



April 2010

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Kent*



Light Aircraft Association

Learning to build an Aeroplane

Last Month I told you about me learning to fly and mentioned building an aeroplane. After much deliberation and thousands of questions to members of our Strut, I finally decided I would buy a Sportcruiser kit, as I wanted to fly more than I wanted to build. Only to find out from Graham Smith that the kits were drying up and I might not get one.

By Martin Payne



Nigel Read—Editor

We persevered and finally one arrived. On 24th October my kit finally arrived at Maypole, unfortunately, I was still in France learning to fly or more accurately, waiting for the weather to perk up for my Skills test.



March Meeting

Thursday 29th April 2010

The return of the ever popular - QUIZ NIGHT



Engine Installed

These particular kits come about as complete as possible and still be a kit....I think there are probably flying aircraft that need more doing to them, the standard answer to this question is it needs about 500 hours of building, but I think that must include all the procrastination time and research and trawling through endless internet pages, I feel I've spent about 28 man days so far and I'm nearly there, about another 7 man days left (56 hours).

When it arrives, the two top fuselage skins and the skins on the underside of the wings are only held on by temporary rivets, these have to be drilled out and all the insides need to be checked and then riveted back up. Then it is

time for painting, mine has now been painted and is now ready to have the engine hung. I decided not to go for the ubiquitous Rotax 912, as with my weight and full fuel let alone a passenger it will be close to its all up fighting weight every flight, that would put quite a strain on a high revving little engine like the 912, so I soon found out there was an alternative, in the form of the Jabiru 6 cylinder 3300. After discussing with friends the pro's and con's, I came to the conclusion the

**'Five second fuses last
about three seconds.'
- Infantry Journal -**

Jabiru would be the better choice with 20 horse power more, lower revving and more than 2½ times the cubic capacity. This engine was already approved by the LAA with a FWF kit from Farry Sayah. The Rotax option would have been the easier solution by a country mile, but



Firewall ready for the Engine

I've never been a conformist!! And I think the aircraft will benefit substantially for this little bit of extra grief and time. The rudder pedal assembly has already been installed.

The main jobs left to be completed after the engine are the interior upholstery, this being made as I type, and will hopefully totally match the rest of a beautiful

'You've never been lost
until you've been lost at
Mach 3.'

-Paul F. Crickmore (SR71
test pilot)-

airframe; constructing the instrument panel (which will be all glass and full of the latest features including fully featured synthetic terrain, this means that as you look out and see hills, lakes, rivers and roads these will appear as is, on the panel in front of you); connections to the engine both electrical and fuel and cowlings and propeller, which will be a lovely, carbon fibre Sensenich number. I'll let you all know how things are going next Month. Happy flying, and be safe.

Improvements at Headcorn

Graham Hammond

It's good to see some real improvements on what must be one of the most active GA airfields in the country.

At last the long awaited and promised new toilet and showers are under construction. I don't think that anyone will mourn the demise of the old block; they were always a talking point. No date has been fixed for the grand opening but hopefully it won't be to long.

Plans are also well advanced, with planning permission already approved for a substantial new hanger of approximately 1,950 m² to be built. I understand it is to be the same width as the existing main hanger and will fit behind it, so from the air it will look like one long hanger. The main aircraft doors in the new hanger will be at the side. There is a crying need for hanger space at Headcorn as aircraft parked outside in the summer tend to be moved away for the winter.

Last Months meeting



Martin Robinson from Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association gave an interesting talk with plenty of questions and answers with around 30 members attending. Martin went through the history from when AOPA was formed from The British Light Aircraft Centre and the Royal Aero Club in 1965, to becoming part of International AOPA in 1967 when the RAC separated out representing FIA for records. Based in Artillery Mansions near Victoria Station until 1973 when they moved a short distance to their current address at 50a Cambridge Street, Pimlico. Premises valued at £30,000 then are now worth £1m. Since 1963 IAOPA has had a seat on ICAO. AOPA has access to and representation on all important aviation committees and bodies in the UK and Europe safeguarding GA but requiring more members to fund their work.

All aviation starts with student pilots and AOPA operates a Wings system to encourage pilots' personal develop-

'It is generally inadvisable to eject directly over the area you just bombed.'
- US Air Force Manual -

ment along with a Mentoring scheme.

AOPA have been working with police forces that have dedicated officers to train them in aircraft operations and encouraging them to develop contacts with their local airfields. In 2014 the UK Border Agency will require proof of identity but current law is written in a way that makes that difficult when flying to and from strips. Drug smuggling is targeting GA and Martin related a tale of an instructor unwittingly caught up in a case when someone he knew wanted a safety pilot to accompany him for an overnight stay in Europe but turned up with a mate who apparently was thinking of learning to fly and would be looking for property on the trip. To cut a long and sad story short he turned up with drugs in his bag for the flight home and found the police waiting for them on landing. Moral being - don't trust strangers - show them your innocent bags and ask to see theirs.

On the IMC, Martin reiterated it was CAA policy to maintain this rating. The goal is an affordable IFR for Europe. The IMC has existed since 1967 and is a major contribution to safety and improves the VFR pilot by encouraging better skills.

Avgas prices have been kept lower than would otherwise be the case due to AOPA work but has recently increased by 3.7p in line with Europe. BP are no longer supplying this fuel and will become difficult to source in the future.

On a brighter note PPL instructor category will return in 2012 as club instructors.

PAFRA spot landing competition

This took place on Good Friday despite the weather threatening to put the ky-

bosh on it. Martin Leusby won the competition.



Derek Browning lands

The strong cross wind at Farthing Corner kept Simon and Gary from flying over but I did get a photo of one of Derek Browning's attempts. Had it not been for the comp I doubt anyone would have bothered to fly, as it was, 16 people made over forty attempts.

Coming up Soon:

May Meeting 27th - Talk on Airspace infringements. This will be an early start at 19:30 and I understand there will be a chance to win a GPS to help prevent misadventures.

...even sooner, April will see a return of the Strut Quiz, missing from our calendar for a couple of years. Mike Negus puts a lot into coming up with the questions, so come along and see if you can win (not a GPS).

...bit further away - June 24th Ripple fly/drive in to Steve Solley's ice cream emporium (350m strip) and August - Treasure Hunt, this time centred on east Kent.

Who Do You Think You Are Talking To!

Profiling a number of people we have more than likely spoken to either on the radio or when dropping into Rochester, continuing from Kelvin in last October's Skwritting it's Julia's turn...

I have been working at Rochester Airport for a fair few years now and have been a qualified FISO since the beginning of 1999, and before that I was assisting in the tower. It all started when I went for a week's work experience when I was 16, having just completed my GCSEs.

As an Air Training Corps Cadet I was looking into joining the RAF to do Air Traffic, so I jumped at the chance of doing work experience at Rochester when a member of Staff suggested it. And so it all started. The week I spent in the tower was great fun, so much so that I started helping out on a voluntary basis while I continued at school, completing A Levels and working towards a career in Air Traffic, but not in the RAF having been persuaded to do it on Civvie Street. Once school was finished I concentrated on getting my FISO licence, with the thought of just staying for a couple of years.

Well, plans change and time flies when you're having fun which is why I guess I'm still there. I am still involved in the Air Training Corps, as staff, and help run a squadron in Maidstone which currently has approximately 30 cadets. It does take up a lot of time but I love it - most of the time. I am enjoying new challenges, one being trying to learn to play in the squadron band. As some of you can witness, I still have a long way to go.



Julia

When flying and the whole aviation world gets too much I like to get creative. I have been making cards for a couple of years now and have recently got into scrapbooking. I also love reading, and always have a book within arm's reach, which is always useful now that the weather is doing its best to stop flying as there are only so many ways you can spend your time in the tower with not a lot going on.

Nigel's Natterings

With Spring here, the daffs and Tulips popping their heads up and thoughts of places to go, here's an idea for a short

trip into Essex. There is a National Garden Scheme garden alongside the A128 just north of Thurrock that welcomes suitable aircraft.

It's in Lockyears as West Horndon with a grass strip 06/24 which although in as 500m long I'm told the usable length is actually 360m probably be-

**'You, you, and you ...
Panic. The rest of you,
come with me.'
- Infantry Sgt.-.**

cause of a garden path crossing the western end, so it's a drive in for me without the Europa.



If you like walking it's 2.5 miles from Thurrock, through Bulphan. Additional to the garden they have a collection of sculptures by Elizabeth Frink, Antony Gormley et.al. and the national collection of Crab Apples. Opening days are Thursdays, times 11:00 to 16:30 and a couple of Sundays, 27th June and 5th September with vintage vehicles on display. Contact Bernard Holms on 01277 811262 or 01277 810516. Their website www.barnardsfarm.eu has full details of the gardens features.

Fancy a bit further? Between 1979 and 1981 the PFA Rally was held at Leicester and the airfield is home to numerous L A A permit aircraft. They would like to welcome all homebuilts back to Leicester and particularly those types that would have been pre-

sent during those events. There are three runways, so it is user friendly to all types of aircraft and homebuilts get half price landing on the day.

The aim is to create a Fly-In dedicated to the homebuilts of that era such as Issacs Furies, Taylor Monoplanes and Midget Mustangs though the aircraft of today are more than welcome.

Leicester Aero Club Classic Homebuilt Fly-In 30th May 2010

1st-2nd May see's the Microlight Trade Fair at Popham and there will be a full contingent flying down from Farthing Corner. Early arrival is recommended as this can get very busy.

Yorkshire Humour?

Yorkshireman takes his cat to the vet...

Yorkshireman: "Ayup, vitnery, I need to talk to thee about me cat."

Vet: "Is it a tom?"

Yorkshireman: "Nay, lad - cain't the see? I've browt it wi' me."

Airspeed, altitude and brains. Two are always needed to successfully complete the flight.

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G-FLOX

Dates for your Diary

Apl 29 Quiz Night
 May 27 Jonathon Smith NATS
 Jun 24 Tea at Ripple