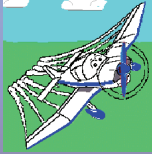


November 2013



SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the **Kent**

**Merry Christmas from
the committee**



Editorial

This is the last *Skywritings* of 2013 and the last meeting at Cobtree Manor golf club this year which will be a talk from Justin Willcocks from the CAA on Thursday 28th November. Christmas Dinner at Newnham Court Inn will be our final meeting of the year, a couple of weeks later on Saturday 14th December.

Don't forget to give your bookings and remittances to Gary!

Last month's talk from Julie Garside was well attended, with a slide show of the Turb team's visits to numerous military shows, parked up alongside jets, first channel crossing by Turbulent and a professionally put together film of Headcorn's activities.



Nigel Read - Editor

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**28th November Meeting
EASA Licencing
Cobtree Manor Golf Club, 20:00hrs**

www.kentstrut.co.uk

Your committee meet each month on the first Wednesday after the Thursday meetings to discuss how things went and what to be organising for the future. A number of ideas and suggestions are discussed and the pros and cons of each one deliberated upon. One of the biggest problems facing the committee is that they get no real feedback from the membership. During the summer months there are no meetings at the golf club due to the evenings being lighter and more of the golfers staying late in the clubhouse so other activities are arranged. Over the last few years there has been a fly/drive in BBQ at Steve Solley's strip at Ripple which has been well attended and enjoyed by members and their families, this is followed by the annual Strut BBQ normally held at Rochester Airport and this is another opportunity for the families to join in and have a social evening. For a number of years there was a void in August where there was nothing arranged but then a dinner was arranged at Rochester which didn't really take off. The last few years has seen a treasure hunt by car but unfortunately this has not been well attended although this year did see some welcome new faces to the event.

What's the reason for going through all this?

The committee would like to hear from you, the members, to know what you want us to do for you.

Do you want more fly-outs? Do you want more visits to places by car? Do you want more family oriented events? Are the monthly speakers the sort of things that you like to hear about? Does the newsletter contain what you like to read about?

Would you like to be on the committee? Would you like to edit the newsletter? There is always room for you, in fact there is a vacancy coming up at the AGM in January so if you would like to put yourself forward or would like to nominate somebody else please do.

If you have any suggestions they would be gratefully received whether in person, by e-mail to any committee member or even an anonymous letter to the committee.

Simon Pratt



14th December Christmas Dinner

3 Courses plus coffee and mince pie

Newnham Court Inn, Nr Maidstone

Bearsted Road, Weaving, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 5LH 7pm for 7:30



GACC News from Peter Kember

On the 7th November 2013 I attended the CAA's 41st General Aviation Consultative Committee, held at the CAAs Aviation House near to Gatwick Airport. I have now been a member of this committee for 3 years following in the footsteps of the late and much missed David Corbett. The GACC is made up of about 10 personnel from the CAA, chaired by Bob Jones, the CAA's Head of Flight Operations and 30 industry representatives including, inter alia, the Light Aircraft Association, the FFA, AOPA, British Helicopter Association, BGA and the BMAA.

The agenda included the usual introductions, apologies for absence, acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting held in November 2012, a review of the action log, and a very fruitful discussion of the Government sponsored "Red Tape Challenge" as promoted by the Chairman of the Conservative Party and Minister Without Portfolio, Grant Shapps (who has a PPL and flies a Piper Saratoga based at Panshanger, an aerodrome which is in the limelight because of a threat of closure arising from a housing land allocation by the Local Planning Authority). Other topics included a review of the programme for GA in the future, an update on the Standardised European Rules of the Air (SERA) and the UK "Skyway Code" which in coming years will replace the Rules of the Air Regulations, a report on the GA Strategic Forum from the Chairman of the LAA, and the usual open debate under "Any Other Business" where I again raised my continuing concern about the CAAs lack of any worthwhile policy on aerodrome safeguarding in the current climate.

The Committee were introduced to Andrew Haines, the new CEO of the CAA who has the task of ensuring that the CAA turns a profit of 6% on turnover. He did not seem a relaxed character but then he has got some monumental problems on his plate. Mark Swann, a Group Director at the CAA, explained that the CAA wish to deregulate where possible over a 2 year period. By April 2014 there is to be a dedicated GA unit within the CAA and staff are being recruited as I write. We were told that the CAA is downsizing as the programme of deregulation comes into effect. By the end of 2013 the Directorate of Airspace Policy and the Safety Regulation Group will have been merged with some job losses likely.

Mike Barnard from the CAA is tasked with designing the structure of the new dedicated GA Unit within the CAA. He is a sensible man, an ex *Ford* employee, who appears to understand the need for not only consultation, but using where possible, representatives of the industry to carry out the legwork necessary to achieve a better, more simplified regulatory regime. The cynic in me suggests that this is a way of passing off the costs of reorganisation to the industry but we should, at this stage, keep an open mind on the subject. The overriding message, often repeated, is to deregulate, to simplify, to speak in plain English, and to fast track worthwhile changes in the regulatory regime. One of the areas currently being examined is flight training in the UK bearing in mind the AOPA strapline "Bad training hurts you, whereas a bad attitude kills you". Mike seems keen to develop GPS approaches to more airfields including, where possible, small airstrips. In the USA there are currently 12,000 airfields with FAA approved GPS approaches, whereas in the UK there are currently less than 10 CAA approved GPS approach procedures! There was even the mention of the resurgence of the UK's light aircraft industry. I am not holding my breath on that one!

It has been estimated that the UK GA industry is worth about £1.5 billion to the economy and it is clear that the Government and many MPs including Grant Shapps are keen to see new UK designed and built light aircraft. Currently only the Swift Aircraft Technology Group, the current owners of Europa Aircraft, have any significant new designs under construction. In the Red Tape Challenge there were over 150 suggestions made that have a real prospect of producing a better future for GA. "Proportionality" is apparently the new mantra in regulating the industry and at the LAA Rally at Sywell this September the CAA announced the deregulation of single seat microlights. Well, it is a start, I suppose. We were told that in Europe, EASA is trying to respond positively to the malcontent which is evident from over-regulation in the industry. It is a fact that over 90% of GA aircraft accidents are attributable to pilot error, so it is understandable that both the CAA and EASA want to improve pilot training and continuing pilot development.

Cliff Whittaker, the Head of Personnel Licensing Policy at the CAA, told us that the IMC rating was now safe until April 2019 subject to certain loose ends to be tidied up by the CAA. Payments for flights, in the form of cost sharing, can now be accepted by PPL and LAPL holders in the UK and this can cover the issue of "trial flights" by members of the public (subject to ratification by EASA before April 2014). At my own aerodrome, Laddingford in West Kent, two pilots have just obtained their IMC rating flying a very well equipped Trigear Europa (not mine) operated on a "Permit to Fly". I suppose that night flying in a Permit aircraft will be next!

Ben Watkins, from the CAA's Flight Operations Policy Unit, has been monitoring the work that EASA is carrying out on the Standardised European Rules of the Air (SERA). It seems likely that the UK will derogate from certain EASA rules in favour of the current UK Rules of the Air Regulations. It seems daft to me to have one set of rules for the UK and another for France, Belgium, Germany etc. How can that result in a standardisation across Europe? How can any pilot hope to understand different rules for each country in which he flies? Ben Watkins responded to my often voiced criticism of the CAA's current policy on the safeguarding of UK aerodromes and other flying sites. Apparently a new information pack has been drawn up for distribution to Local Planning Authorities and Mike Barnard, (who had hopped into Bob Jones' role as chairman when he had to leave urgently), told me that I will be consulted on it before it is published. I await the documents with interest.

Finally Mike Barnard informed us that the GACC is likely to change in the future to better represent the industry and to work with the CAA's new GA Unit. The twice yearly meetings may become more of a workshop for change rather than merely a forum for consultation with the many special interest groups. The next meeting will be on the 28th January 2014 and I hope to attend on my return from my holiday with my son and his family now living in Auckland NZ. I hope to try my hand at flying in that country. Any tips? 2pk@peterkember.co.uk

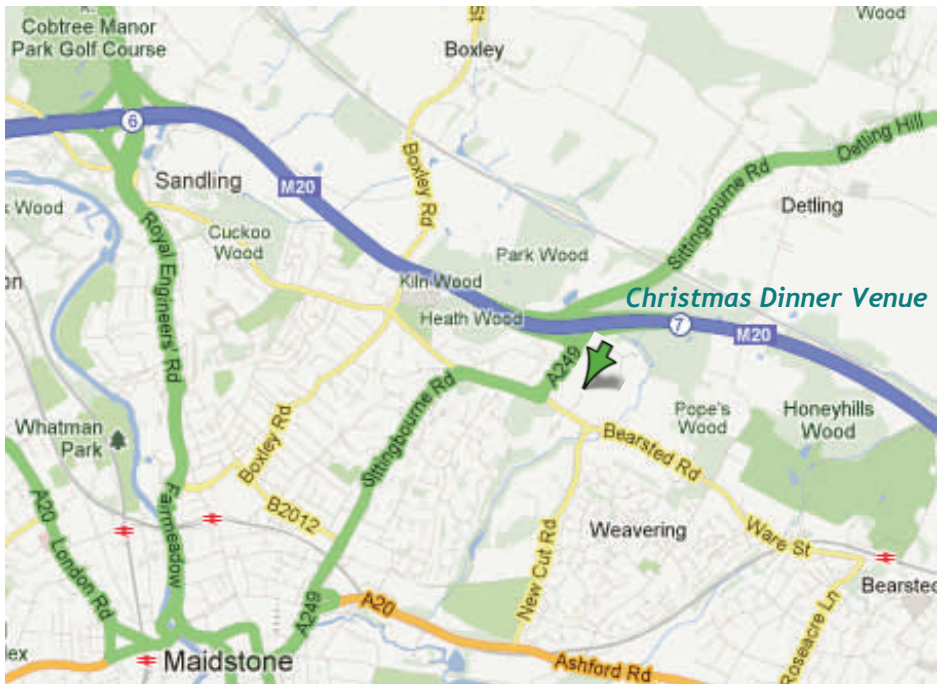
Peter Kember Dip TP, MRTPI, MRAeS,

Aviation Planning Consultant to Kember Loudon Williams LLP. Tunbridge Wells.

The aircraft limits are only there in case there is another flight by that particular aircraft.

If subsequent flights do not appear likely, there are no limits.

Christmas Dinner 14th December Newnham Court Inn



Directions:- From Junction 7 of the M20 and the bottom of the A249 turn left from the roundabout into Bearstead Road and then first left into Newnham Court shopping centre, then right into the pub's car park. If coming from the opposite direction there is officially no right turn into the drive so double back from the roundabout. Likewise there is no right turn out of the drive onto the Bearstead Road so go left when leaving and double back at the small roundabout at the junction with New Cut Road if you need to go in that direction.

New Members

Welcome to:-

David Hurst from Chilham who has a PPL, enjoys touring and is about to start building an RV.

Les Pluck from Swingfield near Hawkinge who has a Cessna 150 at Clipgate and enjoys all aspects of aviation.

Chris Read, from Maidstone who is learning to fly.

Another 'new' member is the replacement Luscombe for G-BSNT 'Beryl' following an aborted take off, named 'Lucy'. Pictures of Lucy on the next page.

Luscombe G-BSUD arrives at her new home, Farthing Corner



Simon, Bruce, Mike and Paddy's new mount



There are only three things the co-pilot should ever say:-
1. Nice landing, Sir. 2. I'll buy the first round. 3. I'll take the fat one.

Medway Queen Paddle Steamer

Back in February 2012 we had a talk from Mark and Pat Bathurst about the restoration of the Medway Queen. Pressed into service as a mine sweeper during the war it made seven channel crossings in 1940 to Dunkirk rescuing 7000 men from the beaches, becoming one of the 'Little Ships'. Nearly two years ago it was hoped the ship, which was undergoing extensive restoration in Albion Dock, Bristol, would return to the Medway the following spring. It took a bit longer, much like all those maintenance tasks seem to take!

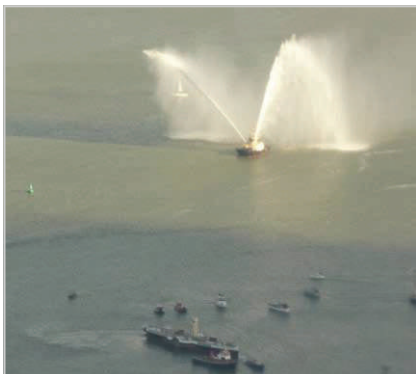
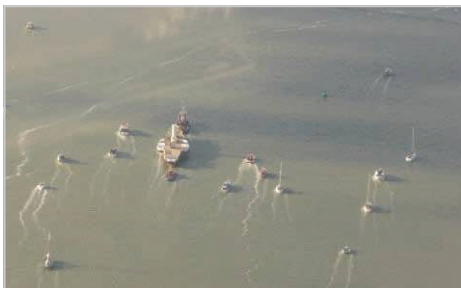


Five apprentices from Mid Kent College have been working on replacement parts for the decks, learning a trade in the factory unit next to the intended berth.

Finally, after a long wait of several weeks for a 48 hour period of suitable weather it was towed back from Avonmouth, having been moved from the dock several days earlier, setting out on Saturday 16th November and continuing through Saturday and Sunday night the tug Christine rounded the North Foreland around midnight on Sunday and stopped just off Reculver. Later on Monday the journey continued to Queenborough where it moored until the following day for the 13:30 high tide.

Monday was marred by the weather we have received much of recently. The weekend tow, which seemed to catch everyone out with it's speed, after weeks of waiting, did not leave enough time for arrangements to be made with either the council for road closures or to get dignitaries to meet the Medway Queen. Delayed, rather fortunately until Tuesday which dawned cloudless and gloriously flyable provided the opportunity to photograph the arrival and the small armada of even smaller 'Little Ships' which escorted it to the dock in Pier Approach Road, Gillingham. There will be opportunities to visit the ship later.

Skywritings February 2012 has more details about the restoration.



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Where to find Medway Queen
www.medwayqueen.co.uk

Dates for your Diary**28th Nov Strut Meeting****Licencing**

Justin Willcocks CAA

30 Nov -1st Dec The Flying Show

NEC, Birmingham

14th December (Saturday)**Strut Christmas Dinner**

Newnham Court Inn, ME14 5LH

7pm for 7:30pm

30th January 2014 AGM

Cobtree Manor Golf Club