



July 2007

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Mid Kent Strut* of the

POPULAR
flying
Association

Mike's Mutterings

Mike Negus -
Editor



Distinguished Visitor Polly Vacher Makes It !!!!

I suppose there is always more than one way to skin the proverbial cat! As related in the last two newsletters Polly Vacher has been on her campaign to raise money for flying for the disabled and was attempting to fly in to all of the 206 airfields listed in the UK Jeppesen VFR Manual. Reference was made about flying in to the rather short strip at Farthing Corner being problematical in her Piper Dakota but she was determined to fly in if not in her own aeroplane then something else more suitable. A telephone call from her organizer to John Dean resolved the situation and the plan was laid.

Polly was due in to Rochester and arrangements were made to fly her in one



July Meeting - 26th July

Evening BBQ at Rochester Airport.

Fly In (MUST PPR with Rochester) or Drive In - See inside for details

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of the resident Jodels which inhabit the strip like a rash. Step forward the popular editor of our sister publication Popular Flying, one Brian Hope accompanied by his wing man John Dean who duly rendezvoused with our honoured guest at Rochester where she emplaned in Brians machine, which no doubt had been recently vacuumed and probably had a little dangly air freshener hung discretely somewhere, the short flight was made and I understand very complimentary remarks were made on Brians airmanship, to be expected no less after the length of his tenure at the strip.

On arrival Polly was treated to Farthing Corner hospitality in the form of a cup of tea and a sticky bun and the opportunity to have a natter with a couple of the chaps and a photo taken by Paddy to record the event when a complimentary Strut Newsletter was passed to her. By common consent the lady herself was found to be charm personified and Brian was invited to sign her logbook recording that she had indeed flown in to Farthing Corner and she was duly returned safe and sound to Rochester to continue on this most worthy adventure to support flying for the disabled.

LATEST NEWS UPDATE- 8th July

Polly is heading offshore early next week bound for the Isle of Wight and the Channel Islands and if you wondered what a typical "day in the life" feels like, check out Polly's [diary](#) entry for 4th July on www.worldwings.org Bookmark Polly's diary for regular updates. Her campaign is due to complete on the 31st July 2007 so we wish her all the best on her continuing journey.

Report on June's Meeting

For one brief moment in this so far dismal summer the weather took a turn for the better to enable several Strut Members to take advantage of Steve Solleys hospitality and fly in whilst the rest of us that made the run to Ripple came by road. Steve had laid on a Bar-B-Q whilst we had a chat with the other guests and members and took in the ambience of what is a rather delightful corner of this wonderful county of ours laying as it does just to the South of Deal in one of those folds of land which is not quite a valley.

As many of us know Steve manufactures, if that is the correct nomenclature for the production of a rather fine ice cream, to be found in many outlets in Kent and beyond. Supplied by milk from his neighbour's dairy farm this can be classed as a truly local product and a number of us took the opportunity to avail ourselves of some of the shop stock before departure. As his business has evolved, which in itself a fascinating story with the location of a number items of equipment used for the production procured from Europe and amazingly one machine nearly 100 years old shows just how long the modern ice cream has been manufactured, the business now boasts a rather fine visitor centre and café.

Pilot: "How far behind traffic are we?"

ATC: "Three miles."

Pilot: "That doesn't look like three miles to us!"

ATC: "You're a mile and a half from him, he's a mile and a half from you ... that's three miles."



Ripple Arrivals by Air

It's always rather interesting to hear how other people make their way in the world which is so diametrically opposite from ones own and ice cream manufacturer is certainly one of those, at least in my opinion.

Steve, apart from being on the committee and a staunch and enthusiastic member of the Strut, is always a generous benefactor at some of our other events, which leads me nicely on to next months Bar-B-Q at Rochester when Steve inevitably hands round tubs of his excellent product which my

family buy at Gore Farm Shop in Rainham and if you think that is a bit of a plug it is.

On behalf of the Members and their guests thanks to you and your good lady for your hospitality, most enjoyable .

Never fly in the same
cockpit with someone
braver than you.



Ripple Departure

Rochester Airport Bar-B-Q Thursday 26th July 2007

July meeting is at Rochester airport and will kick off at about 18.30 and is always well attended and as before gives a chance for our members to bring along friends and relatives for this annual get together.

In the past we have been blessed with fine weather, only once do I recall the event suffering a bit of precipitation but with the way things have gone at least to the time of writing (8th July) its fingers, toes and anything else crossed that it is going to be all right on the night.

The catering will be done by the resident staff of the airport café you will be pleased to know and from past experience put up a pretty good show and the price per head will run out at a very reasonable £5 which is held from last year so in these evolving inflationary times that's not bad. Alcohol will not be available but if you wish to bring your own for personal consumption feel perfectly free. Anyway look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on the night.



BBQ 2005

Committee Meeting 4th July 2007

Your committee met as usual on the first Wednesday of the month following the meeting to discuss upcoming issues. A more livelier meeting than the usual livelier meetings produced a packed programme for the ensuing months which is published below. Emphasis is given on what past experience tells us you tend to enjoy and we have therefore tried to mix in some interesting talks together with a bit of practical and informative evenings and we believe there is an eclectic mix of things to look forward to which will interest most.

The talks will vary from the historical to the practical and we are hoping to engage a couple of well known names to add further interest and perhaps encourage a wider audience from PAFRA and others. So, here is the provisional list:

July: Bar-B-Q as detailed above at Rochester Airport.

August: Informal sit down meal at Rochester Airport Café - further details in next months issue again open to family and guests

September: Talk - (speakers to be announced) on 'Trips We Have Done' recounting no doubt the mix of fortunes from members trips abroad. (How about how we got stuck in Northern France for nearly a week with the weather for one)

22/23rd September: Joint Fly - In at Laddingford with the Europa Club. This is designed to allow members to look at and maybe experience others aircraft particularly as we have a number of interesting new types to the Strut fleet so if you are thinking of building an example you can discuss your thoughts with someone who has and potentially to have a go in one. Not forgetting the non - flying members the same courtesy will

be extended for the experience to also get a bit of hands on.

A fly out to Abbeville is also planned for September date to be announced, always a well attended trip for the end of season.

October: Tony Richards - C.F.I. Tiger Club at Headcorn on Aerobatics.

November: Ken Craigie - Updating us from PFA Headquarters on all things engineering. A chance for builder members to talk to the man first hand. These are always popular visits which can help unblock some situations, some controversial but always informative.

December: Christmas Dinner of which more details soon. I don't want you to get depressed now that the nights are drawing in!

January: AGM - usually a fairly swift affair to be followed by a Members Build Night giving a chance for inspiration and a bit of showing off of your latest project.

February: Talk by Des Page - WW2 glider pilot who will give his reminiscences of dropping behind enemy line twice, once at Arnhem from where he escaped capture and also a veteran of the Rhine crossing. A chance to hear first hand these exciting tales.

March: An Exciting Speaker with whom we are negotiating but watch this space!

April: Where to Go - members will be giving us the benefit of their experience on ideas of destinations for the new season. Blimey, didn't time pass quickly, no sooner are we in one season than we ready to discuss the next.

Saturday 26th April 2008 We are holding a permit renewal guide day at which one of our inspectors will hold a workshop on the things to look out for to ensure a trouble free issue of your document. There will also be work-

shops held by members experienced in the field of fabric recovering, sheet metalwork and composite so if any of these are of interest you have the date the venue will be Farthing Corner

Other items will be added as time passes, we are trying to set up a couple of trips to as yet to be confirmed locations but I think you will agree we have a pretty interesting rest of the year and beyond but as always if you have any ideas or criticisms we would like to have them as we try and operate on the members behalf an not to our own ends.

Regional Rallies

Disappointingly as with a number of events this year the Old Warden Rally and PFA Party due to be held on the 1st of July and the Southwest Regional Rally at Dunkeswell on the same weekend were both washed out, Old Warden was cancelled ahead of the weekend which turned out in every way to be a shocker and Dunkeswell was just plain washed out. The south west did get one visiting aeroplane in the shape of Brian Hope's Jodel who was determined to support the event but as was related at the committee meeting it just didn't happen and for all the souls down there that work so hard to put on what would undoubtedly been one of the best of the year it was obviously heartbreaking and to all organizers that have been so hit our deep commiserations. As a result the Devon Strut have already cancelled the Farway Common fly-in with the field unserviceable, however we have the rest of the summer to look forward to.....

The Real Aeroplane Club & Sherburn Aero Club will be hosting a Regional PFA

Rally at Sherburn Airfield (EGCJ) on the 25th & 26th August 2007. It is expected weather permitting there will be around 250 visiting aircraft over the two day event. The airfield will be open for arrivals and departures from 0830 to 1900 local both days.

Certificates will be awarded for:-

Best plans built
 Best kit built
 Best vintage / classic (factory built)
 Best classic home built

A variety of flying related stalls, a hanger for projects, fast food, soft drinks, a beer tent, and an evening Bar B Q will be laid on. For further info please log on to www.sherburnaeroclub.com or www.realaero.com Amongst the fleet operated by The Real Aeroplane Club are these classics so if you go you can be sure of a 'Real' treat particularly if these wonderful machines are flying.

Duxford Flying Legends July 7/8th

Whilst I know the warbird fraternity do not sit with ease with some members we

all work with one aim and that is to go flying whether in an Evans VP1 or a Spitfire and along the way there are always crossovers between the two. Whilst Flying Legends is acknowledged to be Europe's premier event for the amazing variety of warbirds in amongst the heavy metal sits the more genteel and gentlemanly aerial carriages. Now I have to admit I love all this stuff and Legends is one airshow, usually these days the only airshow I attend to see what surprises are in store and as always there were but from different less publicized routes. This year the highlight was to be the arrival of the P38 Lightning recovered in the 90's from under the Greenland ice cap from where it had force landed along with 5 others and 2 B 17's during a wartime delivery flight but wouldn't you know on this epic flight to the UK some 65 years later it broke down and is having an engine change at this time where.... In Reykjavik so once again its journey has been interrupted although hopefully it will be weeks rather than years. Another star which was there is a survi-



vor from the Pearl Harbour raid in the shape of a P 40 Tomahawk which was actually on charge at that time in 1941 but hangered due to a forced landing some days before but nonetheless a very rare bird indeed . One of the new build Focke Wulf 190 which is at Duxford undergoing some test flying was on display which is being sold as a kit form although it will set you back considerably more than a Rans.

But amongst all these were gems such as the Mew Gull and the Arrow Active together with a Bucker Jungmann wich all

gave spirited displays. A Norwegian group flew in with an immaculate DC 3 which complimented the two Junkers 52's which displayed their low speed and highly maneuverable flight envelope. It was also good to see the Shuttleworths Gladiator back in a pre-war colour scheme which suits the type so well and when the Fighter Collections own example gets airworthy in the not too distant the sight of a pair will be something to relish.

I look forward to next year with anticipation



Gary Smith and his recently completed RV at the PFA Rally, Popham.

When flying your RV remember to take your driving license. When the CAA man asks for your documents simply show him your car license :- It "qualifies the holder to drive cars, motorbikes, vehicles under 7.5 tons, road rollersand VANS. Perhaps that's why the RV's are so popular, you don't even need an NPPL.

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I walked into a Mickey D's with a buy-one-get-one-free coupon for a sandwich. I handed it to the girl and she looked over at a little Chalkboard that said "buy one-get one free." "They're already buy-one-get-one-free", she said, "so I guess they're both free" She handed me my free Sandwiches and I walked out the door.

They Walk Among Us and Many Work in Retail.



Persistent rainy weather followed by a forced landing in a boggy field demands new lifesaving measures

Dates for your Diary

Jul 26	BBQ at Rochester
Aug 30	Dinner at Rochester
Sept 27	Trips we have done