



We're walking in the air...

All pictures by Derek Boyce

## **The thrill of a lifetime**

Cornwall Flying Club earned perhaps its most impressive public relations coup in recent years when the wing-walking day featured prominently on BBC television, resulting in a surge of requests for information about next year's event.

Spotlight presenter Johnny Rutherford was one of 13 brave souls who climbed on top of the Wingwalk Display Stearman for an unforgettable voyage through Cornish skies, and his report on the event – he loved the experience and is threatening to come back for another dose in 2019 – aired on the BBC on July 9<sup>th</sup>. The following day, organiser Pete White fielded a flurry of phone calls about wing-walking, including around 20 serious enquiries about next year.

Pete said: "The event was a success on several levels... we gave some people the thrill of a lifetime, the club made a bit of money, the café benefitted from the crowd that turned up over two days, and as a bonus the proceedings were broadcast far and wide, which helped

to promote the club and put the airfield on the map. And our bookings for next year are already ahead of this year's."

Some people wing-walked for



**You're not here to enjoy yourselves...**

charity, some for the sheer exhilaration and adrenaline rush of standing on top of an aeroplane as it dipped and swooped over the airfield. Those who



**Bodmin Flyer**

participated this year will be eligible to loop the loop next year, and some have already signed up in anticipation.

The weather on the first of the two flying days was slightly troublesome, and the programme was briefly stopped at one point when the cloudbase lowered. Some flights were made as low as 300 feet, but most reached 500 feet in order to give participants a better view of the county. The weather on the second day was much improved.



**Next year, we loop the loop!**

## The neighbours drop in

By **Martin Pengelly**

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> July saw the third St Neot Flying Afternoon with 40 local people flying over their homes and exploring the Cornish scenery. The first two equally successful events were held on August evenings, but with so many different clubs and activities going on throughout the week – Young Farmers, WI, Bellringing, Scouts, three choirs, a Gardening Club etc, it was

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### Bar and BBQ did sterling trade

changed to a Sunday so that more people could come along and enjoy the afternoon flying, watching or eating the excellent BBQ and having a drink from the bar.

This year saw far more people attending than the usual St Neot crowd. I tried this time to encompass people from outlying areas, and as word spread fast and it does in this neck of the woods, we welcomed 'flyers' from Cardinham, Mount, Draynes, Millpool, Blisland and Warleggan besides the usual St Neot crowd. Only 10% of the people who flew had been here before – good to see so many new faces. One gentleman from the St. Neot flew for the first time ever at the age of 70, and his rather nervous daughter got over

her initial nerves and loved every moment of her 30 minute flight. She was absolutely buzzing when she came back. And that emotion could be seen in so many faces. Our visitors don't normally get the chance to do what we do, and so for them it was a truly unique experience.

In the week following the event I have had some wonderful messages from some very happy local people. With over 80 people just coming to watch, it was truly a lovely afternoon for all. As a result, 10 people wish to join us as social members, and there may be many more.

But even though it was my idea and I had done the initial planning, if it wasn't for the co-operation of so many Flying Club members, then the event would have not happened. I have so many people to thank for giving up their time to aid me in my little project. Where do I start?

Jay for controlling everything from his position aloft, Carol and Steve for the wonderful BBQ that was enjoyed by so many (never seen some people eat so much!), Michael Footit for running the bar – ably assisted by Corinne and her husband Lionel, Derek Boyce for his superb photos and then the 'Master of Ceremonies' – Kevin Riley.

A big thank you goes of course to the pilots – Pat Malone, Gary Perry, Tony Knowles, Richard Saw, Pete Chapman, Bob Harris, Chris Burton and Bill Thirtle. Gentlemen without you, it would not have happened. I was just the conductor of a very large orchestra and what a wonderful sound we all made together. Thank you.

*Airfield manager Jay Gates adds:*

"Martin is too modest about the extraordinary amount of work he put into making this event such a success. Having instigated and promoted the Local Villages Flying Day he has been tireless in his efforts to ensure both the visitors and the club get the best out of it. We owe him our heartfelt gratitude."

**Happy customers Andy, Michelle and Bradley**



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# Celebrating our newly-minted pilots



CFI Bruce Abbot congratulates Michael Footit (*left picture above*) and Reiss Watson (*right*) who successfully passed their PPL skills tests in July, Mike in the C172 and Reiss in the C152.

Air Cornwall has also had a series of successes. **Gary Perry** reports: Early June saw Laura Raisen pass her general skills test on the Ikarus C42, adding her rating onto her UK PPL, after a 16 year lay

off. Laura (*pictured left with examiner Lothar Berger*) came to me for refresher training and confidence building, and now rents the C42, keeping her skills current and enjoying her flying once again. Congratulations, Laura – you worked really hard.

Secondly, Decker Vermeulen came to me with a restricted NPPL licence, meaning he could only fly 8 nm from his place of takeoff and was not allowed to carry a passenger. We worked on the navigation skills needed to plan and fly cross country flights, visiting several south west airfields dual, then Dekker (*pictured below with celebratory bubbly*) was required to visit some of these on solo flights, which he planned and flew successfully. I was able to sign him off as having successfully



completed the required training, lifting his restriction allowing him to fully flap his wings so to speak, and take passengers – well done Dekker. He is also now doing his 5-hour conversion onto the Cessna 152 with the club, so should soon take his GST in that aircraft, gaining his NPPL in a Group A aircraft, so I wish him well with his imminent test.

Thirdly, congratulations again to Abhijit Vejayendra, who passed his skills test this week on the Ikarus C42, gaining his NPPL. Abhi completed the course from start to finish in five weeks, with zero previous flying experience, working like a trooper, and studying at home in the evenings to pass his first two theory exams in one sitting, then the final three, two weeks later. Astonishing! The





amazing weather allowed him to do this, as if it hadn't have been so amazing, we may have struggled to complete in the six week deadline he gave me, between finishing his degree at Plymouth university, and returning to India to further his business interests. Congratulations Abhi (*pictured right*). It was a pleasure to be your instructor, and I look forward to seeing you in September when you return to do your conversion with the club onto the Cessna 152 to get your Group A licence.



## Members pitch in with donations

The response to the suggestion in the July newsletter that members who can't help directly with essential tasks around the airfield consider making a cash donation to pay for the work has been superb, with some £600 having been raised.

Given that the club has access to casual labour at £15 per hour, this equates to 40 man-hours of work, which will make a real difference at a time when we're putting resources into catching up with the backlog of neglected maintenance at the airfield. Our heartfelt thanks to those who have put their hands in their pockets; we will be keeping them informed of exactly how their money is being put to use. The Club relies on a coterie of volunteers – the 'Golden Nuggets', in Jay Gates's phrase – who undertake vital work on the clubhouse and the airfield, but they can't do everything and we need to pay for certain jobs to be done. We hope that people who would like to help, but can't because of family, work or other commitments, might direct a few quid our way in lieu. The over-riding imperative is to get the club on a sound financial footing, and voluntary contributions are like manna from heaven. If you feel able to help with a cash contribution, please have a word with Jay. Again, many thanks to those who have contributed.



## Wheels and wings

The Club took a stand at Wadebridge Rotary Club's Wheels event, a gathering at the Royal Cornwall Showground which is very well patronised by the motoring fraternity – hundreds of fascinating cars attract thousands of petrol-head visitors, a large number of whom, it turns out, are also curious about flying. The stand, organised by Pete Chapman, was busy the whole day long, and actually ran out of copies of the literature giving pricing details. Helpers were reduced to writing price information on the back of club brochures. Most people were keen to know about introductory flights, but a few expressed an interest in learning to fly. While it's impossible to know how many of the 70-odd people who stopped to ask questions and take the literature will follow up on their initial approaches, the first four customers from Wheels turned up at the Club barbecue the following Wednesday evening and booked flying lessons, and their business alone covered the cost of the stand many times over. Our thanks are due to Pete Chapman and his helpers Richard Saw, Roger Davies and Pat Malone.



Carol Farnell leaves the cafe for a close-up look at the Chinook

## A real summer! (Up to now, anyway)

By Jay Gates

We've gone from a long and mostly wet winter to a long and mostly dry summer... and what a contrast in activity the two seasons have produced! Once more the airfield statistics have improved as May turned into June and as June turned into July. In the last newsletter the month of June was looking to be an improvement on the month before, and so it turned out. The 1,000 movement mark was passed, with a total of 1,052 aircraft movements recorded for June, including a stunning 152 movements in a single day. This magnificent monthly total translated into increased income from landing and parking fees and fuel uplifts. Bodmin Airfield improved on the fuel dispensed total of 8,300 litres of avgas in May with a total of 8,500 litres in June. The good weather allowed the flight training programme to increase and the club aircraft flew 135 hours in June, which is an increase on the May total. Again, I cannot stress how much we owe the club instructors, who have now been supplemented by Olly Smith. Olly's 'proper' job is as a Captain with the British Antarctic Survey flying Twin Otter aircraft in Antarctica between October and April each year, so we are fortunate to have secured his services as an instructor during our busy summer.

The success of the training that Cornwall Flying Club delivers for its student members is manifested in the fact that over the last 8 weeks we have delivered five students for their General Skills Tests. All five passed and are now the proud holders of pilot licenses. As you see above, Gary Perry, the sole microlight instructor on the airfield, has been magnificent in producing three of these pilots. Well done to all the instructors, and the students, for achieving a superb result and being a great advert for the club. Howard Fawkes and Sandy Wilkinson continued with the Introductory Flight programme and completed 35 such flights between them in June. Pat Malone on the C172, and Bob Harris on the C152, joined them on the pool of Introductory Pilots in July. We are looking for other members who would like to add their names to that list. July looks like matching June in every respect. Up to the close of play on July 27<sup>th</sup> we recorded 976 movements, with the busiest day being the 22<sup>nd</sup> when we recorded 110. This has resulted in our fuel delivery remaining at a good level, just over 8,100 litres of avgas having been dispensed to date. We have held a number of events in July, both for members and for all



comers. The wing-walking has been covered in this newsletter; balmy weather allowed us to hold three BBQ social evenings in July, all of which were well attended. The last one coincided with a meeting of the new LAA Cornwall Strut at the airfield, and almost 50 people enjoyed the superb spread put on by Carol and ably cooked by Steve. Bodmin airfield is well represented in this new and exciting strut, with many members joining. We look forward to seeing a lot more Cornwall Strut meetings and events at the airfield.

Gary Perry, in conjunction with Craig Webster, Chief Pilot of the Cornwall Air Ambulance Trust helicopter operation at



Newquay Airport, held a helicopter simulator afternoon in early July. Gary piloted a Bell 206 Jet Ranger (pictured above) for scenic flying and over 20 people, on eight flights, took advantage of flying over Cornwall in a helicopter. The event raised over £100 for the Cornwall Air Ambulance Helicopter Appeal. Did you know that Cornwall was the first county in England to have an Air Ambulance service?

Another successful event was as a result of a great community effort by Martin Pengelly, where villages from local villages, but mainly St. Neot, spent a great afternoon at the airfield and thanks to a generous effort by our members we put on 29 flights and nearly 40 villagers got to fly over their villages and look down on their homes.

Bodmin carries on attracting flying visitors from all over the country, and July provided the thrill of

welcoming new arrivals from airfields that we have not recorded before. Three farm strips were added to the list with Old Hay Farm in Kent, Farley Farm in Hampshire and Landmead Farm in Oxfordshire. We also recorded arrivals from some old WW2 airfields, namely Cark in Lancashire and Thorney Island in West Sussex, plus an arrival from a little known gliding strip in Rhigos, South Wales.

Carol and Steve continued providing great sustenance to our members, flying visitors and footfall members of the public coming in off the A30, as well as the BBQs. She also provided a magnificent breakfast for 16 guests of

the Help 4 Heroes charity, who for the second time asked to bring these magnificent ex servicemen to our airfield for breakfast and a social meeting. It has not all been easy for Carol this month as she had a medical scare late in July which has resulted in her being told to take things easy for a short period of time while she regains her strength. As a

result the café opening times will be reduced for a week or two, and we are all asked to bear with this until Carol is ready to return full-time. The new opening days are going to be only on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays to start with.

Finally, as last time, it is always great to see rotary visitors at Bodmin and early July saw us welcoming a flight of four



Autogyros inbound from the Scillies, en route for home airfields around London. They stopped off for a cooked meal, a comfort break and a refuel before continuing with their journey. What is the collective noun for a group of Autogyros? A gaggle? However, it is the big turbine engine rotary visitors that always grab your attention. We have been very used over the past few months in welcoming the Fleet Air Arm Sea Kings, Merlins and Wildcats from RNAS Culdrose and RNAS Yeovilton. This time we got to welcome one of the Royal Air Force 'big daddy' helicopters when a magnificent twin-rotor Boeing CH-47F Chinook HC.6 helicopter, flying under the callsign of 'Vortex 496' arrived from its base at RAF Odiham in Hampshire and landed for a 90 minute crew break. Another one for the pub quiz – the Chinook is not named after the wind that blows down from the Rockies but rather it is named after the native American Indian tribe that lives in the Pacific Northwest coastal region of Canada and the USA. Finally, in July we had a distinguished visitor when Elliott Ham DFC came to fly with Pat Malone. Elliott is one of the world's top Apache helicopter pilots, with five combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan to his credit,



Ham (right) and Malone

and he has amassed 8,700 hours, almost all on helicopters and most of it on the Apache. He retired from the US Army last year and joined a company providing Apache training to armies and air forces around the world. Used to the wide-open spaces of Texas or the zones of conflict, he found Cornwall interesting. His comment on Bodmin: "That's not an airfield! Somebody's mowed the top of a hill!"

In 2020 Elliott will be at Wattisham, upgrading British Army pilots from the D Model Apache to the E Model, and he has promised that, if the opportunity presents itself, he will drop in to Bodmin for a cup of coffee in an Apache. Watch this space...



Light Aircraft Association

## Cornwall Strut up and running

The Cornwall Strut of the Light Aircraft Association is now well and truly up and running and promises to be of significant benefit to general aviation in the county. After an inaugural meeting in June the first full meeting took place at Bodmin in July, with some 20 people present. Offices were given out; Nigel Ramsay is co-ordinator, Pete White Chairman, Howard Fawkes Membership Secretary.

The LAA exists to act as a support structure for general aviation in all its forms, providing engineering and checking services to aircraft builders and lobbying and representation services to all. The Cornwall Strut, to which 37 people have signed up, will begin by organising a first-aid teach-in, with an emphasis on dealing with problems which might arise around aircraft. This will be arranged by Jon Parlour, from Plymouth. Members of Cornwall Flying Club will be invited to participate whether or not they wish to join the Strut – membership will be £15 a year.

Similarly, Howard Fawkes is arranging for Bodmin Fire Brigade to come to the airfield to give us the benefit of their expert advice on what untrained volunteers can do in an emergency. Again, this will not be for Strut members only; all Cornish aviators will be invited.

If you'd like to join the Strut, talk to Nigel, Howard or Pete.



# Meet the real Jay Gates

Who is this man, and what is he doing – with all his qualifications and experience – running a small grass airfield in a remote corner of England? It is of course Jay Gates, looking like he's on his way to a 1970s-themed fancy dress party... but then we all looked dead cool in the seventies, didn't we. Back then, Jay was a Merchant Navy officer roaming Antarctic waters aboard an icebreaker; later he took charge of major airports on two continents. Today he contentedly surveys his bucolic domain from the Tower at Bodmin airfield. There's some distance between auditing ICAO standards in Djakarta or Sao Paulo to ensuring the smooth running of Cornwall Flying Club, and here's how it was bridged:

Jay's father spent over 29 years in the Army in the days when that meant far-flung postings across the pink parts of the map. In common with many children of military families abroad, Jay was sent to a boarding school in England, and holidays began with a three-stop VC-10 epic to Hong Kong or wherever mum and dad might be. This experience inculcated in him a love of travel and of aeroplanes, and in fact he's hardly stood still, until now.

Jay wanted to be a commercial pilot, but



three Antarctic stations and doing marine research projects in polar waters. The *Agulhas* had two Puma helicopters on board, and as well as being communications officer, Jay was made aviation officer, responsible for flight watch.

"It was a great way of life, but it was very much a bachelor's way of life, and that has limited appeal," Jay says. So he returned to England and took a job in ground handling at Gatwick for a big American company, Ogden Aviation. When they started an operation at Birmingham he was made Senior Operations Duty Officer at the new station, responsible for weight and balance calculations and flight despatch for aircraft up to 747 size for clients such as American Trans Air, Thomson, Aer Lingus, and Flybe. He then moved to



On Marion Island off Antarctica

in those days short-sight ruled you out, so he went to Fleetwood Nautical College and studied marine radio, electronics and radar. He joined a South African company, Unicorn Lines, as an officer and stayed with them for two years until one day, when he was docking at Cape Town, he saw a bright red icebreaker, the S.A. *Agulhas*, which he learned plied its trade in an interesting place, Antarctica. It turned out they were short of officers, so Jay joined the crew and spent over 200 days a year at sea, for the next 8 years, servicing





Humberside to be Base Manager for Bond Helicopters – later CHC – who were servicing oil and gas rigs in the North Sea, and when the airport was taken over by Manchester Airports Group he became Humberside's Airport Operations Manager. But on holiday in South



**Airport Manager, Humberside**

Africa Jay met Melody, the lady who was to become his wife, and thought it a good idea to get a job in Cape Town. He became Head of Operations and Safety at Cape Town International Airport, and within two years his employer ACSA offered him the post of Corporate Head of Operations and Safety at Johannesburg,



**Airport Management Trainer, UAE**

making him responsible for nine airports, including three of the four busiest airports in Africa – Jo'burg, Cape Town and Durban. He then joined Airport Solutions which trained airport staff on behalf of Airports Council International (ACI), a job that took him all over the world – Abu Dhabi, Athens, Kuala Lumpur, Salalah, Seoul – and graduated to doing ICAO Annex 14 aerodrome standards auditing in such cities as Sao Paulo, Mauritius, Djakarta, Livingstone and Windhoek. But Melody complained he was spending too much time away from home, so they settled in England and

**Bodmin Flyer**

he became Head of Operations at Coventry Airport. The owners, Regional & City Airports, also had Blackpool, and he was made Accountable Manager and later General Manager of both Blackpool and Coventry. Ultimately he had eight key responsibilities at two airports two hundred miles apart, and the CAA expressed concern that if he got run over by a bus, things could get sticky. The pressures of work were onerous, and after three hectic decades Jay was thinking of ploughing an easier furrow. Then he saw an advert in *Pilot* magazine for an airfield manager at Bodmin. And the rest, you know. Jay and Melody moved to Liskeard in 2017, and of course he was pitched straight into the existential crisis the Club faced last year – so much for an easier life. But as things settle down,



**ICAO Standards Auditor, Mauritius**

Jay is able to bend his talents to the business of putting CFC on a sound financial and operational footing, and it's difficult to see how we could have got a better man for the job.

Chairman Darren Fern says: "Jay has an encyclopaedic knowledge of aviation legislation, flight operations and airfield management based on many years of running operations in a wide variety of circumstances. He is passionate about General Aviation and is an asset to the club. Operating within a safe and legal framework is essential for the long term viability of our club, and Jay ensures this is done, while respecting the friendly and welcoming reputation of our club."



**Facing the challenges of Bodmin**

**August 2018**



# Partial power loss

By CFI **Bruce Abbott**

We regularly practice (or should regularly practice) total engine failures and power-off landings, but have you thought about partial power loss? A Club member had an educational experience when he suffered a partial loss of power accompanied by vibration so severe he could barely see the instruments. On full throttle he could get only 1000 to 1100 rpm and was unable to maintain height. He was less than four miles from Bodmin and calculated he could make it back, but as he says, the rocks on Bodmin Moor looked awfully close. The cause was a worn cam, leading to a valve failure.

I can remember three incidents when I had similar partial power losses. On every occasion I made it to an airfield but didn't take the most direct route. I flew from suitable field to suitable field, always planning for the moment the engine failed completely and prepared to carry out a



**They will let you down...**

precautionary landing if a suitable route did not present itself. On one of those occasions the engine did fail completely but I had sufficient height on short final to land on the runway. It wasn't luck, it was planning, and not fixating on getting into an airfield at all costs.

Do you know how your aircraft would perform at limited power settings? What minimum revs do you need to sustain level flight at 15, 20 and 25 knots above the stalling speed? What would your glide path look like at say, 1300 rpm at a safe speed above the stall? There's only one way to find out: practice and experimentation. Do it at a safe height, though. It could take some of the guesswork out of your decision-making when you suffer a partial power loss. Finally, consider the words of a famous test pilot: "I expect and plan for an engine failure on every flight. When it doesn't happen, I consider it a bonus."

**Bodmin Flyer**



## TopNav Trophy comes home

Simon Coy and Pat Malone travelled to London in June to receive their Royal Institute of Navigation trophy for winning the south-west area TopNav competition. The awards ceremony, at the Royal Geographical Society in Knightsbridge, coincided with the centenary flypast of 100 RAF aircraft, for which Malone and Coy had ringside seats in Green Park. The trophies were given out by Shaesta Waiz, the first-ever Afghan woman pilot and the youngest woman to fly solo around the world. Given her cultural background and the fact that she was forced out of Afghanistan as a refugee, her achievements are extraordinary. She is the founder of Dreams Soar, a campaign to involve more women in aviation; she makes the point that all the female airline pilots in the world – 0.6 percent of the total – would fit into a single A380. The campaign aims to involve girls in science, technology, engineering and maths subjects, especially in Third World countries; see the website [www.dreamssoar.org](http://www.dreamssoar.org). TopNav continues to go from strength to strength, especially here in the South West where ten teams competed this year. In 2017 the same trophy was won by John Watts and Corinne Dennis.

**August 2018**

## Upcoming events at Bodmin

August 4th

**Bader Braves:** A flying day for youngsters from the Douglas Bader Foundation

August 11th and 12th

**Summer Vintage Wings & Wheels.** Our special guests for 2018 are The Vintage Aircraft Club and local Classic Car Clubs. Tiger Moth Training aircraft will be in action.

September 15th and 16th

**Cornwall Strut Fly-in.** Join us for the rebirth of the Cornwall Strut of the Light Aircraft Association

All are welcome at our events – and remember, we have the *Diner 31* cafe available for food and beverages

Sat 11th & Sun 12th Aug 2018

*Summer*  
**Vintage  
WINGS &  
WHEELS**



Our special guests for 2018 are...  
The Vintage Aircraft Club and local Classic Car Clubs.

TMT Nostalgic Flight  
Tiger Moths will be in action  
on August 11th & 12th.

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September 15th & 16th 2018

## Cornwall Strut Fly-in.

Join us for the rebirth of the Cornwall Strut



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## Visit to Padstow Lifeboat Station

Are you interested in a Club visit to Padstow Lifeboat station? The crew exercise on Wednesdays, and they're always available for a chat, and very friendly and informative. Pete Chapman and Kevin Riley are gauging the level of interest in such a trip. The station has a long and distinguished history of lifesaving in one of the busiest and most challenging stretches of water in the country. The current Tamar Class lifeboat, Spirit of Padstow, has been in service since 2006. In common with all RNLI craft it is crewed by volunteers and supported entirely by donations. Let Kevin know if you'd like to go – kevinflier@talktalk.net



# Kevin and Reg invade Belgium

*Kevin Riley and Reg Stainer took G-BYNK to Belgium for a unique aviators' gathering at Sanicole, and were hugely impressed. Here, Kevin tells the story of their trip.*

Since 2015 Aeroclub Sanicole, best known for its yearly airshow in September, organises this event dedicated to aircraft builders and restorers. But all are invited to attend and it varied so much, even had a Pilatus and a Navion (superb German colour scheme). The aircraft which attracted the most comment, I think, was the blue Delta Wing two-seat Verhees Delta, built by a Belgian called Bart Verhees but registered in France, for ease of the legalities I believe. It flew as part of the show on Saturday. What an interesting aircraft to watch – especially the landing. It all started for us at CFC having chatted to ex-club member Graham Newby, now manager at Compton Abbas, and with a few club members who regularly visit fly-ins abroad in their amateur-built aircraft. The Belgian regulations made such an event a difficult undertaking. Thanks to the support of EFLEVA, the European Federation of Light, Experimental and Vintage Aircraft, the Belgian Transportation Authorities and VVMV the permit to over-fly Belgium was changed to make it possible for foreign aircraft to freely visit Belgium (conditions apply). Experimental Days is an event dedicated to aircraft builders and restorers. Aircraft from all over Europe fly to Sanicole Airfield in Belgium for a weekend filled with aviation joy. All aircraft of any type are welcome to join! In 2017 and 2018 this event was temporary renamed EFLEVA Days, to support

the organisation, but in 2019 it will be back under its original name and concept. Pilots came from as far away as Italy, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Portugal – and Bodmin.

2017 sadly was a washout for us due to the weather, although there was no problem in cancelling both at the venue and the accommodation. But 2018 was looking fabulous for flying right across Europe. So looking at the potential Reg and I decided we would fly up to



Reg and BYNK at Sanicole

Headcorn in G-BYNK and overnight there, then fly to Calais and RV with three other aircraft – Steve Leach and Bob Harris in G IOSL (Steve's RV-9) Nick Yeoman and Matt Culverhouse in G-ICOM (C172), and Phil Foden of Devon Strut in his Europa from Dunkeswell. Phil sadly had to cancel as his wife was ill, but three aircraft from CFC was a great start. There was a lot of chat reference weather, NOTAMS, timings and flight planning, and the ability to bounce off each other was a great asset and confidence builder. Our flight to Headcorn was a bit of a trial as we were fighting up to 20kts of headwind. We chatted with Exeter, who were excellent as usual, then as it was a Thursday we got a Basic Service from RNAS Yeovilton, which again was excellent. At the end of the AIAA we went on to the 'Listening Squawks', changing the transponder codes and frequencies as we flew from Bournemouth - Isle of Wight - Shoreham (Basic Service as we approached and flew overhead). Once clear we changed to Gatwick frequency and squawk and trundled on quite merrily listing to the Big Boys and Gatwick ATC. We were trying out a recently-purchased Pilot Aware, linked to the iPad; it proved interesting to say the least, especially around Gatwick. My iPad started giving strange course changes as we were just north of Deanland (EGKL). After chart and Skymap consultation we resolved the correct route and things settled down. After a few



CFC contingent in Belgium





Kevin and Reg hard at it

minutes of heads scratching and brain scrambling, the iPad came to its senses and we continued. Good flight planning, regular checkpoints and airspace awareness solved the problem. Good comms between Reg and myself ensured we were good to go, and for me it got rid of any complacency.

We had an interesting crosswind landing at Headcorn after 2.9 hours. We overnighted at the Weald of Kent Golf Club, and can thoroughly recommend this for a stay, even if you don't play golf. Friday dawned with clear skies, so with bills paid and Flight Plan filed – free courtesy of RunwayHD – away we went, logging in with London Information where the lovely lady controller activated our Flight Plan. We coasted out ('feet wet') at Folkestone over a low-cloud covered sea to the French coast. London Info handed us over to Lille Info, who passed us seamlessly to the tower at Calais-Dunkirk (LFAC). There we cleared French customs (whom we had emailed 24 hours earlier with our ETA) and met up with G-IOSL and G-ICOM, who had left Dunkeswell some 2.5 hrs earlier. Sadly our Catering Officer Steve didn't check the catering facilities (cafe closed until mid-July), but we managed a coffee courtesy of the entry point gentleman in the office there. We had originally planned on Oostende, but as the Belgians would not allow non-Mode S aircraft into Oostende, it had to be Calais for G-BYNK. Steve and Nick could have got in via Oostende, but it was a 'Club Event' so we stuck together.

Flight plans filed, away we went. As Radio Op and Navigator I felt a bit apprehensive, even after numerous trips to France – and England had lost the match the night before to Belgium. Lille Information was superb; they must have worked hard covering the number of aircraft routing

through their airspace en route to Sanicole, and would have been relieved when we became a Belgian problem. Distance flown was some 130 miles, over some of the WWI battlefields and cemeteries – Ypres – and at heights varying from 1000ft agl (some very high wind turbine blades in Belgium) to 1500ft agl, this time under the direction of Brussels Information. Navigating (skillfully) under and between controlled airspaces, we didn't bust one. We arrived at our final check in, called Point West, said goodbye to Brussels Info and called Sanicole airfield for landing information, which was duly given, and the airfield was located! I wish I had studied the satellite pictures better. Reg greased us in despite an interesting rotor off the trees to the north of the runway.

It was an interesting, stimulating and relatively straightforward flight for me – probably harder for Reg as the pilot. Undoubtedly I irked him as navigator and radio man, keen to get us there with no hiccups through the complex airspace and narrow corridors that I didn't want to bust. We have done a few trips to France before, so we were well versed in that aspect, but the handover from French ATC to Brussels was brilliant. There were some 40 to 50 Brits going to Sanicole, but ATC was a pleasure to listen to and easy to comply with, really professional and not the least bit daunting. A real bonus was that Sanicole Club had coordinated ATC by having actual ATC Officers in the tower, so it really flowed. They opened and closed flight plans as required, and were great with advice.

Then the great reception and fun started. We were escorted to the fuel point by a Yellow VW Beetle with a flashing orange light on the roof and big black FOLLOW ME on the boot – eat your heart out, PW. Once shut down at the fuel bowser, a lovely young lady handed us each a bottle of very cold refreshing water. It was great to see the others arrive safely. We followed an



You wouldn't get me up in one of those...



orange-vested guide on a bike to our tiedown point, again with Sanicole members to assist. Euros were changed for tokens (brilliant idea) which were very quickly changed into bottles of beer and festivities started as did the pizza express – I'm a non-cheese person but Sanicole accommodated even me. Everyone mingled and chatted about the journey, the food and the beer, the hospitality and the jokes flowed – what a great club, and club atmosphere. A notable event was the arrival of a Flexi-wing that left the Midlands about 11:00 that morning; at 20:10 local it was announced over the PA system he was on a 10 mile final, 10 minutes later on a 3 mile final. He touched down 4 minutes later and parked right next to entrance to the club and bar. Everyone stood up and gave him, rightfully, a rousing welcome and a beer. At times he was down to 28kts groundspeed, a superb feat admired by all. Bet he slept well. As the effects of the long day set in, assisted no doubt by the great welcome a few refreshing beers, we drifted off to our accommodation, Nick and Matt to their tents (Airbed Nick had to do an oral as he had left his pump behind), Steve and Bob to their rooms in the military blocks – higher standard than I had in the army by all accounts – the Reg and I to our twin room at the hotel. All were safely delivered by the club minibus, free and on call for all guests. Saturday was available for local flying, with assistance and guidance on the best sites to see and where not to go – it's a military training area – but it presented no challenges. The town was beautiful, really clean and the old and new buildings blended in well. All the roads had cycle paths, generally on both sides, and the majority of the roads were one way. The club had organised a number of bicycles for us – free, of course –and as it was flat terrain there was a waiting list.

There were a few stands to visit: Lambert Mission with their aircraft, fully kitted out with latest avionics; Adams Aviation had teamed up with Manuel Queiroz and his beautiful RV-6 which he flew around the world. He also gave presentations and was available to chat with. Andair, with their components, PMM Wing Service (Powerplants) assisted or gave advice as requested. It has to be said that the Bratwurst Stand and the Belgian ice cream stand were very popular with the British contingent, and for those not flying, the club refreshments.

Camping at the airfield was for pilots and passengers only; there were basic showering and toilet facilities, and the military accommodation was very reasonably priced. Reg and I had a twin room at the Hotel Au Prince Royal – they must have known we were coming because they even locked the bog roll up...

The trip back I will cover in the next newsletter – supported, hopefully, by the other club members. Register today for this unique gathering in France 2019. Sanicole will also host a separate fly-in. You will not regret it, we promise! There are club members who will help and advise on all aspects of flight planning, customs out and back, and the dreaded GAR form.

### **Tailwheel Group Planned**

I plan to purchase a non-EASA/Permit to Fly or 3-axis microlight, with a view to starting an owner's syndicate at Bodmin.

If you might be interested, please email me at [laura.raison@btinternet.com](mailto:laura.raison@btinternet.com) or phone 01822-840485

## **Somebody up there likes us...**

### ***Last word, from a satisfied visitor (the gentleman was Terry Earl)***

Hello: Just a short note to thank you for the welcome and help yesterday. I flew in late in my C182 and absolutely loved the look and feel of your airfield – so well presented, great pilot-tone to the clubhouse and nice cafe. That is the standard to which all GA-type airfields should aspire. I will definitely be recommending Bodmin to my flying pals from Goodwood. A special thanks for the help with starting my aircraft. I was very embarrassed (and relieved) to see that I had forgotten to turn on the fuel. The gentleman who came out to assist was what I needed – stop, think and do things properly. Please thank him once again. I put it down to a distraction from the events of the day - definitely another ILAFFT.

Best wishes

Graham Holford, G-JBRN