



September 2014

SKYWRITINGS

Newsletter of the *Kent Strut*



Monte in a £200 car



Nigel Read - Editor

Monte Carlo Madness 6-9th September 2014

Steve Solley

This is a note to everyone who kindly donated money to Martha Trust - The Monte Carlo Madness. With your help we raised just over £4000 including Gift Aid.

Our trip started in Dover where we grouped before setting sail for Calais. Once on the road we headed direct to Dijon via the toll roads arriving at our first hotel at 6.30pm after travelling some 365 miles. This section was fairly uneventful apart from one car which was in desperate need of fuel. They managed to coast into a filling station a few miles down the road.

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to Monte Carlo
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trip through
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**25th September Meeting
Aviation Lawyer—Tim Scorer
Cobtree Manor Golf Club, 20:00hrs**

www.kentstrut.co.uk

The scenery comprised of vast open farmland which was quite flat but still interesting to look at as I hadn't driven further south than Paris before. This road was the A5/E17 quite strait with not a lot of traffic.

Day 2 started well with a typical continental breakfast comprising a wide range of fresh bread, fruit and cheese and good coffee. The route changed to the slower roads through the countryside and pretty villages. We stopped for lunch at Bouge-en-Bresse just north of Lyon. As it was Sunday the restaurants were fully booked. Fortunately the local bakery in the square was open, so filled baguettes were the order of the day. They were very filling.

Realising we had sill over 200 miles to our next hotel we had to give up our siesta under the trees in the square and move on. We continued to Lyon were we went back onto the toll roads.

Now the scenery was beginning to change with the Alps in the background and the temperature rising into the low 70's, also the start of the wine regions. If only time was allowed for tasting!!

Thus far we were able to keep together but on arriving in Avignon things went wrong. Everyone went in their own directions to find the hotel. So we decided to drive through the town before finding our hotel. Fortunately the satnav worked on our phone. Avignon is a beautiful walled town on the banks of the river Rhone. After finding the hotel which is part of golf club, first stop was the bar for a well-earned beer and a de-brief of the day's journey. We then returned to the town to enjoy the evening eating and drinking the fine food and wine.

On day 3 our car had a little mishap. The air-conditioning dropped all its gas, Strange!! Also cars seemed to lose their wiper blades and one car travelled on 3 cylinders for most of the way.

Just after midday we all arrived in Monte Carlo. We checked into our hotel and then took the cars for a drive round the town before parking them in the garage for the duration of our stay.

We re-grouped for the evening at a very nice restaurant overlooking the main harbour for a final dinner, returning to our hotel between 2 and 4am.

Sadly it was time to leave for the Airport at Nice via the scrap yard where we had to part company with our cars, which had helped us raise so much money for a very worthy charity, Martha Trust. (www.marthatrust.org.uk/montecarlomadness) without all of you being so generous they could not survive. Thank you.



Rally Pictures : Mike Mold took many pictures including these two, which can be seen at this address:- <https://plus.google.com/photos/107492291167042641292/albums/6054058608380923617?banner=pwa&authkey=CMjOxKOvts7ChQE>



*Weslake Diesel
in Graham
Smith's Gruppo
Trail*



*Brian the
closet
Conservative
shows his true
colours!*

Rally Photos from Colin Evans



Wassmer Jodel D119 (Ex F-BGMA)



Percival Mew Gull replica

Nemo found!



Gardan GY20 Minicab

N134TT Cessna 305C Bird Dog



Plumb BGP-1



Thorp T18 Tiger



Ecuvillens R.I.O. 2.1 Old Timers Fly In Switzerland – Part 1 The German Leg

Simon Pratt and Mike Negus



In 2011 Simon and I flew to the Old Timers Fly-In, RIO 2011 at Ecuvillens which was advertised as the final event in a series spanning a number of previous years. The 2011 event was a long overdue trip thwarted by weather some years before and was conducted in perfect weather there and on the journey each way. It was therefore a surprise when 2.1 was advertised by e-mail to Simon and so the germ of an idea was hatched. As one advances in years a bucket list begins to form and on mine was a

desire to see from the air the Ruhr Dams subject of the raid by 617 squadron and the film made in 1955. The 70th anniversary of the Dams raid was in May 2013 which would have been a more appropriate time to go but was not to be, so the idea formed was to go to the Swiss event via the great Dams and so after some careful planning and the purchase of the necessary maps we had a trip briefing session over the homework that Simon had put in. All was set for the 26th June.

Thursday came in bright and clear and after the pre flight checks and the obligatory last minute pee, we emplaned and set off East. Map reading our way for most of the time throughout the whole trip apart from occasional checks on the GPS proved a refreshing change from reliance on electronic navigational aids. Tracking on through Belgium to Kortrijk threw up our first hiccup when calling up for landing we were informed in emphatic terms the airfield was closed. This was puzzling as traffic was still using the field. A look at the map was not too positive, however I had been into a small field called Amougie some 15 plus years ago with Brian where we were made welcome as they only seemed to get a G registered aeroplane in once a year. We called up and received mixed information but landed anyway. It turned out they were licensed for Ultralights only, however when our predicament was explained the guys there provided fuel, coffee and liaison with the police as of course this was not a customs field. Our flight plan was also closed. We had missed the Notam relating to Kortrijk as the heads of state were attending a ceremony in Ypres.

Onwards and upwards to our next refueling at Aachen - achieved without issues as we sailed into Germany with a noticeable increase in wind farms. Sandwiches and drinks taken and all fuelled up we were off to our overnight stop at Soest roughly 50 km (31 mi) east of Dortmund.

This next leg took us northeast ish and we were still mainly relying on map reading, there was a bit of airspace to get round but there were no real problems. Our next landmark was to be the Sorpe dam which we found after a couple of false sightings. Flying over this area in good weather and in daylight makes you wonder how on earth the bomber lads managed to find the place in the dark, there's also a lot of hilly stuff around that you don't want to go bumping into. The next landmark was the Mohne. This was easier to find as it stood out from a much

greater distance, we weren't too worried about anybody spotting us on the way there though so we could stay up high but again there are a lot of hilly bits and in the dark it would be a real b@#!er to get right.

Soon we landed at Soest. A microlight arrived and while we had a beer he was loading his gear into a car. The airport manager asked if we wanted a lift into town as the other pilot was going that way and could take us. During the journey into town the other pilot told us about his trip. He had just arrived from the Isle of Wight following a round Britain tour. His flight had been direct whereas we had needed to stop twice on the way from Kent.

The town nearest to the airfield is Bad Sassenburg but we were booked into Soest which turned out to be fortuitous as the manager told us that Bad Saaenburg is a 'no go area' at night even for the police due to an influx of Russians. Soest turned out to be very quiet and we managed to find a beer garden containing most of the town's residents watching Germany v USA in a big football competition which was happening in South America. Everybody was in good spirits and we enjoyed a good meal there. When the game finished about half of the crowd went and the rest sat quietly enjoying the evening. A walk round the town gave a little insight to the history of the place and we decided to have a night cap before returning to the hotel. The inn opposite the hotel was closed but there was a small bar a couple of doors away, we went in and ordered two beers and then realised that this was the bar where the real drinkers hung out, there were only 4 of them and they were friendly and quiet but we decided to leave after the one beer.

The hotel was basic but comfortable and breakfast was consumed before leaving. We went to the station, just across the road and got into the first cab on the rank. On asking to go to the airport the woman driver told us to get in the one behind, we explained that we wanted Bad Sassenburg and not Dortmund airport and she agreed to take us "Alles est klaar" she said.

Back at the airfield there was a glider which had arrived after us the evening before, following a 450km non stop flight from France. We refuelled and headed off for the Eder to take more photographs and complete the set.

The Eder is to the south east and again there are a lot of hilly bits on the way and again it would be a real whatever to find. We turned south and headed for Aschaffenburg where we landed and were directed to the end of the runway - move to the left and wait for further instructions. We turned through 90 degrees to look down the runway to see a formation of 4 Piper Cubs taking off after which we were told to cross to the parking area. Luckily I had Mike with me as there was no landing fee for old timers.

Our final leg in Germany was south to Freiburg, having looked it up on t'internet I thought it would be a busy international airport. Look it up and you'll understand why. When I called them I was told that the avgas is three Euros a litre so most of them go over to France to get fuel, which reinforced the big airport theory. There are nine photos of the approaches to stop you getting it wrong and these had been duly printed off. On calling for joining instructions we were told 'you can come straight in on 16' so much for all that planning and ink. It's a nice little airport a little along the lines of Headcorn, although it has a hard runway, but with about as much activity as Laddingford. After paying the landing fee we were told that there could be a chance of parking in a hangar as one of the aircraft from the flying school was likely to be out overnight. Mike went for a chat with the flying school and sure enough we were offered a spot. We taxied to the hangar and pushed into a convenient space, the doors were closed and locked, Mike thanked the nice man and he said "twenty euros please".

Committee Contacts**Co-ordinator: Gary Smith**

Tel : 01795 422426

gary.james.smith@btinternet.com**Treasurer:**

John Dean 01892 822776

john@jmdean.co.uk**Membership Secretary:**

Stephen Solley 07836 653257

sc.solley@solleysicecream.co.uk**Newsletter Editor:**

Nigel Read 01634 362375

skywritings@tesco.net**Committee Members:**

Mike Negus 01634 364396

Mark Balding 01580 851112

Brian Hope 01795 662508

Graham Hammond 01622 891466

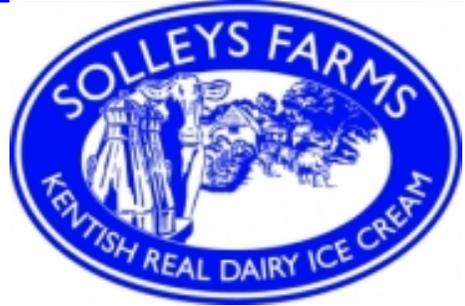
Simon Pratt 07973 402986

Frank Lissimore 07798 900220

Peter Huxley 07899 015287

Web Master

Glen Everett 01622 858956

glen@flyingadverts.co.ukwww.solleysicecream.co.uk**Dates for your Diary**

25th September

Aviation Lawyer Tim Scorer

*Abbeville fly-out :-**Sunday 28th September*

30th October

Temsford SOE Airfield

Fr. Peter Geldard

27th November

Strut meeting

Christmas Dinner :-

Saturday 6th December

This was a bigger town than Soest and we had been told about a beer garden where they brewed their own and only sold it there, it had to be tried. After a beer, which looked much worse than it tasted, and a German sausage and chips we had a walk round town looking for ice cream which was located and consumed. We continued our walk round town and found some sort of street party going on with three stages of live music, food outlets and bars. In the interest of entente cordial, or whatever is the German equivalent, we hung around and partook of the atmosphere. Unfortunately the hotel was up a steepish hill and we agreed not to get a cab which meant a shower was required before bed.

Part 2—"The Swiss bit" continues next month.