



July 2010

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the **Kent**



Light Aircraft Association

Nigel's Natterings

Fly-ins, exhibitions and BBQ's are under way now the weather has finally improved. The Europa Club held a fly-in and AGM at Popham on the 12th June, there was an Auster gathering at Old Hay over the weekend of the 20th-21st June, Aero Expo at Booker over the three days 25th-27th June and our own BBQ at Steve Solley's strip, all enjoying good weather. The PAFRA's NavEx took place on the 13th June with Strut members taking part (and winning) -



Nigel Read—Editor



Tea at Ripple

July Meeting
Thursday 29th July 2010
BBQ at Farthing Corner

www.midkentstrut.freeserve.co.uk

Gary has written an account of his adventure with encouragement for others to enter next year. Only six aircraft started but one aborted due to passenger upset. After all the work that Martin Leusby put into the planning it's a pity there were not more participants.

Online Airspace Survey Launched

A new Airspace and Safety Initiative project has been launched to collect accurate data on the use of Class G airspace. The aim is to collect data from all users of Class G to facilitate better airspace planning and design. You will require your log book to complete the survey which is supported by AOPA and the LAA.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/G5Z9BNB>

Welcome to 3 New Members

Ron Armitage with a Husky & Nic Orchard with a Jodel, both based at Maple and Europa builder Dave Walters.

Radio Problems?

Does anyone have problems with ground repeater reception as used by Farnborough and Stansted? My Narco and Gary Smith's Icom do not always pick up the ground transmissions unless turning off the radio squelch. Discussing this with Jonathan Smith after his talk in May he said the repeaters are slightly off

frequency and suggested the radio needed attention from a radio engineer but is it that the radio is too good for the band width they are using? Let me know if you have noticed this and with which radio - or not with those mentioned.

Martin Leusby's Rochester NavEx Competition 2010

Historically people have been put off navigation competitions because of the stigma of getting lost, getting a low score or thinking they do not have the skills to complete the event. If you have a PPL then you are already prepared, just come along and apply yourself. The principles of aviation navigation competitions are similar to treasure hunts set by car clubs. You solve clues on a sheet, go from one point to another and identify things on route. There are levels of complexity in both camps but Martin designs his flying competitions to be fun with no chance of getting lost and every possibility of a novice getting a prize.

Having completed last year in less than ideal circumstances (blustery wind, solo and a "black eye") I was feeling more optimistic as I joined the circuit in perfect conditions for

I can't believe we only managed a draw against a team we should easily have beaten.....I'm ashamed to call myself Algerian.

this years offering.

Martin has been involved with designing and flying navigation competitions for over a decade and with a good grasp of people's abilities he deliberately keeps things simple. Any aircraft can enter but enclosed cockpits prevent clues being lost over the side while slower aircraft have more time to think and look. ALL planning is done on the ground so you depart with a fully prepared "pilot log sheet" and know exactly where you will be going. There are no clues to solve in the air so you just have to fly accurately (+/- 1nm) looking out for ground features.

This year's competition pack comprised of eight sheets of paper. The first sheet explains what you are supposed to be doing and some simple safety rules. The second sheet is a clever narrative or poem, dreamt up by Martin and deciphering the rhyme allows you to find the turning points and get a line on your map. The first verse (of six) of this year's competition went as follows: -
"Climb overhead of EGTO, Then

What's the difference between Cinderella and the England football team?

Cinderella wanted to get to the ball....

you've 93 (nm) to go, Now you've got to find your way, almost southwest if you MAY." Hopefully Mr Average Pilot should have identified the start point as Rochester (EGTO) with the first leg heading down towards the Mayfield VOR. The length of the course is hidden in there too (93nm) and hopefully this prevents competitors making gross navigation errors (i.e. the furthest point from Rochester must be less than half of the course distance i.e.46.5nm).

To assist with the route planning a sheet is supplied with aerial photos of the turning points (sheet No3) and since there are only 5 pictures there can only be 5 turning points - all very straight forward. The page of turning points shows two VOR beacons (which confirm the Mayfield VOR), two railway junctions and a reservoir. Now there are not many VOR's within a 46.5nm mile radius of Rochester and even less once you have reached Mayfield VOR, thus narrowing the second VOR to being Detling (another turning point identified). By carrying on through the rhyme the clues were unravelled and this years route was Rochester - Mayfield VOR - Burgess Hill railway station - Darwell reservoir (south of Bewl Bridge Reservoir) - Appledore Railway junction (near Lydd)- Detling VOR and back to Roches-

ter, exactly 93nm.

Once you have plotted your course it will be checked and only when your route is perfect will Martin “release” you to fly. Out with the trusty (and probably dusty) ARC-1 “whirly wheel computer” to fully prepare a flight log and declare a flight time for the route. A tip here is to declare a speed about 15% slower than your normal cruise as this allows a bit of leeway if the winds aloft are stronger than forecast.

The next three sheets contain 18 aerial photos of some obvious (and not so obvious) sites including windmills, railway junctions, sports stadiums, stately homes, aerals etc. If the pilot flies the course accurately at 1500ft the 18 objects will come into view and their position can be marked onto the map. Once back on the ground the distance between the photo

Fabio Capello was wheeling his shopping trolley across the supermarket car park when he noticed an old lady struggling with her bags of shopping. He stopped and asked, "Can you manage dear?"

To which the old lady replied, "No way. You got yourself into this mess, don't ask me to sort it out..."

and the last turning point is declared and if you are within 2nm you get full marks. I elected to cut the 18 photos into individual pictures, group similar features together (e.g. aerals / windmills / water features) and “blu-tak” them around the cockpit. This makes identifying objects easier but one must remember to close the canopy before starting the engine so none are lost (lesson learned for next year!). A section of ¼ mil map and a log sheet complete the set.

On your return to Rochester your time to the “overhead” is recorded and again points are deducted for every minute you are early or late. It helps if you have a second (or third) pair of eyes to help with “spotting” but be warned, if you guess a feature wrong 30 points are deducted per wrong item.

So with pictures stuck all around the cockpit I set off for the Mayfield VOR, and missed the photo of “West Malling village green” after just 6 minutes!

I found the turning points easily and returned overhead within one minute of my declared time, but only spotted half of the pictures. As the other competitors submitted their results I got more optimistic. Three aircraft arrived exactly “on time” and they had spotted more pictures than myself but some were wrong and heavy penalties were awarded.

Entries were marked and it was results time. In third place was myself flying solo (Vans RV9) with 8 correct answers (none wrong), quite a surprise. In second place was Ian Ecksley (Robin DR400) +2 passengers, 13 correct answers (but 3 wrong) and in first place was Paul Smiddy in the only high wing aircraft (Glaster) + passenger with 16 correct answers (none wrong) and perfect timing. There were prizes for all competitors and a fun day was had by all.

I hope people come to realise the nav comp is light hearted and fun, it is not difficult and help is at hand and you really have to work hard to get lost. If you do not have an aircraft available you are still welcome to come along and work through the nav-pack whilst "on the ground". Deciphering the rhyme and plotting the route is good fun and will give you good experience for the next year.

For more information or encouragement contact Gary Smith or Martin Leusby.

martin@leusby.co.uk

Last Months Meeting - BBQ at Ripple

Eight aircraft flew in and many more strut members and locals drove in to enjoy the usual BBQ fare, cake, chocolates and tubs of Steve's ice cream. A vintage Austin and MG, drivers in RAF uniform added to the atmosphere.



Europa Fly-in at Popham

About 30 Europas flew in, mainly



mono wheels.

This tri-gear visitor from Holland had a much modified aircraft:- Instrument panel, flap fairing, straps, cowl, 2 blade wobbly prop with high twist, brake levers, deeper wind-shield and raised nose wheel for extra prop clearance. Apparently mods



are easier in Holland!
Photo record of build on www.privatepilots.nl

PAFRA Flyouts: Gliding at Bicester 9th June

A small group from Rochester and Laddingford set off in less than ideal

gliding conditions, the weather deteriorating north of London but picking up past Princes Risborough allowing both winch and aerotow launches and a little thermal soaring.



AeroExpo Wycome Air Park

This year added a gyrocopter section and the usual selection of manufactures and agents. Various goods on sale at reduced prices, oil being particularly popular. The LAA had several aircraft on display both inside and outside their marquee.



What's the difference between Rob Green's spill and BP's spill?
- Robert Green has got a cap for his.

**Next Months meeting -
BBQ at Farthing Corner -
ME9 7XA - 6pm.**

Directions:- from M2 services, follow Matts Hill Road for 0.5 mile towards Bredhurst and the entrance gate is on the left. It does involve driving through the Hotel only signs as all the local residents do! Alternatively, from Deanwood Drive in Parkwood turn into Tyler Drive, turn right at the end into Mierscourt Road then right into Matts Hill Road crossing over the M2. £5 Head or £3 Small heads! Donations of good Raffle prizes requested. Flying in - contact John Dean for PPR.

**Other Forthcoming Events - From
Jonathan Wilkins (Turbulent G-
BUKH)**

For the second year the Invicta Military Preservation Society are holding their Combined Ops Military Show and Vintage Aircraft Weekend at Headcorn Aerodrome Sat 14th & Sun 15th August 2010. It will again include hundreds of military vehicles and tanks, arena action, reenactments, living history displays, model aircraft, cockpit displays, militaria stalls and lots more.

Included as part of the event is a fly-in of warbirds and vintage aircraft as well as an air display by the BBMF Spitfire, Hurricane and Lancaster and flypasts by the Red Arrows

(so check Notams).

Anyone wishing to fly in for this event in a Vintage, Ex military or Classic aircraft will receive FREE landings and FREE show entry. All other aircraft welcome but normal prices will apply. There are no slots but to book an aircraft in please email:- flyin@headcornaerodrome.co.uk or telephone 01622 891539. www.headcornaerodrome.co.uk

Eurofly St Yan 14th-18th July:-
<http://www.euro-fly-in-rsa.com/>

Classic Cars & Aircraft at Leeds Castle, 14th-15th August. *

Sywell Revival 3rd -5th September

Rochester Open Day, 12th Sept *
(LAA recruitment opportunities)

**A (not so) new Arrival at Far-
thing Corner. By John Luck**

It was last November I first learnt about the possibility of a tie down at EGMF. Previous investigations to find suitable alternatives to Rochester (way back in 2000 when under the threat of closure) saw only Maypole, Lydd or Biggin as possibilities. However, we decided F. Corner was a feasible alternative to EGTO. After a full briefing from John Dean about the noise sensitive area's I flew in with a 5-10kt wind straight down

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www.solleysicecreams.co.uk

24. A slightly curved approach saw me land, with only one little bounce on F.C's runway. It wasn't long before a suitable spot of grass was found and some previously sunk tie downs were located with a metal detector.

I can thoroughly recommend the strip to others thinking of a move. They are a friendly bunch there and were most welcoming, nothing being too much trouble to help a fellow aviator.

Place to visit:

De Haviland Aircraft Heritage Centre,
 Salisbury Hall, London Colney, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL2 1BU

Dates for your Diary

Jul 29	BBQ at Farthing Corner
Aug 26	Treasure Hunt
Sep 30	Back to the Golf Club