighty miles an hour is 8 miles a minute and the elite racers take about 70 seconds to cover the 9.1 mile Reno course.

If you could take a souped up P-51 racer flying the circuit at Reno, slow time down and examine just one second, what would you find? In that one second the V-12 Rolls - Royce Merlin engine would have gone through 60 revolutions, with each of the 48 valves slamming open and closed 30 times. The twenty four spark plugs have fired 720 times. each piston has travelled a total of 60 feet in linear distance at an average speed of 41 miles per hour, with the direction of movement

reversing 180 degrees after every 6 inches. Three hundred and sixty power pulses have been transmitted to the crankshaft making 360 sonic booms as the exhaust gas is expelled from the cylinder with a velocity exceeding the speed of sound. The water pump impeller has spun 90 revolutions, sending 4 gallons of coolant surging through the engine and radiators. The oil pumps have forced 47 fluid ounces, roughly one-third gallon of oil through the engine, oil cooler and the oil tank , scavenging heat and lubricating the flailing machinery. The supercharger rotor has completed 348 revolutions, its rim spinning at Mach 1 forcing 4.2pounds or 55ft of ambient air into the combustion chambers under 3 atmospheres of boost pressure. Around 9 fluid ounces of high octane aviation fuel, 7843 BTU's worth of energy has been injected in to the carburetor along with 5.3 fluid ounces of methanol/water anti detonant injection fluid.

Perhaps 1/8 fluid ounce of engine oil has been either combusted or blown overboard via the crankcase breather tube. Over 1.65 million foot pounds of work have been done, the equivalent of lifting a station wagon to the top of the Statue of Liberty. In that one second the hard running Merlin has turned the propeller through 25 complete revolutions, with each of the blade tips having arced through a distance of 884 feet at a rotational velocity of 0.8 Mach. Fifteen fluid ounces of spray bar water has been atomized and spread across the face of the radiator to accelerate the transfer of waste heat from the cooling system to the atmosphere. In that one second the aircraft itself has traveled 704 feet close to 1/8 mile or roughly 1.5% of a single

lap. The pilots heart has taken 1.5 beats pumping 5.4 fluid ounces of blood through his body at a peak pressure of 4.7 inches of mercury over ambient pressure.

Our pilot happened to inspire during our measured second inhaling approximately 30 cubic inches (0.5 litres) of oxygen from the on board system and 2.4 million, yes million, new red blood cells have been formed in the pilots bone marrow.

In just one second an amazing sequence of events have taken place beneath those polished cowlings and visored helmets. It's the worlds fastest motor sport. Phew.....

A Flight of Fancy

Some more musings from Graham Hammond...

There are many strange and funny things that happen on some of the flying rallies that we go to but one back last summer beat them all. It was to be a hanger

bash with late entertainment up to 9.00pm.

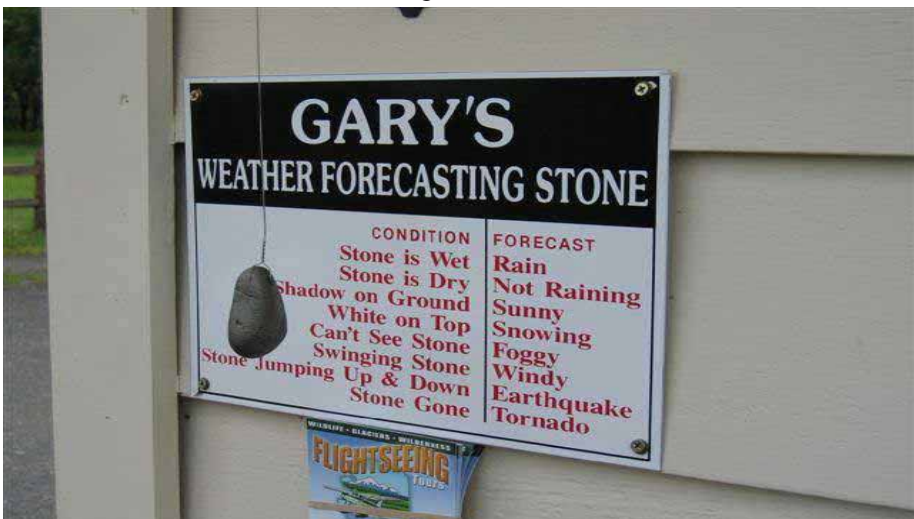
In the evening there was to be a dance for 'Recycled Teenagers' and as most members fell in to this bracket, including us, we went along.

The programme for the evening is set out below with a list of the dances - I think you may find it interesting.

Senile Saunter
Wrinkly Swing
Rumba Rheumatica
Quivering Quickstep
Waltz Arthritica
Fandango Tango
Stammer Twostep
Zimmer Blues

Tower:- Delta 123, you have traffic at three miles, 10 o'clock

Delta 123:- Give us another clue, we have digital watches.



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Faltering Foxtrot
 Jaundice Jive
 Mistaken Tango
 Bungling Blues
 Tripping Tango
 And of course The Forgotten
 Waltz - I think

During the resuscitation break the singer, Dee Mentia, sang Forgotten Dreams with the backing group The Al Zheimer Quartet.

We were able to leave electric scooters on the side of the taxiway but zimmer frames were not allowed in the hanger or the dance floor.

A wonderful time was had by all.

Snippets

We may have a new AME on the block - details possibly next month!

Pilots believe in clean living. They never drink whisky from a dirty glass.

Dates for your Diary

January 26	AGM with Extras
February 23	Builders Evening
March 30	Exotic Trips

MID - KENT STRUT

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDING 31 DEC 2005

2004	INCOME	2005
£		£
0.00	BBQ	79.00
100.00	Raffle at Christmas Dinner	99.97
893.00	Christmas Dinner	340.00
0.00	Fly-In	62.60
80.00	Donation	20.00
0.00	Meeting Raffles	41.00
1297.00	Subscriptions	1106.00
2370.00	Total	1748.57
	 EXPENDITURE	
200.00	Meetings	180.00
1231.67	Newsletter	1091.69
0.00	Printer Purchase	262.09
0.00	BBQ	45.52
20.00	Quiz	6.90
42.00	Raffle at Christmas Dinner	22.97
830.00	Christmas Dinner	339.50
50.00	Fly-In	17.27
5.00	Miscellaneous	85.87
130.00	GAAC	110.00
-445.16	Excess of Income over Expenditure	-413.24
£2,063.51		£1,748.57
		£1,748.57

MID - KENT STRUT

BALANCE SHEET FOR YEAR ENDING 31 DEC 2005

	2005
	£
Balance in Lloyds Bank at 1/1/05	1954.44
Credit from Profit & Loss Account	-413.24
Balance at 31/12/05 in Lloyds Bank	<u>1541.20</u>