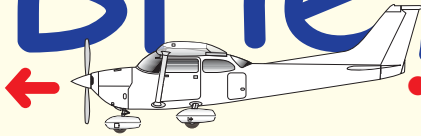


Briefings



New man at GASCo

Air Commodore Rick Peacock-Edwards is the new Chairman of GASCo, the General Aviation Safety Council. GASCo has been working for 30 years to reduce accidents in GA, and is strongly supported by AOPA. Rick Peacock-Edwards joins GASCo's Chief Executive Mike O'Donoghue to form a strong team to take forward the Council's work.

Air Commodore Peacock-Edwards CBE

AFC FRAeS FCIM served for over 30 years in the RAF flying Lightnings, Hunters, F4 Phantoms and Tornado F2/3s, Gnats, Hawks and many other types of aircraft and helicopters. He has held Qualified Flying Instructor, Instrument Rating Examiner and Pilot Navigation Instructor qualifications. He introduced the Tornado F2/3 to RAF service and commanded the F2/3 Conversion Unit at RAF Coningsby and the front line Tornado base at RAF Leeming. He also served as RAF Commander at Dhahran in the lead-up to the first Gulf War and as Assistant Air Attaché at the British Embassy in Washington. On promotion to Air Commodore he became Inspector of Flight Safety for the RAF and his final tour was as Director of Eurofighter Typhoon at the MOD.

Since leaving the RAF he has worked in the aviation industry and has been actively involved in the work of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators (GAPAN), of which he is a Past Master. He is Chairman of GAPAN's Trophies and Awards Committee, Vice Chairman of the RAF Club and Chairman of the Aviation Focus Group, the Historic Aircraft Association, the Board of Trustees of the International Air Cadets Training Organisation and of the Imperial War Museum Duxford Flying Control Committee.

He takes over as Chairman of GASCo from Gerald Hackemer, who served for the maximum term permitted of six years.

GASCo is headquartered at Rochester Airport and their website is www.gasco.org.uk. ■



Cheap landings

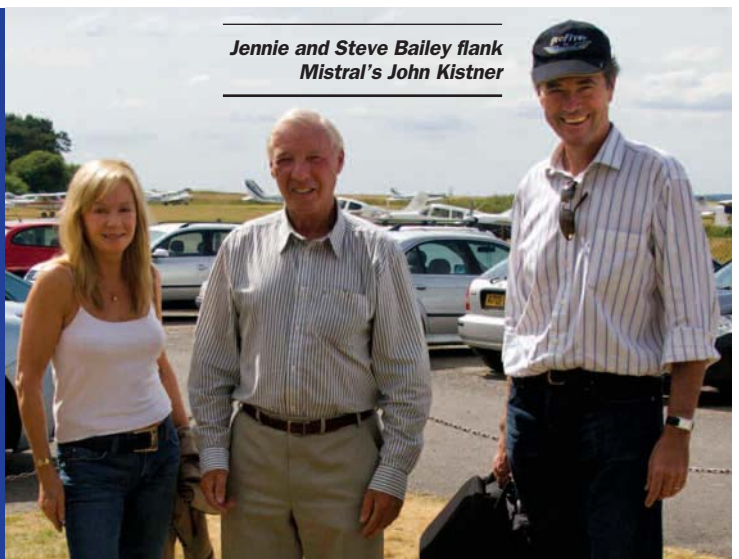
Here's a cheap deal – always welcome in these times of austerity. If you join the Embassy Flying Club at Sandown for £5, you can land at Sandown for just £5. Chris Williams and John Woodhouse (above) have saved Sandown from developers, and it's a fabulous place to visit and to use as a base to tour the Isle of Wight. All you have to do is email embassyflyingclub@hotmail.co.uk and Chris or John will forward a membership application form to you. Fill it in and email it back, arrange your payment and you'll get a membership card in the post. Then you're eligible for the £5 landing, payable at the Specialist Flying School. Money well spent in a worthy cause.

Mistral moves and shakes

Mistral Aviation Ltd, authorised distributor and leading broker of Robin aircraft for fifteen years, is expanding. Because of increased demand for the famous French aeroplanes, John Kistner is joined by Steven and Jennie Bailey as fellow directors.

Steve and Jennie have been operating Robin aircraft for several years and, in association with Mistral, have recently partnered the manufacturer in the certification of a new diesel engine and an electronic flight display.

Mistral's office is now at Elstree Aerodrome, overlooking the runway and just next door to Pooleys' Flight Shop. Elstree has an ongoing refurbishment program and is an increasingly attractive site to visit. Tarmac runway allows year-round demonstration flights, the new café offers quick snacks, the restaurant offers more lavish meals and there is a new flying school. For demonstration flights see www.mistralaviation.co.uk



Jennie and Steve Bailey flank Mistral's John Kistner



Left: the turboprop powered Hawker Siddeley HS 125 series 700 first flew in 1976

Geriatric jets head for the scrapheap

Hawker Beechcraft, the Chinese-owned (what would Harry Hawker say?) bizjet manufacturer, keeps tabs on the age of the business aircraft fleet around the world in order to predict future demand. Well, that didn't work, did it. But their new figures say that the average age of business aircraft in the UK 13.7 years, half a year higher than the current European average. Of a total fleet size of 676 aircraft, 20 per cent of this country's business aircraft are over thirty years old, and the

company estimates that seven per cent may have to be retired in the next five years due to age.

Across Europe, Sweden has the oldest business aircraft of any fleet in Europe, with an average age of 20 years, while one third are over 30 years old. In comparison, the youngest fleet wears the relatively new Isle of Man registration, with an average age of just six years. Is it a coincidence that Swedish authorities are the most prickly and bull-headed interpreters of the EASA requirements,

while the Isle of Man offers a partial refuge?

The largest bizjet fleet is in Germany, where there are 753 aircraft with an average age of 14 years. Spain has 202 business aircraft, and fully 36% of them are more than 30 years old.

Hawker Beechcraft estimates that 296 European aircraft could be retired over the next five years, which it says could lead to a significant increase in demand for new business aircraft as companies and individuals look to replace ageing aircraft. But how many will chuck in the towel? ■

Moth Club Charity Flying

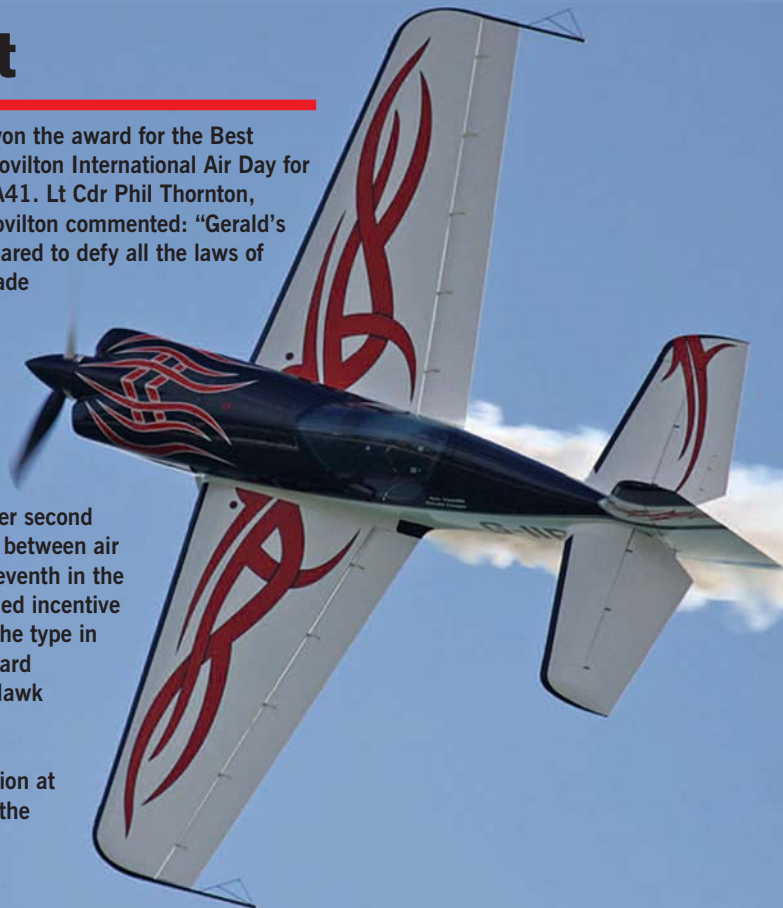
Following the weather-related cancellation of the de Havilland Moth Club's annual Charity Flying Weekend which was scheduled for Old Warden Aerodrome in June, the event has been rescheduled for Old Warden on October 13th and 14th. Aircraft expected to be providing Charity flights at £95 per person are the Tiger Moth, Fox Moth, Dragon, Leopard Moth, Hornet Moth, Chipmunk and Miles Messenger. For details email Stuart McKay, dhmoth@dhmothclub.co.uk

Xtreme discomfort

British Aerobatic Champion Gerald Cooper won the award for the Best Fixed-Wing Flying Display at 2012 RNAS Yeovilton International Air Day for his dynamic display in the new XtremeAir XA41. Lt Cdr Phil Thornton, Lieutenant Commander (Flying) at RNAS Yeovilton commented: "Gerald's routine was admired for the way that it appeared to defy all the laws of physics and aerodynamics and the way it made the Flying Control Committee squirm uncomfortably at the thought of the amount of positive and negative G being experienced in the cockpit."

The XtremeAir XA41 is a carbon fibre aircraft weighing 500 kg including its 315hp Lycoming engine. Capable of over 220mph, it has a roll rate of 450 degrees per second and a range of 650 miles – useful for transit between air displays and competitions. Cooper, ranked seventh in the world for competition aerobatics, has an added incentive to display it to the max – he's the agent for the type in the UK. His competition for the Yeovilton award included the Red Arrows, RAF Tucano and Hawk display teams, Saudi Hawks, Sea Fury and Hawker Hunter.

Cooper can be contacted at One Sky Aviation at Wickenby, and you can find out more about the XA41 at www.xtremeair.de.





Battersea says come on down

Battersea Heliport wants your business – so much so that they’re dropping their prices in the hope of luring you in. It’s still not cheap; the mooted reduction of around 20 percent will take the landing fee for an R44 or a JetRanger down to £280. But that’s a long way from the £650 they were charging for an R22 before the recession hit.

Much has changed at Battersea since the economy went over the weir. Previously owned by Von Essen Hotels, which fell victim to the downturn, it is now ‘Barclays London Heliport’ and is in the hands of the Reuben Brothers. The ‘Barclays’ nomenclature is part of a sponsorship deal, and valued customers of the bank can get priority deals at the heliport.

The Reuben Brothers, David and Simon, are venture capitalists and property developers with a diverse range of interests including data centres, wind turbines, steel distribution, Millbank Tower, half of Sloane Street, the In and Out, the Wellington pub chain and 40 percent of Britain’s racecourses. They got into aviation with the purchase of Oxford Airport in 2007 and two years later it was voted Business Airport of the Year; it is now Britain’s fifth-busiest GA airport with 6,000 movements a year.

When they bought the heliport in February this year it must have looked like the Olympic Games were going to give the business a boost, but the relentlessly negative attitude of the authorities towards helicopter use during the Olympics dampened any hopes of an Olympic uptick. Like other sectors of general aviation, the Barclays London Heliport was left to make the best of a bad job.

The heliport’s pitch for Olympic business involved laying on drug-runner-style speedboats to whisk customers to Limehouse Basin, from where they could take a boat up the Lea River to a point only

70 metres from the Olympic Stadium. The transfer took 90 minutes and was relatively relaxed compared to overland transport.

The Reubens also provided incentives to use Oxford Airport, which is 22 minutes from Battersea by Sikorsky S76. Anyone landing at Oxford in a business jet of 15 tonnes or more and flying on to the heliport could claim a 50 percent discount on the landing fee and other concessions at Battersea. If you were coming in in your Gulfstream GIV, this was worth around

£1,000. There are smaller discounts for smaller jets.

The legacy of this Olympic provision could be a regular boat service into the City, although such a thing has been mooted many times down the years and nobody has yet made it work.

Battersea, now 50 years old, has survived all the upheavals that killed off other London heliports and all attempts to set up a rival closer to the City have foundered. Over the years there have been more than half a million movements there; during the good times, annual movements climb into five figures, during bad times like now they fall to between 7,000 and 8,000. The local authority, Wandsworth, imposed a 12,000 limit on annual movements – 6,000 in, 6,000 out – and before the recession the heliport was bumping up against its ceiling. It was during this period that landing fees rose to £650 for a single. With just 6,000 landing fees a year to live off, there’s not much fat in the operation. Traffic is increasingly steadily; Grand Prix bookings were double those of last year, Ascot was up by 30 percent, and Cheltenham and Farnborough were also strong.

During Von Essen’s ownership the heliport was run by PremiAir, and some of its competitors thought there was a conflict of interest in having a charter and management company running the facility. The new operators carry no such baggage. PremiAir is no longer the major user of the heliport; Air Harrods has taken the lead. ■

French fly-in for Sue Virr

There’s to be a fly-in to celebrate the life of Sue Virr at Limoges Bellegarde airport in central France on August 25th and 26th, and it’s hoped that it will become an annual event. Sue was an

English language flying instructor, the first British instructor authorised to teach in France, who died of cancer in October 2011. She was well-known to many UK pilots, both those who were her students and those who passed through Limoges. In addition to being an exceptional instructor and flight examiner, Sue was a champion jockey and dog-breeder. Stuart Morton, of Cosmo Flight School, said: “All of us here at Limoges, and her circle of friends around the world will miss her ‘joie de vivre’ a lot, but we do not mourn her, we celebrate her and all she has done for us and aviation. Our aim is to keep her legacy alive, so we invite you to join us and help celebrate her life and achievements at this, the first of what we hope will become an annual event.”

A flyer for the '1st Annual "Sue Virr" Fly-in' event. The flyer features a blue background with white clouds and a photo of Sue Virr. Text on the flyer includes: '1ST ANNUAL "SUE VIRR" FLY-IN', '25-26 AUGUST 2012', 'LIMOGES BELLEGARDE AIRPORT', 'EVENING BBQ + ENTERTAINMENT - ORGANISED FLYOUT', 'NO LANDING FEES (ADVANCE BOOKING ONLY)', 'FREE OVERNIGHT PARKING', 'SATURDAY NIGHT BBQ', 'NO NEED FOR FRENCH AT!', 'SUNDAY BREAKFAST (FOR THOSE STAYING OVERNIGHT)', 'PLEASE JOIN US TO CELEBRATE SUE'S LIFE & LOVE', 'BOOKING DETAILS ON STUART@COSMOFLIGHTSCHOOL.COM / +33 6 88 90 98 20', and the Cosmo Flight School logo.