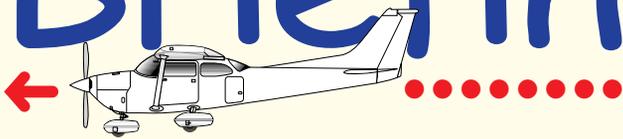


Briefings



Warren Chmura –

a life less ordinary

Peter R March

By Pat Malone

It is with great sadness that we record the passing of Warren Chmura, a 'complete aviation person' who would fly, sail or drive anything as long as it was interesting, and who was killed rallying his pink Citroen in Morocco. Warren and his wife Jean had built Southern Aircraft Consultancy into the leading N-reg facilitator in the UK, and while the company is unaffected by Warren's death – his brother Larry, a US citizen, has taken over as President – all of general aviation is diminished by his passing.

Warren fell in love with England when he was sent here during his national service to load bombs onto F4s at Bentwaters; he'd been turned down for pilot training because he wore glasses, but instead became an

Airframe and Powerplant mechanic. His main interest as a young man was motorcycle scrambling, but he learned to fly in the US, obtained a US commercial licence and flew crop sprayers, rebuilding and selling on aircraft as a sideline. Obtaining a Hiller 12 as part of an unpaid debt, he moved into rotary-wing flight and at one time owned a Gnome-engined Whirlwind, which he kept in his garden in Hadleigh, Suffolk, and in which he commuted to a job teaching A&P mechanics at Embry Riddle University at Lakenheath, which helped pay for the 60 gallons of fuel it sucked up every hour. Warren replied to an advert saying: 'Helicopter pilot wanted, long hours and low pay' on the grounds that it had to be interesting, and ended up flying a Hughes 300 for Greenpeace in Antarctica, then transferred to tuna-spotting in a float-equipped Bell 47, having one of many

interesting experiences when the carburettor arm came off and he autorotated into a six-foot swell without rolling over. During his tuna tour around the Pacific Ocean he learned to play the flute, signally failed to learn Korean and developed a taste for raw tuna and garlic.

Warren started a maintenance operation in Norwich before moving to Lands End, where he and his second wife Jean built up Southern Aircraft Consultancy. Considering the high-risk nature of their hobbies, Warren had put contingency plans in place to ensure SAC clients remained fully protected and ensure that the business would carry on as normal should the worst come to the worst. With Larry Chmura as President, the business will continue to be run by Jean and the couple's daughter Faith.

Warren's non-aviation enthusiasms were many and various. At one time he got involved in breeding horses and trained in Portugal for dressage events. Then it was on to boats – he bought a Dunkirk 'little ship' and enrolled on a year-long wooden boat building course before buying a beautiful fin-keel wooden Folkboat. His helicopter adventures would fill a book; Jean remembers driving their Citroen BX to the Czech Republic in the depths of winter to collect a Hiller, getting stuck in blizzards on the way home and trying to explain to German policemen that they needed to find a hotel that had a car park big enough for a car and helicopter before being led through town with sirens blaring, and several trips to Romania to work with the talented but under-employed

Left: Warren Chmura at the controls of one of his Hiller 12Cs

aeronautical engineers there.

Warren's enthusiasm for classic rallying in his Lady Penelope-pink Citroen DS finally did for him. He was highly competitive and was determined that the DS would be up there with the Porsches and the Minis, and he had many class wins and top five finishes in rallies. With Jean as navigator, Warren was driving through Morocco on the London to Casablanca rally in November when the car left the road. The cause of the accident has not been established, although Jean thinks they may have hit an animal in the road. Warren died of multiple injuries, while Jean was virtually unhurt. Warren's funeral took place in Truro, Cornwall, in December.

Jean says: "A friend described Warren as the perfect example of 'how to live a life less ordinary' and he certainly attacked every day and every event with passion." ■

de Havilland bursaries for 2010

In keeping with its aim of promoting the continued operation of historic de Havilland aircraft, the de Havilland Educational Trust is once again offering bursaries to pilot and engineers.

Each year the deHET awards a maximum of two bursaries to fund ten hours flying on de Havilland Tiger Moth aircraft at Cambridge Flying Group or at an alternative location subject to agreement. The bursaries are to enable licensed pilots to convert onto the Tiger Moth, with the aim of providing a new and continuing stream of experience for the operation of vintage aeroplanes.

To be eligible, you must have a UK pilot's licence for a powered fixed-wing aeroplane (single engine piston including touring motorgliders, self-launching motorgliders and three-axis microlight) and a minimum of 75 hours PIC. A maximum of eight candidates will be selected for interview at Cambridge on a date in April. Each has an assessment flight in a Tiger Moth, subject to weather and other operational considerations.

The dHET also awards engineering bursaries to individuals who are licensed or unlicensed aircraft engineers with an interest in the restoration and maintenance of vintage aircraft, and who are aiming to further their professional experience and qualifications. Following assessment of written applications, candidates will be called for interview to explain how they would use the funds in the furtherance of their vintage aircraft interests.

To apply for the application forms, contact Stuart McKay MBE, Secretary, de Havilland Educational Trust (deHET), Staggers, 23 Hall Park Hill, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 2NH. Hurry up, because applications close on February 28th.





Air race school

The Royal Aero Club Records Racing and Rally Association is once again looking for race pilots, navigators and volunteers to join them in the 2010 air race season.

The concept is simple – it's a bit daunting just pitching up to one of the eight race venues held throughout the UK, Europe and the Channel Isles. Attending one of the two one day courses at North Weald on 25th and 26th March gives potential new participants a feel for the racing scene, the excitement involved and the technical requirements.

The course comprises a mixture of aspirational videos, background information on air racing and the organisation, pilot and navigational techniques and for pilots the opportunity to fly with an experienced race pilot to see what it's all about. For potential volunteers such as marshals, timekeepers and judges, it's an exciting opportunity to see what being involved as ground crew entails.

Air racing is run by the Royal Aero Club RRR on a handicapped basis, which means that any fixed wing propeller driven aircraft, home built or fully certified, capable of 100 mph in level flight, can take part. Pilots require no special qualification other than a pilot's licence and a 100 P1, and must complete a check ride. Because it's handicapped, which means that the slower aircraft take off first and faster ones later, any GA aircraft can be competitive.

Races are normally run over a closed 20 25 mile circuit of four or five laps. A typical race weekend comprises a practice session on the Saturday, a qualifying race in the afternoon and a championship race on the Sunday. Navigators are encouraged but this is not

navigating in the conventional sense of the word as closed circuit racing is more a matter of good lookout and ensuring straight lines between turn points.

There are some historic and spectacular trophies up for grabs, handicapped air racing being one of the few sports where private pilots in normal GA aircraft can compete in a safe and regulated environment for the King's Cup, Schneider Trophy, British and European Air Racing Championships and now the

CAA gets new safety head

Gretchen Burrett has been appointed Group Director of Safety Regulation at the Civil Aviation Authority and will take up her new job on April 1st. Ms Burrett, currently Group Director of Safety at NATS, is an internationally recognised expert in human factors in safety-critical systems and is respected throughout the aviation industry for her knowledge and leadership of safety performance improvement.

Before she joined NATS she worked in nuclear certification and safety of intercontinental ballistic missiles, joint airworthiness trials for military aircraft, design and development of defence systems, and as an expert advisor to NATO on human performance and safety-critical systems. She has a strong aviation background, having trained as a pilot in the US Air Force, flown jet and piston aircraft, and led a multi-national team of test pilots and aircraft designers through the development and execution of a new approach to operational performance and safety certification. She has a BSc and MSc in Human Factors Engineering and other qualifications in system safety and reliability analysis, systems acquisition, human-computer interface design, flying, survival training, and flight test engineering.

The appointment is for four years and carries an initial salary of £180,000 per year.

special Navigator's Trophy.

As with all sports a lot of infrastructure is required, such as managing turn points, timekeeping, finish line judging and so on, so the Royal Aero Club is always keen to engage with aviation enthusiasts willing to undertake these tasks for basic expenses, as well as encouraging new pilots and navigators in to the sport. For more information and registration see the Royal Aero Club RRR's website www.airraceuk.co.uk. ■

CAA Safety Evenings

This is the CAA's GA Safety Evening programme for the spring; any changes or last-minute additions will appear on the CAA website www.caa.co.uk/safetyevenings.

Date	Area/airfield	Location	phone
February			
4	Andrewsfield	Clubhouse	01371 856744
08	Sturgate	Clubhouse	07957 140125
10	Aberdeen	Doubletree Hilton hotel	
11	Carlisle	Aerodrome Terminal	01228 573344
March			
02	Seething	Clubhouse	07976 661784
04	Gransden Lodge	Cambridge Gliding Club	07801 398714
09	White Waltham	West London Aero Club	01628 823272
11	Bristol Filton	Concorde room, BAWA	01454 202216
15	Turweston	Airfield conference room	01280 701167
18	Haverfordwest	Rosemarket Golf Club	07545 350294

Haverfordwest's Peter Hopkins says that anyone who flies in to attend the CAA Safety Evening on March 18th will be given free landing and overnight parking. PPR is essential.



Eglescott win for Air Ambulance

A 125-year lease of Eaglescott Airfield has been gifted to the Devon Air Ambulance Trust, free of all charges, along with the gift of a parcel of land on the south side of the airfield on which to build their own hangar, visitor centre and operations room.

The local authority's decision to allow the building of a hangar is a huge boost to the Air Ambulance, which has been paying up to £125,000 a year to base its EC135s at Exeter. The deal follows two years of detailed negotiation between the Air Ambulance, Eaglescott and Devon County Council.

Eglescott Airfield operates as a 'Not for Profit Distributing Organisation' and a 'Community Amateur Sports Club'. The airfield is run by Barry Pearson and manned entirely by volunteers; there being no paid staff. It was created in 1983 to be the home of the North Devon Gliding Club. Today Eaglescott Airfield is the only CAA Licensed grass airfield in Devon and is one of the few airfields in the country where you can learn to fly gliders, motorgliders, helicopters and autogyros as well as light aircraft.

A full article on Eaglescott appeared in the August 2009 issue of this magazine. ■

Top: a Devon Air Ambulance EC135 at Eaglescott Airfield

Doing it upside down

Is this the year you take up aerobatics? Even if you don't aspire to competition, the AOPA aerobatics course can do wonders for your general handling skills. Kemble-based Ultimate High, which specialises in all sorts of advanced training, has appointed well-known aerobat Nick Wakefield to its team of flying instructors, and he'll take you up for a spin in the Extra 300.

Nick won the British Advanced Aerobatic Championships in 1992 and was a member of the British Team at the Advanced World Aerobatic Championships in 1999 and 2000, and at the Unlimited European Championships in 2002. He won an RAF Flying Scholarship, and while he was at Cambridge studying engineering he spent three years flying Bulldogs with the University Air Squadron flying Bulldogs. In 1995 he joined Brian Lecomber's Firebird Aerobatics team and spent four years flying the Pitts S2B and Extra 300L in solo displays. Today, Nick continues flying competition aerobatics in his Pitts S1T G-WILD.

Ultimate High is also offering the Standard AOPA aerobatics course as a follow-on from the Basic AOPA course. The Standard AOPA course lasts six hours and is flown on the Bulldog. It aims to take aerobatic students up to Standard level at Aerobatic Competitions, or for pilots wanting to increase their existing aerobatic repertoire. For more information see www.ultimatehigh.co.uk



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PIPER MALIBU MIRAGE (1999)

w/KFC225,GNS430 & EHSI. TTA&E 562. Prop 268 (next due O/H Apr/2011). San Marino registered (previously UK G-Registered until March 2008). Can be viewed near Milan, Italy. Annual valid to 1/May 2010. GNS430, KX155A (FM Immune), KR87 ADF, KN64 DME, Sandel SN3308 EHSI w/KCS55A Slaved Compass System, No 2 GS, GTX330 TXP w/Mode S, KFC225 AP w/Pre-Select/Hold, APP Mode & Yaw Damper, King RDR2000VP Colour Radar, i-Link MFD (shows Radar & Colour Terrain map), Strikefinder, PMA6000MS Audio/Mkrs w/6-Place I/Com. Co-pilots instruments. Speed brakes. Aircon. Decided. All logs. NDH. USD\$520,000 (+ Import VAT as San Marino ownership is outside the VAT area).

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AIR RACE SCHOOL for Pilots, Navigators & Marshals

North Weald 25/26 March 2010

Pilots: how about competing in this year's Schneider Trophy, King's Cup, or for the British and European Air Racing Championships.

Navigators: enjoy the same spirit of competition.

Marshals required: if you're an aviation enthusiast your opportunity to get involved in the exciting sport of handicapped air racing.

The Royal Aero Club invites you to join them for a one-day Air Race School. To handicap Air Race all you need is a GA Piston Aircraft capable of over 100mph and 100 hours of P1 time. The day course comprises full briefings on race technique, rules and procedures, and video presentation culminating with an air experience flight and for all marshals an explanation of tasks available.

If you cannot bring your own Aircraft we can provide a Pup 150 or Bulldog Aircraft through Skysport UK. The School combines, with our unique mentor system, the ideal way to start Air Racing.

To register simply complete the slip below, enclosing a cheque and you will receive an arrival package. *No landing fees at North Weald for airborne arrivals*

Name _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

Phone No _____

INDICATE CHOICE required* and enclose cheque payable to: Royal Aero Club RRRRA: £35 for Pilots/£20 for navigators/marshals. Training Manual & Skysport UK aircraft extra (if required). No Landing fees.

I wish to attend as: PILOT* NAVIGATOR* MARSHAL* on 25th* or 26th* March 2010

I require the use of: a Pup 150* or Bulldog Aircraft* or will attend with aircraft*

Registration _____ from _____ airfield

Please return to: Training School, Royal Aero Club -RRRA, Three Way Cottage, Ampney Crucis, Gloucestershire, GL7 5RZ email: rogerhayes@dial.pipex.com Tel:01285 851311 Website: www.airraceuk.com