

WYE VALLEY FLYERS NEWSLETTER JUN 04

Incorporating Broadmeadow Flying Club

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5th Edition

Editorial Comment

You may well have noticed the distribution of this newsletter has increased recently, last time around Eddie Clapham and Eric and Pat Woods this time Phillip Whitmore. Anyone else out there? Give me a call but more importantly your e-mail address.

North Weald – Aerofair 2004

I went to the Aerofair 2004 at North Weald on Saturday 22nd May, with a PPR slot time of 1115 hrs. I had a quick flight with a strong tail wind; it was a busy circuit with a variety of GA aircraft all doing their interpretation of an overhead join. Not a lot of microlights (only saw a couple of flex wings), basically the target audience is to those with serious money. Nothing like Popham or Kemble it has a complete different atmosphere, no large crowds, lots of hospitality tents and a professional atmosphere. But it is well organized, good facilities, lots of aircraft to drool over and some stunning air displays; warbirds, business jets, aerobatic displays and even a Pilatus going through its paces. On the surface not cheap at £15 but it includes your landing fee, which having paid £11.50 recently to land on deserted airfields with no facilities in the Scottish Islands begins to look reasonable value! Anyway the weather was good and I managed to get a close up of the 450kg version of the German made Fascination (see picture below). What a beauty, sleek, quality, retractable and expensive! No harm in dreaming as it is not likely to make the UK microlight register.



Warbirds (3 types of Yak) over North Weald.



Flex Wing Over Everest

So RMH made it. On the 24th May he successfully circled the summit of Everest (29,028ft) towing a hang glider piloted by an Italian. He received excellent press coverage (unusual for microlight activities). Congratulations well deserved and I only hope we get a fuller report in MF magazine in due course. I can only imagine the feelings of the seven climbers who successfully summited having spent several months acclimatizing and moving progressively up the mountain, a 20 hour climb from camp 6 (and 3 days to get back down again). When into sight comes Mr. Rotax; circles several times, waves and flies away – home 30 minutes later! Depressing or what?

Finally got Roger to put pen to paper over the recent purchase of his flex wing and the trial and tribulations resulting...

Part 1 – A New Plane

By Roger Coppin.

Having finally got my ticket and become a fully-fledged pilot (sorry about the pun), I wanted to spread my wings (sorry, I really will stop now) and buy a new plane. I then pondered the question – which plane to buy? I decided to seek the advice of my fellow Club Members and friends – what a mistake! Never, ever ask a group of enthusiasts their opinion on a specific make. I was recommended to buy every model known to man! In the end I opted for a blend of comfort and speed and decided on a Quasar.

I scoured the magazines and spotted a few possibilities, which came to nothing in the end. Undeterred, I finally found a 'find' in Fife (try saying that after a few pints!). As with all things, you should try before you buy, so I jumped on Easyjet and visited Fife and my potential new plane. My cunning plan was to act normal but dumb (no acting lessons required for the latter), which seemed to work well with the very enthusiastic individual at the airfield. A few hours, an Easyjet flight and a phone call with the owner later and the deal was done – without too much haggling. It wasn't until I posted the cheque off that I began to wonder how I was going to get my new purchase back to Broadmeadow, it's new home.

But then, who is that up in Blackpool – it's Russell to the rescue! He agreed to drive from Blackpool to Fife, collect the plane and deliver it to Hereford. What a star! The day arrived, and all seemed well with a phone call from Russell to say he has departed from Fife. The next phone call was not quite so reassuring – it sounded like this: "It's 2200 hours, I'm cold, wet and tired. I'm stuck outside Worcester and I've lost a tyre on my trailer. Tell me again why I agreed to do this?!"

Now where are you going to get another trailer or a spare wheel at this time of night? What size wheels are they? As you can imagine this is not a good train of thought. But when in doubt, call in the cavalry (Queens Dragoon Guards to be precise) in the shape of Alan Bucknell – friend able assistant and all round good egg who doesn't mind his so called friends yelling "Help" down the phone in the middle of the night. Alan arrives bearing tools and a discussion ensues on a plan of action.

Unfortunately for my domestic bliss, the plan involves stealing a wheel from Short legs (that's She Who Must Be Obeyed)) Renault Clio, collecting up all other spare wheels and setting off for Worcester. Luckily we find Russell straight away, unluckily none of the wheels fit the trailer! Alan then has a revelation – at home he has an adaptor plate, which could solve all our problems. To cut a very long story short, he got home, smiled sweetly at his wife, came back to Worcester armed with the adaptor plate and it worked! So my new plane arrived at Broadmeadow in the midst of a howling gale at 0030 hours – what a night and what a welcome!

She was built the next day, flown a week later (with Alan as passenger in case of breakdown – I mean as a thank you!). Despite all the hassle, it was definitely worth it; the plane is exactly what I was looking for.

P.S. I am now an official FAI / BMAA Observer and have just got my Bronze Colibri.

I don't have a clue why Roger included the last bit unless some one out there is going for a record attempt? Obviously Claire has the right of reply, which she has chosen to exercise...

Part 2 – The Microlight Widow By Claire Bond (aka Shortlegs)

When Roger mentioned he wanted a new plane, I didn't pay a great deal of attention. As a long-suffering Microlight Widow I had developed my selective hearing to a very high standard. As he discussed the pros and cons of a kiss (not the kind you may think), a Quasar (not a fun laser game) and a Quik (definitely not how fast he comes home), I nodded and smiled and gave the dutiful response of "sounds lovely dear".

Then everything changed as Roger was mobilized for six months and posted to a hostile country (Nottingham). He was very lucky and had quite a bit of time off, and kept in touch well with regular phone calls.

Imagine my surprise when I received this call – "Hi, I've been working really hard, hostility in Nottingham isn't improving, oh and by the way I have just flown to Fife and back to look at a plane, take care, Bye!"

The next conversation involved a lot of "Ooh and Aah" about how lovely this plane is. Being a well-adapted Widow, my response was – "When? And How Much?" When we discussed the amount and I dispatched the cheque, little did I know I was going to cost me a wheel off my car as well!

The day finally arrived (no not the first flying of the new plane) of Roger's de-mob. He was granted a little post tour leave. How naive I was to think we may have a little quality time, but alas he was always with his new bird at the Airfield. He even visited her before me on his first day home.

Still this sounds like a lot of complaining but it is the lot of the Microlight Widow. The plus side is you always know where they are, what they're doing and if you want to plan anything, make sure the weather is bad. Another note to potential Microlight Widows – you will spend a lot of time checking the weather forecast anticipating if he's had a good days flying, or if he will be unbearable (bottom lip definitely out!)

Blois Part 2 By Spencer was going to go here but it has yet to be produced... Suggest you hound him when you next see him.

Fly UK Previously known as Round Britain Rally.

The Organiser has now gone firm on the dates and the itinerary. Meeting at Long Marston on the evening of Friday 18 Jun, going around the UK anti clockwise in slow time, camping and fuel is arranged and various airfields are putting on BBQ and entertainment. Ends up running along the South coast into Sandown IOW the following Friday in time for Spamfield. I have got my name down and will let the weather dictate my final movements. This should be good fun, anyone else interested in attending give me a call for the full details – you can do parts if you wish.

Last year at Sandown IOW (Spamfield) just before it rained (photo by Spence).



Calendar - Events

The next few months are very busy with Fly-ins and aviation events all over the country and abroad, in fact to many to mention in this newsletter. Although having mentioned Spamfield, the BFC arranged by Spence have got a van going over to the IOW carrying non-flying members, excess kit and beer! It is hoped we can arrive roughly about the same time and bag a piece of real estate, ring Spence nearer the time to work out the timings if you are interested. We have quite a few members going so if you are not confident to go on your own there is a good chance escorts can be arranged. This apart from the PFA Rally at Kemble is the one big event of the year – will you be there?

The one event worth mentioning is our own Club Fly-in; strictly speaking this is the BFC event with WVF involvement. Due to be held at Broadmeadow 03 Jul, Russ has got the lead and has advertised the event in his normal manner (to the whole of the UK)! Nearer the time he will be requesting assistance – please help out if you can and make the effort to attend.

Aviators Digest – Titbits

Bill has had a few more flights in the Chevron and a fright when the engine coughed whilst low and slow. Nothing really considering he had 2 engine failures in the course of one day when he was doing his conversion training. He did promise to write the story up...

Neville set off for France to join the Otherton boys on a Red Baron flight, got as far as Ross when the engine started misfiring. So back he came.

Chris Long and his Zenair are coming on fine; Chris can see light at the end of the tunnel with many of the small alterations now complete and the overall package just about ready for test flying.

Brian, Eddie Clapham with friend Bill and myself in a trio of Eurostars went up to the Perth Airshow and PFA Rally. The journey up started in poor conditions and improved as we went North, 3hr 30min saw us in Perth. Then 2 days of rain, wind, mist, cloud etc saw me and Eddie do the Round Scotland Microlight Rally. Needless to say for the journey back the weather was superb, 4hrs exact from Oban. Quite an eventful few days, good arrangements, well hosted and a few beers drunk! I might tell the full story next edition.

Social Fixtures

Until the autumn WVF and BFC Club members meet at Broadmeadow Airfield on the first Thursday of every month about 2000hours. Any like-minded aviators, are welcome to drive or fly, why not socialize and join us for a drink?

Comment

Grateful if anyone out there can put pen to paper, stories, snippets anything. Give me a call or e-mail.

Regards Merv.