

General **A**viation

OCTOBER 2013

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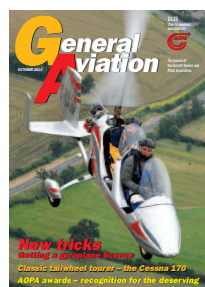
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AOPA office:

The British Light Aviation Centre
50a Cambridge Street
London SW1V 4QQ

Telephone: 020 7834 5631
Fax: 020 7834 8623
E-mail: info@aopa.co.uk
Web: www.aopa.co.uk



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Chairman's message

Achievements in the spotlight

This summer has been great for flying light aircraft, a big improvement on last year, which, combined with the constraints of the Olympics Airspace, conspired to keep many of us on the ground. Already I find my annual flying budget being stretched. However, our glorious summer has come to a sudden end. It was truly disappointing to be let down by adverse weather for the AOPA Event Day at Duxford on 14th September, although a few intrepid pilots managed to fly in late morning when the cloudbase lifted a little. I had hoped to fly in myself, accompanied by fellow aviator and AOPA Board Member, Chris Royle, but, like many others, we arrived by car.

The day, centred around a programme of stimulating presentations, included a lunchtime break that allowed plenty of time to meet up and chat with fellow members, friends and guests. Supportive remarks about AOPA's work in keeping general aviation viable and providing advice and assistance on a variety of topics were warmly received. The morning's programme consisted of an inspirational talk by Douglas Cairns on "Flying with Diabetes" and presentation of the AOPA awards for achievement and endeavour, followed after lunch by further presentations on infringements and pilot licensing issues. The former two items shared a strong common thread focusing on effective lobbying using qualities and skills of diplomacy, negotiation and straightforward persistence, as well as providing wonderful examples of good news in general aviation. A more detailed account of the day is to be found within these pages, but it is worthwhile dwelling on the above aspects.

Douglas Cairns won the 2011 AOPA Individual Merit award in recognition of his record-breaking flight to the North Pole in an N-registered Beech Baron on his FAA licence, thereby demonstrating the viability of pilots with this particular medical condition. His talk described how skilful lobbying managed to overcome hardened resistance by the authorities to even contemplate the possibility of licensing pilots with diabetes. The catalyst was being told by an aircrew medical examiner, when an RAF pilot in the early stages of training, the words: "You are now a diabetic, you are no longer a pilot!" Douglas's achievement, coming from such a negative and demotivating standpoint, is all the more meritorious. The CAA came in for significant praise too, in the form of valuable dialogue and support from its Chief Medical Officer, Dr Sally Evans.

Perseverance, lobbying and liaison skills were similarly strongly in evidence for most of the awards. The recipients were not expected to respond with a short speech at the actual handing over of the respective trophy. However, such were the challenges faced and subsequently overcome, that each of them wished to explain to the audience what a long and hard journey it had been. Thus, two aerodromes, Rochester and Lee on Solent, have been saved for the general aviation community. Other achievements recognised were the General Aviation Report (GAR) now available to all pilots, and a more constructive way of dealing with infringements established, helped by the introduction of Airbox and other flight planning tools. The Olympics Airspace project and the taking over of the Flight Safety Evenings from the CAA by GASCo have also been success stories. Second time round award winner, Alan Evans, received his on a different set of skills - namely, those of an encouraging and enthusiastic instrument flying instructor.

At the time of writing, another important AOPA event is in prospect, namely, the 2013 AGM. Unlike the Duxford event, this is a relatively formal affair made necessary by company law. We look forward to welcoming two new members onto the Board, John Walker and Richard Hawkin. John has had a long and varied experience of aerodrome operation and management, and Richard is currently Chairman of AOPA Channel Islands Region. Sadly, two long standing members have decided to retire from the Board this time, Alan Croxford and David Ogilvy, although they will continue to keep up to speed on AOPA affairs as Vice and Past President respectively. David, of course, was my predecessor as Chairman of AOPA. Both have served on the Board for a great many years and their significant contributions to AOPA and general aviation will be widely acknowledged by AOPA members and beyond.



George Done

DfT: 'IMC rating is not safety-critical'

A civil servant has written to AOPA members accusing *General Aviation* of misrepresenting a letter from Aviation Minister Stephen Burns to an MP over the Department for Transport's position on the IMC rating – then repeating the contentious and profoundly unhelpful claim that the IMC rating is not safety-critical.

In the August issue of this magazine, Stephen Burns was quoted as claiming: "While the IMCR is a useful rating in the UK, it is by no means essential to ensure the safety of private pilots. If the holding of an IMCR were safety-critical, the CAA would have made it compulsory."

But in a new letter claiming that the original was misrepresented, a civil servant writing on Burns's behalf repeats exactly the same sentiment – "while the IMCR is a useful rating in the UK, it is by no means essential to the safety of private pilots. If the holding of an IMC rating were safety critical, the CAA would have made it compulsory."

With consummate timing, the new letter was written as the AAIB accident report was published on a Jabiru which crashed in Suffolk in bad visibility, killing the pilot. While he was experienced, with 634 hours total time amassed over almost 25 years, the pilot had no instrument qualification – it would not have been valid for his aircraft. But had he held an IMC rating, it's probable that he would be alive today. There can be no better illustration of the safety-critical nature of the rating than this.

The Department's attitude matters profoundly because the Aviation Minister is the official link with Europe, and equivocation by his Department risks undermining the long fight to save this vital – and safety-critical – rating from the EASA scrapheap.

In the new letter, the civil servant rehearses some of EASA's plans for instrument flying, good and bad – all of them presented repeatedly in this magazine over the years and irrelevant to whether or not we retain the IMC rating – and says the Department is "disappointed" that EASA will not allow the issuing of new IMC ratings for use on EASA aircraft after 2014. (EASA's outgoing head Patrick Goudou says it would be contrary to the purpose of harmonisation.)

The civil servant claims that when AOPA Chief Executive Martin Robinson wrote to Stephen Burns about the original letter, a reply was sent within weeks; but no such reply has been received by AOPA to this day. He says his 'not safety critical' claim is based on advice from the CAA; sources within the CAA say, however, that it's an issue of semantics.

In a reply to one AOPA member, Roger Bell, the civil servant says: "The Minister's view that the holding of an IMCR is not safety critical is one that is supported by the Civil Aviation Authority. They have advised us that the evidence proves that the majority of pilots fly safely without holding an IMCR."

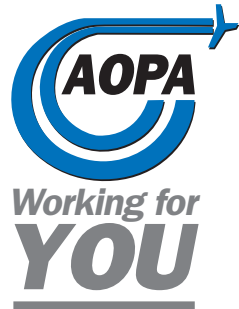
The issue underlines AOPA's long experience of a lack of stomach for the fight at the DfT. If the Department is fully behind the IMC rating, what is the point of making such play of a claim that it is not critical to safety? What exactly are they making excuses for? At best, it's a non-sequitur; at worst, a call to inaction. The impression it seeks to create is that the destruction of the IMC rating would have no negative effect on safety. In fact, it would have a disastrous effect on safety.

But while the CAA is absolutely committed to retaining the IMC rating because of the safety it offers private pilots, it can only act in accordance with the wishes of its bosses at the DfT.

To have his civil servants state that EASA's instrument rating plans are

essentially positive, intimate that the changes are agreed and essentially supported by the GA community, and add gratuitously that "we have not had any representations from any general aviation organisation seeking to make the holding of an IMCR compulsory" must give the Aviation Minister the idea that private pilots are largely in accord with EASA's plan to destroy the IMC rating.

Of course no GA organisation has demanded that the IMC rating be mandated; as stated in *General Aviation*, when AOPA first proposed and drove through the rating in the 1960s the mandate was considered and rejected because the major expense it would represent was not justified when not all aircraft were capable of being flown in IMC and not all pilots wanted more than fair-weather flying. We haven't sought a mandate for the Instrument Rating either, →



Change at the top

AOPA US has appointed Mark Baker as its President and Chief Executive, and the likelihood is that he will also take over as President of International AOPA. Mark replaces Craig Fuller, President of both AOPA US and IAOPA for the past five years. A GA pilot for 35 years, Mark (*right*) owns a Beech Bonanza and a Piper Super Cub and has logged more than 7,500 hours, flying everything from seaplanes and fixed-wing turbine aircraft to helicopters. A successful businessman who built and rescued companies in the home improvement sector, Mark took over at AOPA US on September 6th.

In the past it has been the practice for the head of AOPA US, by far the largest of the 70 AOPAs worldwide, to become President of International AOPA and based on feedback and approval received from the affiliates there seems to be no reason why that should change. On the international scene, Craig Fuller will be a hard act to follow. He had a broader global understanding than previous AOPA US Presidents and recognised that problems afflicting GA in Europe and elsewhere will eventually wash up on America's shores. Craig was instrumental in strengthening AOPA as a global brand and placed strong emphasis on influencing European authorities, helping to underwrite IAOPA's Brussels lobbyist and attending several IAOPA-Europe Regional Meetings with his US staff.

IAOPA Senior Vice President Martin Robinson – who takes over as Acting President of IAOPA in the interregnum between Craig Fuller and the new man – sent his congratulations to Mark Baker and said: "We very much look forward to working with him in Europe, and we hope he will carry forward the good work Craig Fuller has been doing. We would like to record our appreciation and thanks to Craig Fuller and wish him the best in all his future endeavours."



but that doesn't mean we'd be happy to see it abolished. Martin Robinson says: "We're not saying the IMC rating should be made compulsory, we're simply saying they shouldn't destroy it."

"This man's letters compound the problems we have and do the Minister a disservice. I have long experience of the DfT's lack of conviction in seeking to retain the IMC rating and this is merely the latest manifestation of it."

"The question for the DfT and EASA is this: is harmonisation more important than safety? The overwhelming body of evidence shows that the IMC rating is safety critical, whatever this civil servant or anybody else says, and this fact must be communicated to EASA in the most unequivocal terms. This mealy-mouthed excuse-making augurs badly; it's hard to avoid the conclusion that civil servants are setting up the Minister and the pilot community for defeat on this issue. We cannot allow this to happen." ■



Goudou: who needs a partnership with industry?

EASA is boycotting one of its own creations.

By Nick Wilcock, IAOPA delegate to the Part-FCL Implementation Forum

In recent years, EASA has hosted regular meetings between industry, National Aviation Agencies and EASA Part-FCL rulemakers, to discuss and seek clarity and common understanding of Part-FCL issues. Originally these were termed 'Partnership



Group' meetings, but at the FCL PG meeting held in Köln in October 2012, delegates were advised that EASA's Patrick Goudou (*above*) had unilaterally decided that the FCL PG could not continue in its current form.

This surprising news was not well received by the group, whose conclusion was that it was the only joint forum for NAAs and industry on FCL matters and was very important for both, as well as for the staff in the FCL Section of the Agency. It was suggested that the FCL PG could continue, but under another name to

Chief executive's diary: Safety goes out the window

There's no denying that EASA has earned a bad name in general aviation, and of course there's one easy way to change that – give it a new name! And while you're about it, you might as well reflect more closely what its purpose is by dropping the word 'safety', which those of us who have fought to save the IMC rating from EASA have long thought was a misnomer. So EASA is to become the EAA – the European Union Agency for Aviation. They haven't got the word 'harmonisation' in there, which is outgoing General Director Patrick Goudou's stated excuse for killing off the IMC, but you get the picture.

They're also not happy that European states interfere too much with Europe's plans. Life would be so much easier if states did what they were told. Well, we all have our crosses to bear. I think if EASA had covered itself in glory, member states would be less fractious and would seek to interfere less. But it hasn't covered itself in glory, not by a long chalk.

On July 17th I had a meeting with the CAA's new GA 'focal point', Mike Banard, to discuss options on the subject of gold-plating. The CAA Chief Executive Andrew Haines has stated that there is to be no more of it, and confirmed this with a press release. However, two months have passed and nothing much has happened; we're looking for a

complete reappraisal of areas in which GA has suffered from gold-plating

Three days later I went to the AOPA Members Working Group at Sywell for another round of discussions on 'live' topics. I find this group very helpful and would invite members who wish to take part to please do so! The group has a very capable chairman who manages the agenda brilliantly. Email me (martin@aopa.co.uk) if you want to know more about the work of the AMWG.

On July 23rd I attended the Airspace Infringements Working Group for discussion and updates on the problems associated with airspace infringements. This is a good example of where industry and regulator work together in a co-operative way. However, more needs to have been



done to reduce the number of infringements – which, although not necessarily risk-bearing, still means GA has to do more when it comes to how we navigate. There were 372 infringements to June this year. We must work to reduce the number of pilots infringing and, regardless of how large the infringement is, no infringement should be acceptable.

On August 6th I was at a meeting of the EC's transport department DGMOV to discuss the EU directive on ground handling services. Although a regulation is under discussion, the directive is still the legislation that is currently in force. We need airports to make the correct provisions to allow GA to self-handle. The Commission is interested to hear from us on this issue and it is something we shall continue to pursue. If you have any comments please send them to info@aopa.co.uk.

Next day I met with Mike O'Donoghue, Chief Executive of GASCo, to examine where AOPA can provide additional support, particularly as we now have additional space and a simulator at our offices here in London. AOPA, with Mike's help, plans to run Safety Evenings from Cambridge Street – watch this space!

On August 12th I enjoyed one of



Left: CAA chief executive Andrew Haines
Right: Paul Hendry Smith and Andrew Haines at the Light Aircraft Company

placate Goudou, with around three meetings per year to be held in member states, to which EASA would be invited. Austria then agreed to hold the next meeting in Vienna in January 2013, to be termed the Part-FCL Implementation Forum, following which the Irish Aviation Authority hosted the 2nd FCL IF in Malahide in April 2013. Useful progress was made at both meetings and Finland's TraFi generously offered to host the 3rd FCL IF in Helsinki in September 2013.

Meanwhile, Goudou was clearly determined to exert control over such meetings and a combined 'Thematic Advisory Group / Safety Standards Consultative Committee / Flight Crew Licensing' (TAG/SSCC/FCL) meeting was held in Köln in June 2013. Unfortunately IAOPA was not represented at this meeting; however, by all accounts it wasn't a particularly successful meeting as the relevant expert groups hadn't been invited to attend.

A few days before the 3rd FCL IF,

delegates were astonished to learn that EASA had elected not to attend, having without any warning decided to limit its participation to the 'main EASA FCL meetings' such as the joint TAG/SSCC/FCL and 'not to be involved in too many similar FCL working groups and meetings at the same time'. They also laid down prerequisites for a 2nd joint TAG/SSCC/FCL meeting, which they proposed to hold in Köln in late December 2013.

The 3rd FCL IF went ahead at TraFi in Helsinki, thanks to the generosity of our Finnish hosts. Delegates travelled from as far afield as Malta and Spain, yet EASA's rulemakers weren't prepared to travel the relatively short distance from Köln. During his welcome speech, Pekka Henttu, TraFi's director and the Vice President of EASA's Management Board stated that he was "...sad that EASA is not here". Which is a diplomatic way of saying that he was rather less than impressed by the rulemakers' failure to attend. He told the meeting that this failure would be added to

the agenda of the meeting the Management Board was due to hold with EASA's new boss, Patrick Ky, the following week. He also told the Forum that Goudou had actually said: "Where is there any requirement in the Basic Regulation for partnership?"

The FCL IF subsequently debated the future of the Forum. It was unanimously agreed that further meetings will be held in the same format, whether or not under the umbrella of EASA. The FCL IF does not agree with the concept of joint TAG/SSCC/FCL meetings and will expect EASA rulemakers to attend its future meetings, the next of which is likely to be held in Madrid in mid December 2013.

EASA rulemakers' boycott might well have been a political gesture. Nevertheless, it has only served to reinforce the views many in industry have of an Agency more interested in itself than in those it purports to regulate. We can but hope that Patrick Ky will act swiftly to repair the damage inflicted by his erstwhile, unlamented predecessor. ■

my more pleasurable working days as Andrew Haines and I flew down to Thrupton, where we met David Scouler for a discussion on FCL charges and FCL administration. From Thrupton we flew to Little Snoring, where we met Paul Hendry Smith of the Light Aircraft Company. In the wilds of Norfolk there is a successful British manufacturer of a light aircraft – microlights. We enjoyed a good conversation about aircraft design, manufacturing and maintenance and where the CAA may be able to gain more support!

On August 22nd I had a meeting with Brian Humphries and Fabio Gamba of the European Business Aircraft Association. Michael Erb, Managing Director of AOPA Germany, and I have both discussed with EBAA our current and future working ties, ensuring that both organisations fully understand each other's needs and desires and looking forward to greater co-operation in the years ahead on technical and political matters.

At the beginning of September I returned from a week's leave to 'play catch-up' with

my emails and other admin matters. On September 2nd the CAA hosted a meeting which was entitled 'Recreational Aviation Workshop'. However, the main focus of the workshop was the content of the PPL course, and the aim was to consider which parts of the current PPL course need to be amended to reflect today's flying environment. The objective is to submit proposals to EASA as an alternative means of compliance. AOPA supports this process and will make a positive contribution as it rolls out.

Next day I departed for Hong Kong, where I met up with the International AOPA Secretary General, Craig Spence. AOPA China will host the IAOPA World Assembly in 2014 and it is necessary for IAOPA HQ to ensure that the host country is fully aware of what is required. Having met senior officials from the city of Shenzhen, Craig and I flew to Beijing where we went through another site inspection. We had several meetings with the leaders of AOPA China, as well as with other officials. It was very educational, as I began to understand how the development of GA in China will happen. And it is not the same as in Europe!

From September 10th to 12th I was at the US-China Aviation Symposium, which is co-sponsored by the US and Chinese governments. There was a half-day's discussion on the development of GA in China. Business aviation has been growing at around 18% per annum and China realises that they need to build up an infrastructure that will enable VFR operations. The first piece of work on low altitude airspace liberalisation has begun. The Americans are leading the Chinese in a co-operative way as they develop their

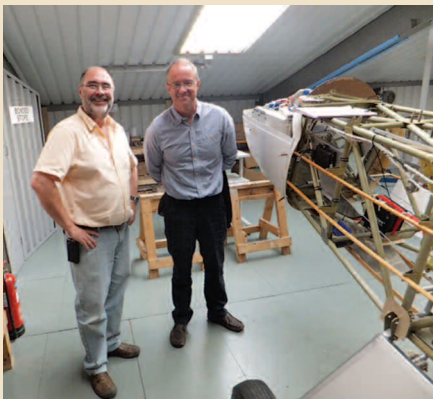
regulations. Obviously the world's largest economy sees a huge advantage in assisting the development of the world's fastest growing economy!

I arrived back in the UK on September 12th, and on the 13th I attended the DfT EASA briefing. The briefing covers some of the items that will be discussed at the next Management Board meeting. As the new Executive Director, Patrick Ky, takes up his post there are changes coming to the way EASA presents itself. As I say, its name will change, dropping the world 'safety' and will be known in future as 'The European Union Agency for Aviation' (EAA). Other changes that are being proposed centre on the idea that we need more Europe not USS – so there is a discussion about the greater use of delegated acts as opposed to implementing acts – the UK Government favours the latter. The problem with delegated acts is that they give member states less 'wiggle room'. Europe for any State means less 'wiggle room' – I think that this is a direct result of member states' failure to deliver Functional Airspace Blocks on time, which has angered the Transport Commissioner. There is certainly a view in some parts of Europe that member states interfere too much with European plans.

The European Parliament will finish early in 2014 and the Commission shortly thereafter, so there will be new people to educate about GA and its needs.

On September 14th I was at Duxford for the AOPA Day. Although the weather was poor the turnout was very good. Thank you everyone who turned out on a wet and windy Saturday, it was a pleasure to see you.

Martin Robinson



Six months of online GAR

The Online GAR was launched with Border Force and the Police on 8th April. There was a very quick take up with several hundred GARs being submitted online in one day alone.



The smartphone versions for the Android and iPhone were available soon afterwards. It has been trouble-free from the AOPA point of view. The Home Office continues to develop it in line with the eBorders programme,

and of course there have been unexpected outages at the Home Office end because of this. But it is all to the good that improvements are being made. Border Force's Communications Officer reports

that they estimate as much as 60% of leisure GARs are now online. The proportion of total GARs is nearer only a quarter because this includes business aviation, for whom there are still some drawbacks, for them, with the structure of the GAR Border Force have insisted upon.

Most users have become quite familiar with the online process. Naturally there are those who have struggled, but most have expressed their backing. AOPA central office and John Murray, the developer, have provided continuous support through email and telephone. John points out that it's only through feedback that he can tweak and improve the system (where he can) and thanks everyone for their

patience. "Very often with these sort of interfaces, one man's meat is another's poison, but we continue to work at it to make it easy for everyone," he said.

Murray says there are major new versions available for release, but right now we have not received permission from Home Office IT to release them.

The project has not only been about technology. Four years ago, the then head of GA at the Border Agency declared that if a workable GAR system could be implemented they would certainly review procedures and notice periods. We have yet to see the outcome on this. AOPA and its volunteers have delivered a massive service to Border Force. AOPA is currently in discussions with Border Force over a number of contentious recent changes to regulations. It is hoped to report on the results in the next issue. ■

Border Force and GAR – what's going on?

By Roy Harford

Having spent five tiring but enjoyable days as a Judge at the Belgian Helicopter Championships, a colleague and I were returning from St. Hubert in the beautiful Ardennes forest region of southern Belgium.

Starting later than planned to allow morning mist to burn off, we arrived at Kortrijk-Wevelgem from whence we had previously filed our flight plan to return home, nominating Lydd as our point of entry.

Despite sitting in a rather bleak landscape, Lydd is popular with GA pilots for selling fuel at duty-free rates if outbound to continental Europe. Having taken advantage of this facility outbound we decided to return via Lydd as it gave us the flexibility of timing, needing only to file a flight plan but not a General Aviation Report (GAR).

Walking into the terminal I went to the Customs & Immigration Desk, where a UK Border Agency officer asked: "Do you know why we are here?" My reply was that they are generally there to deal with any incoming flight from outside of the UK.

Apparently this was not right. "We are here because you did not file a GAR form." I agreed that we had not done so because as Lydd is a designated Port of Entry it was not necessary. Wrong answer again, apparently.

The officer went on to say that it was still necessary as we were four persons arriving from France. Hardly, I replied, as our helicopter is a two-seater and our flight plan correctly stated our point of origin as



Roy Harford flying the 'Tardis' – official jinx?

Kortrijk-Wevelgem in Belgium.

That is not the information we were given, he replied. I invited him to check the helicopter and our electronic flight log, an offer which he declined.

The Border Force officer then gave me some leaflets outlining how to file a GAR online. "That's fine," I replied, "but the third party apps for iPad don't always work and it is increasingly difficult to find a fax to submit the GAR".

Apparently the Home Secretary has decreed that our borders must be secure. Well, I certainly would not take issue with that.

"Would you like me to complete a GAR now?" I asked.

"No, we just need to check your passports." We handed them over. The job was completed in seconds and no written details were recorded. How secure is that? As we were keen to get on our way home I decided not to pursue the matter.

On two previous occasions this year, in May and July, I had returned to the UK via Lydd from France and the Border Agency officers checked our passports and asked

us to complete a GAR on arrival, with no mention of any transgression of rules. They did however invite us to submit our GAR online in future.

I do recall reading in General Aviation a few months ago that a pilot arriving at Biggin Hill was given a hard time by the UKBA for not filling in a GAR despite Biggin Hill also being a designated Port of Entry.

I have checked the UKBA website and Lydd is still shown as a designated Port of Entry.

Clearly there is some miscommunication here, to say the least.

What is going on? Are UKBA making it up as they go along? If rules have been changed, would it not be a good idea to publish this on their website?

The UKBA website has no facility to submit a GAR online, although you can email a scanned copy to them if you just happen to be near a scanner when you need to make the submission. Alternatively you can try using a third party app.

Sure, Government departments have all suffered budget cuts but relying on third party apps or old fashioned fax technology seems a poor excuse for not providing a proper "official" system to meet the requirements of secure borders.

Given the long delays and obfuscation I suffered in trying to get a UK Certificate of Airworthiness for my factory-new, EASA-certified helicopter built in an EASA approved factory by a company holding EASA Design Approval, I begin to wonder if G-TRDS has a jinx on it when it comes to officialdom? ■

Expired Ratings on EASA pilot licences – WARNING!

Those of you who have seen that underwhelming piece of origami which is the CAA's interpretation of an EASA Part-FCL Pilot Licence will note that any lapsed ratings at the time of licence conversion now appear on the back of the licence.

Under JAR-FCL, a rating lapsed by less than five years could be renewed in the field by the appropriate Examiner. However under the Eurocratic yoke of EASA, this has been reduced to three years – although no-one seems to be able to identify any specific regulation which actually requires this.

So you would think that if a rating on the back of a licence has lapsed by less than three years, it would simply be a matter of taking the relevant refresher training and passing a Proficiency Check, then ensuring that the Examiner signed the Certificate of Revalidation, before sending off half a rain forest of paperwork to Gatwick.

WRONG! The CAA have advised that '...where a lapsed rating is shown on the back of a Part-FCL licence (regardless of when it lapsed), the licence must be sent to the CAA to have the rating reinstated on the active side of the licence and Certificate of Revalidation page. The examiner cannot renew the rating on the licence by endorsing the licence in the field.' The cost of this minor piece of administration is a mere £89 plus postage, which might seem somewhat disproportionate, but I suppose they do have the cost of the bubbly at the shareholders' meeting to consider?

So, if you want to avoid this trap, do make sure that any rating which you intend to use in the future and which may have lapsed by less than three years is renewed before you apply for the conversion of your pilot licence to a part-FCL licence. –
Nick Wilcock



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AOPA in China

Martin Robinson, as Acting President of International AOPA, and Craig Spence, Secretary General of IAOPA, have visited China as guests of AOPA China to discuss arrangements for the IAOPA World Assembly, to be held in China next year.

The International AOPA World Assembly is held every two years and brings together the 71 AOPAs worldwide to discuss matters of interest to general aviation owners and pilots around the world. The last Assembly was held in South Africa in 2012; and Britain hosted the event in 2000.

While the options are still under review, it looks likely that the World Assembly will take place in the city of Pingu, outside Beijing, where Spence and Robinson were shown the conference and accommodation facilities by representatives of AOPA China. They also looked at potential sites in Shenzhen, outside Hong Kong. Meetings were held with the mayors of a number of other cities.

China is a vitally important to the future of worldwide general aviation and its potential is huge. A billion-strong, increasingly affluent population in a country where roads are poor and other surface transport infrastructure is primitive, where the government is building 150 new airports and promises to liberalise airspace and citizens' access to it, where the GA fleet is expected to grow by more than 5,000 aircraft in the next five years – it represents one of the few bright spots in a recession-hit world.

Martin Robinson says: "The Chinese already have a GA fleet of 1,392 aircraft, of which about 300 are rotary. Most of them are business aircraft. There's also a strange netherworld of 'underground' aviation in secret homebuilts which are flown clandestinely because of the official restrictions. They say they now have 150

GA enterprises and 30,000 pilots, most of them commercial. There are only 400 GA pilots, but they are projecting that by 2020 there will be 5000 GA aircraft flying 2 million hours a year. The Chinese have got on order 200 new commercial aircraft every year for the next five years, and given that you need an average of 12 crews per aircraft, the prospects for pilot training look very good. They're predicting 19 percent growth in GA per annum, and they are strongly encouraging pilot training by the private sector. The Chinese are committed to opening up to GA, and there is massive room for expansion in our segment of the market."

In contrast to what has been happening in Europe, the Chinese are planning to bypass primary radar and go direct to ADS-B for flight tracking. And while they wish to remain free of American influence, they

Below: China - America sets the pace

want to take the best from all sources. The Americans are making massive efforts to sway Chinese aviation regulation their way, and early signs are that China will adopt a version of the FARs whose content will include around 80 percent of the American version. This would make it easier for the Chinese to get access to the American aviation market, and vice versa. The AOPA visit coincided with the US-China Aviation Symposium, at which Craig Spence gave a presentation.

The Americans are working on a similar arrangement with India and other countries, and there is a risk that ultimately, Europe will stand out as an island of over-regulation in a world that is turning its back on bureaucratic excess in aviation. As this comes together, Europe's bilateral arrangement with the Americans, currently under discussion, will become ever more important, allowing equipment made with Chinese efficiencies to American standards to gain access to the European market.

Dates for the World Assembly have not yet been fixed, but it will be towards the end of 2014. ■



GPS approaches – we're getting there

AOPA UK's long-standing request for work to begin on GPS approaches has finally been answered by the CAA, which has set up a study group to look at the issue. While the move is welcome, it comes late – there are already some 5,000 WAAS-assisted GPS approaches in the United States, and France has decided it will adopt EGNOS-assisted GPS approaches in place of ILS systems.

AOPA Chief Executive Martin Robinson has produced a paper at the request of the European Commission on why International AOPA-Europe supports the

establishment of GPS 'LPV' approaches. These provide EGNOS-derived vertical guidance. IAOPA has long held that the teaching of NDB and VOR approaches should be replaced with the study of GPS let-downs.

Five years ago the UK CAA established a handful of GPS approaches, but only at large airfields which already had ground-based systems. AOPA has been urging the Authority to make establish GPS approaches at fields with no instrument landing capability, where ad hoc GPS approaches have been created by users,

some with less understanding of safety issues than others.

Martin Robinson says: "The reality is that 97 percent of the time the EGNOS-enhanced GPS signal has an accuracy of three metres, and 90 percent of the time accuracy is within 2 metres. An ILS-lookalike system with this level of accuracy is more than sufficient for most of GA. There is absolutely no reason why we should be required to use the same technology our grandfathers used, and we congratulate the CAA on beginning to look at this issue." ■

Looking-glass regulation at EASA

The 129th Regional Meeting of International AOPA-Europe will be held in Heidelberg in October, and among the topics to be discussed are some of the anomalies that are emerging in EASA regulation as it is implemented by states.

Jacob Pedersen of AOPA Denmark is dealing with a number of problems surrounding new FCL and MED regulations as they have been interpreted by Danish authorities. One example is that holders of a CPL who do not fly commercially but want to use their license for a purely private flight must now maintain a valid Class 1 medical. Even if their medical certificate is still valid for Class 2 privileges, they cannot legally fly non-commercially if the Class 1 date has expired. The absurdity of a situation in which you can fly legally on a PPL but not on a CPL is obvious.

The Danish CAA's solution is that CPLs must hand in their licences and pay a fee to have a PPL issued. Then when your Class 1 medical is renewed, you hand in your newly issued PPL and pay a fee to have the CPL re-issued. "This bureaucratic paper exercise serves absolutely no purpose except generating fees and costs," says Jacob.

The Danish CAA has admitted that this is not an acceptable situation, but find themselves unable to change the process because of the formulation in Part MED.A.030. They have promised to bring up the problem at the next FCL evaluation meeting, but it's likely to be



at least three or four years before any change can be made.

In a second example, because of a redesign in how privileges are presented in the new EASA licence, many pilots now have perfectly legal privileges for which a licence cannot be issued. If you renew your multi-engine IR on a simulator so you do not have the associated MEPL class rating, then you do not fit into the new tabular format where your IR is written next to your class rating. The consequence is that you cannot have your IR privileges printed in the licence. The rules have not changed, and renewing your MEIR without the ME class rating is still perfectly legal and can make good sense, but you cannot have a licence issued. According to the Danish CAA, the problem has been recognised by EASA but again it will take three to four years to fix it.

Jacob concludes: "When it comes to EASA priorities, the main message should be, focus on fixing what is broken before attention is diverted to new areas." ■

Left: Jacob Pedersen "This bureaucratic paper exercise serves absolutely no purpose except generating fees and costs."

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RMZs and TMZs in vogue

aircraft to negotiate access if radio communication was impossible for any reason. In the event, they were not needed.

A temporary Transponder Mandatory Zone was put in place around Exeter Airport during the upgrading of its radar,

The CAA-imposed Radio Mandatory Zone covering Blackpool was unusually short-lived, being withdrawn after three days, fully three weeks

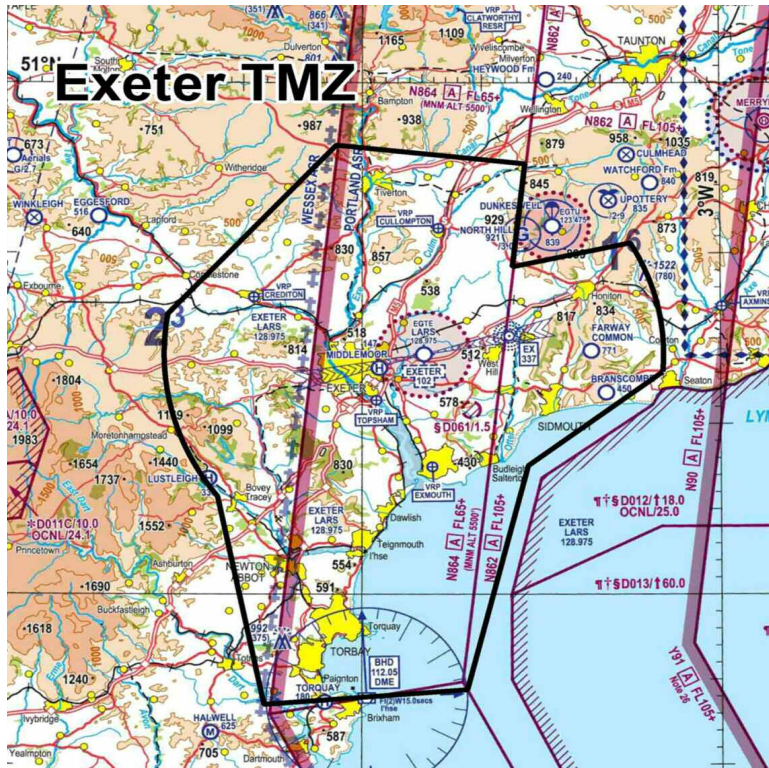
ahead of schedule. The RMZ was put in place while the airfield's radar was down for replacement and was originally intended to run from August 27th to September 23rd. The replacement work was completed far more quickly than the airport expected, leading to the withdrawal of the RMZ on August 30th.



communication by phone was not possible, and plans were laid to arrange for

and this is lasting rather longer. Aircraft operating in the TMZ are required to carry and operate a serviceable transponder with both Mode A and C. Again, arrangements have been made for those who cannot comply to gain access subject to certain conditions. Pilots should contact Exeter Air Traffic Control on 01392 369646 before flight, or Exeter Approach on 128.975 to discuss the matter.

The TMZ was planned to run from September 16th for up to 28 days. There's a map of the dimensions of the TMZ at <http://www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?catid=7&pagetype=90&pageid=15074>



Left: Exeter TMZ

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CAA complaints

No doubt influenced by the cod-'CAA complaints department' stuff that's been doing the rounds, the Authority has published its own complaints policy – setting out the process for people to follow to raise concerns about the services they provide, the conduct of their staff, or anything else we don't like.

CAA Chief Executive Andrew Haines says: "We are absolutely committed to providing a high standard of service to everyone we deal with. However, we recognise that sometimes things can go wrong for a number of reasons and our stakeholders may feel that they are not receiving the level of service that we should deliver. Complaints are a valuable source of feedback and help us to identify areas we need to improve – and our stakeholders have made clear they feel we should be more open about our policy on handling them. To help those we regulate understand our approach and the most effective way to give us feedback, we want to ensure that our policy is fully accessible and it is easy for anyone to share a concern or make a complaint."

It is the CAA's intention to respond to all complaints within 20 working days, and they explain on their website how people can take their complaint further if they are not satisfied with the initial response.

You can read their complaints policy at www.caa.co.uk/complaints. If any member has experience of having to use it, good or bad, let us know and we'll pass the word on. ■

BALPA tackles EASA

The European Aviation Safety Agency has been accused of gross maladministration by professional pilots. The British Airline Pilots' Association (BALPA), which represents over 80% of British airline pilots, has submitted a formal complaint to the European Ombudsman who has responsibility for investigating such cases of poor governance within European agencies.

BALPA's complaint is that EASA has breached its own terms of reference in the way it has put together its proposals to change pilots' working hour limits, limits which are supposed to prevent fatigue. In particular, the EASA group that formulated the proposals appeared to be very short on relevant medical and scientific qualification and BALPA says EASA took no steps to record or manage conflicts of interest within the group.

BALPA's General Secretary Jim McAuslan said: "We have written to the Minister to inform him of our Ombudsman complaint and asking him to support our cause and insist that the rule-making process is done properly.

"Regrettably the Minister has shown little stomach so far for a fight with EU bureaucrats. BALPA's battle is therefore likely to move to the EU parliament, which has been poorly served by an Agency that lacks transparency, skill and knowledge and yet has been given the power to draft rules which will have a big impact on every airline passenger in Europe."

The CAA supports the EASA line on flight time limitations.

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Members Working Group at Sywell

The AOPA Members Working Group met at Sywell at the end of July to discuss the issues facing general aviation and debate what can be done to help promote solutions. Present were Pauline Vahey (in the chair), Nick Wilcock, James Chan, Peter Baron, John Walker, Mike Cross, Chris Royle, Pat Malone and Chris Wheeler, with AOPA Chairman George Done and CEO Martin Robinson making up the Association contingent.



The range of topics covered included the online GAR, which came out of group member John Murray's work, CAA airspace changes, handling charges, the AOPA Bonus Day at Duxford, AOPA's free legal insurance scheme, the AOPA Regional Representatives, the early performance of the AOPA shop and the online sales operation.

Licensing

Nick Wilcock gave a comprehensive brief on the licensing situation, which touched on the restructuring of the CAA's general aviation interests under Mark Swan, now head of the Safety and Aviation Regulation Group. Nick reported that at the AOPA/CAA Working Group held at Gatwick on July 10th there had been several significant developments. Significant progress has been made towards reducing the burden on Registered Facilities (RFs) which are required to convert to Aviation Training Organisations (ATOs) under new EASA rules. While the change will not be painless, the CAA is going out of its way to take the sting out of it. At AOPA's suggestion, RFs will automatically be deemed to be ATOs at the EASA deadline, and will have two years to undergo the audit process. The CAA is working on a tick-box template system for the audit. The first of these documents had

been handed to the AOPA Instructor Committee, which thought it was a good start but still represented too much unnecessary work. The Committee had made some suggestions as to what can be excised.

The new ATO requirements include the need for a Safety Management System, but if an operator already has one as part of the CAA licence for his airfield, that will suffice for ATO purposes – nothing further will be required.

Martin Robinson said that while AOPA had been concentrating on RFs, the problems facing the smaller Flight Training Organisations had not been addressed. They would be subjected to the same onerous requirements as the largest schools and many did not have the ability to handle the workload. This is something AOPA has turned its attention to.

Nick Wilcock reported that The CAA had again reiterated its support for the IMC rating, or IR (Restricted) as it is known in Europe, and has made its position abundantly clear to the DfT and EASA.

Nick covered a raft of small but important changes to the wording of licensing requirements to clean up the anomalies and contradictions inherent in some of EASA's requirements. Others covered over-zealous CAA interpretations – for instance, a pilot who is issued with an EASA Light Aircraft Pilots Licence (LAPL) cannot take passengers until he has ten more hours PIC. This was deemed to apply to CPLs and ATPLs who were applying for LAPLs, which seemed excessive. The CAA has now agreed to effectively remove the requirement for those who already have superior licences.

One change for which AOPA has been pressing for years is ORS4 No.974, a long-awaited exemption from the Part-FCL

Instrument Rating renewal requirements for holders of UK CAA-issued pilot licences who hold or have held Third Country pilot licences with Instrument Rating privileges or UK military unrestricted Green instrument ratings. EASA has recommended to the European Commission that it accept a derogation from the requirements of Part-FCL (Annex 1 to the Aircrew Regulation) modifying Instrument Rating revalidation and renewal requirements for such licence holders, and this exemption is issued to permit affected pilots to take advantage of the modified requirements pending formal adoption of the derogation by the Commission. Some military pilots had been faced with the possibility of redoing their IRs from scratch because their military currency didn't count. This resolves that issue.

The Members Working Group at Sywell, with Chairman Pauline Vahey front and centre



Handling charges

James Chan updated members on the situation with handling charges at regional airports, which he has been pursuing. There has been little movement in recent months, although the most promising news was that the European Parliament was once again planning to rule that it should be mandatory for airfields to offer GA the self-handling option. Laws mandating self-handling provision were due to go before Parliament last year, but MEPs got cold feet in the face of threats of strikes by airport staff.

European law already recommends that self-handling be allowed, but many airports choose to charge GA for handling whether we want it or not. A mandate would force them to comply, and to offer competitive handling services to those who wanted them. It won't happen this year, but it's potentially a positive development.

Martin Robinson said the issue of handling charges had been raised with the Department for Transport through the GA Strategic Forum, and a response was expected at the next meeting. ■

Letters to the Editor

Arrows RA(T)s

Sir,
Regarding the Arrows infringement article in the August 2013 *General Aviation* magazine, I would like you to consider just how seriously do the 'Reds' take their display notification.

The Reds have no map showing their activities on their website. Do you really expect every GA pilot to make a phone call to them to receive a verbal description of the RA every time they fly? Have you tried getting into the NATS NOTAM section to retrieve the Reds RA? It's a real pain. Not everyone has an iPad and SkyDemon.

I would not be amused by any aircraft flying through my display, but why don't the Reds have a map on their website? It is not as easy as you claim to obtain the Red Arrows display RA information quickly and plotted except with an iPad.

Do feel free to send Red One round to give us a proper briefing with a MAP.

Chris Burrough
GA pilot and ATPL

That Red Arrows number again: 0500 354 802 – Ed

Smelling the airline dollar

Sir,
Fine article about Southampton (*General Aviation*, August 2013) but a bit soft-focus and glossy. Hats off to the Solent ATC, never had any issue with them. However, the airfield management is a different issue. Being owned by BAA, they think they're a mini Heathrow. I trained at Southampton at the turn of the century and flew from there till GA was evicted around 2005. We were highly professional and really current on IFR rejoin procedures, making us very safe. I then had to move to Bournemouth and regularly mixed it with fast jets, Ryanair and a private 747. They had no problems, so what made Southampton so precious? I now fly regularly out of East Midlands and the other day was taxing behind a Dreamliner and on rejoin was No 2 to a Ryanair with another Ryanair as No3.

Lee on Solent is now up and running as a marvellous GA field so Southampton has lost out. Great pity, because when the weather is bad IFR into Southampton is great. Great shame so many regional airports get anti-GA the minute they smell the airline dollar, and when passenger numbers fall they try to make out they're suddenly GA friendly. Southampton and others need to get real, ditch the unnecessary mandatory handling for a PA-28, charge us a sensible fee and we will return.

Robert Hill ■



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AOPA Bonus Day



Despite some appalling weather more than 60 members made it to Duxford for this year's AOPA Bonus Day, where we heard from some interesting and informative speakers, did some networking among ourselves, had the opportunity to pin down AOPA's executives and experts on topics of our own, and of course visit one of the world's best aviation museums on the cheap.



The TAF said the day was flyable but the morning's weather turned out to be significantly worse than the TAF and Duxford was closed at the time proceedings were due to start, with a cloudbase of 300 feet in rain. Some members diverted to Cambridge – where the weather was somewhat better – for an instrument approach, and went on by taxi; others waited at Cambridge until the cloud had lifted enough to hop over to Duxford. In the event, only four of the dozens of aircraft that had been booked in made it on the day.



(Incidentally, a word of praise for Cambridge – not only did they fit in this unscheduled IFR traffic without notice, but they handled it with impressive efficiency and gave us a hearty welcome. I could have claimed a free landing under the provisions of AOPA's Strasser Scheme; but like the rest of us, they have a business to run, and the £25 fee is not a killer given the quality of the facilities there. And if you're a member of the Cambridge Airport Flying

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Top: only a handful of planes made it to Duxford because of poor weather

Above: bad weather meant there were several empty seats in the Marshall Hall

Below: Hayward's Matthew Day signed up members for the free AOPA legal expenses scheme





Left: Nick Wilcock – EASA FCL data laced with humour and delivered like a stand-up

Bottom left: members enjoyed a buffet lunch and a networking opportunity

Above: more than 60 pilots travelled to Duxford for the AOPA Bonus Day

issues of this magazine, and although the picture is ever-changing, we don't propose to publish the whole thing again here. See pages 24 and 25 of the June issue, which is available online at www.iaopa.eu and if you have further specific questions, give AOPA a call. It's worth mentioning, however, that if Wilcock hadn't been a Hunter, Phantom, Vulcan and VC-10 pilot he would have made a first-class stand-up comedian and nobody can deliver a lecture on EASA licensing in such an engaging and memorable way. Catch his performance if you can.

AOPA Chairman George Done presented the biennial AOPA Awards, we had a good lunch, and when it came time to leave the weather had done what the TAFs always promised it would do, and we flew home well satisfied. – Pat Malone →

Community – membership is free, see www.flyingcambridge.com – you only pay half the fee.)

Most members arrived by car, but as a result of the weather delay some of us missed the first speaker, Douglas Cairns, who has famously battered down doors across the world to overcome the inertia of the authorities in the matter of making reasonable provisions for diabetics to fly. Douglas's exploits in breaking aviation records have often been publicised in *General Aviation* and elsewhere.

The other speakers were Phil Roberts, Assistant Director of Airspace Policy at the CAA, Nick Wilcock, AOPA's expert on licensing (and other stuff), and AOPA Chief Executive Martin Robinson. The substance of Nick Wilcock's presentation has been published a number of times and quite comprehensively in recent



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Avoiding a mid-air

If there is a mid-air collision involving a passenger jet and a general aviation aircraft we might as well all pack up and find something else to do, because quite apart from the loss of life in the accident the consequences will be horrendous, far-reaching and not at all positive for GA.

There's a strong chance that any such accident will result from an infringement of controlled airspace, and it follows that such incidents are to be discouraged. Phil Roberts, Assistant Director of Airspace Policy at the CAA, believes that we are not doing enough to tackle the infringement rate, which remains stubbornly high despite all the effort that has been directed at getting it down.



In his talk to AOPA members, Phil Roberts used the collective 'we' – partly because he's a general aviation pilot who flies a Warrior out of Brize, partly because he's not of the opinion that GA pilots are entirely to blame for the current situation. The CAA is looking at all aspects of the airspace structure, and the way students are taught to deal with it, to see where improvements can be made. But whomever is responsible, 'we' are all part of the solution.

"It's our problem," he said. "We want to make it that infringing is simply not acceptable. We should all challenge people when we see things not being done properly. We need to take collective responsibility to clean up our act as a community."

Roberts has been engaged on infringement prevention for the past dozen years or more, and while some inroads have been made, the problem resolutely declines to go away. Infringements have come down since their 2009 peak, when more than 1,000 were reported. In 2012 the number was 768 and there have been 372 this year, up to June.

Understandably, most are in the south-east – that's where the airports are, with their associated controlled airspace, and that's

where most of the flying is done.

Infringements of Red Arrows RA(T)s feature incessantly, which Roberts characterised as 'disappointing' given the amount of effort that now goes into publicising them. "They're on the AIS website, the notams, they're on SkyDemon, the freephone number... but still we have to do better," he said. ATZs and glider launch sites are also hot spots for close encounters, and 75 percent of infringements involve light aircraft.

Infringements are Commercial Air Transport's biggest unmitigated risk, Roberts said. Loss of separation was not merely a nuisance, with CAT aircraft being held or vectored out of the way of infringers, but could cause the sort of accident that would change all our lives.

"Some people in the GA community don't seem to show the same level of care in their flight preparation," Roberts said. "We need collectively to improve that situation..."

Contributory factors in infringements were poor pre-flight preparation, inadequate navigation skills, over-reliance on GPS, distraction, weather, misunderstandings with ATC, apprehension over the use of RT, the complexity of airspace design, and the fact

Below: glider launch sites are also hot spots for close encounters



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that airspace boundaries were not aligned with identifiable surface features.

With so many problems to tackle, a multi-faceted approach is needed. "We are asking ourselves what we are teaching our students, and whether it is as appropriate today as it was 30 years ago," Roberts said. "Are we teaching people to operate the radio as well as we can? How do we engage with pilots who are not members of associations, with whom the biennial flight review is the only contact? What options do we use in response to infringements? All these things are up for debate."

The CAA is now having a weekly meeting between flight examiners and safety data people to look at recent data and identify any trends quickly – to study particular sites where infringements occur, perhaps identify particular registrations. "We can go and talk to CFIs, or have a conversation with owners," Roberts said. "Those conversations have in fact started in the past two or three months."

The options available to the CAA start with a caution. "We could require infringement awareness training," he went on. "Like the speed awareness training that's used in some road traffic cases. It could take the form of an online test."

"Ultimately prosecution is an option, but it's not something we do lightly. There has only been one prosecution this year, and last year there were five, out of 768 identified infringements."

The CAA's study of infringements covers all the options. "Are we equipping pilots with the right skills during training?" Roberts asked. "Where and how can airspace design be made more user-friendly, in terms of design and operation. Maybe we should be looking at 'successfully navigate through' rather than 'unsuccessfully navigate round'."

Roberts put up a slide of the Manchester low-level route as an example of where airspace was not notably user-friendly. "Would we design things this way if we were starting from scratch?" he asked. He brought forth from the audience a low growl when he

Below: CAA Assistant Director of Airspace Policy Phil Roberts posing difficult questions









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showed a slide of the new Norwich CTR. "Class D is not a no-go zone," he said. "We anticipate appropriate levels of access. It should be possible to get through. The Norwich CTR was created to deal with an issue around the safety of flying – there were 200 incidents before that Class D was created. But if people aren't getting access, we would like to know about it. At the moment, about 300 flights a month get crossing clearance. We will do the 12-month analysis and see how well it is working."

"Use RT well and professionally. Having been an air traffic controller, I know that if someone doesn't sound professional on the radio it puts you on your guard. And have a plan B; the answer might be 'no' for good reason. And if you have a transponder, use it. It helps ATC so that when there is an incident, the consequences are less significant. If there's one message I'm seeking to convey today, it's 'switch on your transponder'."

"Ultimately we must ask ourselves whether we are conducting ourselves as professionally as we might. However they come about, infringements usually involve an issue of airmanship."

There was a short Q&A session at the end where speaker and audience seemed to be largely at one with the issues. Too much unnecessary clutter on the notams – especially when translated by SkyDemon. Radiosonde launch areas made the map look like a war zone, but in fact they only launch when the wind is calm and there's no cloud. Roberts said he had campaigned long and hard to get that 'sticky' out of the notams that warned of four Jetstreams on navigation exercises somewhere in the south west. But he took issue with a questioner who said he wasn't interested in cranes in Grimsby or wherever, reminding him of the helicopter accident in London earlier this year.

And lest you think technology is the answer, the session ended with Jonathan Smith of NATS remarking that of the 768 infringements recorded last year, only five did not have on board some sort of moving map technology – Garmin, SkyDemon on an iPad, Airbox Aware or similar. More food for thought there.

AOPA Awards for 2013

The biennial AOPA Awards presentation ceremony formed part of the AOPA Bonus Day at Duxford. The awards aim to recognise exceptional contributions to general aviation in all its forms, and they were presented by our Chairman George Done. The words here are taken from the citations, delivered in each case by AOPA Chief Executive Martin Robinson as the trophies were handed over.

Lennox-Boyd Trophy:

Awarded to a person, club, group or organisation who has contributed significantly to the furtherance of general aviation, flight training, club flying or piloting standards. The trophy is a cup in a special presentation box that was originally given to the Association of British Aero Clubs by the late Rt Hon Alan Lennox-Boyd PC CH MP (subsequently Viscount Boyd of Merton) in 1953.

This was awarded to Mike O'Donoghue, Chief Executive of GASCo, the General Aviation Safety Council. He is thus responsible for ensuring the aims and objectives of the Council are met. One of the most difficult of recent challenges has been to organise the well-established Flight Safety Evenings on behalf of the CAA following the CAA's decision to cease direct involvement. With the full support of Council, and past and present GASCo Chairmen, Gerald Hackemer and Rick Peacock-Edwards, Mike has turned the Flight Safety Evenings into a success story, having delivered 45 last year against a contracted requirement of 20, made possible by the recruitment and training of additional regional safety officers. GASCo



Above: Mike O'Donoghue

continues to offer the popular safety seminars and support the major GA shows and events with their well-known pre-flight challenge, but the GASCo Flight Safety Seminars have brought about a heightened profile within the GA community. Without doubt, this is due to Mike's diligence, perseverance and careful planning, resulting in an outstanding contribution to general aviation safety.

AOPA Special Award.

Awarded to a person who, or organisation that, has made a special contribution to safety, customer care, or other area of general aviation. The trophy is a cup originally presented to the British Precision Pilots Association in 1987.

This award goes to Dawn Lindsey. Prior to the 2012 London Olympic Games and the Paralympics, Dawn Lindsey was appointed the CAA Head of Olympics Planning. In this role, she led a small team and worked with the DfT and industry to provide a system involving a special air traffic service (Atlas Control) that was considerably less restrictive than that originally proposed by the security services. She liaised closely with GA aerodromes most affected by the Olympic restrictions and delivered, with her team, many informative presentations, including at the AOPA Bonus Day at Duxford in September 2011 and the IAOPA (Europe) Regional Meeting in London in March

2011. In the follow-up discussions, the Olympic Airspace system was widely recognised as having been highly successful, due in no small measure to Dawn's dedication to the task, which is now recognised by this award.

Best Aerodrome.

Awarded to an aerodrome that offers outstanding facilities and helpful service to residents and visitors alike. The trophy is a sword donated to AOPA by Airtour International Ltd (now Pooley's Flight Equipment Ltd) in 1982. The sword was renovated by Robert Pooley in 2004.

This award goes to Rochester Airport, which is a heritage site originally owned by Rochester City Council, who leased it to

Below: Kelvin Carr accepted the award on Rochester's behalf



Dawn Lindsey receives her cup from George Done

Short Brothers for the design and construction of huge numbers of aircraft from 1934 to 1946. It was occupied by the RAF from 1938 to 1953 and later used by commercial flights, with the lease eventually reverting to the Council in 1979. Rochester Airport Ltd took on the lease from Medway Council and after many difficult negotiations have agreed plans that will see the airport continue in operation for many years yet. The residents and owners of aircraft based at Rochester are enthusiastic supporters of the aerodrome and are bound together by an exceptionally strong community spirit, which comes across to fly-in visitors who receive a friendly welcome.

The award was accepted on Rochester's behalf by Kelvin Carr.

Contribution to the Community.

Awarded to a person or organisation who has made an outstanding contribution to the aviation community. The trophy is a cup donated in 1997 by Flyer magazine.

The award went to Lee Flying Association. Over the past six years, the Lee Flying Association has played a pivotal role in preventing the closure of Lee-on-Solent aerodrome to general aviation users and in championing the retention and regeneration of the site as a centre for aviation employment and recreational use. Lee-on-Solent is now a popular aerodrome



Above: Lee Flying Association's Chairman, John Butts

for pilot visitors. Many challenges, some almost insuperable, have been faced and overcome by the association, these having been well recorded over the period in *General Aviation* and other GA related magazines.

This award was accepted on behalf of all the members of the Lee Flying Association by its Chairman, John Butts.

Controller of the Year.

Awarded to a controller or ATC team who has or have contributed significantly to flight safety through provision of service or other means. The trophy is a shield, originally donated by International Air Radio Ltd, who developed the AERAD charts, in 1982.

The award goes to Jonathan Smith of NATS. Jonathan Smith has been an Air



Above: Jonathan Smith of NATS



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Traffic Controller since 1988 and is currently a Terminal Control Safety Manager at NATS. He has been instrumental in changing the way infringements are treated by NATS such that lessons could be learnt leading subsequently to a significant reduction in infringements. By enabling the provision of key data, he has also been the driving force behind the Airbox, a low-cost tool for GA pilots that warns of approaching restricted airspace. The award is given in recognition of Jonathan's special contribution to air safety.

Individual Merit.

Awarded to a pilot or individual who has made an outstanding aviation achievement. The trophy is a cup on a granite plinth.

This goes to John Murray. John is a regular attendee at and contributor to the meetings of the AOPA Members Working Group. He has kept the group informed as to progress towards the establishment of the online General Aviation Report (GAR) that is now available free for all pilots, whether or not they are members of AOPA, by downloading the necessary off the AOPA website. It has been totally through John's dedication, negotiation with the UK Border Agency and prolonged persistence in tackling almost insurmountable problems over many, many months

Below: John Murray



that the system is now up and running. By agreement, ownership resides with the UKBA and AOPA provides an approved portal. An app for Android devices is also available.

Instructor of the Year.

Awarded to an instructor who has made a special contribution to the training of student pilots for the PPL or NPPL, or to private pilots for added qualifications. The trophy is an art deco cup donated in 2004 by Virgin Experience Days.

The Instructor of the Year award goes to Alan Evans. Alan

Below: Alan Evans



instructs at the IMC Club which he established at Bourn. His nomination is supported by a group of 15 pilots who were successfully trained for the IMC Rating by Alan over the past year or so, with each pilot contributing an individual view on why Alan should receive the award. The list of Alan's qualities as an exceptional flying instructor included being an excellent teacher, having empathy with his students, having an infectious enthusiasm for flying, being always

available, encouraging his students to keep learning, and earning a fantastic pass rate.

Friend of AOPA.

Awarded to a person or persons who has or have made a special contribution towards the work of AOPA.

This goes to Councillor Sean Woodward, Executive Leader Councillor of Fareham Borough Council. He has been hugely supportive of the efforts over the past six years of the Lee Flying Association in making Lee-on-Solent freely available to general aviation users. Councillor Woodward took up the case in the political arena and provided invaluable advocacy on behalf of the aviation businesses, organisations, users and community groups dependent on access to the aerodrome and this award recognises his invaluable contribution.

In accepting the award, Councillor Woodward intimated that there was good news to come on the Lee-on-Solent aerodrome front, including the possibility of an £8 million investment.

At the conclusion of the awards ceremony, Lee Flying Association Chairman John Butts stood to thank Martin Robinson, George Done and AOPA for the invaluable help it had given during the fight to keep Lee on Solent open to general aviation, a sentiment that was reinforced with a warm round of applause. ■



Right: Councillor Sean Woodward

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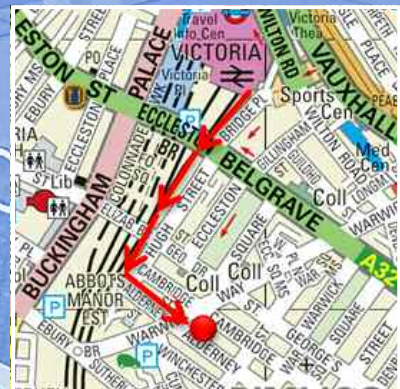
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Helping ourselves

By John Walker

Many pages of previous editions of *General Aviation* and aviation forums have described the troubles and tribulations of GA aerodromes in maintaining operations without having undue restrictions placed upon them by local planning authorities. The starting point for many of these authorities' actions is a campaign by a small but vociferous group of local residents objecting to the aerodrome's activities, particularly concerning noise. These campaigns are often sustained by much misinformation and, surprisingly, by former pilots who find it necessary to attack the industry in which they have spent their working life, having learnt to fly in GA aircraft! The situation is not helped by the lack of aviation knowledge on the part of both the elected members and officers of planning authorities, coupled with a failure to properly investigate and assess complaints against aerodromes.

To counter some of the ills noted above, we GA participants can all play our part in minimising the causes of complaints and setting the record straight as to our activities by adopting some simple measures such as those listed below.

Aerodrome Best Practice

A licensed aerodrome, including those dedicated to GA, is governed by the practices laid down in CAP 168: "Licensing of Aerodromes". CAP 793: "Safe Operating Practices at Unlicensed Aerodromes" is the bible for all other aerodromes, which term includes airstrips. Owners and operators of unlicensed facilities should follow the guidance in CAP 793 thus answering any criticism that they are 'unregulated'.



Another document with a wealth of good advice in it is the CAA's publication "Noise Considerations at General Aviation (GA) Aerodromes". In particular, the publication of noise abatement procedures on an aerodrome website, in flight guides and so on is a 'must do' action. Although noise abatement routes are usually designated by lines, in reality they are better defined as bands to cater for varying winds, piloting standards and local familiarity. It will not be for the first time that a complainant has overwritten an aerial photograph with a published noise abatement route to indicate that his property was not on the route by the width of the line! It is good practice to brief all new resident pilots on the procedures including a flight demonstration of them.

Movement Record Keeping

There is a legal requirement for licensed aerodromes to keep a record of their aircraft movements but no such need for unlicensed aerodromes to do so. With no records available it then becomes difficult for an aerodrome to provide the evidence to support an application for a Certificate of Lawful Development; to counter a claim of intensification of use or to negotiate restrictions on aircraft movements. So, the answer is to keep a movement record in an accessible place for pilots to complete even when the aerodrome is unmanned. Apart from the usual details of date, time, aircraft type, registration etc. the record should include the runway used or intended to be used and the purpose of the flight (local, circuit familiarisation, aerobatics etc.). The record can then be used as part of any investigation into complaints and provide data to support the establishment of noise contours should the need ever arise. The record also provides pilots with an easy way to meet the legal requirement to notify their movements.

Complaints

In a similar fashion, aerodrome operators should keep a central record of all complaints received about aerial activity to include date, time, nature of complaint, aircraft information, details of the complainant (if given) and the action(s) taken as a result of the complaint. For ease of future reference, complaints should be numbered and the complainant given the reference number. By cross-reference to the movements log, such a record is invaluable in tracking down pilots who need further education on local noise abatement procedures, detecting problem areas and/or troublesome local residents. People will complain to their elected representatives or local council and the media but not directly to the aerodrome in the forlorn hope that the first three agencies can immediately do something about their problem. The motive for doing so may also be to claim later that the aerodrome is doing nothing about their problem without mentioning that they have never contacted that aerodrome. Aerodrome owners/operators should not shy away from inviting persistent complainers or elected representatives to the aerodrome for direct discussions, including arranging a demonstration flight of the relevant noise abatement procedures.

Safeguarding

All aerodrome owners/operators should safeguard their facility, irrespective of whether it is licensed or not, by using the procedures given in CAP 738: "Safeguarding of Aerodromes". By this means they can gain some protection from developments within the safeguarded area which might hinder the aerodromes current or future operations. Wind farms and telecomm masts are examples of potentially troublesome structures near aerodromes.

Future Development

There is nothing to stop an aerodrome owner/operator from consulting directly with the neighbours about future plans for

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AOPA advice

AOPA members who are worried about planning issues surrounding flying sites can, of course, access some additional advice. Stephen Slater of the General Aviation Awareness Council works on behalf of members to provide initial advice and guidelines for responding to Local Planning Authorities on matters surrounding flying sites, and can be contacted via the AOPA office. In addition a number of GAAC Fact Sheets, prepared in consultation with professional planning consultants including Anna Bloomfield, Louis Chicot and Richard Vousden, all acknowledged experts in the field, can be downloaded from the GAA website; www.gaac.org

the aerodrome either before or at the same time that a planning application is submitted. By doing so, the aerodrome can pre-empt any of the wildest exaggerations of what is proposed. It is also a fact that some planning authorities' consultations do not include the most affected residents resulting in disquiet and suspicion amongst this community when construction activities start.

Pilot Briefing

As GA pilots we all have a responsibility to be fully prepared for a forthcoming flight and this includes knowledge of the relevant noise abatement procedures at the aerodromes concerned. If these procedures are not readily to hand in flight guides or on a website they can be obtained through a call to the aerodrome when requesting PPR, local weather conditions etc. Be very clear that the procedures have NOT been established to hinder the enjoyment of flight but to ensure the future of the aerodrome's continued operation. Remember also that it will probably not be you who has to deal with the angry and abusive local resident's telephone complaint about the breach of procedures but the unfortunate on-duty aerodrome staff! The result may then be a lack of customer service and an invitation not to visit the aerodrome again!

Local Government

For those readers who are elected or co-opted local government members or officers or with connections to such persons, here is a plea. Please improve the standard of reporting and dealing with complaints about aircraft activity. All of the said bodies will have some code or standard of practice stating the principles upon which they conduct their business to ensure fairness for all. Why is it then, that these principles are neglected when dealing with complaints particularly about noise, coming from aircraft allegedly based at a local aerodrome? At a recent Planning Inquiry, a planning authority submitted records of noise complaints allegedly caused by aircraft flying from a particular aerodrome that lacked any details of the time of the event, the aircraft concerned and whether the complaint had been forwarded to the aerodrome. As such this 'evidence' would not meet any of the accepted standards for evidence in a court of law and yet was being used in an attempt to restrict the operations of a lawful business with the consequent adverse employment and economic impacts. Surely, in the interests of fair play, local authorities should obtain as much detail as possible about such complaints before accusing any aerodrome of their involvement, especially if the complaint is from a resident miles away from the aerodrome concerned. Natural justice also dictates that the aerodrome should be advised of the complaint so that the owner/operator has the opportunity to comment on it and take any necessary remedial action instead of being accused at a later date of taking no action on matters of which he has not been previously advised. ■

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Hard to imagine now but way back in the hazy history of the late 1940s and early 1950s, post the Second World War, there were thousands of Cessnas without nose wheels – indeed there were none at all until the advent of the Cessna 150 in 1955!

One of the most attractive of the earlier

Cessna tail wheel models is the Cessna 170. A rarity in Europe and especially in the UK, where there are only six examples, there are still some 2,500 Cessna 170s flying worldwide, mostly in the USA, out of 5,200 built. Not bad for an aircraft with a relative short production span from 1948 to 1956 and for a type

which has a reputation, somewhat overstated, of taming pilots with a tendency for the tail to overtake the nose on the landing run – the classic ground loop.

But maybe it's not so surprising that so many are still flying when you realise that almost all are owned by enthusiasts who cherish their beloved 170s, with an active US-based owners' association, fly-ins and most of all a strong tendency to hang onto their aircraft. These days it's virtually impossible to find one for hire, especially in Europe.



How to bounce a take-off

The Cessna 170 is a classic tail wheel aircraft with a sensitive undercarriage, as Mike Derrett explains



The DNA of the aircraft has an interesting history which started when aviation pioneer Clyde Vernon Cessna started his aircraft company, which unfortunately for him petered out during the Great Depression of the 1930s. However his enterprising nephews Dwayne and Dwight Wallace brought the Cessna Aircraft company back to life and in the following years did more to build the Cessna name than Clyde ever did, so maybe Cessnas should be called Wallaces, and if a dog called Gromit could be brought into the picture as well the story would be complete for a major cartoon series!

After the war Cessna was turning out 190s and 195s, classic models with radial engines, until the Cessna 120 appeared, a two place high wing aero plane with a flat Lycoming engine. This transformed into the 140, which had additional conveniences like flaps. The decision by the Cessna company to develop a four-seat mass produced aircraft out of the 140 was at turning point in the development of light aircraft. A true classic, the 170 with its performance and style bridged the gap between the age of the fabric aircraft and that of all aluminum construction, which has lasted until the next progression, the advent of composite

aircraft in more recent times. Early 170s had fabric wings and an all aluminum fuselage, which soon changed to all metal 170s. Production of the type ceased in 1956 with the introduction of the nose wheel Cessna 172, which was quickly developed from the 170 when Cessna realised that market demand was swinging towards nose wheel designs with competition from Piper and their Tri-Pacer. The 170 has very pleasing lines, especially the beautifully proportioned tail feathers – it just looks right, more so than its successor the Cessna 172.

The 170 was produced in three versions, the original 170 model with



Flyer magazine

*Main photo: more than 5,000 Cessna 170s were built between 1948 and 1956
Left: it's a tailwheel, but the view over the nose during taxiing is good*



Above: D-EEVY at Stow Maries, the World War One aerodrome near Chelmsford
Left: suitably aged, the Pilots Operating Handbook for the Cessna 170

of luggage to be carried. D-EEVY has a Rolls Royce licence-built Continental C-145 engine, a smooth running six cylinder 145hp engine that gives an economical cruise using 28 litres per hour at 90 kts running at 2,300 rpm. Endurance from full tanks is 4 hours 30 minutes with no reserve, and planning for maximum legs of three hours is my rule.



Left: clamshell cowling make for easy access to the Rolls Royce Continental
Above: beautifully proportioned Art Deco tailplane looks better than that of the C172
Below: tail wheel assembly allows some directional control during taxiing

fabric wings with one degree of dihedral, the all-metal 170A with no dihedral on the wings and the flap angle increased from 40 degrees to 50 degrees, and the 170B with three degrees of dihedral and larger semi-Fowler flaps. Along the way various other changes were introduced including new cowlings, a one-piece windshield and finally new undercarriage legs.

My own Cessna 170A, registration D-EEVY, was built in 1950 and flew in the USA until it was exported to Germany in

1954 and placed on the German register, where it has remained until the present time. D-EEVY has been based in the UK for the past eight years, where it resides in a hanger at Andrewsfield Airfield (EGSL), a great grass airfield near Stansted Airport. Annual checks are done in the UK by Brinkley Aviation at Mepershall in Bedfordshire, who have the approvals from the German Civil Aviation Administration – the Luftfahrt-Bundesamt – to do the work in the UK. With an all up weight of 2,200 lbs and empty weight of 1,387 lbs payload is 813 lbs which allows full fuel of 140 litres and three average people with a small amount



Price

The first 170s sold in the US for just less than \$6,000 rising to \$8,500 for the last 170B models in 1956. Now Cessna 170s can be seen in the US in the range of \$25,000 to \$60,000 depending on condition and engine hours. They do rarely come up for sale in Europe with aircraft in Germany and Belgium recently being advertised between €40,000 for a mid life engine model to €100,000 for an as-new rebuild.

What's it like to fly the Cessna 170?

On the ground, pre-flight checks are aided by the two-part fully opening engine cowling, allowing ease of access to the engine and accessories, something that more modern aircraft distinctly lack. I like looking at the engine and ensuring items like rocker box covers and exhaust manifolds are secure. Walking round the aircraft even the casual observer will notice

the beautifully Art Deco style rounded fin, elevators and rudder which set the 170 apart from its 172 offspring, while the more observant pilot will notice the undamped sprung steel undercarriage, the Achilles heel of the aircraft, of which more later.

The first thing that any pilot new to the C170 will notice as he takes his seat is, for a taildragger, the superb forward view over the nose, the result of the lowered cowling line which almost takes away the need for the classical tail wheel zig zag while taxiing. Starting the carburettor-induction six cylinder Rolls Royce Continental engine is easy. From cold with three strokes of the primer the engine fires immediately the starter turns it over, especially if the engine is pulled over by hand beforehand to prime the cylinders, a technique I always employ when ambient temperatures are low. However this should always be carried out

with the brakes on, wheels chocked, throttle closed, magnetos off and a responsible person at the controls. Once running, the distinctive slow rumble of the six cylinder engine does wonders for one's ego, something to be savoured while running the engine at 600 rpm after start, as recommended in the Rolls Royce engine manual, until the oil pressure stabilises at 45 psi. In cold weather with thick oil this can take over a minute. For a tail wheel aircraft taxiing the 170 is relatively easy with – as mentioned – a great view from the cockpit. Most 170s such as D-EEVY have been modified to include Cleveland disc brakes, and these are highly reliable without any tendency to bind, which can be a problem with the original 170 drum brakes. As with any tail dragger care is needed in operating the brakes, especially in a strong tailwind when excessive application can easily stand the aircraft on its nose. The Scott tail wheel assembly allows some directional control during taxiing while a clutch allows the wheel to be fully castoring after a deflection either way of some 20 degrees. With careful use

Left: a blend of ancient and modern on D-EEVY's panel

Bottom left: the 170's wide cockpit door allows easy access

Below: author Mike Derrett with D-EEVY, the C170 he describes in these pages



of the brakes the aircraft can be manoeuvred into some tight spots that nose wheel aircraft can't reach. Taxiing the 170 will also give some indications of the lively undercarriage characteristics to be expected on take off and landing as the aircraft rocks and rolls slightly on the undamped leaf springs, and it takes some familiarity to understand the slackness inherent in the steering system. With anything more than a gentle crosswind, touches of brake are required to hold the required course while taxiing. Lined up for take off it's important to get the tail wheel straight before smoothly applying the power, holding the tail down with aft control wheel. Once the ASI starts to read it's time to gently bring the tail up so that the aircraft is in the level position, at the same time using right rudder to counter the gyroscopic effect of the propeller. This is the point where the undamped undercarriage can show its weaknesses as,

if there is any uneven runway surface the aircraft can start hopping up and down. The easiest description of this is to liken the movement to that of a kangaroo. If it occurs it's best to persevere and get flying as soon as possible rather than abandon the take off. Taking the aircraft off in a tail down attitude with 20 degrees of flap and building speed in ground effect can alleviate this problem if a slightly rough runway take off is envisaged.

Once in the air 170s handle well. The ailerons are lighter than a 172s and the elevators and rudder are powerful, as befits a tail dragger that hails from the era of side slipping. D-EEVY easily achieves a rate of climb of 800 feet per minute with two people on board and half fuel. Fully loaded at 2,200 pounds this diminishes to 660 feet per minute at ISA condition. In turns a slight amount of rudder is required to counter adverse aileron yaw; to any tail wheel pilot this will already be second nature, and it will sharpen up the rudder skills of those converting to tail wheel. Maximum speed in level flight at 2,700 rpm is 140 mph with a useful cruise at 2,300 rpm delivering just over 100 mph. Stalling characteristics are relatively benign, with the horn sounding at 40 mph in a clean configuration and little wing drop, even with full flap and power. The seating position in the cockpit is aft of the wing leading edge and it's good practice to lift the into-turn wing to check for other traffic before rolling into the turn. 2,000 rpm produces 85 mph and this has proved to be the ideal circuit configuration. Full flap and 70 mph is used for the final



The 170 had a short production run when nose wheels took over the world

Flyer magazine

approach reducing to 65 mph when the aircraft is light. With up to moderate cross winds the classic three point landing works out best – any tendency to touch on the main wheels first will provoke a bounce of varying intensity! Cross winds are best tackled by setting up cross controls on short finals. The high wing allows a useful amount of wing down to be held right to the point of touchdown with the objective of getting the into-wind main wheel and tail wheel touching together with the ailerons nicely set into wind to prevent the wing lifting. As the aircraft slows, rudder work is required to stop any tendency to ground loop and gentle touches of brake will also be needed as the rudder finally loses effectiveness – with the rudder partly blanked by main planes in the three point attitude, this will happen fairly smartly.

Below: D-EEVY framed by trees on the perimeter of the airfield at Abbeville

Above all, as with any tail wheel aircraft it has to be handled with care until it's in the hangar! Stronger cross winds are really best handled with the wheeler landing technique, but with the 170s spring undercarriage, if the touch produces a bounce or there is an uneven surface the familiar 'kangaroo hop' can occur. If it does to any extent, climbing away for another attempt is the wisest choice.

The 170 is a great pilot's aircraft, a real classic that encourages the pilot to fly well and can be used for practical touring, being equally at home on grass or hard runway surfaces. D-EEVY's log books shows that in its life in Europe, since being imported in 1953, it has travelled all over from Norway in the north to the tip of Italy in the south and Greece in the east to west to its present home in the UK. Pilots looking to improve their handling skills and economically operate something different need look no further than the Cessna 170. ■





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l x w x h	5,1 m x 1,9 m x 2,7 m
V _{cruise}	160 km/h
V _{ne}	185 km/h
mtow	450 (560) kg
cruise rotor	8,4 m
range	up to 4 h
engine	Rotax 914/912

l x w x h	4,8 m x 1,7 m x 2,7 m
V _{cruise}	160 km/h
V _{ne}	185 km/h
mtow	450 (560) kg
cruise rotor	8,4 m
range	up to 5 h
engine	Rotax 914/912

l x w x h	4,7 m x 1,8 m x 2,8 m
V _{cruise}	145 km/h
V _{ne}	160 km/h
mtow	450 (560) kg
cruise rotor	8,4 m
range	up to 5 h
engine	Rotax 914/912



On the Dark Side

Hunting for yet another challenge, Roger Kimbell goes down the gyro route. Pictures by Chris Jones and Malcolm Bell

For as long as I can remember I have been fascinated with flight and all types of aircraft.

Having spent five years in the RAF Cadet Force at school I applied to join that service to become a pilot but they rejected my generous offer owing to a tiny amount of short-sightedness. Gloom and depression followed, and it was another 28 years before circumstances allowed me to “slip the surly bonds of earth” and acquire my pilot’s licence.

Acquisition of an aeroplane (Robin DR300 and still with me) in 1988 led on to an IMC rating and trips throughout the UK and the Continent.

An AOPA aerobatic certificate was gained in a Pitts S2A and a twin rating in an Aztec soon after.

Always looking for some new challenge I was fortunate enough to be able achieve a PPL(H) in a Hughes 300 which I used for over 100 hours of really enjoyable flying.

Then I got a PPL(D) in a three axis microlight but terminated a conversion to weight- shift on the basis that in an

emergency I could easily put in the wrong input and end up a tangled heap.

So I joined a group flying a Yak 52 for nine years, got covered in oil, had big grin on the face after each sortie; and the opposite when the fuel bill arrived.

Following a visit to a flying show at the NEC, where gyroplanes caught my attention, I invested in an hour’s trial lesson and the rot set in from there.

Sadly, in my part of the world – Northamptonshire – there are no training facilities close by, so where to go? I asked around and was encouraged by all to whom I spoke to go and get qualified at

Chris Jones Gyroplanes up at Kirkbride in North Cumbria. Although it incurred a 500 mile round trip and a couple of weeks away, that is exactly what I decided to do having been introduced to Chris at the ‘Flying Show’ in December last. I have absolutely no regrets at so doing.

Kirkbride is a huge airfield, once a wartime maintenance unit, with 1280m hard and 1000m grass runways just north of the beautiful Lake District and in an area of little air traffic (other than the occasional low flying jet). The facilities are excellent and the aerodrome houses a considerable number of gyroplanes as well



Top: author Roger Kimbell aloft over Cumbria in the RotorSport MT03
Right: Kirkbride, a wartime maintenance aerodrome on the Solway Plain



as the usual mixture of light aircraft.

The RotorSport MT03 – a German factory built – gyroplane on which I trained has a MAUW of 450kg and a range of up to 3.5 hrs. It cruises at any speed from 45 – 90 mph with a Vne of 100. I found that 75 – 80 mph was very comfortable with the Rotax 912S spinning at 4200 – 4500 rpm. Fuel burn is 15 – 18 litres per hour of Mogas 95. The newer MT03 Sport has a MAUW of 500kg and a higher Vne.

A gyroplane's rotors are not driven like those of a helicopter; the rear-mounted engine driving a three-blade propeller provides thrust. One taxis out, turns into wind, holds the handbrake on, switches from brake to flight mode via a switch on the panel to release the rotor brake and then activates the pre-rotor mechanism which, through a car type Bendix powered from the engine, brings the rotor rpm up to 200. The stick is then pulled right back, the throttle opened up, brakes released and forward motion ensues.

Taking off: once rotor rpm has reached 280 – 300 the nosewheel can be felt to lift off. At this stage it is important to allow the airspeed to increase to around 60 mph with a little forward pressure, and then pull back gently into the climb at the same speed. The take off roll can be 50 – 100m dependent upon AUW and wind speed/direction with the rate of climb anything between 1000 – 1500 fpm.

The first week started with general upper air handling work followed by spiral climbs and descents. After this we moved onto

Left, top to bottom: autogyros – or gyroplanes, if you please – on the Kirkbride apron. Chris Jones helps Roger Kimbell strap into the RotorSport MT03.

Another satisfied customer – Roger gets his wings, again

circuits and the challenging business of achieving smooth take offs and landings

Landings: as one turns onto finals, at Kirkbride's 800 ft, the tricky bit is to determine where to initiate the descent or Initial Descent Point (IDP); for an approach with power off one needs to assess the wind carefully so as not to under or over shoot the desired landing spot. A powered approach in high head wind at, say, either side of 300 rpm greatly assists control and accuracy of reaching this point. The glide path is maintained at 60 – 65 mph, flaring at 20ft and flying the machine gently down to the runway for a walking-pace landing on the main wheels with nose up to protect the front wheel and tyre. The stick is then moved forward if one is taxiing back to the hangar to prevent the slowing rotor blades from contacting the tail and/or propeller. After exiting the runway the rotor is slowed down to a stop by applying the rotor brake until the blades are fore and aft.

Alternatively one can arrive over the



numbers at circuit height, pull back the stick to 35 – 40 mph and hover down to 300 – 400 ft before pushing the nose gently down to increase speed to 60 – 65 mph and then flaring at 20 ft, as above.

Above: Derwentwater in the Lake District is a short flight from Kirkbride

We then moved onto practice forced landings following simulated engine failures. These were much easier than in a fixed wing aircraft because, if necessary, one can pull the cyclic back and make a hovering descent at zero airspeed, recovering, again, as in a normal landing before touching down. Alternatively S-turns can be employed to lose height easily on the approach into the chosen area, as with normal helicopter practice. The extremely low landing speed compensates well for the lack of a helicopter's collective and a safe arrival should always result.

My first solo was, as always, an event of mixed emotions but unforgettable nevertheless. A really pivotal point in the whole process. The lack of someone sitting in the back seat had the effect of reducing the rotor rpm quite substantially.

Qualifying cross-countries were carried out uneventfully but with low cloudbase,

rain and poor visibility. However, because one is in the open in an MT03 and is able to fly slowly and more comfortably than in a fixed wing these conditions caused no problem. The crew of a Sea King at Carlisle

airport thought I must be deranged to be out in such conditions.

The GFT, frustratingly held up by rain and low cloud until late in the afternoon, was examined by "Mr Gyroplane" – David



**Ready for his first solo, Roger fires up the gyro on the apron
Right: Malcolm and Chris Jones, part of an excellent training team**

Beevers – and was, I'm pleased to say, much less fraught than expected and ended safely, with the desired result.

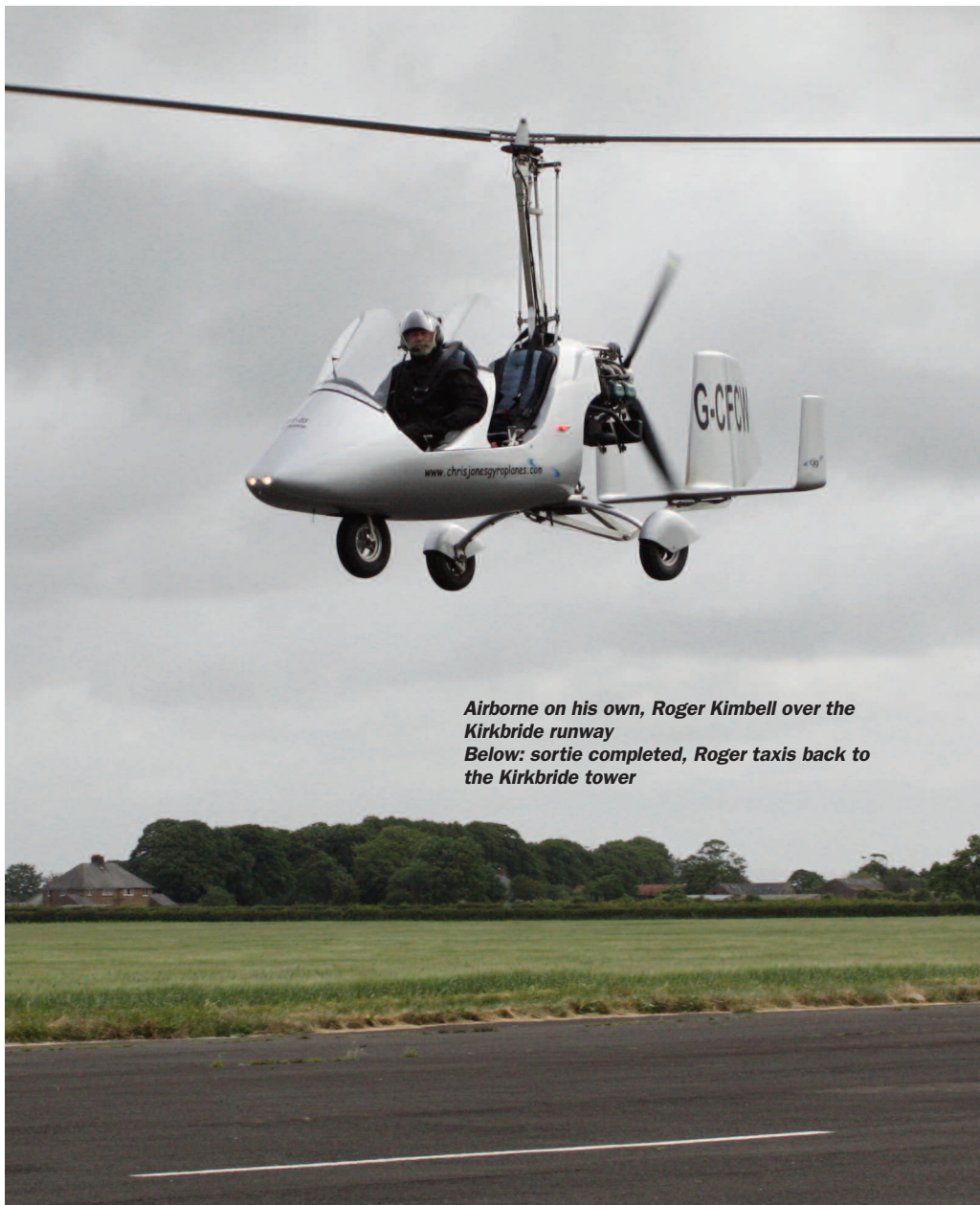
I cannot emphasise strongly enough the joy of flying one of these splendid devices especially over beautiful terrain safe in the knowledge that unless the rotors come off they are as safe or safer than almost every other type of aircraft.

They are different, and in many ways having a deal of either fixed or rotary wing flying experience “under one’s belt” can be a bit of a hindrance to rapid learning and successful handling early on but like all things practice makes perfect and one soon learns what those differences are and how to cope with them.

Fortunately the only written exam a PPL has to take is the additional one on Gyroplane Technical matters and is the usual multi-choice question type. RTFQ rules!

Their early predecessor’s somewhat colourful reputation has been completely overcome with the latest ranges of aircraft being built by certificated manufacturers who produce high quality, properly engineered gyroplanes that cannot fail to please and delight if flown sensibly. The way they can manoeuvre and fly in very high winds makes them so much more usable than a traditional fixed wing aircraft. As long as one follows the golden rules – e.g., no bunting violently forward or exceeding Vne, which can cause retreating blade stall followed by roll over, and flies properly then they must be one of the safest lighter-than-air machines flying today.

In conclusion I cannot recommend Chris Jones Gyroplanes highly enough. Chris himself has over 5,000 hours flying, instructing and is an examiner in his own



**Airborne on his own, Roger Kimbell over the Kirkbride runway
Below: sortie completed, Roger taxis back to the Kirkbride tower**



right. He is a firm but caring instructor, who has the patience of Job, and whose primary concern is the safety of his pupils and his aircraft. I made a lot of stupid mistakes early on and he came down firmly and rightly upon me. That way I learned and got it right next time.

Chris and his excellent team, particularly

Malcolm and John, are the most helpful, supportive and encouraging bunch of folk I have met in aviation during the past 25 years.

So if you fancy a trip in to The Dark Side – one you will not ever regret – then book yourself in and join an exclusive band of gyro pilots. ■

Pam flies her last AOPA sortie

One of AOPA's most stalwart supporters is retiring. *Pat Malone* talks to Pam Campbell

After nearly 50 years of helping to fly the flag for General Aviation, partly voluntarily and through periods of momentous change, Pamela Campbell is retiring from her roles at AOPA.

Pam, whose late husband was Ron Campbell, former Executive Chairman of AOPA UK and the R. D. Campbell so familiar to us all through his flight training manuals, took over her husband's unfinished work after he passed away in 1996. She has been an ever-present member of the AOPA team that has fought to repel some of the more oppressive proposals that European states were trying to introduce into the Joint Aviation Authorities' requirements.

It is in no small part thanks to Mr and Mrs Campbell that you don't need a university degree to be a flying instructor, you can still be a commercial pilot if you wear spectacles, and your PPL hours count towards future commercial qualifications.



AOPA Chief Executive Martin Robinson says: "Pam took over

from where Ron left off with JAR FCL – she had been his shadow, she knew the JAR FCL documents intimately and it was her ambition to see Ron's work through. As always with AOPA's work, more effort has to go into fighting off bad proposals than fostering new ones. The fact that nothing's happening often disguises a huge amount of work, and nowhere was that more true than JAR FCL.

"There were many proposals that, had they seen the light of day, would have had a serious impact on many pilots across Europe. Apart from the university degree, you would also have had to have a minimum of 500 hours flying experience to be an instructor. There was strong backing for a proposal for all flying clubs to be treated the same way as flight training organisations. Ron and Pam suggested the registration system that was eventually adopted. People who need glasses would have been prevented from pursuing a commercial career too – and as for being colour blind, forget it.

"Pam's continued involvement in JAR FCL after Ron died was assured because of her own aviation background and the respect that others had for her knowledge."

Top: Ron and Pam Campbell with a new-fangled Cessna 150 at Cranfield
Right: Ron (back row, centre) with his Halifax and crew during the war



Pam's impressive log books cover more than 2,000 hours flying, most of it as an instructor, and include time on the Meteor T Mark 7, Vampire T11 and Anson along with a dozen civil types. Pam had

arranged to get stick time in both the Lightning and the Hunter, but for different reasons neither flight came off, and flying herself through the sound barrier remains an unfulfilled ambition.





Pam was 10 years old and living in north London when she resolved to become a pilot. "I don't know where it came from," she says. "We had no tradition of aviation in the family, and in fact my father was a Navy man who'd been torpedoed three times during the First World War. We did have a neighbour, Group Captain Jim Ronald, who was the Commanding Officer of RAF North Weald and was a friend of my parents. He would invite us to North Weald and give me the run of the hangars, and I think on one occasion I even stayed there when I was 10 or 12 years old."

Her family was not in a position to fund Pam's flying ambitions, so she decided to join the Womens Royal Air Force (WRAF) on a short-service commission in order to be close to aircraft, and to learn to fly as the opportunity arose. She was posted to RAF Bawdsey on the Suffolk coast as a Radar Supervisor in 1954, with the rank of Pilot Officer, and later as a Fighter Controller with the rank of Flying Officer.

"Bawdsey was an extremely busy station," Pam recalls. "It was where Watson-Watt had done most of his research on radar before the war. In the 1950s there were still dozens of airfields in East Anglia and there was a lot of air traffic, day and night."

One colleague from those days remembers that Pam was so keen on flying that she even had an altimeter and an air speed indicator fitted to her car. While working at RAF Bawdsey, Pam learned to fly at the Ipswich School of Flying, under the tutelage of Stan Ward, an excellent ex-military instructor. "I learned on the Auster Autocrat, although they also had a Tiger Moth for spinning, which was part of the PPL syllabus," she says.

"They had similar flying qualities, although the Tiger Moth was more difficult

Top left: Pam, suitably attired, with Tiger Moth at Ipswich aerodrome in 1956

Left: Pam flying the Tiger Moth kept by East Anglian Flying Club for spin training

Bottom left: Pam Campell in the left seat of an Avro Anson

Below: on the wing of one of her favourite aircraft, the Chipmunk, at Elstree



to taxi as it had no brakes, and you had to increase the engine power to increase the slipstream over the rudder surface in order to turn the aircraft while taxiing. The Auster had differential braking, which made taxiing much easier. And of course, you sat side by side in the Auster instead of in tandem in the Tiger, with the student in the rear cockpit."

The cost: £3 5s an hour (£3.25) although later it went up to £3 10s, then £3 15s, a serious drain on a radar supervisor's income of a mere £252 a year. But living in the Officers Mess, Pam had few other outgoings.

Before her second tour she was sent to RAF Middle Wallop on the Fighter Controllers course, and at the same time was promoted to Flying Officer which led to an increase in pay, which helped. As a fighter controller Pam was required to vector aircraft on to their targets, and part of the job entailed flying with the squadrons in order to understand exactly

what they were doing while they responded to her instructions.

"The pilots would come to us to see our side of the business," she says, "and it was a very good arrangement which allowed us to better work together as a team.

"But it also meant that I got to know many people in the squadrons and was able to get my CO's permission to visit them. They all had dual-control trainers, so I was able to fly some of the modern jet fighter aircraft of the time. I flew quite a bit in the two-seat Meteor T Mark 7 and the Vampire T 11, as well as aircraft like the Chipmunk, Balliol and Anson.

"After the piston-engined aircraft, the jets were a delight to fly. They were much easier, with no pitch control, mixture, carb heat – just throttles. I was quite small, and I found the only way I could keep control of the Meteor 7 with one engine out was to plant both feet on the opposite rudder pedal and push with



Right: Ron at Cranfield with Austers, which they were able to phase out when Cessnas became available

Bottom right: Pam at Ipswich with moustachioed Stan Ward and other students

all my might. I got quite good at that. I had hoped to fly the Lightning and the Hunter, and on a number of occasions I managed to arrange it, only for the aircraft to 'go tech', or some other problem to arise."

During her second tour she was required to give instruction in fighter control techniques to a Flight Lieutenant who had been forced against his will to accept a ground tour at RAF Bawdsey – Ron Campbell DFC AFC (and later MBE), a highly experienced Wellington, Halifax, Lancaster and Mosquito pilot who had been shot down three times during the war, but who had always evaded capture.

Ron was an archetypal RAF type with an ear-to-ear moustache and an expansive, engaging manner. He had started flying in Tiger Moths in 1938, graduating to Bomber Command where he flew three and a half tours – an extraordinary feat of survival which was thrown into stark relief by the fact that his older brother followed in Ron's footsteps and was killed on his first mission. In the 1950s Ron was instructing on the early jets, while occasionally flying converted Lancasters for Air France and working for Vickers as a test pilot.

Pam and Ron were destined to be married in 1963. "Ron was required to keep his flying hours up during his ground tour, so he used to take me with him when he flew," Pam says. "He was a fantastic instructor, and during those flights he put me through the RAF

instructor course. I later undertook the civilian course at Elstree and qualified as a civilian instructor."

Pam began instructing part-time at Ipswich, and with the College of Aeronautics at Cranfield, where Ron also taught at weekends. There they met Neville Rogers, a local farmer, businessman and Cessna dealer who wanted to set up a flying school as an adjunct to his sales operation. Rogers asked them if they'd be interested in taking on the job. Ron left the RAF early, and he and Pam set up the Bedfordshire Air Centre at Cranfield, later to become the Rogers Aviation International Flight School.

"Ron was CFI and I was his number two," Pam says. "I obtained my Commercial Pilots Licence and FIC Instructor qualification, and the school became very successful, partly because we had a full range of brand new Cessna aircraft. After the cloth-and-string aircraft people were used to, these were a revelation. They had amazing things like

self-starters, heaters, and radios, the side-by-side seating was far better for instruction, and we kept them clean and tidy. We built the business until we had six instructors, and students came from all over the world."

At the same time, both Ron and Pam travelled widely as FIC instructors and examiners, but Pam began to withdraw from the business after the birth of their son in 1966. "Although I'd been consumed with a passion for flying, I didn't find it hard to turn away from it because family became the most important thing for me," she says. Pam kept up her licences and did some part-time instructing at Cranfield and Redhill, flying actively until 1991.

Ron Campbell was a leading figure and guiding light for our association whilst it was still known as the British Light Aviation Centre and latterly as AOPA. In the 1970s Ron represented International AOPA on ICAO's PELT Panel, the Pilot Education, Learning and Training group which undertook a root and branch review



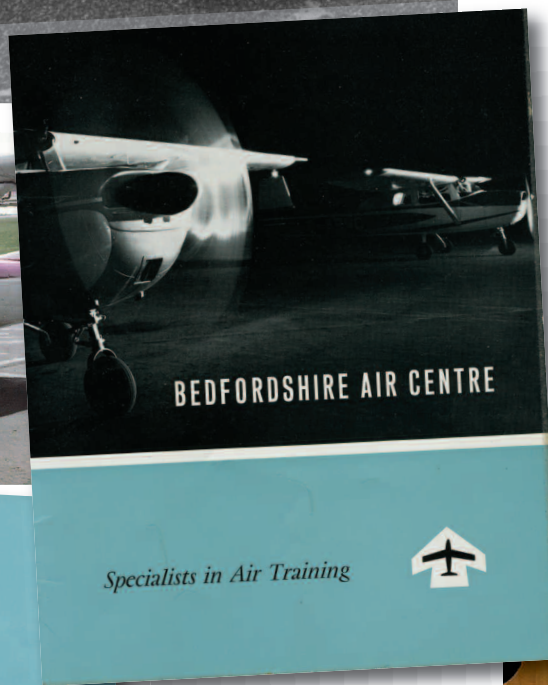


Left: Ron and Pam in 1967 – she started to withdraw from flight training when their son was born
Bottom right: Pam today, representing AOPA members for the final time

worked for the benefit of GA pilots and owners, Ron Campbell stands out as the most knowledgeable, committed and far-sighted. Ron died in 1996, but it's safe to say that without him AOPA UK would not exist in its current, active position today. One of Ron and Pam's greatest gifts to AOPA came in the early 1970s when the organisation was teetering on the brink of bankruptcy. They remortgaged their house to plough an interest-free loan into AOPA, and that, together with an interest-free loan of £10,000 from the late John Houlder, owner of Elstree Aerodrome, kept the ship afloat.

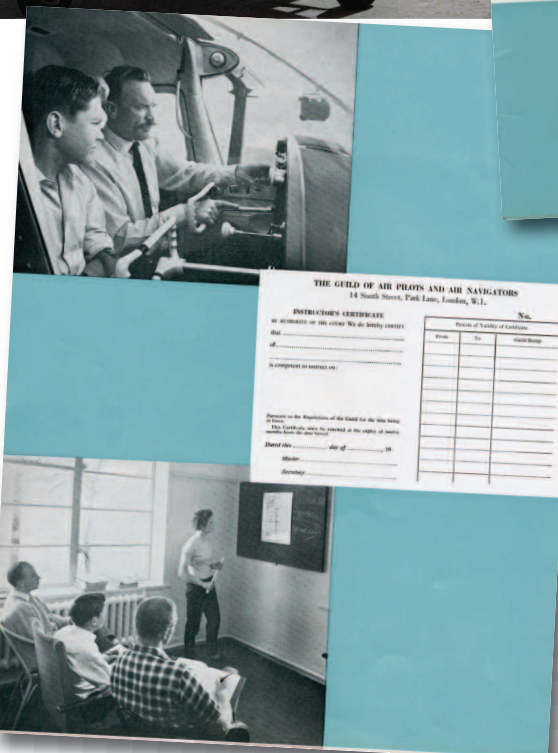
Martin Robinson says: "You could not have wished to meet nicer people than Ron and Pam. But these were two people who loved each other, and had a passion for flying at its most basic level. They both liked to share that passion and became teachers; I would say that teacher was a more apt term, because teachers devote themselves to the education and improvement of others.

"Pam is one of those unique people whose determination was absolute but whose anger would never amount to much more than a muted stamping of the feet. Her knowledge of flying, and flying training, was and is, recognised across Europe. She has been a constant influence within her area of expertise in AOPA and International AOPA and an incredibly hard act to follow. From a personal view I can say having known her for more than 20 years, I still admire and love her for what she has given to AOPA, and to me personally. I wish her a long and happy retirement." ■



Above left: Ron in Cessna at Cranfield – American aircraft revolutionised flight training
Above and left: Bedfordshire Air Centre brochure shows Ron and Pam in training roles

of training. This led to a revision of ICAO Annex 1 – standards and recommended practice in training – and also made it easier to fly across national boundaries. Previously, a pilot had to have written permission from the overflow state before entering its airspace. Of all the aviators who have



VAT blow kills

jet business

A tax grab by the government has knocked over a thriving private jet company, as Pat Malone reports

One of Britain's best-known private jet brokerage and management companies, Hamlin Jet Ltd, has closed down its aircraft management arm in the face of a new tax demand on owners which are driving the more valuable aircraft out of the country.

The closure has made 26 people redundant, but owner Mike Hamlin says they've all been able to find jobs, some with his help, although not all in the aviation business.

The death knell was the imposition of VAT on all aircraft such as the larger Gulfstreams and the Lear 45. Hitherto, aircraft over eight tonnes had been zero-rated, getting the same treatment as airliners. However, Hamlin Jet's client base was almost entirely private individual owners who were not, and could not, be VAT registered. Mike Hamlin says: "Those owners whose aircraft were serving them well when they were costing £1 million a year in operating costs found they were no longer viable when the price is increased by 20 percent. We were weathering the recession quite well, but it's wiped us out as, in the space of three months, all our owners sold their aircraft and our entire management business disappeared. The larger and more costly aircraft are being sold abroad, and of course, there's a knock-on effect all down the supply chain. The more valuable the aircraft, the more value it represents to the support and management companies, and when the business vanished almost overnight our company had a problem to deal with.

"The irony is that the government hasn't gained any more tax because the aircraft have all been sold abroad. But they've lost revenue by killing the companies that depended on that traffic, and across the country thousands of jobs have gone."

Mike, who is 67, will continue in

business as a consultant, but he has decided not only to give up the management arm but to give up flying altogether. On July 2, the 50th anniversary of his first solo – in a Chipmunk at Elstree – he flew a circuit of Elstree in a Chipmunk, then walked away from flying. He invited his family and friends to share the experience, flying in Stephen Bruh's group-owned Chipmunk G-HAPY, which flies in RAF colours as WP803. The Chipmunk in which Mike flew his first solo, G-APTG, was sadly destroyed in a forced landing soon afterwards.

Hamlin Jet has been a successful company and Mike is a rich man; in his time he's sold 81 private jets and has managed many more on behalf of companies and individuals. Along the way he's flown tens of thousands of hours in some very interesting aircraft.

A life

After gaining an RAF scholarship he learned to fly in 1963 at London School of Flying at Elstree, going solo in six hours despite the stupidity of an instructor who was nursing a grudge against the RAF, having been kicked out, and who spent their second hour of instruction doing violent stalls and spins. After a change of instructor Mike

Right: thumbs up from Mike Hamlin after his final touchdown at Elstree

progressed well, but serious sinus problems at altitude in the Jet Provost put paid to an RAF career and he went to work in a bank, contriving to be sent to the Caribbean, where Barclays DCO – their 'Dominion, Colonial and Overseas' arm – had a branch in St Lucia. He was hired by an eccentric local hotelier who'd bought a Cherokee and wanted someone to teach him to fly it. This led to the establishment of the St Lucia flying club, which within three years had five aircraft and gave Mike the first inkling that he might have a talent for business.

He returned to Britain to take his professional pilot exams at John Cass College in the City then worked as CFI at Shobdon. Whilst there he taught an executive of Island Records to fly and that autumn flew the Island Records boss to Nassau for four months. Mike recalled, "Being there was great but getting there was character building!" While crossing the ramp at Elstree one day in 1972 he was accosted by a man who said: "I hear you can fly a Navajo..." This was Colin Chapman of Lotus cars, so Mike spent four years flying for the Chapman family, Lotus cars and the John Player Team Lotus F1 outfit. When he got married and settled down he became a freelance pilot in the London area.

Mike says: "I was flying a Cessna 421 piston twin for a clothing company who were trying to sell it, and one day a chap walked up to me at Leavesden and said 'I'd like to buy your aircraft – is it for sale? My boss has told me to find one by Friday.' I was able to negotiate a good price, and I found I'd earned eight months salary in commission in a couple of hours. A light went on in my head."

Mike proved to be an adept salesman, starting with King Airs and piston twins and graduating over the years to the heavy metal. "In the beginning I was 'the boy Mike' and I had to work hard to be taken seriously because I was so young," he says. "Buy as I got older I found people respected what I said, and the business grew very satisfactorily."

Over the years Mike has had some





fascinating flights, but he's also spent thousands of hours waiting at remote airfields for people to finish their business so he could fly them on. "That's something I won't miss," he says. "But I can remember great days of flying a Gulfstream out of Hatfield to Cairo, then on to Mombasa for fuel, down to Mauritius for five days in a five star hotel, then back again to print out an invoice for my services.

"I've had a few flights I don't care to remember, too... I once had an engine fire in a Pressurised Navajo over the Atlantic, and I landed in the undershoot at Nantes having nursed it through the spray for miles. If I'd been 20 feet lower the game would have been up."

Above: Mike lands the Chipmunk for the last time 50 years after the first time
Top right: stepping out of a cockpit that seems to have shrunk with time
Right: Mike celebrates the end with some of his pilots in the cafe at Elstree

It soon got past the stage where Mike could do most of the flying himself, and over the years dozens of pilots have worked for him. In recent years Mike has done less and less flying – less than 30 hours last year – and having decided that he had the best years of the aviation industry, he decided to stop while it was still his own decision.

"I reckon my wife and I have another fun decade in us, so perhaps it's a good time to wind down," he says. "I don't like the fact that I was effectively forced into it, but that's all there is to it. I doubt whether anyone in aviation today will have as much fun as I had in building my business." ■



Benefits of AOPA Membership

As an AOPA member you are entitled to make use of any or all of the benefits listed here. You may find some will save you money, and at the same time you will be helping your Association



The AOPA Aircrew card

With the ever increasing requirement to produce photo identification, the AOPA air crew card is a valuable asset as it shows your photo as well as your pilot's licence number and AOPA membership number. The AOPA air crew card is also extremely useful in negotiating discounts in the UK and throughout the world. Let us know how your air crew card has benefitted you.

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Save on hotel accommodation - free online booking with immediate confirmation at more than 250,00 hotels worldwide. Type the following into your browser you will be directed to the AOPA UK/ HRS hotel booking website: <http://www.hrs.com/web3/?clientId=ZW5fX2FvcGFbnRlcm5hdGlvbmfMs,0¤cyISO=ROJQ,0> You can also book over the phone by calling the HRS 24/7 reservation and support centre on: 0208 846 0691. Quote your AOPA UK HRS customer number: 1018822004. If you have any questions about HRS and the service in general, please email: servicedeskuk@hrs.com (please do not use this address to make bookings or cancellations)

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Specialises in providing medical and financial benefits for membership groups in the UK. For more information on the services available to AOPA members go to www.hmca.co.uk/aopa.htm

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AOPA members benefit from a 5% discount when purchasing fuel from Fuel Supplies CI Limited. You must be a current member of AOPA and be ready to show your AOPA membership card.

AOPA Lottery Club

The AOPA Lottery is an additional revenue stream for AOPA to fund the work we do on behalf of all of our members. 50% of the funds collected are used to distribute as prizes and 50% to the fighting fund. If you would like to offer additional support by joining the lottery club please email accounts@aopa.co.uk for a registration form. Please note the you MUST be an AOPA member to participate in the Lottery.

Medical Advice

Free initial aviation related medical advice. Email your query to info@aopa.co.uk and mark your email for the attention of Dr Ian Perry.

Ground school for scandal

PPL ground training is still a mess but a clean-up may be on the cards says Nick Wilcock

In common with virtually all other aspects of civil flying, the theoretical knowledge and examinations required for the PPL and LAPL has recently become yet more complicated and administratively burdensome, thanks to the Eurocratic meddling of EASA, coupled with an element of CAA gold plating. However, there are encouraging signs that things may perhaps change for the better in the not too distant future.

On 1 Sep 2013, the CAA introduced the new sets of PPL exam papers, together with 'exam sitting' requirements. An exam 'sitting' is defined as 'a period of time established by the competent authority within which a candidate can take an examination. This period should not exceed 10 consecutive days'. For LAPL and PPL

exams, a maximum of six sittings is permitted; as before, all exams have to be completed within 18 months following the date of passing the first and they will then be valid for 24 months for the purpose of licence issue. Originally the CAA intended to define a 'sitting' as only one day, later they increased this to three. Following AOPA intervention, the CAA has now agreed to the full 10 days as permitted by EASA.

The exams have now increased from seven to nine and the total number of questions is now 172. Regrettably, many of the questions in the new papers have been heavily criticised as being utterly irrelevant and far too demanding at PPL level. However, at the EASA Part-FCL Implementation Forum held in Malahide after Easter, which the CAA also attended, I queried the need for quite so many exams and also noted that only 120 questions are actually required in EASA's Acceptable Means of Compliance. EASA publicly confirmed that the AMC indeed calls for 120 questions and also that there is no mandate for individual exams, hence Member States are free to combine exam topics as they see fit, provided that applicants achieve 75% in each topic. AOPA considers that 172 rather than 120 questions represents CAA 'gold plating' to the tune of 43% extra and has called for further change. We consider that there should be three 'combined' exams of 24 questions each (Air Law & Operational Procedures, Navigation & Flight Performance and Planning, Aircraft (General) & Principles of Flight) and three 'individual' exams of 16 questions each (Human Performance, Meteorology, Communications), making a total of

120 questions. Why 24 and 16? Because applicants need to achieve 75% in each topic, that means nine answers in each section of the 'combined' papers and 12 answers in each 'individual' paper would suffice as the minimum pass standard. Also, six papers fits in well with the six permitted sittings; we recommend that relevant theoretical knowledge is included during structured training, so with six papers ATOs could easily arrange their ground school and flying syllabus sequence accordingly. For example, Human Performance, Air Law & Operational Procedures and Communications could be taken before the student reaches the circuit consolidation stage (perhaps as a requirement before second solo – something combining stick and carrot?), Meteorology, Navigation & Flight Performance and Planning before solo navigation, the RTF Practical Test before the 150 nm cross-country and Aircraft (General) & Principles of Flight shortly before the Skill Test might be worth consideration.

Another change is that an applicant must be deemed ready to take an exam before actually doing so. This will prevent some of the answer-spotting which used to take place and to avoid dispute, each applicant should have this 'ready to sit the exam' statement included in their training record.

But there's another unwelcome piece of Eurocracy with which ATOs will need to cope. Without any evidence of a training needs analysis, EASA has decreed that 100 hours of theoretical knowledge training must be completed for LAPL and PPL courses. This can be 'directed study', 'distance learning' or 'face-to-face' in a classroom. Having seen some draft CAA documents, I was amused to note that 'The CAA recognises the benefits of the traditional, formal classroom environment where the instructor and student can interact directly with questions and answers, providing clarification and check of understanding'. Presumably the instructor should wear a gown and mortar board and wield a cane to make his points? And dole out detentions to naughty students who haven't done their prep? Mercifully, a CAA proposal to require 66 hours of such torture has now been dropped in favour of it forming a 'significant proportion of the course'. Under its current intrusive and disproportionate proposals, the CAA will require long-suffering ATOs to state precisely how their 100 hours of theoretical knowledge training will be achieved. Which is frankly daft; offering some ground school on an opportunity basis on bad weather days is fine, but I recall having to complete 100% self-study when I took the two air law papers for my R/BCPL years ago – and I obtained 97% in one and 100% in the other, even with the negative marking policy which applied back then. So surely self-study and a few oral questions from the instructor should be good enough at PPL level, given the excellent quality of current PPL training manuals? That's what most, if not all, PPL RFs have been doing for some years now.

However, there are some encouraging signs that change is in the wind. The French, those wonderful people whose Gallic contempt for daft rules is well known and much admired, have been leading a small group tasked with recommending significant simplification of the requirements for PPL-level training, as well as GA regulation in general. The CAA has also decided that a thorough review of PPL training is needed, so have begun work on a completely new PPL training syllabus, something which is long overdue, and AOPA has offered its considerable experience of training to assist the CAA with this project. Perhaps more attention on relevant topics such as GPS, use of transponders and the airspace structure should better equip pilots to avoid airspace infringements; acceptance of electronic flight planning rather than the traditional whizz-wheel would also assist pilots in more accurate navigation planning. The pace of progress in the field of tablet computer aviation software applications has been spectacular in recent years; I bought my first electronic calculator in the early 1970s for 49 guineas (about £575 in today's money!) yet 40 years on I would still be required to use a slide rule for the PPL navigation exam! Although I do agree that, unlike an iPad, the sliding part of a whizz-wheel does make quite a handy ice scraper!

So with any luck the CAA will present its proposals to EASA next year and we will see a more relevant PPL syllabus, free of gold plating and fully fit for the purpose of equipping pilots with theoretical knowledge relevant for private flying in the 21st Century. ■



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Cyril Knight and the blind landing

A Cat III landing at Biggin Hill in a Cessna 150 recalled by research engineer Petros Kronis

The flight training experiences I had in England go back about 37 years ago to the King Air Flying Club at Biggin Hill. When I was a kid I wanted to become an airline pilot. My parents discouraged me. "What a terrible job" they said, "working away from home and your family all the time!" I suggested the next best idea. Aeronautical engineering. They were not amused. "This isn't any better" they grumbled. "Cyprus doesn't have an aircraft industry. You'll be away from home permanently". So to please them I ended up studying Mechanical Engineering at what was then the North East London Polytechnic with specialisation in gas turbines, aircraft engines, aircraft structures, and rockets (my own interpretation of the London University mechanical engineering curriculum).

At NELP I was elected president of the Manned Powered Flight society. In those days there was a competition with prize money for the first flying machine to fly a figure of 8 course using muscle power alone. With the resources we had at the time we managed to go as far as drawing board designs. My first job was with Freeman Fox and Partners, the steel suspension bridge consulting engineers, near Victoria Station. I went to the interview with a broken heart. Previously my applications for a job were turned down by Rolls Royce, British Aircraft Corporation and all the other aircraft industries. I accepted the job offered to me by Freeman Fox because as they explained, they were the inventors of the box girder type of bridge which works exactly like an aircraft wing, with skin and stiffeners. At the time they had two bridge collapses, one in Australia and one in Milford Haven in Wales, due to civil engineers underestimating the plate buckling problem, known very well to aircraft structural engineers. I worked in an office with other civil, mechanical and aircraft structural engineers, assigned to

Right: Cyril overflew the VOR from the west and made a constant rate descending turn to starboard in IMC to line up with runway 03

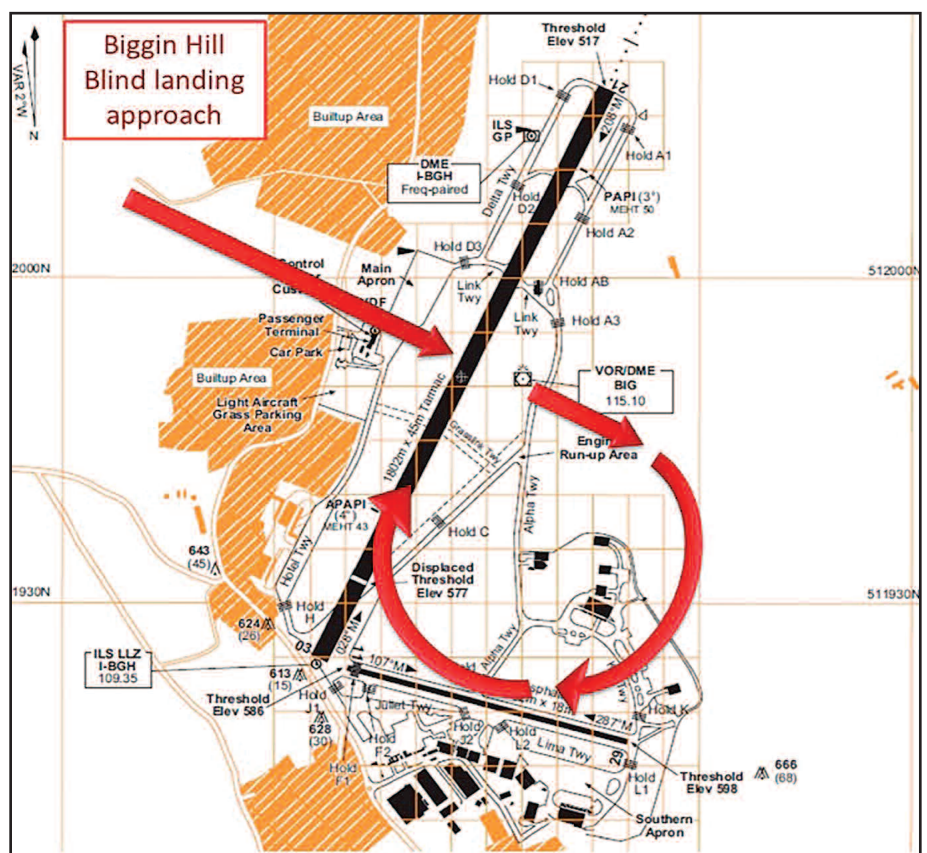


Left: Cyril Knight, who pulled off a blind landing at Biggin Hill in a Cessna 150

design of the fin structure, didn't have good words to say about this test pilot. He also told me about the machine gun platform he was involved in, which was placed on the stern of a gunboat to be demonstrated to the admiral visiting the shipyard. The gunboat captain was asked to make an impressive fast start. Unfortunately the acceleration put too much stress on the platform which sheared off the gunboat and fell in the water, together with the gunner.

Bridge design, next to John, was interesting but I longed for spending more time near aeroplanes. I must admit feeling uneasy if not frightened flying on Comets and Tridents from Cyprus to England and back in those days. A friend of mine, studying psychology, told me that the best way to fight fear of flying was to learn to fly yourself. So I enrolled at King Air Flying Club to do my PPL. My flying instructor was Cyril Knight, a tall, stout but aged fellow. Someone asked me at the club who my instructor was and when I answered Cyril Knight, he told me I was lucky as Cyril was the only pilot who could land an

analyse and reinforce all the existing box girder bridges. I worked next to John Rose, a stress engineer who had previously worked in the aircraft and naval industries and was near retirement. I enjoyed the stories he told me, including the tale of the visiting American test pilot who flew the Venom aircraft (if my memory serves me correctly), managing to bend the fin by exercising too much pressure on the rudder pedals. John, who worked on the



One that didn't make it

Cyril Knight was one of my *ab initio* instructors at King Air Flying Club in 1984 and I concur with Petros's estimation of him as an exceptional pilot and a very adept instructor. He was also great company at the bar, full of ripping yarns. I never thought of him as someone to take risks of this sort, however, especially with a student on board. Perhaps the death of his brother Henry a few months before I started flying had made Cyril more circumspect.

Henry was also an experienced instructor, I was told, and he was noted for being able to get into Biggin in weather that would ground any other pilot. He died when his Cessna hit power lines on a five-mile final for runway 21 at Biggin. The story of the accident was recounted to me by another instructor as a cautionary tale; even the best of us won't get away with scud-running for ever. Later, someone told me he thought Henry had been killed when a PFL went wrong. I was never able to get to the truth of it. But the Cyril Knight I knew seemed to me to be careful and cautious, and preached all the right gospels.

— Pat Malone



Above: the author's first solo flight certificate, signed by Cyril Knight 28th June 1975

Right: G-BA10, the aircraft in which Petros Kronis flew his first solo



aeroplane in zero visibility. I thought he was exaggerating.

One Saturday the weather was foggy and was wondering whether we could fly. When I arrived at the club I noticed that the conditions were not suitable for flying. I met Cyril and said "pity we can't fly". "Who told you we can't fly?" he said. "It's the perfect day to do the instrument appreciation lesson. We won't need the hood". We lined up with the runway and shortly after take-off we found ourselves in cloud. Cyril asked me to fly straight, to execute turns and so on, when the tower came in over the radio informing us that visibility was 200ft and reducing. I learned the next day from the news that all major airports around London had closed that day. But we were flying and I was in command. Cyril asked me what I intended to do. I said our best bet would be to fly to Southend or Brighton in the hope of finding better weather to land. He was categorical. "We are flying back to Biggin

Hill". "You have control," I said.

Using the VOR the only navigation aid on the C150 we headed back. As soon as we flew over the beacon the VOR needle deflected and Cyril timed a perfectly executed descending turn in the calm air conditions. He asked me to look out for treetops and to inform him. I couldn't see anything, when suddenly the runway surface appeared. I said "Cyril, we're over the runway".

"I know," he said.

"Why don't you touch down?" I said.

"The runway is long", he said. "Why roll when you can fly!"

Many people gathered outside the club and applauded Cyril as we got out. They

Right: author Petros Kronis today



Gordon King, great friend and employer of Cyril Knight

gave me a strong black coffee to drink because they said I looked pale.

Just before Cyril sent me for my first solo flight he asked me to do a few take-offs and landings. Coming in to land I had the tendency to land near the threshold. During one

landing I came in too short, heading for the airfield fence. I noticed he became uneasy but he kept quiet. At the last moment I realised my mistake and applied power. "I should bloody well think so," he said. That day he sent me solo. He got out, told me to do one circuit only and slammed the door. On the base leg and as I selected flaps the starboard door opened, the air rushed into the cabin making a distressing noise. I was strapped in and couldn't easily reach to close the door. I thought, leave it, don't get distracted and concentrate on the landing. But then I had second thoughts. Would the door detach from the hinges on touchdown? I decided to lean over and close the door. I lost control and the stall warning sounded. I returned to the upright position, regained control and landed safely. I told Cyril about my adventure due to his failure to close the door properly. "Didn't you jump out?" he said. That was Cyril Knight, a great guy and a great flying instructor. Rest in peace Cyril. ■



Author Petros at Biggin Hill in May 1974

Wing Commander Kenneth Horatio Wallis OBE

1916-2013

By Stephen Slater

The long and incredible aviation career of Ken Wallis came to an end in September with his death at the age of 97, just a few months after his last flight.

Wartime bomber pilot, autogyro pioneer, inventor, self-taught engineer and indefatigable promoter of aviation in all its forms, Ken Wallis was still setting world autogyro records in his eighties and on his death held eight of them and was planning more.

Outside the world of aviation he was famous for having doubled for Sean Connery in the James Bond film *You Only Live Twice*, flying his own autogyro 'Little Nellie' equipped with some 007 gadgets. Little Nellie was one of 18 autogyros of his own design he kept at the family home, Reymerston Hall in Dereham, Norfolk.

Ken Wallis was born on April 26 1916 at Ely, Cambridgeshire, the son of a cycle shop owner who had won a £1,000 prize for building the first all-British aircraft, the Wallbro Monoplane, in 1910. His mechanical bent was honed in his father's workshops, where he built a motorcycle when he was 11 years old. Later he designed and built speedboats and customised cars. In 1936 he applied to join the RAF but was rejected because of defective eyesight – he'd been born with limited vision in his right eye and

Below: Wing Commander Ken Wallis with one of his many trophies
Right: Local hero – the passing of Ken Wallis was judged to be front page news



had worn an eyepatch as a child in an attempt to improve the condition.

At the time, a student needed only a GP's sign-off to obtain a private pilot's licence, so Ken paid £14 to take his PPL course on a Gipsy Moth. A second attempt to join the RAF in 1938 founded on the same eyesight problem, so on the third attempt, after the outbreak of war, Ken resorted to outright dishonesty, sneaking a look at the eye chart with his good eye when the doctor's back was turned.

He began flying Lysanders with No 268 Squadron and in 1941 he transferred to Bomber Command, flying Wellingtons with No 103 Squadron at RAF Elsham Wolds in north Lincolnshire. He completed 24 wartime missions over Germany, attacking heavily defended targets in the Ruhr. His nickname, 'Crasher,' was hard-earned. Returning from a raid on Frankfurt in September 1941, Wallis



found his airfield blanketed by fog and after making a number of missed approaches and short of fuel, he climbed to allow his crew to bale out. His own parachute snagged on his seat, so he left the aircraft very close to the ground and his parachute opened only seconds before he landed. On another occasion he nursed an aircraft home with one wing almost severed by a balloon cable.

After a tour as a bombing instructor, Ken flew operationally with 37 Squadron and was involved in another crash when his aircraft was disabled by lightning. He applied to fly Mosquitos at night, which meant another eye test, and he was rumbled. "All hell let loose," he recalled. "You've been flying with a bomber crew and you can't see properly!" I was told." His RAF ophthalmologist, however, told him: 'Wallis, I'd rather have a man with a bit of fire in his belly who wants to fly than some of the perfect specimens I get here who don't.'



Left: Wing Commander Wallis in his workshop with one of his many autogyros

of the camera helicopter had trained as a kamikaze, which he said caused him a little concern, but in the event Ken thought him "a thoroughly nice chap". He was not credited for his contribution.

Ken's work with lightweight rotary-winged aircraft spanned five decades and between 1968 and 2002 he set 34 world records, eight of which he still held at the time of his passing. Among the records still standing is the 3km speed world record for autogyros which in 2001, he set at 207.7 kph. In 1975 he set a record for the longest flight in an autogyro when he flew the entire length of the British Isles. He flew an autogyro to 18,976ft without oxygen and became the oldest pilot to set a world record when, aged 81, he achieved the fastest climb to 3,000ft in 7 minutes 20 seconds. Later, at the age of 89, he set a world speed record for an autogyro of 129.1mph. In 2010, at the age of 94, his plan to break his own autogyro speed record was frustrated by the CAA's decision to impose a 70mph speed limit on autogyros. The Authority agreed to give him special one-off permission to breach the limit, but in the event he never made the attempt.

Last year Ken Wallis received lifetime achievement awards from both the Royal Aero Club and the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators; he was still flying in his 96th year and 75th year as a pilot. Among other awards, he was appointed MBE in 1996 and two months before his death was awarded his Bomber Command clasp.

In 1942 he married Peggy Stapley, a WAAF officer, who predeceased him. They had a son and two daughters. ■

Among Ken's inventions were a 16mm cine film camera, created in 1945 with capacity for 100 shots. It was a true 'spy' camera and could be worn as a wristwatch, as it was only two and a half inches long. Between missions, he built model slot-racing cars powered by tiny electric motors, racing them on a disused blackboard. The cars, which had front wheel steering, used motors from an electro-mechanical navigation and bomb-aiming computer extracted from a German Arado 234 bomber. The cars and track, which predated Scalextric by fifteen years, still survive in perfect working order at the Wallis family home.

After the war Ken spent twenty years as a scientist and pilot engaged in weapons research. His work with the RAF included examining and testing captured enemy armament, creating the optimum bombing-up procedures for the Canberra, and as Officer Commanding the Tactical Weapons Group, weapons testing for the Lightning. He spent two years on detachment to the US Air Force flying the ten-engined Consolidated RB-36 Peacemaker Cold War nuclear bomber. Ken also participated in powerboat races in vessels that he made from redundant aircraft parts, winning the 56-mile Missouri Marathon.

He returned to Britain to be the Command Armament Officer at Fighter Command and built his first autogyro, which he demonstrated to the resounding ambivalence of the RAF. Leaving the RAF in 1964 he attempted to put his autogyros into commercial production for 'reconnaissance, research and development, surveillance and military purposes' but there was little interest. Instead, during the 1970s, he worked with a company that pioneered a type of multi-spectral aerial photography that could detect where bodies were buried, as a result of which he was called in to help in several high-profile missing-person searches. In 1970 he joined the hunt for the Loch Ness Monster, and in 1975 police requested his help to search for the fugitive peer Lord Lucan. He combed the South Downs fruitlessly looking for a body.

In 1973 Ken and his cousin Geoffrey began work on a flying replica of his father's Wallbro Monoplane, which used steel tube construction and was fitted with ailerons, well in advance of its wing-warped contemporaries. He flew the aircraft in 1978 after which it was placed on display in the Ken Wallis Hall in the Norfolk & Suffolk Aviation Museum at Flixton.

For the Bond film, he was required to shave off his long-cultivated handlebar moustache, which grieved him greatly, and he was required to fly with Little Nellie to Japan and make 85 flights to produce a total of seven minutes on screen. The Japanese pilot



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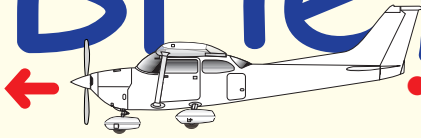
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Briefings



Ayala takes world gliding silver

Lasham-based pilot Ayala Truelove has won a silver medal in the Club Class at the Women's World Gliding Championship at Issoudun in central France. The result means that she has won back-to-back silver medals, having finished second in the last championship two years ago in Sweden.

Going into Friday's final race with a slim lead, Ayala finished the fortnight-long competition in equal second place with German pilot Doerte Starsinski, just 14 points behind gold medallist Christine Grote (GER). The Club Class was one of the most closely fought championship classes ever, with the lead changing almost daily. Team mates Claudia Hill and Helen Hingley finished 7th and 10th respectively. In the Standard Class, Kay Draper – also from the Lasham club – and Gill Spreckley were 7th and 8th overall, which meant that TeamGB was



able to see off the competition from Poland to take second place in the overall team placings behind Germany.

Ayala started gliding in 2001 in the hope of overcoming her fear of flying. She later joined Reading University Soaring Society and went solo in 2002, gaining her FAI Silver Badge a year later. She flew her first regional competition at Dunstable in 2004, and in her first international

competition in 2009 she came 4th in the Women's World Championship. This was followed by silver medals in the 2011 and 2013 championships. She is an instructor at Lasham Gliding Club and flies powered aircraft from Popham.

Ayala's other sporting passion is football – she has played for Charlton and Southampton in the Women Premier League and earned 12 international caps playing for Israel. ■

Storm dodging old-timers



Despite having to dodge a band of thunderstorms, more than 40 aircraft arrived at Turweston on a Sunday in September for the Vintage Aircraft Club's 'Late Spring Rally' – an event added to the calendar after the original March event was cancelled by blizzards.

The gathering attracted rarities including Peter Holloway's Miles Magister, a brace of early post-war Topsy aircraft, a selection of Tiger, Hornet and Leopard Moths, Great Lakes biplane and the immaculate, newly restored Stinson 108-3 Flying Station Wagon of Matthew Colebrook (above left). The fly-in also celebrated the life of David Harper, former chairman of the VAC and for two decades the popular host of similar gatherings at nearby Finmere, who passed away in July.

For information on the club see www.vintageaircraftclub.org.uk

Vulcan can fly day IFR

The CAA has eased operating restrictions on the Vulcan to allow the former RAF bomber to be now operated under daytime IFR rules and in IMC. It was previously limited to VFR daytime operations, which represented a significant restriction to a historic aircraft that was designed to operate at high level in all-weather conditions and with a fatigue-limited airframe not suited to turbulence levels associated with low-level operation. The aircraft may now operate at altitudes and under flight rules which permit greater degree of safety, fuel efficiency and longevity. The Vulcan thus becomes the first UK aircraft with a Permit to Fly to be allowed to operate under daytime IFR and in IMC, overturning the previous blanket VFR restriction on all 'Permit' aircraft.

Moths, bats and leeches at Lydd

Following the government's decision to approve Lydd Airport's £25m expansion plans, airport executives say they are on schedule to meet all the conditions required to enable planning permission for the runway extension to be implemented.

Executive manager Hani Mutlaq says excellent progress is being made in organising a range of studies and surveys as part of the 54 pre-commencement conditions set. He remains confident that runway construction will start early in 2014.

"Strict environmental controls will ensure that the special bird populations, flora and fauna of Dungeness will continue to be safeguarded, and noise levels, aircraft numbers and flying times will be capped," he adds.

What that means for general aviation is not yet clear.

Experts are on site carrying out geological and archaeological monitoring and recording. This will be followed by a water vole survey, surface water drainage studies, an examination of aquatic and amphibious invertebrates, and an updated bat foraging and commuting behaviour study. A moth study will also be undertaken, in consultation with Kent Wildlife Trust, Butterfly Conservation and Natural England. Other studies will cover grass snakes, the common lizard, medicinal leeches and great crested newts. Once these have been completed, Lydd will submit a protection, construction and mitigation plan for these species to Shepway District Council's planning department for approval, in consultation with Natural England.

The airport has also commissioned a ground water quality monitoring programme and a review of facilities required for storage of oils, fuels and chemicals. A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be submitted to Shepway District Council's planning department for approval. Mr Mutlaq says: "Having already spent millions of pounds on getting planning approval for our runway extension and new terminal building, these surveys and studies represent a further heavy investment by the airport."

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