



May 2019

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Kent Strut*



Vacation ventures

Sun N Fun 2019 Gary Smith

Sun-n-Fun commenced on 2nd April this year, Easter was late so the two did not clash and flight prices had not yet been hiked for the vocational period. My self check entry into America (ESTA) was still valid and somehow Orlando airport had sorted the immigration procedure so queues were short and it was a totally stress free experience (not like last year).

Hire car booking is really advanced these days. You collect your luggage, climb in a car, a lady scans it whilst you fumble for your licence and off you go into deepest Florida.

We chose to rent a villa just south of Disney which was cost effective for the four of us and central to the entertainment. The villa pool looked inviting but despite being 20 degrees warmer than the UK it sadly went unused.

Tuesday was the first day of the show. Brian Hope has been writing for the LAA magazine as long as he has been attending the shows, he uses his time wisely researching articles and deserves his media pass. We other scally wags have to



Nigel Read - Editor

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30th May Meeting

Peter Gorman Flight to China

Cobtree Manor Golf Club, 20:00hrs

www.laakentstrut.org.uk

Memphis Belle



pretend to be the “media liaison officer”, “microlight correspondent” and “research development technician” and blag it, but somehow it seems to work every year and in we all go.

The local weather was perfect for walking down the flight line. With fine sunshine and light winds it was not too hot but weather further up the state was holding up early morning arrivals. Interestingly the organisers had moved the homebuilders area from centre stage to one side and surprisingly it was not flooded with aircraft. What would normally have been a 10 acre field (mostly RV’s) was a fraction of this size and we were not sure why this was.

The usual exhibitors filled the four huge hangers with the latest technological offerings and a day could be justified doing these buildings properly. Frank off loaded some radio equipment in the flea market hall and it was interesting to see what people brought to rehome. To be honest we came away with more “stuff” than we sold but don’t tell them back home.

The show is also a convenient place to collect items you have pre-ordered and a fair time was spent at Spruce and Specialty stand with our shopping bags open. Frank ordered some bearings which had accidentally

been left behind, but true to their word they had them shipped to site in time to be picked up.

The EAA have a huge resource of volunteers who spend the week at the show helping out and there are demonstrations and seminars everywhere. We spent some time at the woodwork stand watching them build wing ribs for a Pietenpol Aircamper and did some "hands on" gas welding (last time I did this was at college and I was not wearing flip flops or shorts!!).

On another day we visited Kermit Weeks "Fantasy of Flight museum" about 20 miles north of Sun-n-Fun air show. Due to reduced foot fall the museum is only open at weekends and special occasions, a real pity because he has some great exhibits (see pictures).

For our evening meal we normally venture to one of the larger chain restaurants but decided for one occasion we should do it like the Americans and went to a road side diner called Smokey Joes. Avoiding the log pile in the yard (for the home made BBQ) we were apprehensive before even opening the door but it was a unique experience to be remembered. It was frequented by locals who were very friendly and they served great food on plastic plates with 1960's plastic table cloths. The locals did not have an appetite for alcohol but the management found some wine and glasses and rustled up a great dessert (which the locals did not appear to care for either). The price was stupidly cheap and it turned out to be great evening.

On another day we ventured north to visit a car museum in Mount Dora. The owner had been collecting car memorabilia for literally years and presented it beautifully in a pseudo garage environment. With neon signs and age related items around the cars it was totally unique and quite a surprise for its diminutive size. The town of Mount Dora was really pretty and miles apart from down town Kissimmee. There were pavements to walk on, pedestrian crossings to traverse and quaint little shops to browse. A walk to the water front found us a boat ride around the lake which turned out to be one on a chain of lakes spanning 50 or so miles across the state.

Having visited most of the theme parks in years gone by our last destination was Cocoa beach by Cape Canaveral. It reminded me of Clacton in many ways with its pier and little town spread either side. All too soon it was time to pack our bags full of aviation bits and bobs and head back to Orlando airport to catch the "tin bird" back to reality.

Sun-n-Fun 2020 runs from 31st March to 5th April, everybody needs to go at least once in a lifetime, will 2020 be your year?

John and Frank on the Sun-n-fun roundel.



Car made from an aircraft fuselage



The only flying "Twin Mustang"



Granville Brothers Gee Bee R-2 at Fantasy of Flight replica





Gas turbine Sonex



Exhibits in Mount Dora car museum



Buick settee in Mount Dora car museum

ARE AVIONICS GETTING TOO COMPLEX? By A.N. Other

Up to now all the cars I have owned over the years have been fitted with a car radio which were simple to operate having a single knob to turn it on and adjust the volume and a number of push buttons to select the station I wanted to listen to. I could change stations without stopping looking out of the window. My latest car has a small television screen and multiple buttons making changing from Radio 2 to Radio 4 a hazardous occupation.

Are we getting to the same stage with aircraft avionics where flying VFR we need to be looking out of the window and not at boxes in the aeroplane. Having had to buy a new 8.33 radio, I find that it has multiple menus accessed from a few number of buttons and knobs but which each all have various ways of operation. A long press on a button has a different result to a short press and putting a channel into the multiple memories requires more brain power than I have without looking at the instruction booklet. I also have one of the excellent Yaesu FTA-250 handheld radios as a back up and that too has many menus and options but all different from the fixed radio.

Then there is the Ipad running Skydemon. An excellent piece of kit but we not only have to understand how the Ipad operates but also the many options possible with the software. In its basic use SkyDemon is very simple – put a route in before you fly and the follow the magenta line to your destination. But it does much more than that and the temptation to explore these possibilities is very real. My little aeroplane has very few items to play with but when I look at the multiple screens of some VFR machines the problem must be much greater.

So, in a VFR world, are we spending too much time looking at our avionics at the expense of looking out of the window to stop us bumping into other flying machines? I am sure the Editor would welcome opinions on this subject!

Meeting 30/05/2019

Peter Gorman has done a number of long trips in his RV7 but his latest one all the way to China in a Mooney M20 is exceptional. Peter lives in Dublin and (weather permitting) will be making a special trip to talk to us on his memories of the trip.

DAKS over Normandy at Duxford From Mike Negus

The 75th Anniversary of the D Day landings in 1944 is bringing together probably the last series of large scale commemorations we shall see, none more so than the event described below.

Taken from the Daks over Normandy website:-

June 2019 provides us with the very last opportunity to organize Daks over Normandy and to honour those who have paid so much to liberate Europe. Daks over Normandy will be a once in a lifetime event. The skies over the United Kingdom and Normandy, France will be filled with Douglas DC-3/C-47 Dakotas and hundreds of Paratroopers. For the first time since World War II will this many of these magnificent aircraft be assembled in the very place where they saw their finest hour. From 2 to 9 June 2019 over thirty DC-3/C-47's will come together. Their owners and operators fly them in from all over the Globe. From Scandinavia, The Netherlands and the rest of Europe, from Canada and the United States and even from as far away as Australia. All for what may well prove the very last time. Just so everyone can watch paratroopers jump over Normandy once more and admire these wonderful aircraft on the ground and in the air, where they belong.

The Daks over Normandy event is held in two locations: from 2 to 5 June at Duxford Airfield in the United Kingdom and from 5 to 9 June at Caen Carpiquet Airport in Normandy, France! Both locations were carefully chosen because of their facilities and their infrastructure and because of their World War II heritage.

On 5 June 2019 we will follow into the footsteps of the Greatest Generation! About 250 men and women will board the aircraft in the United Kingdom to, exactly like 75 years before, fly across the English Channel and to jump into the historic drop zones of Normandy. They will be wearing WWII style Allied uniforms and will jump military round parachutes. It will be an event which has no equal. History in the making. Again! Just like in 1944.

<https://www.military-airshows.co.uk/press19/daks-over-normandy-duxford.htm#>

By following this link you can find out all about the event but if you want the chance to see 30 plus Dakota / DC3 / C47 aircraft passing over Kent they are routing via Southend (timed at 14.29) and Maidstone (timed at

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14.37) which should route them a mile or so West of Farthing Corner if they don't swerve over Rochester.

I for one am quite excited by this and I am going to Duxford on the Wednesday. All we want is good weather and not as it was on that fateful day!

<https://tinyurl.com/y467akq8>

For tickets

<https://tinyurl.com/y5ungsoj>**Dates for your Diary 2019**

30th May Mooney M20 to China

27th June BBQ Ripple

25th July Pub social near Canterbury

August no meeting - Rally

26th September tbc

31st October tbc

28th November tbc

Christmas Dinner December TBA