



July 2011

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the **Kent**



Light Aircraft Association

Sandown Trip

Rearranged flyout from Farty.

The Kent strut had organised a fly out to Sandown (Isle of white) for the Bank holiday at the end of May. We had planned to meet The Devon Strut (coming up from the south west) and take a leisurely walk into Shanklin for lunch.

The day dawned bright in Kent but alas, the forecast depicted a cold front moving up from Cornwall. Those who know their weather will appreciate a cold front will move through fairly quickly giving heavy rain but within hours of its passing will leave you in the cold sector where the air is often completely clear.

The positioning of this particular front was to ruin the day for everyone. In Devon the day started off wet as the front passed through but by late morning it was flyable. Unfortunately the system was travelling east (the same direction of the Devon flyers) so a swift departure would mean flying into the back of the rain clouds. There would be insufficient time to allow the front to clear and still make



Nigel Read—Editor

Got there a few days late



28th July Meeting
Treasure Hunt

Meet at M2 services London Bound, 7:00pm
Finish at ??? A place of refreshment!

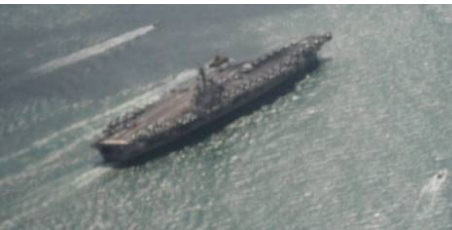


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the day possible, so they cancelled. We had the opposite problem in Kent. The day started fine but nobody wanted to take a chance and get trapped on the Island when the cold front arrived. Sure enough at 7pm that evening a dark blanket of cloud drew over the otherwise clear blue sky and within 10 minutes it was pouring down. [Don't forget if it got to Kent at 7pm it would have been at the island at probably 2pm].

Oh the merits of fully understanding the weather.

Not to be beaten, five die hard adventurers from the Kent strut decided to run the event on Tuesday after the rest of world had gone back to work. The cold front had long passed and left us a cool sunny day with a scattering of clouds to pop at 2000ft. NOTAMS drew reference to the American Aircraft Carrier in Portsmouth harbour but since the no fly zone only applied while it was tied up I took the chance to point my camera down its chimney as it steamed (or whatever a nuclear boat does) out of Southampton water. One of our party thought it was rather large to be the Isle of White ferry but failed to recognise it as one of the largest aircraft carriers in the world.



Sandown airfield is up and running again despite what has been written in the press. A well run cafe is situated on the west side of the strip but at this moment they currently have no 100LL fuel. A twenty minute walk south gets you into Shanklin town and at the far



end of the high street are the beautiful thatched cottages of old Shanklin. A walk down the old chine takes you from the cliff tops down to the beach through a hanging oasis of flora and fauna. Take chance to pop into the museum and discover PLUTO. Of WWII origin, the "Pipe Line Under The Ocean" was designed to carry petrol from the mainland to the Normandy beaches for D-Day and parts of the pipe can still be seen in the chine.

A good day was eventually had and we are planning to meet up with the "Devon boys" in mid July, so watch for an email.

Olympics 2012



Your strut coordinator bumped into the director of the 2012 Olympic committee during the recent AEROEXPO weekend. When asked about his plot to throw light aviation into utter chaos he replied "it was just a drawn out teddy bears picnic". Apparently the restrictive

zone is required for the "throw your teddy out of the pram" event and when asked about the ticket fiasco he said he really was not a "Care Bear" at all. So there you have it, at least next summers flying will not have been lost in vain.

Also Seen at AeroExpo

AeroExpo did not enjoy the best of summer weather. Early in the week I changed our Friday Slot to Sunday and caught a slightly delayed afternoon air display. In it's new home of Sywell it had a bit of a feel of the rally but could have done with a few parts to sell, although aimed more at aircraft buyers and of course enthusiasts. Visibility was good flying up but there was a strong cross wind waiting for the arrivals. The day did not escape a short shower.

You can see from the clouds, the

afternoon display was not exactly bathed in bright sun. These are actually colour photos.



Extra against a dull sky



Chinook Display on Sunday

*Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day.
Teach him how to fish, and he will sit in a
boat and drink beer all day.*



*Too big for an LAA permit, the
North American T28 Trojan (ex
French Air Force Fennec)*



At least on the ground there was a bit of colour



C Boddington's BE2 Replica G-AWYI



DH83 Fox moth G-ACEJ



But the weather did brighten up for these pictures!



Miles M38 Messenger 2A G-AKIN

If a man holds a car door open for a woman, it is either a new car or a new woman.

HRH Prince Phillip

How Jaqui Clark became Mrs Sephton.



Jaqui Clark joined the Kent strut back in the early 90's as a regular member and being enthusiastic was soon an active member of the committee. Not one to turn down a challenge, Jaqui became the coordinator in the late 90's and carried us well into the millennium with her humour, inspiration and "can-do" attitude (a hard act to follow I can assure you).

Whilst pursuing the possibilities of obtaining a display license so she could display her vintage Auster a chance meeting seven years ago with Andy Sephton ensued. Chief test pilot for the Shuttleworth vintage aircraft collection at the time, Andy really knew his stuff, the attraction of Bedfordshire was too great an opportunity to miss and a move four years ago to cooler climates soon followed.

Skipping seven years Jacqui and Andy decided to formalise their situation and get married but in a rather unusual way. Not wishing to make wedding guests feel uneasy and the lack of requirement for wedding presents (how many toasters does one need?) they decided to have an informal party and then announce their happy news.

Jaqui still keeps in touch with many Strut members and receives *Skywritings*. Occasionally, even turns up to Strut meetings and events! (who can forget the flying balloons at the Christmas dinner!)

Saturday 21st May a group of us set off from Kent to a cunningly disguised "retirement party". The happy couple, stunningly dressed greeted us and their beaming smiles confirmed that "Mr and Mrs" on the party balloons was for real. The band were shocked, the caterers were surprised and the guests were over-whelmed. Every one likes a

nice surprise but this was just fantastic.

Congratulation to the happy couple on behalf of the Kent strut and we hope to see you flying the Auster in our area soon. *Gary Smith*



*"Be careful where flying can lead you .."
..in Jaqui's case, up the aisle!*



Amiens—first flyout of 2011

By Gary Smith

The "Jodels to Bernay" fly-in back in the late 90's used to mark the beginning of the flying season for many, but with its demise a new foreign event has taken its place: - the Amiens fete de L'air.

For the second year running the LAA Kent strut has been invited to attend what is turning into a rather grand affair at an airfield approximately 1 hour from home. One of our well travelled strut members got us on last years invite list and we are now considered regulars and part of the parade. The trip over the channel was uneventful with Lille going deaf at the first "G" reg aircraft to call, and the arrival at Amiens was typically French i.e. nobody on the radio, join downwind for the most popular runway, fit in with the circuit traffic and enjoy yourself.



The "chef de l'air" welcomed us vigorously, having taken our details he announced he was the commentator on the tourist train and wanted to tell the locals about the aircraft and their foreign visitors. Lawrence had arrived from Lydd the day before in their group owned Robin and this brought the British contingent up to 6 aircraft. There were no landing fees as everybody was having fun and visiting aviators were treated to a free lunch (so there is such a thing, but alas, in another country).

The event attracted all sorts of spectacles including classic & kit cars, motorbikes, model aeroplanes and boats, a live band, kites, fair ground stalls, food stands, tourist train, trial flight etc. The gliding club continued to fly, oblivious to the goings on around them and whilst it sounds like aviation chaos everybody used their common sense (sadly lacking in England these days) and there were absolutely no problems.

Several members of the group caught a bus into town and stayed the night despite there being a large shopping complex next of the airport and a group of travel hotels within a 10 minute walk. Amiens is nice town and worth considering as an alternative to Le Touquet.



The coupe 2CV was my favourite exhibit. It poked fun at the other custom cars in a quintessentially French way no other car could get away with.

PAFRA Navigation Competition

Just six aircraft took part in this years event from Rochester which saw a route taking in the A2/A249 (or more precisely the junction just north), Sheerness Docks, the disused airfields of Birch & Rivenhall in Essex, a turning point 5 miles SE of Chelmsford and Brands Hatch before returning to Rochester. Your Editor came third (Europa), Simon Pratt and Dave Smith fourth (Luscombe)



Ripple BBQ 30th June

As usual this meeting proved very popular. Nine aircraft flew in, ten if you count the R44! Some having to avoid heavy showers which luckily avoided Ripple. Plenty of food, refreshments and ICE CREAM!

A raffle was held for Aerobility.

More pictures on the web site.

Next BBQ – August meeting at Rochester!



Steve Solley at work!



A380 at Le Bourget—look what apprentices have done!

You're Fired!

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*No Phones were Hacked in preparing
this newsletter!*

www.solleysicecreams.co.uk**Headcorn Hanger nears completion**

Official opening, Hangar Bash 30th July at 7:30, £10 entrance. This will increase capacity by about 30 a/c with some spaces still available at time of writing. Vintage a/c weekend (PPR recommended) 13-14 Aug. Free for Vintage or Military a/c.

**Dates for your Diary** (PPR fly-ins)

21st July Visit to Swanick

28th July Treasure Hunt

20th August Laddingford Fly in ...

..(21st August Back up date for poor weather)

7th Aug Home Builder Fly in EGLG

13th-14th Aug Vintage A/C EGKH

10th Sept Rochester Hangar Dance