

January 2013



SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the **Kent**

Happy New (Dryer) Year!



Light Aircraft Association

Let's go Flying! From Brian Hope.

What with the recession and rising costs, not least Avgas at around £2 a litre, many of us are, understandably, doing less flying than we have in the past. 2012 may well go down as the year that light aviation had its most significant decline, the Olympic airspace and appalling weather adding yet further to the woes so I think it's time we fought back and looked forward to 2013 with some optimism and commitment that we are going to enjoy our flying. More than ever we need to get the maximum value from our flying



Nigel Read - Editor

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*Mike Tooze arriving at Stauning
see p4*

**31st January Meeting
Annual General Meeting & Free Raffle!
Cobtree Manor Golf Club, 20:00hrs**

www.kentstrut.co.uk

because it's all too easy to find reasons not to bother, so your Strut committee has decided to arrange some trips that you can get involved in and enjoy fellow members' company. Together we can banish the apathy and regain the enthusiasm and enjoyment we have all experienced with our flying in the past.

The LAA is a flying association, and as members of one of its Struts we have decided that we are in an ideal situation to create flying opportunities. Most activities are more fun when you do them with friends, so our idea is two-fold. Firstly we will arrange a small number of pre-planned fly-outs, maybe three or four, so that members can plan ahead to attend them. One for instance, will probably be the LAA Bonus Day at Duxford on Saturday June 8th. But in addition to those events, if the weekend weather is shaping up OK, we'll email everybody on the Thursday or Friday with an idea of where we could all meet up on the Saturday, maybe to have lunch or a sticky bun and a cup of tea, or to visit a nearby attraction. It won't happen every week due to commitments to some of the larger events like Aero Expo, but we'll do it on a fairly regular basis, at least a couple of times a month say. That way we'll all enjoy the companionship of old and new friends as well as flying with a bit more of a purpose. It is not intended that these impromptu trips will be to far flung destinations, most will be a maximum hour each way - up to Fenland or Old Buckenham, over to Popham or White Waltham, or down to the Isle of Wight for instance - but by meeting up with fellow Strut members there'll be more of a sociable aspect to our flying.

This is effectively what some of us do already, so the basics are there, happening on a smaller scale and we are simply rolling the idea out to involve all Strut members; the odds are that four or five aircraft from Farthing Corner will already be committed to going to wherever the plan is to meet up. Gary Smith will be a contact so you can ask questions, see if there are any spare seats, or let us know if you plan to come along. It will all be very informal and non-committal, simply an invite to fly somewhere specific rather than simply tootle around locally or not bother getting the aeroplane out at all.

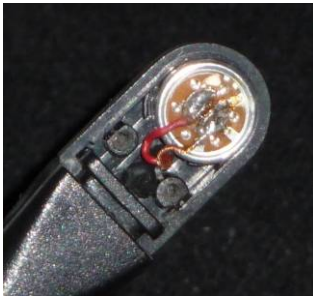
Another benefit is the opportunity to take advantage of some mentoring if you are a little rusty with your cross-country flying. We can arrange for people to meet up and fly together, help with planning or whatever is required.

Fact is, most of us have invested a lot of time, effort and money into flying so let's make sure we get the maximum fun out of it. We're open to ideas of course, places to go, how we might make the best use of this idea and what might encourage people to join in. We'll be starting probably in May, it all depends on how the weather shapes up, so please do give this some thought.

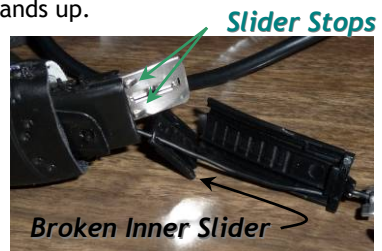
Some of the best flying I have done is when a group of us have flown to a strip or airfield, visited a local pub and had lunch and then flown home again. So let's all try to get involved and join in, we'll make sure to include some airfields with hard runways for those whose aircraft don't favour grass, and we'll make sure we have a good variety of destinations to suit all tastes and abilities. Let's make 2013 the year we put the FUN back into our flying!

Headset Repair

For the second time the microphone cartridge failed in one of my elderly Flightcom Eclipse headsets. Last time it cost somewhere between £60 and £80 to repair at Headset Services, can't remember the exact figure but I thought I would search the web and see if I couldn't find a replacement and fix it myself. Flightcom stopped making them some time ago and I have not been able to get replacement plastic sliders for the ear cups. These have been glass fibred where the outer has snapped! First I looked for some identification on the mic, which is only 9,7mm dia and 5mm thick. Checking the duff one and the other working headset found two different numbers neither of which produced anything on a Google search. Maplin had similar but the description was not quite right and no readable dimensions. So I went for the description, Noise Cancelling Back Electret Microphone Cartridge. A supplier name kept cropping up, Digikey, an American supplier with a dot UK web site and the correct dimensions were found for a Panasonic WM-55D 103 at under £2 each but with a £12 shipping charge. I hunted around for a UK supplier of electrical components, finding one in East Anglia but on enquiring they wanted a minimum order of 5000 and I don't want to repair that many, one of the fiddly little buggers is bad enough so I took a punt solely on description and dimensions, ordered a couple from Digikey and after a couple of days they duly arrived from Minnesota. It was simply a matter of soldering two very thin wires as previously soldered and then try it out. Gary allowed me to test it in his aircraft and bingo - it worked! I was a little concerned that the data sheet (most of which I barely understood) quoted a max. voltage of 10 but they all seem to be about the same and do the same function so unless it subsequently blows up I've saved a few quid and learnt something.



There was a slight problem when the slider on the other set came past it's stop because an inner plastic part broke—it had felt loose for a while so just when I thought I was winning... luckily it was not the side with the boom mic which would have been even more complicated to dismantle! The wires are threaded through the broken part (arrowed) were holding it together. Some Araldite 420 and a piece of wire bonded into a spare channel (presumably used on the other cup for the mic) have reinforced it. Now to see how it all stands up.



Project News 1

Mike Tooze's Vari Eze, pictured on page 1, clocked up 30 years since it's first flight at Manston on 30th November. "It was from Manston where I had been conducting the test programme. After a very chilly couple of circuits under a clear blue sky we put her away into one of the RAF hangars I had been kindly awarded. The station commander, the late Wing Commander Buster Skinner, who become a great friend and later flew with me, gave Emma my daughter and me a brilliant lunch and opened a bottle of champers!"

Project News 2

After 15 long years in the build, Strut members Nick Hampton and Shawn Whitling have finally transformed their Vans RV8 kit of parts into a working aircraft. The first flight of G-NISH from Headcorn's frozen



turf took place on Friday 30th Nov with Andy Hill at the controls.

Vans' reputation is intact as it "did what it said on the tin". No niggles worth mentioning except that Kent is really small when travelling at 170kt (190mph).

Once the test flying is completed a more in-depth article had been promised.

Project For Sale

Rand KR2 project, contact strut member Edward Rooney, email edwardrooney@talktalk.net
Phone Whitstable 01227 274882

Registered G-KISS

Bodywork finished: Wings, ailerons & canopy not signed off.

Instruments: Alt, VSI, ASI, PITOT, SLIP

Engine: 1600cc VW in bits, No ignition system
£4000 o.n.o



Aircraft for sale

Jamie Foreman is selling his Cozy III G-BXDO, 210 hrs Engine & Airframe.

Built in 1998 it is one of two in the UK. Renovated in 2008 to include :-

Paint & upholstery, Dynon D-10a glass panel, King NAV/COM, DME & Transponder, Skymap Illic GPS (colour), Catto 3-blade propeller, HD 12v battery. 125kts at 25 litres/hour. New Permit August 2012. Located at North Weald

07958-293777 : jamie@jforeman.co.uk £24,500.



*Jamie Foreman's Cozy
which is for sale*

Christmas dinner

Nearly fifty came along to our new venue of Newnham Court Inn, enjoying good food in good company with good choices, reasonable prices, three excellent courses with coffee and mince pie to follow. We took over a large section of their upstairs on one long table and a couple of smaller ones. From the number of diners there, clearly a popular restaurant.

Mike Negus ran a raffle netting £145 to add to the £390 already collected for the Kent Air Ambulance. The 'lucky' seats were clustered around Jim Stevens!



Kent Air Ambulance presentation on Thursday 24th January

Gary Smith presented the Kent Air Ambulance with the collection made by the strut during 2012.

£535.13

Lets hope none of us ever need to take a ride in it.

Pictured with Gary are two of the Doctors



AGM

The LAA wish to get all associated clubs and struts on a more professional footing and have issued a governance document to adhere to. To do this a club constitution needs to be agreed, having run along happily for years without one. LAA produced a generic constitution which John Dean has tailored to suit Kent Strut and will be voted on at the AGM.

Our membership secretary of the past eleven years, Graham Hammond has requested to retire from the post and needs to be replaced but is staying on the committee. Unless we have another more willing volunteer, Steve Solley has offered to take on the role. So thanks to Graham, who will be as usual as far away as possible from the AGM, in Oz!

It would be nice to see a good turnout of members, perhaps outnumbering the committee. Any suggestions or comments from the floor on fly-outs, talks, web site or newsletter gratefully received.

The official business of the AGM won't take long, there is also the announcement of the lucky recipient of the *strut screw* (Phil Barnard Trophy) and a slide show from earlier days at Rochester thanks to Colin Evans and general social get together after.

Plus– there will be a free draw with magnificent prizes!

From earlier days at Rochester to....



What a wet end to a wet year!

2012 was actually the second wettest year on record for the UK as a whole but missed out on topping 2000 by less than half a percent, 6.6 mm. For England it was the wettest, third wettest for Wales, 17th wettest for Scotland and 40th wettest for Northern Ireland. To quote ‘Agnes Brown’, “if it rains for 40 days and nights in Ireland we call it summer!” East Anglia, the South and South East actually clocked up 98% of the average sunshine from 1981 to 2010 but 127% to 129% of the precipitation over the same period. December was the eighth wettest for the UK.

If like me, you’ve been grounded for all of November and December, think carefully about all the checks and emergency procedures before getting airborne again.

Each of three 30 year averages show an increase of about an inch over the previous period, 1961-90, 1971-2000 & 1981-2010. Met Office Statistics.

An old pilot is one who can remember when flying was dangerous and sex was safe.

Airlines have really changed, now a flight attendant can get a pilot pregnant

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Alan Baker, a gliding friend of Karl Martin's from Lasham came along to our September meeting and mentioned a project he is involved with in Spain. Apparently the local government want to increase the activity at Alhama de Murcia, LELH, in south east Spain and would welcome strut members as visitors. Alan can be contacted on 02081 230286 or 07771 624727.

www.flydiamond365.com

And finally..

From the recent GasCo safety meeting at Rochester:-

A pigeon may poo on your head but a dead one will never drop on it– they have the sense not to go flying if they feel ill!

Dates for your Diary

31st Jan Strut AGM & Free Raffle

28th Feb Quiz–yes it's back!

28th Mar Bob Ogley - Biggin Hill

25th Apr **Strut Meeting**30th May **Strut Meeting**

27th June Ripple BBQ

25th Jul Rochester BBQ

29th Aug Treasure Hunt

26th Sept **Strut Meeting**31st Oct **Strut Meeting**28th Nov **Strut Meeting**

Dec Christmas Dinner