



February 2010

# SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Mid Kent*



Light Aircraft Association

## Nigel's Natterings

### BEAR ATTACK!!

During a private "fly-in" fishing excursion in the Alaskan wilderness, the chartered pilot and fishermen left a cooler and bait in the plane. And a bear smelled it. This is what he did to the plane. The pilot used his radio and had another pilot bring him 2 new tyres, 3 cases of duct tape and a supply of sheet plastic. He patched the plane together and reportedly flew it home. Don't seem to have pictures in a different location!

The pictures apparently come from [ArmyParatrooper.org](http://ArmyParatrooper.org). Not just the fabric ripped but the tubing is well and truly



*Ripped Tyres and bent Tailplane Leading Edge*

**February Meeting**

25th February 2010

Ballooning with Glen Everett



*Rightside*



*Flyable!! Just needs the registration number! Now where is the contrasting duct tape?*

rearranged. Best not to offer up similar to the LAA as a repair schedule. Some members of the committee know how the bear felt - just put a packet of chocolate biscuits in front of them.

### **Cold Weather**

It's not been very nice weather for flying with the snow and seemingly endless dull cold days but hopefully by the time you read this the daylight will be noticeably drawing out. However, despite the snow, some managed to fly and we have picture evidence!

Some of our local airfields remained surprising useable during the heavy rain before Christmas, perhaps due to the strong winds and higher than normal temperatures, Laddingford and Heathfield being examples where the latter became the base for my biennial and



*Leftside*



*Nearly Fixed*

*My first job was working in an Orange Juice factory.....  
but I got canned. I couldn't concentrate.*

first flight in a Rans S6 with Richard Wariner who qualified as a CRI last year. The Europa has been to Challock for a wing respray along with Steven Harman's.

If you don't want to read about the Europa every issue and which free landing voucher we used, please send your excellent prose to [nigel.read@tesco.net](mailto:nigel.read@tesco.net)

### Flying Magazines

What do you do with old mags? They don't want them in doctors' surgeries any more since the swine flu panic. On a trip to Gloucester I noticed a car parked with the boot open and a sign inviting passers by to help themselves to old mags. I'm guilty of hoarding them too and have orders to sort out what I want to keep. As I have virtually every Flyer since it started and the last couple of years of Pilot, does anyone want copies of that elusive flight test?

### New Listening Squawk

0011 Solent/Bournemouth 120.225 MHz/119.475 MHz respectively

### New VRP's from 11<sup>th</sup> March

Just outside London City:-  
Banbury Reservoir BIG R354°/D16.7 LAM R254°/D7.5  
M11 Junction 4 BIG R002°/D15.8 LAM R235°/D5.3  
And inside:-  
Becton BIG R009°/D11.8 LAM R204°/D7.8

My best job was a Musician,  
but eventually I found I  
wasn't noteworthy

Thames Barrier BIG R002°/D10.0 LAM R207°/D9.9  
Three Mills BIG R356°/D11.7 LAM R219°/D9.1

### Narco AT150 A/D

Just found AD No.: 2009-0200 issued last September concerning erroneous mode C altitude replies. This AD was posted on 31 July 2009 as PAD 09-095 for consultation until 28 August 2009. No comments were received during the consultation period. Perhaps no one knew about it. Ours, which was only mode A, was replaced with mode S.

### UAVs over Kent

Tipped off by a teletext news page, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan 'The Guardian' newspaper carried an article on UAV's being developed for Kent Police.

"Police in the UK are planning to use unmanned spy drones, controversially deployed in Afghanistan, for the "routine" monitoring of antisocial motorists, -protesters, agricultural thieves and fly-tippers, in a significant expansion of covert state surveillance.

The arms manufacturer BAE Systems, which produces a range of unmanned aerial vehicles for war zones, is adapting the military-style planes for a consortium of government agencies led by Kent police. Documents from the South Coast Partnership, a Home Office-backed project in which Kent police and others are developing a national drone plan with BAE, have been obtained by the Guardian under the Freedom of Information Act.

They reveal the partnership intends to begin using the drones in time for the 2012 Olympics. They also indicate that police claims that the technology will be used for maritime surveillance fall well short of their intended use - which could span a range of police activity - and that officers have talked about selling the surveillance data to private companies. A prototype drone equipped with high-powered cameras and sensors is set to take to the skies for test flights later this year.

The Civil Aviation Authority, which regulates UK airspace, has been told by BAE and Kent police that civilian UAVs would "greatly extend" the government's surveillance capacity and "revolutionise policing". The CAA is currently reluctant to license UAVs in normal airspace because of the risk of collisions with other aircraft, but adequate "sense and avoid" systems for drones are only a few years away."

"There are two models of BAE drone under consideration, neither of which has been licensed to fly in non-segregated airspace by the CAA. The Herti (High Endurance Rapid Technology Insertion) is a five-metre long aircraft that the Ministry of Defence deployed in Afghanistan for tests in 2007 and 2009.

After many years of trying to  
find steady work,  
I finally got a job as  
a Historian  
- until I realized there was  
no future in it.

CAA officials are sceptical that any Herti-type drone manufacturer can develop the technology to make them air-worthy for the UK before 2015 at the earliest. However the South Coast Partnership has set its sights on another BAE prototype drone, the GA22 airship, developed by Lindstrand Technologies which would be subject to different regulations. BAE and Kent police believe the 22-metre long airship could be certified for civilian use by 2012." More on the Guardian web site. The Times had a similar article last April - it seems to have resurfaced with the police becoming impatient with progress at the CAA.



*Glen Everett flying the MW in the snow near Leeds castle during January.*

## AGM 28<sup>th</sup> January 2010

The meeting was attended by around 20 members. Gary Smith talked briefly about last year's meetings and flyouts and thanked the committee for their work. Mike Negus on behalf of the committee thanked Gary for his organisational efforts as strut coordinator, chairman and the last minute reorganising of the Christmas dinner.

Derek Browning and John Knight have stood down from the committee being replaced by (Big) Martin Payne and Glen Everett who has also offered to take over the strut website from John Dean leaving him with treasurer and laying out of the newsletter.

John Dean discussed the treasurer's report explaining the equipment purchases were the projector (having borrowed Kelvin Carr's personal one for some time), a new gas ring for BBQs and new metal cutlery for same. We ended the year with a small profit; details were included with the last newsletter.

On the subject of the newsletter, after many years of editing it, Mike has finally managed to escape from that duty and in the absence of any willing volunteers Nigel Read will be taking over in addition to providing chocolate biscuits at the committee meetings. Thanks to Mike for doing this for so long but it's not 'so long' to Mike as he stays on the committee.

Brian Hope raised the question of should the strut make a donation to the Educational Trust or the Armstrong-Isacs Foundation which in the current financial climate is unable to

rely on interest to provide bursaries to young LAA members to obtain a NPPL. Finishing up, Gary ran a film show of flying Harvards.



## Flying in the Snow Committee Notes

With the demise of the North Kent Strut a name change dropping the Mid from our name was discussed as better reflecting the area covered by our membership, which in some cases extends beyond Kent.

There was further discussion on charitable donations with perhaps some money collected at specific events going to LAA related initiatives. Please contact a committee member if you have any thoughts on this.

## Strut outings this year

To allow you to book your holidays a number of trips likely this year have been suggested and if anyone is interested in joining in or would like some help if this is new to you please contact Gary, Brian or John on the committee:-  
May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>

Microflight Trade Fair - Popham	
July 3 <sup>rd</sup> - 4 <sup>th</sup>	Amiens
July 14 <sup>th</sup> - 18 <sup>th</sup>	RSA Rally
Aug 13 <sup>th</sup> - 15 <sup>th</sup>	Schaffen Diest
Sept 3 <sup>rd</sup> - 5th	LAA Rally
Sept 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup>	St Omer

Trip to Germany similar to last years  
Peenemunde TBA

26<sup>th</sup> Aug - Treasure Hunt  
Oct TBA - Young Aviators

## PAFRA News

Next meeting is the Wine and Wisdom  
Fish and Chips supper in Rochester Can-  
teen on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> February.  
Tables / teams need to be booked.

## Royal Aeronautical Society Medway Branch

Next talks, BAE canteen 19.00  
17<sup>th</sup> Feb The Airbus A380  
17<sup>th</sup> Mar Fast Jet Testing at Boscombe  
Down 1958-1975

## GASCo

28<sup>th</sup> Apr - Seminar to include a trip to  
Farnborough AAIB - limited places and  
probably all booked now but there are  
two similar meetings planned at a cost of  
£25 each person to include food. You  
need to contact the GasCo office on  
01634 200203 on a Monday, Wednesday or  
Thursday.

## Other Events

Aero Expo 25<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> June  
[www.expo.aero/london](http://www.expo.aero/london) where you can  
book a slot and check on exhibitors which  
includes the LAA.

## Next Strut meetings

25<sup>th</sup> Feb - Ballooning - Glen Everett  
25<sup>th</sup> Mar - AOPA - Martin Robinson  
29th Apr - TBA  
27th Apr - TBA  
24<sup>th</sup> June - Ripple fly/drive in -BBQ  
29<sup>th</sup> July - BBQ at Farthing Corner

## Privatised SAR

A 25 year contract, starting in 2012 to  
provide search and rescue will phase  
in Black and Orange liveried Sikorsky  
S-92As which are 30% faster than the  
40 year old Sea Kings but the number  
of helicopters will be reduced from 38  
to perhaps 24, averaging two per base.  
Crews will be mainly civilian with over  
70% reduction in military crew to 66.  
The consortium, Soteria includes Royal  
Bank of Scotland (didn't they need  
rescuing by us recently?). It has been  
stated there will be no intension to  
charge. They have undertaken to ar-  
rive within one hour, so it's nice to  
know you will only have drowned  
about 30 minutes earlier. Immersion  
suits to go with ELT's and PLB's?

## Free Landings

Thinking back to free landings, I was  
looking forward to LeTouquet and  
Shoreham in January but even if the  
wing repainting hadn't over run the  
weather would have clobbered those.

Last year we took advantage of  
Gloucester in May and September but  
just as useful was the bus service  
which runs every 20 minutes between  
Gloucester and Cheltenham the stop  
being only a 10 minute walk after  
turning left out of the gate. Even bet-  
ter with a bus pass (which I don't have  
yet). Only 4 hours free parking was  
included (so don't waste too much  
time taxiing). This was time enough  
for Gloucester Cathedral on one trip  
and Cheltenham's museum and art



*Gloucester Cathedral*

gallery one the other. The docks I seem to remember from some time ago are also worth a visit as is Gustav Holst's



home in Cheltenham. What makes the difference between visiting a nice but a little boring out of the way airfield and one either close enough to local attractions or with good transport is location.

**A banker is someone who lends you his umbrella when the sun is shining but wants it back as soon as it starts to rain.**

Taxis are best shared to keep costs down or how far are you prepared to walk?

My group partner and I have walked to Salisbury and back from Old Sarum - there is a pleasant path that leads down from the old hill fort past the river Avon on a more direct route along the main road although it is uphill coming back it only takes an hour. Sibson is also in walking distance of Nene Valley railway museum. Just do a bit of research on the internet and print off a map.

### Increased Terrorist Threat



Due to the raised level of terrorist threat, Headcorn Aerodrome has introduced runway camouflage, as illustrated above.

Resident terrorists are requested to contact Air Traffic for a briefing before flying.

Visiting terrorists are requested to obtain PPR by telephone before departure.

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**Dates for your Diary**

Feb 25 Talk on Ballooning  
Mar 25 Martin Robinson, AOPA  
Apl 29 TBA