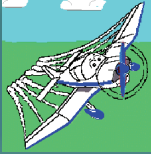


April 2017



SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Kent Strut*



Beating the weather and squishing flies

We need to move the weekend. Gary Smith

Doesn't it make you cross when the weekend weather is awful but Monday morning dawns bright and sunny with light winds, just as you start another dull old day at the office. This is made worse when the "mid week flyers" tell you "its always great weather on Tuesdays when we go flying", and you have to wonder if they are telling the truth.

A couple of us at Farthing corner had works holiday to use before the end of the financial year (1st April) so decided to tag along with the "Tuesday flyers" and sample some of this alleged mid week wonder weather. Word must have got out because on the last Tuesday of March there were six aircraft being fuelled at 10:00 and looking for a suitable destination.

Most of us had already taken advantage of March's free landing at Lydd (courtesy of the LAA magazine) so somebody suggested making the first overseas trip of the year and proposed Sandown on the Isle of Wight.



Nigel Read - Editor

Contents

Weekend timing p1

Turb talk p2

Sparkly Clean p3

DiY Medicals p4

Still waiting p5

Portugal p5

Last months talk p8

27th April Meeting

Building a Turbulent, Derek Levermore

Cobtree Manor Golf Club, ME14 3AZ 20:00hrs

www.laakentstrut.org.uk

The weather “playing ball” was rather unexpected so I swiftly did a route plan and checked Notams whilst sitting in the aeroplane (oh the delights of Wi-Fi and Sky Demon).

We initially flew over the scattered clouds that were sitting between 1000ft and 2000ft. As Shoreham approached the clouds started to close up so we found a gap and popped down through the forming layer to remain VFR. It was unfortunate that cloud at 10,000ft was preventing the sun from breaking through otherwise this low level cloud would have burnt off very swiftly.

The water crossing from Selsey Bill to the Isle of Wight is only about 7nm but feels much further when you are at 800ft. Eventually the Island came into view, the cloud base lifted and a large area of blue sky appeared over the airfield. A few in the group were apprehensive about the murky sea crossing but assurance from those in front that “all was well” ensured everybody got across.

After 10 minutes all six aeroplanes had landed and the controller came out of the tower to express his delight. He could not remember the last time so many aircraft had arrive from the same club at the same time and when asked for a “mass arrival discount” he willingly obliged (there had only been one other aircraft movement so far).

We would normally walk into town or get the train to Ryde but decided to make use of the on site café this time before heading home.

By early afternoon the cloud had lifted nicely, we could fly back to Selsey Bill at 2500ft and enjoy the 20kt tail wind as we meandered along the south coast. Two days later I flew to Clacton (another great destination) and again the weather was excellent for this time of year.

I think this is sufficient proof that mid week weather is better and we should either shift Saturday and Sunday along or the government should let pilots have a few extra days off during the week to keep in practice.

Aircraft on the trip :- Gardan Horizon, Jabiru J400, Vans RV9, Jodel 117, Jodel D120, PA22.

P.S. The controller was so taken by our mass arrival he parked us here-there and every where so our official photographer (Colin Evans) did not have a lens wide enough to get all of the planes in Tee Hee!

April Meeting

Derek Levermore a friend of Gary Smith’s from his model aeroplane club who built a turbulent back in the 1970’s and flew it from Rochester. Its registration was G-AWWT. He has some interesting tales from building as a member of the PFA and dealing with engine failure.

Muc(k) off - no really. Gary Smith

Everybody has their favourite aeroplane cleaning products and I have discovered a new one that is truly excellent. Every shop has its own little "aviation department", for example ALDI were recently shifting air compressors for £70 and Boots do a great range of flight timing clocks, but did you know Halfords are a new player in our game too.

In their cycling department you will find a squirty bottle of pink liquid called "Muc-off", allegedly for cleaning mountain bikes. I was struggling to remove some stubborn dead flies from under my aeroplanes wings (potentially scratching the paint) when friend passed by and applied a few squirts of Muck-off. After 30 seconds I simply wiped the mess away with a warm wet sponge.

The pink juice appears to leave a film behind that discourages further dirt from adhering and makes subsequent cleaning even easier. If you dilute the product by 50% it works just as well and apparently is fine on Perspex (although I have not tried this).

I thought "Muck-off" was going to be just another gimmick cleaning product but it is non acid, non solvent, biodegradable and really does the job. Hope to see you in the Halfords cycling department soon..... but please don't wear those skin tight cycling shorts.

(Note. Please test the products suitability somewhere discrete on your paintwork / Perspex before going large).

(Currently one litre costs £7 or two for a tenner on the website. A 5 litre container is £21 for really dirty cyclists and there is a range of Muc-off's for other assorted jobs. ed)



Self Declaration Medical Gary Smith

As from 26th August 2016 it has been possible (if you meet the requirements) to obtain a self declaration medical from the CAA. Providing you continue to meet the requirements (and operate within its limitations) you can fly annex II aircraft (basically LAA permit aircraft) in the UK without the need for a class II medical.

The question people ask is “why would you want a “self declaration medical” if you already have a current class II?”

The answers :-

- a) you are allowed to hold either or both types of medical at the same time
- b) in the event your class II medical expires or you can't get to your Aero Medical Examiner (AME) you can still fly (Annex II in the UK) on your self declaration medical - using it as a back up
- c) you can apply for a self declaration medical “on line” in 10 minutes
- d) there is no charge - “and if its for free then its for me”
- e) self declaration medicals are a step towards reducing aviation “red tape” and if people don't sign up it could get “lost”, leaving us with the expense and inconvenience of the Class II medicals.

You may have to do a bit of searching in the CAA website (nothing new here), you can only apply on line but the good news is that a recent website upgrade means the software works properly 99% of the time.

<https://www.caa.co.uk/General-Aviation/Pilot-licences/Medical-requirements/Medical-requirements-for-private-pilots/>

All the instructions and links are there.

Read the text to see if the restrictions suit your needs / personal conditions. If everything looks good then follow the link under “Completing the Pilot Medical Declaration”, accept the terms, have another look at more or less what you just read then complete the boxes and submit the form.

(That's as far as I checked as I don't meet the conditions! Ed)

CAA will return your application form (by e-mail) with a reference number on the top, you simply print this out and keep it as your Self declaration medical.

A lot of hard work has gone into achieving the “Self declaration medical” and this is real progress for *(most of)* us flyers. If there is a large enough “take up” in the UK perhaps the rest of the EU will formulate an equivalent

medical and our system will become internationally accepted. So I urge people to sign up, its free, you have nothing to loose but everything to gain.

Missing Propeller

For those of you following the non story of getting my defective propeller replaced, well despite an assurance it would arrive the day after I returned from holiday—still nothing, no email, no tracking number. I had rather hoped to write a glowing report on how good it is but I can't.

On the other hand, I have managed to get an improvement to the cooling with the Arplast prop by adding a couple of glass fibre vanes to the spinner just in front of each blade. Pieces of aluminium served as formers to get a tight bend that wrapped inside the spinner and should be able to remain in place when the wooden prop arrives. (I have not given up all hope of seeing it). We will then have two useable props. Also, a larger main jet was fitted at the suggestion of Dave Amey at Skycraft and between the two mods seems to work!

Also still waiting—the LAPL licence I applied for last month. 18 days to reply to an email!

Portugal *(ed's holiday)*

Monument near the Belém tower in Lisbon



Having just returned from Holiday in Portugal I came across this monument to a couple of Portuguese aviators in Lisbon. Our guide was not able to tell me much about them other than their names, which I promptly forgot and that it commemorated the first crossing of the south Atlantic by an aircraft. So with a simple search on Wikipedia I discovered the following:

Gago Coutinho and Sacadura Cabral were two Portuguese Naval pilots who in 1922 took off from Lisbon, near to where the monument is now and flew in several hops (and aircraft) to Rio de Janeiro, commemorating the centennial of Brazil's independence. Gago, died at the age of 90 in 1959 but Sacadura died in 1924 at the age of 43 when he crashed into the north sea or possibly the English channel.

The cross on the side has nothing to do with Germany but appears on the sails of Portuguese sailing boats and relates back to the Templers.

The aircraft, three of them, were Fairey III seaplanes.

They used astronomical navigation with an artificial horizon using spirit levels.

Fuel stops, ditching in rough seas and an engine failure in a rain storm resulted in the journey taking 79 days but only 62 hours 26 minutes flying. (assuming they noted the time of ditching correctly!).



They were variously rescued by their support ship and a British ship.

Hailed as heroes when they arrived in Rio de Janeiro they were met by huge crowds and Brazilian aviation pioneer Alberto Santos-Dumont.

Apparently they inspired many subsequent transatlantic flights including Lindbergh, five years later.

A quick skim through “Chasing the morning Sun”, I could not see that Manuel Queiroz was similarly inspired although probably at the back of his mind somewhere. I reread the part when in Lisbon he suffered a food related upset, loosing a nights sleep—as did I on my last night!



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Last months talk on Parachuting by Mike Negus' niece was a cracker!

It was certainly worth the effort to come along to the golf club and bask in Emma-Louise's enthusiasm!

(I'm still not doing it though!)

She has found many interesting places to jump, brought along her equipment and is clearly very knowledgeable on the subject—probably knows more about using gravity than Isaac Newton.

There was discussion on Licences, Training Levels, Disciplines and ratings, Formation, freeflying, tracking with arms behind and wing suits!

Canopy types have 7, 9 or 15 pockets.

The Skyvan can take 21 jumpers to 12000' in 10 minutes.

Dates for your Diary

27 Apr Turbulent build

13/14 May Amiens flyout

25 May McCudden VC

29 Jun Ripple BBQ

30 Jul Fly-in EGTO (Sunday)