

East Staffs Flying Club



Newsletter

August 2005

Chairman's Report

Welcome to another edition of the newsletter, a bumper edition this month - so thanks to all the contributors for making the time to pen an article.

Since the last newsletter we held the very successful Fly-In - see Rob's excellent article included in this edition. I think that everyone who attended said what a great time they had, which makes it all worthwhile.

There are too many people to thank individually for their assistance in making the day a success, however I would like to single out Dave Holland/John Calverley in the An2 ('Big Bear') and also Gennady Elfimov in the Yak 52 for some truly amazing aerobatic sorties. Thanks also to Colin & Jane for donating their Yak - now Mr & Mrs Reeves since they got married this month! I would also like to add my personal thanks to Rob Rowley for all his work with the CAA to ensure that we were able to operate the aerobatic displays legally at Tatenhill - believe me this was not a 5 minute task! Finally many thanks to Vic Holliday for once again bringing a collection of his classic cars to display on the airfield - again a task not to be undertaken lightly!

Here are a couple of photos of the day; the others will be loaded onto the ESFC website:



The club social at the end of September will be a 'Quiz Night & Pie and Peas Supper' see the Events section in this newsletter for further details.

We are also looking to hold another Fly-Out towards the end of September, so again keep an eye out on the notice board and the website for further details.

Mike Tidmarsh



What Shall We Do Next Year?

The Fly-In of 2005 was considered a success with many aircraft visiting. Could we top that in 2006? Well I believe we did.

Naturally all these events are weather dependent and with all the dry, hot weather around the sceptics bemoaned that the event would draw the short straw and probably get dumped on. Well we made it, just.

Back two or three months then, how could we, the committee, improve on 2005? Several ideas came to the fore. The usual format would be followed, inviting other clubs to join us for the day. Other things then? Well, we noted that amongst our members we have some very generous people. John Calverley and Dave Holland with the AN2 for instance, would they be prepared to display the Baltic Bear? of course they would,.

Right, off we go then, number one item was on the list. It was also noted that another very generous couple had joined us, Colin Reeves and Jane Hewitt (now Mrs Reeves). Colin has a Yak 52, a capable aerobatic mount and a showstopper in the right hands.

It just so happens that flying Colin's Yak and providing expert coaching is probably one of the world's leading Yak 52 drivers` Gennady (Gena) Elfimov. I had flown with Gena some time ago when he was using Arthur Tyler's Yak and had seen him display. I promised everybody, he was dynamite.

A breakthrough, we were informed that Colin had already suggested that Gena could display; this was just what we had hoped for. There we are then, we are turning our fly-in to something a little different. This is just what we want to put our club on the map.

The organisation started in earnest, caterers, traffic control, ground layout, grass cutting, advertising etc, etc, Piles of paperwork for the CAA to cover the displays, letters to police, emergency services, air traffic at NEMA and yes even one to East Staffs Council (bah!)

Dawned the day and Hey Presto! The sun is shining and people are actually piling into the field along with a respectable number of visiting aircraft. A super family atmosphere was developing, Frank McClurg was there once again, the affable and laidback CFI from Northamptonshire School of Flying with his well known Pitts G-WREN and was doing a roaring trade with aero-jollies. Frank likes coming to Tatenhill and has whetted our appetite with the promise of a newly acquired Extra 300L, which will be available to us.

Showtime then, Gena taxied the Yak and took off on 08. I had seen this departure before but most of the crowd hadn't. There were gasps as Gena accelerated, cleaned up the gear and at only about 30-40ft when over the end of 08 performed an astonishing flick-roll (which for the un-initiated is a yawing accelerated stall of one wing) and then climbed away into his display.



It had it all, rolls, stall turns, rolling circles, the classic Lomcovak but for me the piece-de-resistance was his arrival back on terra-firma which consisted of a 100ft fly-by down the runway, climbing into a half Cuban whilst dropping the gear, flaps etc and landing all off the same figure. Absolutely Amazing!!

Huge applause from all as Gena taxied in, all received with a modest" thank you" as he climbed out.

Baltic Bear up next then. John and Dave aboard having stored all the silver service etc. This aircraft is creating a lot of interest and the crowd gather to see the display.

Off they go in a very sporting crosswind and are airborne in less than 250 meters, I say airborne, it's more like levitation as the AN2 gracefully climbs into display. Another amazing display, how does this thing stay in the air at these low speeds? Slow flying, steep turns, steep climbs, the boys in this large graceful lady make it look easy.

Again the crowd are very appreciative, even more so when the boys step out of the aircraft their damp shirts showing the sheer physical effort required to pilot an aircraft like this to the edge of it's envelope.

A repeat show from Gena and there we are, we have actually made it. How many small clubs like ours can boast world class display pilots at their fly-in?

For their time and generosity we must really thank John, Dave, Colin, Jane and Gena for not many people will realise that all this time, commitment, aircraft and displays came to us absolutely free-of-charge from the boys and girl mentioned. For that, the club will be eternally grateful.

I'm off to do an evening display with the other beautiful lady in my life, the Spitfire Vb over at Weston Park so I leave all the rest of the team to clear up (Hee Hee!)

What shall we do next year?

Answers on a postcard to Mike Tidmarsh!

Rob Rowley

Make your day - enthuse a young pilot!

I guess most of us take friends, family and colleagues up for a flight from time to time, and get a buzz from seeing their delight as they survey the ground from a few thousand feet. But sometimes, the buzz goes even further - let me tell you about when I took my partner's nephew, Jurgen (14) up for a flight.

We were chatting about nothing in particular when he lost the thread and gazed up at a commercial jet, probably climbing out of Birmingham and tearing across the skies above Lichfield. Come on, we all still do it, don't we?! I mentioned what a great day for flying it was and he agreed and said that he loved the thrill of the take-off, and the landing, and being at the airport - and then faltered as he anxiously watched to see if I thought him a geek. I assured him that I felt the



same and that was how I came to be interested in flying. "Have you ever wondered what it would be like to actually *fly* a plane?" he asked. Lovely! After having bored hundreds of people with my stories, here was someone who might actually *want* to listen! "Not really" I said. "You see I don't need to wonder - I've been flying myself for nearly 20 years". You have probably experienced the same slightly pointless and embarrassing questions that follow - "What, in a plane?", "Actually flying it yourself?", etc.

It will come as no surprise that within the next 10 minutes I was on the phone to the lovely girls at the airfield, Helen and Paula, getting a slot with G-BJOA for two days hence. Jurgen was ecstatic - and dying to brag to all of his mates about his planned adventure.

Although it was a pleasant, if hazy, day, driving up to the airfield was unusually hazardous. The incessant bombardment of questioning from my young flying buddy made MI5 interrogators look amateurish and the now unfolded Southern England landscape flapped in my face as Jurgen gasped as he realised we could actually fly to another country (well, Wales, technically).

Within a mere 45 minutes of arriving at Tatenhill, I had completed the Aircraft Technical course content for Jurgen in the pre-flight walk around, realised I needed to re-acquaint myself with Mr Thom's words of wisdom, and managed to get the two of us strapped in and ready to go... somewhere. You know the form - get up there and make it up as you go along, according to your passenger's level and direction of excitement. The amount of communication through my David Clarks was as bad as Farnborough LARS on a warm summers evening and getting a gap to make my radio check took ages. But, after about 5 minutes, he seemed to need to breathe and I grabbed my opportunity.

"It's OK, I'll do the take-off this time" I assured him, rejecting his kindly meant offer of assistance. And then we were off - that exhilarating moment following the "ready for departure" call as the runway centre line stretches ahead and the throttle moves smoothly all the way to the firewall. It's still one of my favourite moments - even in something as mundane as a Piper Archer. Heaven knows how unbelievably exciting it would be in a Tornado, or being blasted off an aircraft carrier!

I changed to Birmingham Approach - which always makes me feel like a real pilot as I battle for calls with FlyBe 737's and Emirates biggies - dropped my voice an octave, added a few timely errs, and indicated a vague intent to wander around north of Lichfield, but I would offer mode C to show willing. The cloud base was a disappointing 3000', but we cruised around Staffordshire, checking out his house in Lichfield, the school, peeking down the Rugeley cooling towers (which all my passengers seem to delight in, but always disappoints me), buzzed



Shugborough, then climbed up above Hixon and surveyed the scene. Jurgen was loving it - and was one of those few who had instantly mastered working out which way was north, roughly where the airfield was (handy - I think I'll keep hold of him just for that...), and what was what on the ground. Now clearly it wouldn't have been sensible for me to hand over control to a 14 year old on his first time up, but if I had, he would have loved it, his eyes wide open catching everything, sitting forward and up as he carefully focused on the track towards Stoke, ignoring my suggestion that fingertips on the column would suffice and two clenched fists would not be appropriate....

We banked gently right on to 030° and shortly Jurgen let out this very long sentence in a strange Catherine Tate dialogue, which included some recognisable chunks like "gor crikey s'loads of cars there and a castle look at that blimey they upside down or what can't believe hang on bin there cor is that, no, have we, must be, can't be anywhere but, hang on - it is isn't it". I gather he'd correctly identified Alton Towers.

Heading south now, at 5,000', I pulled a few steep turns and simulated dive, dive, dive manoeuvres, and Jurgen was torn between massive excitement at the trip so far and disappointment as Tatenhill 26 came into view. Being a softie, I did a quick detour back around Lichfield and then returned for a downwind 26 left join. We were soon on final approach, and I felt stangely under pressure for a greaser from the enthusiast on my right. Ho hum, can't have everything. As the bouncing slowed and I steered back to the centreline, Jurgen smiled the biggest smile I'd ever seen and said that the flight had been... well, I think the words meant "quite enjoyable"....

It was at least two weeks later when I bumped into his Mum who informed me that Jurgen had decided he wanted to be a pilot, had already been on to airline web sites, quizzed his careers advisor at school, asked his parents for birthday and Christmas monies to go into his "I'm gonna be a pilot" savings, and started pondering what exams would be best to get there quickly. Great stuff!

I decided to invite a flying chum up for lunch to meet Jurgen. Paul Wynn, my ex-neighbour and flying buddy, had re-qualified at Tatenhill a few years back and had gone on via Cranfield, the US and CFI at Wellesbourne, to become a fully qualified commercial pilot, currently taking ATPs around the UK for Eastern Air. Jurgen listened attentively to his every word and you could see the excitement and commitment building, no matter how many depressing stories Paul related about the costs of training, the pressure commercial pilots are under, the time it takes to get to a position to earn good money, the crap hours and the days and weeks away from home. A few hours later he left to walk home, full of ideas, carrying my old Aviation Law and Basic Training books to read, frothing with the



thought I'd take him up again when he came back from holiday, and doing that one-thumb-don't-need-to-look txt thing that under 30's seem to be able to do.

Jurgen is now officially smitten with the bug we all know. And desperately keen to do anything involving aircraft to get towards his dream left hand seat job with a major airline. So if you ever want an enthusiast on your right, or have any thoughts on how we could get him involved in anything from helping on the radio to fuelling to contacts in the industry - let me know! You'll help him get to his dream and make a young potential pilot very happy.

Martyn Proctor
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Flying In France

After the interesting article about a French tour last month, this seems rather small beer, but might be useful if you want to go flying whilst you are on holiday in France.

To go to my older sister's house in France we fly by Ryanair 737 to Rodez (pronounced RodEZ - it's in Languedoc). I've often noticed Robins (capital R!) flying around, but only recently realised there's an aero-club, so I thought why not fly there? We could see the Millau Viaduct (not Millau Bridge - the French get quite upset if you call such an impressive object by such a small name), which was designed by Norman Foster.

As I couldn't cope with an unfamiliar French aircraft, an unfamiliar French airfield and an unfamiliar French instructor as well as trying to speak French, I thought it was best to have a go in Tatenhill's Robin beforehand. There wasn't time to get properly checked out so I had a short familiarisation flight in Victor Lima with Martin. I really liked it; it is a very responsive aircraft and gives a superb view. It was a bit difficult to keep at the same height in the turn as its attitude is different from a PA28 and it was rather bouncy (as Vince warned me), but you soon get used to it.

My sister had asked a French friend, Karine, to arrange for me to fly at Rodez. My sister said Karine had made enquiries, but had not booked a slot as she 'wasn't family'. I rang the aero-club, but was answered by someone who didn't speak English and I couldn't quite follow him. Someone else tried to help me who could speak some English, but we got rather confused. He said 'Do you want a flying lesson?' I said 'I can fly a PA28 and a Cessna 152' which he repeated out loud. As soon he said this, the rest of the people in aero-club called out Zhanees! Zhanees! Karine had booked it for me, but only under 'Janice' as she couldn't remember my 'nom de famille' (surname)!

I'd arranged to fly at 9.00 am as it would be a bit cooler. When we arrived at the aero-club we saw 'Janice' written across the slot. I was flying with the Le Chef Pilote, Michel, as he spoke some English. He looked at my licence before we went - 'Oh a PPL!' My sister Alison was unsure whether to come as she is a bit wary of turbulence, and I wasn't sure if I would be allowed to take her. It had been too difficult to explain this



over the phone in my poor French, but there was no problem, it was just assumed she would come too.

The club has one D19 2-seater for 'promenades', two DR400/120 CV for lessons and 'voyages' and one DR400/160 CV for 'voyages'. The spacious hanger seemed absolutely full of Robins plus a Rallye. We pulled out blue and white F-GLDY, the 400/160 Robin, and got in, putting Alison in the back. She was to be chief map holder to give her something to do so she wasn't nervous. Being rather short, I had problems getting in and ended up with both feet on one side of the stick.

We set the QNH, which seemed a bit odd to me as it was so high, but Rodez is almost 2000 feet above sea level. Michel's explanation of the controls was very easy to follow as he pointed to each one, 'fuel pump on, 3 times with the throttle to prime' and so on. He also said he'd do the radio, for which I was profoundly grateful. 'Just go to Alpha one' and then we taxied onto the runway. I asked if I should go to the numbers, but he said take off from here (half way along!). 'This engine will take us straight up' - and believe me it did!

We turned onto 140. Again I had no difficulty understanding as Michel said the numbers one by one and pointed to the instruments. Power setting was 'two, four, zero, zero' to cruise at 200 or 220. This is a bit startling until you remember it is in kilometres, not knots! Michel just let me get on with flying the aircraft and seemed to be looking out of the window or talking to Alison when the power slipped slightly back to 2300 and I didn't notice. He immediately moved the power back to 2400 almost without looking. 'Five, zero, zero, zero hours on Robins,' he said.

We flew over Lac de Parelap where apparently the 'Allemands faire the camping'. Then Millau viaduct appeared, floating in the haze - it looked unreal. For the first time Michel took control for a short while and explained how he would use one stage of flap for slow flight to allow me to look at the bridge whilst Alison took photographs from the back seat. She says the only way to see the bridge is from the air - driving over it you feel as if you are on an ordinary road and standing underneath it you don't get the sense of scale (even though the tallest posts are higher than the Eiffel Tower). The photos do not do it justice.

We turned back towards Rodez. Just ahead was a line of clouds. It was getting bumpy and Michel was concerned about Alison being afraid. 'Go above the clouds' he said 'to 5000 feet.' I pulled back a bit too steeply and Michel tapped the attitude indicator - 'just here, just here'.

We climbed at a steady 500' per minute - more or less in IMC.

'I don't like this' said a little voice from the back.

'I don't like it much either' I thought, 'This is a strange aircraft, in a strange area and I'm out of practice!'

We were fine, of course, and levelled out into the tops of the white ice-cream cone clouds. It was calm and beautiful as always, with the ground visible a short way ahead.

'Did you get some photos?' I asked Alison as we cleared the clouds.

'No, I had my eyes shut. Going towards that cloud was like going into a wall.'



Michel called Rodez ATC (Approach) and I found I could follow them quite easily, probably because they used standardised radio calls apart from 'Toute les heures' (see you later) at the end. I also could understand the instructor perfectly well when he explained anything to do with the aircraft as again it was all familiar, but I did find I couldn't understand conversational French and fly at the same time. Michel told me he had to fly to Toulouse that afternoon, how nice I said; he told me again in a different way, oh good I said. He gave up then. Alison explained later that he was telling me he was doubtful about going to Toulouse because of the forecast weather (thunderstorms)!

Shortly after, a British Cessna 172 en route to Albi called Rodez and was answered in perfect English. ATC slipped from French to English and back again with no trouble and were very clear and helpful. Another British aircraft called them during our flight, a Piper I think.

We descended to 3500 feet. I found the Robin easy to fly and kept my heading and the balance ball in the middle, but because of the hot weather it was difficult to stay at 3500'. I tapped the altimeter and asked Michel 'OK?' 'No problem,' he said, 'this is free air. Look at the view, don't worry.'

We flew north of Rodez and Decazville (an old coal mining town) and turned right up the Valley of the Lot (pronounced as in 'not a lot') to fly over my older sister's house. I'd really got the hang of the Robin by now and managed several fairly steep turns followed by slow flight to enable Alison to take photographs. We then flew over Conque - a world heritage site. You've probably never heard of it; it is a medieval monastic town built almost into a cliff face with a treasury containing jewel encrusted statues over 1000 years old. The countryside is beautiful here with ancient chateaux, medieval forts and large rivers in steep wooded valleys. Michel took control again for just a few minutes so I could take my time to look at the view.

After turning back to Rodez, Michel pointed to the map. We couldn't fly straight in but had to fly an 'S' shape. Again it was no problem, I looked at the runway to judge downwind whilst Michel did the checks and calls. We had to be quick as a twin wanted to land and ATC let us go first as long as we 'expedited'. Power back, 10 degrees of flap and then full flap, a bit of power until you are nearly on the ground. Luckily I landed it in the right place so a short roll out would get us to the turn-off, which was just as well as the other aircraft was on short finals. We taxied back to the fuel and I got into trouble for the first time for braking against the power (a bad habit!). It was a wonderful flight, in an excellent aircraft with an excellent instructor.

I said I'll be back next year.

'Oh good,' said Michel 'I will send you solo.'

Oh dear, I thought, I had better get checked out properly on Victor Lima first!

Rodez-Marcillac is obviously much bigger than Tatenhill, but is nowhere near as large as East Midlands or Finningly. The main runway is 13/31 and 2040m x 45m with a slightly shorter LDA. I cannot imagine how they manage to fly 737s there. One of my nephews describes it 'like landing in someone's back garden'. A 737 taking off in hot weather uses every inch of the runway to do so - the exact tight turns at the very end of the runway are something to see.



The aero-club was established in 1933 (I think, if I've translated it properly!) There are 150 members of which about 120 have licences including 30 to 40 students and one English person. All pilots have their photos on a small index card on a large display board in the office. Everyone at the aero-club was very kind and helpful, but they're also security conscious.

If I understand it correctly, to fly there I'll need to be a member of the FFA (French Powered Aircraft Association) and the aero-club. This is not a problem as flying in France is comparatively cheap. The Robin I used cost me €137.50 an hour with an instructor (I don't think they have to pay VAT). The aero-club suggests it costs €5500 to get a PPL (licence de Pilote Prive europeenne - which seems identical to ours as it is a JAR licence). There is also a simpler BB licence (Brevet de Base) which allows students as young as 15 to fly one particular type of aircraft solo within 30 km of the airport. They also do mountain flying, night flying, etc. There's even a night flying social event in August!

There are 595 aero-clubs with 2350 aircraft and 45,000 private pilots in France. There's apparently an aerodrome every 50 km too! However, according to their website they also seem to have worries about fewer young people flying and the increasing cost of fuel as we do. They are also worried about losing older pilots because of problems with their medicals, as they don't yet have anything like the NPPL (or IMC for that matter). I suppose you win some, you lose some.

Janice and Alison (or 'Zhanees et Aleeson' as we'd rather be known now- it sounds much more interesting!)





"Rules of the Air"

1. If you push the stick forward, the houses get bigger. If you pull the stick back, they get smaller. That is, unless you keep pulling the stick all the way back, then they get bigger again..
2. It's always better to be down here wishing you were up there than up there wishing you were down here.
3. The propeller is just a big fan in front of the plane used to keep the pilot cool. When it stops, you can actually watch the pilot start sweating.
4. When in doubt, hold on to your altitude. No one has ever collided with the sky.
5. A 'good' landing is one from which you can walk away. A 'great' landing is one after which they can use the plane again.
6. Learn from the mistakes of others. You won't live long enough to make all of them yourself.
7. You know you've landed with the wheels up if it takes full power to taxi to the ramp.
8. Stay out of clouds. The silver lining everyone keeps talking about might be another airplane going in the opposite direction. Reliable sources also report that mountains have been known to hide out in clouds.
9. There are three simple rules for making a smooth landing. Unfortunately no one knows what they are.
10. You start with a bag full of luck and an empty bag of experience. The trick is to fill the bag of experience before you empty the bag of luck.
11. Helicopters can't fly; they're just so ugly the earth repels them.

NEWSLETTER

If you have any articles for the newsletter or comments on the format, please contact Alison at alie_todd@yahoo.co.uk.

SOCIAL EVENTS

CLUB NIGHT - Friday 30th September 2006

This will be a 'Quiz Night & Pie and Peas Supper'. Tickets are available from Margaret @ £5.50 each. Partners are also welcome and encouraged to attend this event. Get in early as numbers will be restricted due to the limited space available.

OTHER EVENTS

If you have any suggestions for other events or would like to help, please contact Hugh Clarke on 01283 531556.

FLYING EVENTS

Proposed Fly out to Somewhere!

It has been proposed to have a fly out to Somewhere towards the end of September (weather permitting - its not been too kind lately) though there are no firm details at present. Please keep an eye on the club noticeboard for further information.

If you have any suggestions for flying events or would like to help, please contact Angus Stewart 07967 593 341.

Please keep an eye on the club notice board and the website (www.esfc.org.uk) for more regular updates on forthcoming events.

NEXT MEDICAL DUE?

As a reminder Dr Hill, our local AME, continues to give a discretionary £5 discount on aviation medical examinations to East Staffs Flying club members. To receive the discount you must show your current ESFC membership card at the time of your medical.

Contact details for Dr Hill are as follows:

Dr J D Hill AME