



November 2004

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Mid Kent Strut* of the



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Mike's Mutterings

Mike Negus -
Editor



The Shuttleworth Collection

November Meeting – Come and Enjoy

Shuttleworth Flying

Exciting things to read this month

- Mistake to learn from
- Pictures of Strut Aircraft particularly needed
- Please let Editor Mike have your articles for inclusion in the Newsletter

The Shuttleworth Collection is in a quiet countryside setting, actually on an old fashioned all grass aerodrome with eight hangars. These hangars comprise an aeroplane engineering workshop, a garage and coachroom, and the remainder house the world famous collection of aircraft.

of WW2 and he has the enviable job of flying most of these machines and checking out the other display pilots entrusted with these sometimes unique examples.



If you have never been, then put it on your "to do" list at once. Whilst, realistically, I will never be allowed to fly any of their aircraft, the next best thing is to hear Andy Sephton tell you all about it at the next Strut Meeting.

Andy is the Chief Pilot for The Shuttleworth Collection of aircraft predominantly spanning the earliest days of flight through to the end

Andy will be giving a talk on how he and the staff at the Trust go about producing the standard of flying to ensure that the collection will be enjoyed for many years to comewhich costs money so to that end there will be some merchandise on sale to support this in the shape of their calendars which will be good value at £9.50 so for that 'I never know what to get them for Christmas' problem this could be your answer so bring your wonga to support the cause. Don't forget most of the guys like Andy come to us

Don't forget the November Meeting is all about Shuttleworth Aircraft by their Chief Pilot - Andy Sephton



Ford Museum at Dearborn



*" Eclectic
collection of
cars, aeroplanes
and engines"*



*Another Picture of the Ford
Museum*



for no fee so it would be good to put something back. Whatever, it will be a good final talk before.....

Christmas Dinner Saturday 4th December 2004 Cobtree Manor Golf Club

Enclosed with the Newsletter is a repeat of the Menu and response slip so when you have sorted your requirements rush them to Jaqui if you have not already done so in order that arrangements can be finalized as soon as possible.

We always have a great time at these Dinners and this one promises no different and if your wives/girlfriends/spouses get fed up with hearing of your aviating derring do at home then here at last they can at least be wined and dined with other like minded souls and realize they are not alone! (Which leaves you to natter to your mates about THE most important thing in life whilst they have a distraction particularly if an early start is made on the wine) SEE YOU THERE!

Rochester Airport Café

Paul Britten has put out a statement regarding arrangements for the Café which will remain open despite a change of management. Some changes to opening hours will involve an earlier start for those healthy breakfasts but during the Winter it will be closed Mon/Tues but the clubroom and vending machines will be available during the Airport opening hours. Prices will be lowered and there will be one 'special' lunch per day as well as all the normal fare. For further information at this stage please go to the Company website at www.rochesterairport.co.uk where you can also find details of the special of the day. Thanks from a personal perspective to the previous incumbents who certainly provided a much needed facility to the airport users.

Henry Ford Meets Brooklands - A tale of Two Museums

I was pleased to receive a report and some photos taken by Nigel Read, sometime Europa driver and Strut stalwart of his visit to Brooklands at the end of October as part of our where to go days out and he also sent in some more photos taken at the Henry Ford Museum at Dearborn near Detroit from a recent business tip of which a little more anon. I thought it would be agreeable to link the two trips as there are similarities albeit from different perspectives.

Brooklands for some years during and after the First World War was home to Vickers Ltd the aeroplane manufacturer whose finest product from those days was the RAF SE5a fighter of which incidentally we may here first hand account of its flying characteristics when Andy Sephton gives his talk in November's Strut Meeting as the Shuttleworth Collection owns an example, but I digress.

A great deal of motor racing took place between the wars and there still remains within the museum site the chance to view a section of the famous banked track round which the 7litre Bentleys and other exotica raced. Amongst the exhibits is the Manuel Willow Wren Glider built in 1932 by WL(Bill)Manuel then a serving Corporal in the RAF and was the 62nd glider registered by the BGA and now holds the distinction of being the oldest surviving British Glider. It was stored for many years at Dunstable after setting the British duration record of 6hrs 55mins and eventually found its way to Brooklands via a grant from the Lottery fund. Bills other claim to fame was the work constructing the tail fins for Alcock and Browns Transatlantic Vickers Vimy in 1919.

Brooklands is home to an eclectic collection of cars, aeroplanes, engines and other memorabilia and is well worth a visit if you did not go recently. The area is under redevelopment and we can only hope the Museum and exhibits are treated sympathetically for the public to enjoy for years to come exemplified by two classics in the Hawker Hunter in its T.Mk.7 guise and the Napier Railton

A new barber nicked a customer badly while giving him a shave. Hoping to restore the man's feeling of well being, he asked, " Do you want you head wrapped in a hot towel ?"

"No thanks," replied the customer, "I'll carry it home under my arm."

another British thoroughbred.

Dearborn however is home to Americas achievements in transport and life in general courtesy of the Henry Ford Museum set up to educate Americas youth and includes Orville and Wrights bike shop, which may be original , with other resurrected original and replica buildings depicting early engineering pioneers. Of interest is Fords attempt to break in to the popular flying market with the Ford Flivver built in 1926 as a single seater and the Pitcairn Auto Gyro. Pitcairn is not a name I am familiar with but by all accounts he worked very closely with Cierva but was told, by whom I don't know, to give up all his helicopter work to Sikorsky, whose name I am familiar with who after years of trying to get his own helicopter work to succeed finally achieved this within 6 months of this happening. This so upset Pitcairn, understandably, that he topped himself because he did not receive the recognition he felt he deserved.

Other goodies are an example of the Ford 4-AT Tri Motor which took part in some of the Antarctic exploration with Admiral Boyd and the Fokker FVIIa/3m Tri Motor used by Bird over the Arctic. There are examples of both the Pitcairn Autogyro and the Vought-Sikorsky V-S300 helicopter of 1938, the first practical helicopter built in the USA.

Nigel incidentally works for the Ford Motor Co and was part of a group invited over to HQ for a week receiving an award from the company for work on a new Diesel engine and got to meet Bill Ford Jnr so not a bad little jolly! If you would like further info on this museum if planning a trip thataway try www.thehenryford.com for more details.

Last Months Meet

Well thank you Karl for a most entertaining account of your trip to Cyprus via RV 6 which, judging by the number of questions asked by the members attending seems to have fired up the imagination. Will we see record numbers of the membership heading east, dunno it's a hard act to follow but we look forward to further tales from the Irish connection. Thanks to those who provided technical support to enable a first rate presentation by Karl, obviously a fair bit of effort went in and if we can have the projector screen again for the November Meeting please Julian

All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.

Mistakes I Have Made

Brian Hope.

AAIB reports are a classic example of how in aviation we pass on the lessons learned from others' misfortunes. It is a system that has undoubtedly saved many lives over the years and has led to a commendably excellent safety record. However, there are inevitably many of us who have experienced 'close shaves' due to poor airmanship, poor piloting technique, misjudgement, or just plain bad luck. Fortunately we have survived to tell the tale, but telling the tale is something that really needs to extend beyond the clubroom bar, so I am going to share this recent misdemeanour with you so that, forewarned, you will be in a better position to avoid a similar pitfall.

Fuel (mis)management.

I have owned and flown my Jodel D117 for seventeen years, that's a lot of hours in which you, and I, would have thought I had pretty well learned most of what there is to know about flying this simple and forgiving aircraft. The D117 has two fuel tanks, one between the panel and front firewall, and the other underneath the rear parcel shelf. They are of approximately equal capacity. In keeping with the simplicity of the design, no electric fuel pump backs up the engine driven mechanical pump, so take off and landings are made on the front tank, which has a degree of gravity feed should the pump fail.

Once in the cruise, normal practice is to change to the rear tank and burn that off first so as to move the c of g forward. On depleting the rear tank, or when approaching the destination, the front tank is selected. I have an accurate fuel gauge on the rear tank so I am able to leave switching it over until it is down to less than a gallon.

This saga begins whilst on a trip to Barcelona in June. Landing at Albi late in the afternoon after a two and a half hour flight from Amboise, we were too late to refuel. Having night stopped we were keen to get away early, and rather than wait around for the refueller to arrive, we decided to make the short hop to Carcassonne, where we could refuel and file a flightplan for the crossing into Spain. With the rear fuel tank showing just a couple of gallons I remained on the front tank until, with about five miles to run, I 'prepared' for arrival at destination by switching to the front tank, but in fact had changed to the rear tank. With a Ryanair flight also on the way in, we needed to be particularly



Willow Wren



"down to less than a gallon"



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Dates for your Diary

Nov 25	Andy Sephton
Dec 4	Christmas Dinner
Jan 27	AGM
Feb 24	Dick Richardson

accurate with navigation and position reporting, but having been slotted neatly into the circuit, I proceeded to land.

It was not until I had parked at the pumps that my heart missed a beat when I realised I had flown the last few miles and landed on the nearly empty rear fuel tank. I had been very fortunate that it still had a couple of gallons in it, rather than the usual small quantity, and it had proved sufficient. It could so easily have run dry at a most inopportune moment, at low level and low approach speed.

Certainly a case of familiarity leading to a robotic action without actually thinking about what I was doing. I didn't see the fuel selector, even though I looked at it. The downwind checks are just that - checks - so do check, don't just go through the motions.

So, what have I learned and what do I now do differently? Well, for one I actually say to myself 'change tanks and check fuel selector position', and I also make sure that I don't run the rear tank down to less than two gallons, therefore ensuring that should I suffer another bout of stupidity I will have sufficient reserve to see me down safely. Remember, safe flying is about maximising options and minimising risks.

Oostend 2005

Yes, it won't be long and next season will be on us. Graham Hammond e-mailed in to say that whilst Le Touquet, Abbeville, Midden Zeeland or Dieppe seems to be the popular day trip destinations in his opinion Oostend is a first class place to go. Yes its big, it's commercial and a bit more expensive than Le Touquet but it is friendly and accommodating with excellent transport links.

Flying Time not much more than Le Touquet in fact the longest part he feels is the downwind leg of the 3200metre runway. In September, his last visit his Jabiru was slotted in between two 737's doing touch and go's, now that is friendly! You are ferried from your aircraft to the main terminal building and you will need your passport for customs. Outside there is a bus stop on the left (far end) and a regular 20 minute bus service in to



www.solleysicecreams.co.uk

town for just 1 euro each. Oostend is a typical Continental seaside resort with wonderful beaches smashing prom and a first class shopping centre.

Within the town there is the ferry port combining a marina and right in the middle the train station where you can catch a train to Bruges just 30 mins away for about 7 euros each. Having been myself a number of times although not in the past 5 years it sounds about time to catch up so put it on your list of possibles for next year.

Round Up Time

Has anybody got access to a Laptop and Projector for Power Point Presentations? As you can see by last months talk and others from the recent past we are getting slicker and that has to be a good thing however although we have some access to this equipment it is entirely down to goodwill and availability so it would be good if we can have a 'pool' to call on to avoid constantly calling on the same resource.

Looking ahead we have in January the AGM more on that next issue and in February another fine talk in the offing with the return of Dick Richardson, the popular Popham Manager. We have a number of other ideas in the pipeline and we will let you know as they develop unless you have any ideas we are always open to suggestions and we are always, always in need of articles for the Newsletter preferably with photos but anything welcome, remember more of you is less of me and that has got to be a Very Good Thing.

E-Group for Mid Kent Strut

One of our members suggested the above and I know that a request has gone out by e-mail to gauge opinion and we will report back through the Newsletter on take up of the idea which basically should be a forum for pooling information on all matters particularly projects and could be useful for locating that tool or spares or what have you. Watch this space.

**MID KENT STRUT
XMAS DINNER 2004
Cobtree Manor Golf Club
(usual Strut night venue)**

**SATURDAY 4th DECEMBER
7:00pm for 7:30pm**

MENU

Starters (choice of)

Cream of Vegetable & Tomato Soup [1]
Duck & Orange Pate [2]
Smoked Salmon Parcels [3]

Main Courses (choice of)

Stilton Topped Ribeye Steak [A]
Rolled Escalope of Turkey [B]
Mushroom & Nut Stroganoff [C]
(all the above are served with seasonal vegetables & potatoes)

Desserts (choice of)

Traditional Christmas Pudding [a]
Double Chocolate Bavaois [b]
Woodland Fruit Cheesecake [c]

£22.50 per person, including entertainment

[OR £27.50 per person to include $\frac{1}{2}$ bottle of house wine]

The tables will be decorated with party poppers, hats & crackers creating a great Christmas atmosphere. Please join us.

Please return this slip to Jaqui Clark. Cheques payable to Mid Kent Strut please. Minimum deposit is £5.00 per head New Orchard Farm, Upper Rodmersham, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 0QL. Or call 01795 830378 to reserve your place

(please circle your choices and state whether wine is required) Starter / Main / Dessert

Name: 1 2 3 / A B C / a b c

Guest: 1 2 3 / A B C / a b c

Guest: 1 2 3 / A B C / a b c

Guest: 1 2 3 / A B C / a b c