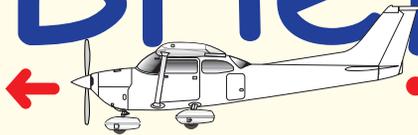


Briefings



Don't miss Duxford this year



If you're planning your flying season, it's worth looking at the calendar of Duxford Fly-in Bonus Days this year – they're good fun, and you're always likely to learn something new. The main attraction is, of course, the fabulous Imperial War Museum aircraft collection, and the extraordinary range of aircraft rebuilt and preserved by specialist companies there – it's not unusual to see the B17, Spitfire, Hurricanes, Mustangs, Catalina, or even the F86 Sabre in the circuit. The fact that it happens to be sited on a GA-friendly airfield which wants your business, has a good restaurant and an excellent tarmac runway is just gravy.

The first event is the Safety Bonus Day on April 17th. There will be a huge range of expertise on tap, so if there are any gaps in

Above: Duxford – note the grass runway, if you need one

your knowledge of general aviation (?) you'll find the answers here. AOPA will be explaining the Mentoring Scheme, the campaign to preserve the IMC rating and other pressing issues. This has been expanded following the success of the last two years. There will also be experts from the CAA, NATS and elsewhere to answer your questions. The CAA's David Cockburn will be giving a presentation on collision avoidance, always a good idea, and Jonathan Smith of NATS will be talking about avoiding infringements and giving GPS demonstrations. Also giving advice will be Martin Smith from D&D, Andy McKnight of

NATS on London LARS, Colin Potter from AIS on how to get the best out of Notams, Andrewsfield CFI Carol Cooper, and a NATS speaker explaining AFPEX. The presentations will be repeated, so you can pick and choose times of arrival.

Landing is free for everyone visiting the Safety Bonus Day on April 17th, and there's a special landing fee of £7 for qualifying aircraft on other Bonus Days. You also get discounted entry to the museum.

Other Bonus Days planned for this year:

May 22nd: Pilot magazine Bonus Day – meet 'Pilot' folk; see magazine for details.

June 19th: Cessna Bonus Day – arrive in any Cessna.

July 24th: Piper Bonus Day – arrive in any Piper.

Aug 14th: New PPL flyout/experience building Bonus Day – New PPLs, make a cross-country to Duxford with an experienced pilot. See www.forums.flyer.co.uk/viewforum

Sept 18th: AOPA Bonus Day – For AOPA members, pilots and guests. Come and meet the AOPA team to discuss some of the issues you read about in this magazine, or any subjects you think the Association should be addressing.

Duxford is PPR, so call 01223 833376 to book your place and receive a briefing. If display flying is taking place visitors may be asked to hold for a few minutes clear of the ATZ, and departures may be slightly delayed. Further details about the Bonus Days and information about Duxford for fly-in visitors: www.iwm.org.uk/duxford ■

CAA Safety Awards

Do you know anyone who's deserving of a CAA Safety Award? The Authority is once again inviting nominations for the General Aviation safety awards, which for the first time this year could recognise individuals who have made a long-term contribution to air safety, as well as those who have displayed good airmanship, skill or bravery in a particular incident.

The awards are now in their 15th year. Previous winners have been honoured for exemplary airmanship or practical skills and abilities when faced with potentially serious incidents directly related to flying. However, the CAA is also encouraging the GA community to nominate anyone who they feel has made a prolonged contribution to aviation safety; it says this could include aerodrome managers, air traffic controllers and maintenance engineers, for example.

Nominees should be over 16 years of age and can be organisations as well as individuals.

Nominations can be submitted online via www.caa.co.uk/gasafetyaward or by emailing richardd.taylor@caa.co.uk. The closing date for nominations is Monday 30 April 2010.

The previous winners of the award were an RAF pilot and two air traffic control colleagues based at RAF Linton-on-Ouse near York who shepherded to safety a GA pilot temporarily blinded by a stroke in mid-flight.



Keeping up with glass cockpits

Interesting food for thought in an American study which purports to show that glass cockpit aircraft are no safer than the clockwork variety, and if you crash one, you're more likely to die. The study suggests that generalised training is no longer adequate in order to operate glass cockpit aircraft, and says that specialised requirements should apply.

The study, conducted for the National Transportation Safety Board, shows that while glass cockpit aircraft suffered fewer accidents, they were more likely to be fatal. It claims that it's comparing like with like, but it's short on details that would establish for certain whether it's taken proper account of the modern, high-performance nature of many glass cockpit aircraft. It does in fact allow: "Accidents reflect differences in aircraft use that might explain differences in accident severity."

The study asks three questions: Have glass cockpits made GA safer? Is training for glass cockpits adequate? And what can we learn? The answers it arrives at are no, no, and lots. It

looked at 266 accidents involving the C172, 182 and 206, the Cirrus range, the DA40, the Lancair, Mooney M20, various Pipers and the Hawker Beechcraft 36 series. Of these 141 involved conventional panels (23 fatal) and 125 glass cockpits (39 fatal). Accidents to conventional planes occurred most commonly on take-off and landing, while glass cockpits fell prey to loss of control in flight, CFIT and weather accident. This was despite the fact that glass cockpit pilots tended to be older, more experienced, and with instrument ratings. The NTSB suggests that glass cockpit pilots were insufficiently aware of what to do when the panel goes blank and adds: "Experience with conventional instruments and/or generalised training do not adequately prepare pilots to operate glass cockpit avionics."

The NTSB's Deborah Hersman says: "Nearly all newly manufactured piston-powered light airplanes are equipped with digital primary flight displays. This is a marked change from just a decade, or even five years, ago. And the number

of older airplanes being retrofitted with these systems continues to grow. While the technological innovations and flight management tools that glass cockpit equipped airplanes bring to the general aviation community should reduce the number of fatal accidents, we have not – unfortunately – seen that happen.

"Glass cockpits are complex and vary from aircraft to aircraft in function, design and failure modes. To maximize the safety potential of this technology, we must give pilots the information they need to understand the unique operational and functional details of the technology specific to their aircraft. Yet, as this study revealed, pilots may not have this vital information. We know that while many pilots have thousands of hours of experience with conventional flight instruments, that alone is just not enough to prepare them to safely operate airplanes equipped with these glass cockpit features. The data tell us that equipment-specific training will save lives."

Among the NTSB's recommendations are that questions on the operation, limitations, and interpretation of malfunctions and aircraft attitudes by incorporated in revised airman knowledge tests, that manufacturers of certified electronic primary flight displays include information in their Manuals and POH supplements regarding failures, and that specific training requirements be incorporated into FAA aeronautical knowledge requirements for all pilots. ■

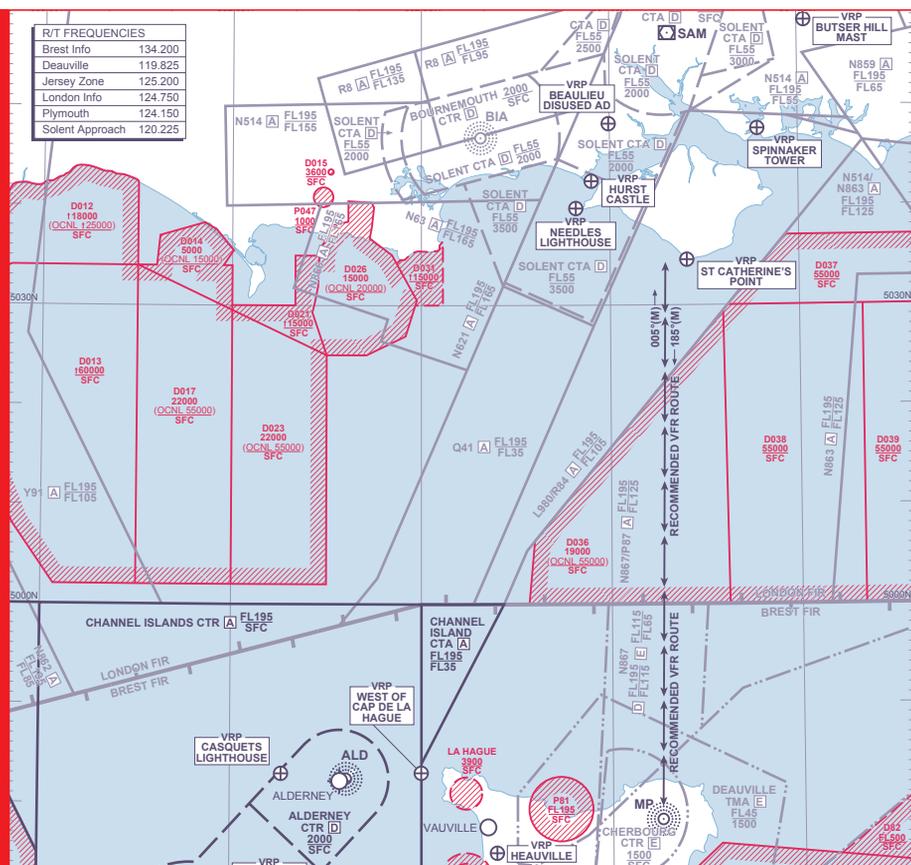
Blackpool Airport

Worth noting that Blackpool has lifted its 'PPR' requirement as of March; it was imposed because of restrictions on light aircraft parking, which are no longer such a problem. Ignore the mobile number for PPR in the flight guides; it leads to an answering machine, and they'll never call you back.

Cunning plan

The CAA has announced an amendment to the recommended VFR route between the Solent control area and the Channel Islands. The route, which provides an alternative shorter profile for GA flights between the south coast and the Channel Islands, is detailed in Aeronautical Information Circular 14/2007 (Yellow 233) and is being amended to reflect the origin of the route in the Isle of Wight. The change took effect on 11 March 2010 and was incorporated into the Edition 36 Southern England half mil.

The cunning plan is to reduce the number of infringements of the Southampton and Bournemouth Control Zones and the Solent Control Area, and remove any confusion regarding the route's origin, by depicting the route on charts as commencing/terminating abeam St Catherine's Point at the southern tip of the Isle of Wight. The 'follow me' dotted line used to start at the SAM VOR. To help pilots navigating around the airspace, a number of additional visual reference points have also been established. The chart also presents guidance on the relevant danger areas in the Channel. For further guidance see the *Solent VFR Guide* on the flyontrack website www.flyontrack.co.uk/content/links.asp





R66 priced at \$770,000

The R66 has finally made its appearance on the Robinson Helicopter Company website and from the look of the data, everything seems to meet or exceed public expectations of RHC's first turbine.

In particular, a basic price tag of \$770,000 is lower than some people were prepared for. The aircraft looks like being cheaper to buy and cheaper to run, and to have a higher cruise speed and longer legs than potential buyers had been led to believe.

As expected, at 1280 lbs empty the helicopter is about 230 lbs lighter than the Raven II, but the dimensions are not greatly different. Rotors-running it's the same length as the piston-engined 44; the main differences are that the 66 is eight inches taller and the cabin has eight inches more shoulder-room to make way for the fifth seat.

Sean Anderson Brown of Heli-Air says that although there's still a lot to be settled, the selling price of an R66 with decent kit should fall around the £550,000 mark. Currency movements and other factors make forecasting difficult. The first R66 is expected to appear in the UK before the end of this year.

The dealer network will apparently be slightly different to that for the piston-engined Robinsons. Sloane Helicopters will be a dealers, and Heli-Air has been gearing up for two years for the much-heralded machine. Engineering boss John Michalakis has become the first certified engineering instructor on the helicopter's Rolls Royce RR300 turbine outside the United States.

Pilot conversion is likely to be the same five-hour course as for the piston types; the engine is relatively simple to operate and according to Sean Anderson Brown, a hot start would be "very difficult to achieve." ■

Spot the difference – to the uninitiated the R66 could pass for an R44

Robin up and running again ?

An agreement has been signed between a company called Finch Aircraft and the current holders of the Robin type certificate CEAPR which it is hoped will lead to the revival of the DR400 range at Dijon, and possibly more. Finch Aircraft is a new company owned by Philippe Le Corre which says its long-term objective is to create at Dijon-Darois "a vibrant centre for French light aircraft manufacture." Le Corre has a long history in aerospace and IT and has directed many aeronautical projects. He was at Dassault in the 80s and 90s, was formerly a flight test engineer and is himself a pilot.

Finch plans to use the existing factory to restart production of aircraft using existing type certificates and wants to negotiate a co-operation agreement with CEAPR to rent part of the existing workshops. It is applying to

EASA for a POA for Finch Aircraft which will allow re-start production of the Robin 400 range. There are also plans to produce the 155 hp version of the Ecoflyer with the new TAE Centurion 155 hp engine – the prototype aircraft is test flying now.

CEAPR continues to support Robin aircraft under its own POA and Part M. Finch says that the existing distributor network of Robin aircraft will be retained by the new company. For the UK, that's Mistral Aviation.

Robin has been in and out of a peculiarly French sort of bankruptcy several times down the years, and owners always console themselves with the thought that the French can't really let it go under because it would wipe out their training fleet. It might not matter so much if the DR400 wasn't such a brilliant aircraft.



Philippe Le Corre is a close acquaintance of Philippe Corne, President of CEAPR, and wants to tap into the pool of technical knowledge and infrastructure built up from 50 years of light aircraft manufacture at Dijon-Darois. ■

New FTO at Teesside

A new flying school, Durham Tees Flight Training, began operations at Teesside Airport in January. It's run by local businessman David Ripley, who has run an international fire protection company in the North East for 17 years and who learned to fly at Teesside – now called Durham Tees Valley. CFI is Dale Reynolds, who has 12 years instructing experience and has 7,400 hours – Dale was a lecturer at Leeds University's Aviation Degree Programme. The school offers the full range of flight training on C152s, Piper Warriors and a Bulldog. David Ripley says: "We did consider newer designs of aircraft such as the DA20 but decided to go for the tried and tested Cessna and Piper range. They are the world's best sellers for a reason and are great for PPL training."

Transair opens at WAP

Transair has opened a new shop at Wycombe Air Park – a franchise outlet in association with AOPA corporate member Airways Flying Club. Airways has more than 60 years of flying experience, and Transair's Tom Moloney described them as "the perfect partner, well-equipped to meet the needs of aviators from the complete beginner to the professional pilot."

The shop offers the same professional service as Transair's established pilot outlets at Shoreham, Gloucester and London, where the staff are all pilots on the commercial career ladder and have the kind of knowledge that comes in handy when you only vaguely know what you need.

Insider dope on claims handling

AOPA's legal consultant Tim Scorer has published a book, *A guide to General Aviation claims handling*, which is an insider's guide to how GA compensation and other claims are handled. Heaven forefend that you should ever need it, but it would be a very useful tome to have on an FTO's bookshelf, and it's the first time such a publication has been made available.

Full of practical tips and advice, the book gives an overview of the GA insurance market, its policies, people and procedures, the technical basics of GA aircraft and how they are flown, and proceeds through to the notification of a loss and the necessary steps leading up to a claim. Flight planning, the weather, aerodromes and airspace, and the requirement

incumbent on the pilot to be aware of them, are all included.

The book is intended to be of practical use to pilots, aircraft operators, underwriters, brokers, lawyers and others interested in general aviation, who will benefit from the guidance provided on aviation insurance, claims, the role of the Air Accidents Investigation Branch, and of coroners, the legal process and working with lawyers.

Tim Scorer is an aviation consultant at the international law firm Ince & Co, and has flown GA aircraft for nearly 40 years; he has more than 1200 hours in his C172. A solicitor since 1965, he has specialised in aviation since 1978. Many AOPA members have reason to be grateful for his 'first aid' advice when they found

themselves on a sticky wicket. Tim says: "The opportunity to produce this guide was given impetus by the perceived need for a handy reference which insurance claims managers and adjusters in the Market could hand out to their 'new recruits' in order to give them some basic knowledge as to what goes on after a GA loss is notified. I very much hope that readers will find the Guide instructive and informative."

Gillie Belsham, Partner and Head of Aviation at Ince & Co, said: "We are proud to present this Guide to all those who are interested and concerned in GA claims. We intend that this first edition will be followed by further editions elaborating and developing on the existing areas covered, and we welcome any comments that might enrich further editions." ■



Fancy flying a CJ2?

Stapleford Flight Centre is offering its former students with an Instrument Rating the opportunity for currency sessions in the DA42 sim at £79 per hour solo and £125 dual for two consecutive hours. Sessions are available after 1800 on weekdays and weekends, subject to availability. Stapleford is also making its Alsim AL 200 simulator available to members of the public who fancy having a go at flying a Citation II for a 'trial lesson' at £59 a half hour, £99 an hour. Conditions are not onerous – you have to be over ten years old. Stapleford's Deputy Head of Training Brian Peppercorn says flights will be tailored to your level of experience, so they're offering something for everyone.

Channel Islands fly-ins

The Channel Islands are a relative paradise for general aviation with friendly airfield folk, less expensive fuel and discounts for AOPA members, and they will stage a number of fly-in events this year to try to lure you down. Aviation fuel still remains duty free in the Islands, and prices are attractive compared to the rest of Europe. Furthermore, there is a 5% discount on fuel for AOPA members – this applies to both local and visiting pilots, who can claim the discount on production of their current paid-up AOPA membership card. (This does not apply in Alderney).

The 55th Jersey International Air Rally is taking place from Friday 28th to Sunday 30th May. They promise you a weekend of competitions over Normandy, including a timed arrival, spot landing and timed circuit, and of course good food and fun. For details, have a look at www.jerseyaeroclub.com.

If you miss that, or even if you don't, on

September 10th, 11th and 12th there's the 39th Guernsey Aero Club International Air Rally – fly in on the 10th and enjoy an evening's hospitality before the 150-mile navigation competition into France on the Saturday, several other competitions and events, evening hangar

extravaganza with moderate drinking, then depart at leisure on the Sunday. This is part of Guernsey Aviation week, which showcases skydiving, corporate flights, aerobatic flying, a Battle of Britain Air Display and other aviation stuff. See links on www.guernseyaeroclub.com.

101 uses for a PLB

McMurdo is trumpeting the role of a Personal Locator Beacon in helping ATC to monitor the progress of a light aircraft after it suffered a total electrical failure. The FastFind was activated when

the aircraft, operated by Oasis Flight, was returning to Oxford from a commercial flight to Pontoise in France on the evening of December 19th 2009. As the plane approached the French coast at 19.45 the pilot lost all electrical services, which robbed him of lighting, nav equipment and radio. The mobile phone had a very poor signal.

The signal from the FastFind was picked up by French emergency services, Swanwick ATS and Kinloss SAR. Kinloss contacted Robert Foster, the operator at Oasis Flight, who was able to advise that the captain's intention was to seek a suitable en route alternate in northern France. However, he was unable to do this, and managed a short phone call to explain that he was heading for Oxford.

Using the FastFind signal, ATC and Kinloss was able to give the aircraft a clear run to Oxford, where it landed 90 minutes later without further incident. Oasis's Robert Foster said: "The continual transmission from the PLB helped to reduce the captain's workload in a difficult situation and made sure that we were in control of the situation."



Fairchild Argus

Some readers have asked about the letter 'P' on the fuselage of the Fairchild Argus in the top left-hand picture on page 42 of the February issue of *General Aviation*. In World War 2 the British painted a yellow 'P' in a yellow ring on aircraft that were prototypes or being used for development and testing purposes. Although HM187 was not the first Argus to be allocated a British Service serial, most probably it was used for evaluation purposes before the type was released for everyday use by the RAF and the ATA. This practice always surprised me, for it drew attention to aircraft that were non-standard and which could well have secret items of equipment.

Although not directly related to the above, another little-known sign that appeared on a few military aircraft in WW2 was the lettering 'WW', meaning 'war weary', on the top part of a fin and/or rudder. This indicated that the machine had been damaged by enemy action and/or had been bent in an accident and that repairs had not returned it to its design-standard structural integrity. This was intended as a message for pilots to treat the aircraft carefully and not to indulge in aerobatics – a warning that any sensible person would take very seriously! – *David Ogilvy*