



September 2019

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Kent Strut*



Two Rallies

RSA Rally 2019 John Dean

The RSA (Reseau du Sport de L'Air) is the French equivalent to our LAA and hold a Rally every year in the summer. The location seems to change at regular intervals but for the last few years it has been held at the airfield of Brienne-le-Chateau to the south east of Paris.

Three Jodels and an RV from Farthing Corner decided to attend this year setting off on the Friday to spend the first night at the delightful town of Semur en Auxois as we only had hotel accommodation booked for the Saturday night at Brienne.

Taking off from Farthing Corner on a beautiful flying day for our first stop at Calais my airspeed indicator decided that it wouldn't work and resolutely showed zero. I decided that a landing at the long runway at Calais was preferable to a return to the short strip runway. Arriving safely it was only the work of a few minutes to clear the blockage in the pitot tube.

Having cleared customs and over a cup of coffee we decided that a stop on the way to Semur was



Nigel Read - Editor

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Sept 26th Meeting

The Dambusters, Guy Bartlett

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

www.laakentstrut.org.uk

Sézanne



called for and chose Sézanne for no other reason that most of us had not been there before. It proved to be a typical French club airfield with little going on but a club member opened up the clubhouse and sat with us in the sunshine chatting over our drinks.

Another flight in excellent weather saw us land at Semur airfield, another quiet French airfield but with a hard runway this time. It is only a fairly short walk into the town and we had a hotel booked in the town centre which we had been to before and liked the old world family run style of it. After a wash and brush up we headed out into the town for dinner and wandered down to the river to a restaurant we had been to before but found it "complet" but with many eating places it was not difficult to find an excellent alternative.

Walking back to the airfield in the morning a car stopped to give us a lift and it turned out to be a club member who opened up the hangar to proudly show us his aircraft. The flight to Brienne was short and despite

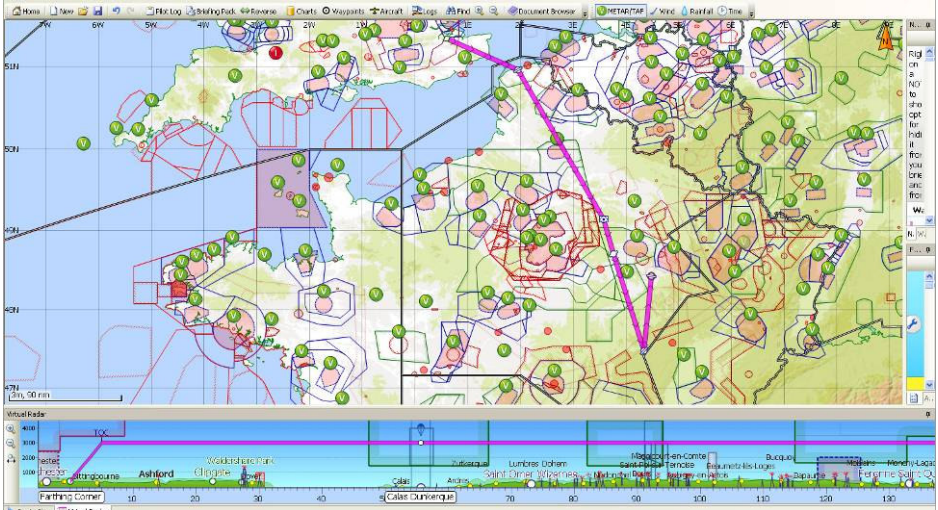
Semur



being a well attended rally the arrival procedure worked well and without any trauma. The Rally was its usual excellent self in hot sunshine although not as hot as the previous year when it was uncomfortably scorching. With good food available

and many interesting aircraft to look at the day passed quickly. If you have never been to the RSA Rally then it is well worth a visit although nowhere near as large as the LAA one. We were very fortunate that Brian (Hope) had decided to attend by car and was not only able to give us a lift to our hotel but had also sussed out a suitable restaurant in the town and provide transport there and back later in the evening.

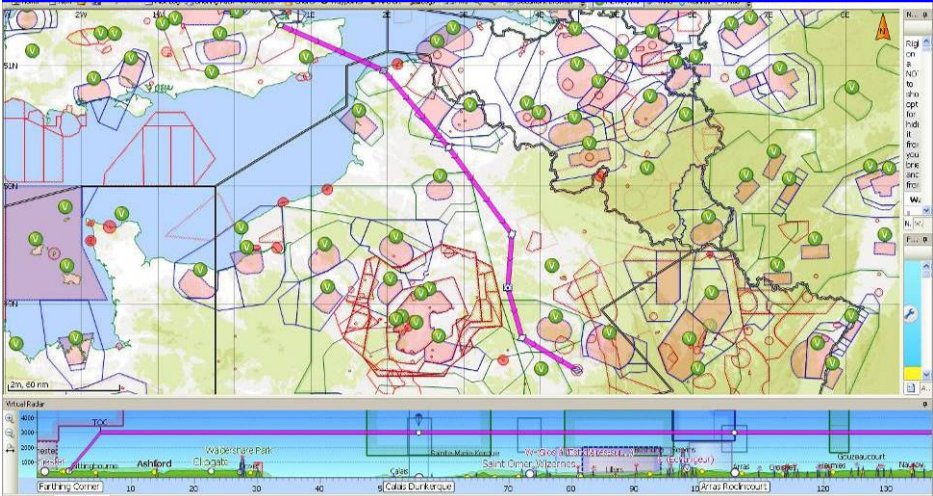
Walking back to the airfield in the morning we spent another couple of hours at the Rally before setting off for our next night stop at Laon which is



a pretty town on the top of a hill with the airfield a few miles away on the plain. Booking accommodation is easy these days with booking.com and a suitable hotel in the town was soon found and a taxi organised. Another fine dinner in the evening at a restaurant overlooking the Cathedral which was probably more expensive because of the view but very enjoyable to be able to sit outside in the warm atmosphere.

Laon





The following morning we had a problem. There were no taxis available and it was too far to walk back to the airfield even if it was mostly downhill (3.9km)! The hotel proprietor took pity on us and his wife gave us a lift. Showing her around the aeroplanes she was fascinated and despite having lived in the town for many years had never been to the airfield.

Again we decided to break our trip to Calais by dropping in at Arras on the way for a coffee in the restaurant on the airfield which looks to serve excellent lunches and would be well worth visiting for that purpose. The flight to Calais for customs was uneventful but we found the restaurant on the field is closed on Mondays so it was a walk into the village of Marck before returning for the last flight of the weekend back to the UK. For the first time during the weekend the weather had deteriorated meaning the first half of the channel crossing was done at very low level before we flew in good weather again for the last part of a very enjoyable weekend.

Have a look at Google maps and search for L'aerodrome de Brienne-le-Chateau and there are a number of photographs loaded apparently in the last month. (Ed)

LAA BMAA merger

A presentation on the proposals was recorded at the Rally and you can watch it at <https://tinyurl.com/yxd9k3tr>

A copy of the an information paper is here

<https://tinyurl.com/yyshc434>

The AGM is on 20th October at Sywell

Sywell Rally (*Pinched from the Devon Strut Newsletter*)

The 2019 LAA Rally proved an enduring success, with over 50 individual trade exhibitors, 779 visiting aircraft and more than 4,000 visitors over the weekend-long event. Despite the challenges posed by the weekend weather and gusting conditions on the Saturday, as well as a more rigid 'slot' system imposed by the CAA, Sywell air traffic handled a total of 1,580 movements over the Rally weekend, an average of an aircraft every 1 minute 45 seconds. Notwithstanding the impressive statistics of the event, it's the 'craic' that makes it for most attendees. One of the stars of the Rally was the public debut of the ISA180 Seeker, designed by Ivan Shaw, best known for the highly successful Europa kit plane and the Liberty XL2 certificated type. His latest project, a Rotax 912iS-powered machine, is what he calls a 'personal aircraft', designed to meet Ivan's ideal personal aerial transport requirements. It is a twin-boomed pusher aircraft that will carry a 6ft 5in tall pilot, a full-size folding bicycle, a tent and personal baggage at a designed 180kts cruise speed. (*Not sure if all at the same time. Ed*). Ivan gave an entertaining talk about the Seeker, in his usual inimitable Yorkshire style, on the Saturday evening of the Rally. Wings fold back outboard of the booms.



(At a meeting three years ago, Ivan stated his intention to design a "pocket rocket" but pass it on to someone else to market. Ivan enjoys the element of design rather than the production although he is a pretty good salesman. Ed)

Reduced to common thievery and plagiarism, also in their newsletter is a piece on corrosion in a Luscombe tail (items brought to my attention by Kevin Marks). It seems there have been at least two recent cases caused by mice and wasps making nests inside the tailplane. Mice I understand do not possess bladders and leave a trail of urine everywhere presumably the corrosive substance. The proud Devonshire owner had his tailplane rebuilt by Owen Watts at The Aeroplane Workshop in Hampshire, using a jig which the owner, Chris Howell has for sale. Infestations of any sort could affect any aircraft where they can find a way in so it is worth checking inside any almost closed box sections. The Aircraft is now back



together permitted and painted in Norwich City FC colours so any passing canaries would feed at home.

September Meeting

Guy Bartlett is a professional speaker who has a number of aircraft related talks which he has researched and presents in an informative way. He is also a qualified teacher and UAV pilot. Our coordinator, Gary has a particular interest in the Dambusters having flown his RV over the reservoirs in a mock attack. (Nov 2011/Jan 2012 Skywritings!)



North East corner of the Möhnesee

October Meeting

Due to a function at the Golf Club we have to move the meeting forward one week!

What Steve Solley gets up to during harvest

No further explanation, but it looks like “go flying while someone else gets on with it?”



Also, a quick ice cream stop at Ripple



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Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP Secretary of State for Transport at the Rally,

You tube presentation and Q & A

<https://tinyurl.com/y4k7wtho>*Sorpe Dam**Edersee***Dates for your Diary 2019**

Note: due to a function at the Golf Club the OCTOBER Meeting will be brought forward a week.

26th September Dambusters

24th October Paul Cattanach

28th November tbc

Christmas Dinner December TBA