

East Staffs Flying Club

Newsletter



WINTER 2010

Chairman

Firstly I would like to wish all ESFC members a very Happy Christmas and a safe New Year (where has the year gone)!

We have already published our 2011 calendar of Social events (see website) and will do the same for Flying Events early in the New Year so please get these dates in your diaries. Don't forget the club AGM that will be held in March - please make every effort to attend. We will be on the hunt for new committee members so you have been warned!

Finally, a big thank you to all the members who have supported the club events during 2010, we look forward to seeing you again and hopefully some new faces in 2011. I would also like to thank all members of the 2010 committee who make the time to meet in the evenings and discuss and organise all issues/events relating to ESFC.

Mike Tidmarsh

From the Editor...

A Bumper Christmas issue!! I have been overwhelmed with the quantity of contributions made this time; a very sincere thank-you to all contributors. I am hoping to be able to expand the scope for articles for this newsletter - how successful this will be remains to be seen!!

Membership renewal lurks just around the corner. Could I ask all members to renew their club subscriptions as soon as possible after 31st January 2011 please?

A very happy Christmas and a (hopefully) prosperous New Year to all members.

Brian Waters

Flying "Words of Wisdom" 1

Both optimists and pessimists contribute to society. The optimist invents the airplane, the pessimist, the parachute!!

What would you do if.....

Picture this scene - a typical British spring day with rain, a twelve-knot crosswind, a cloud base you could practically touch if you stood on your tiptoes and a liberal smattering of snow. Sorry, I may have got a little carried away; it was an eleven-knot crosswind! The office at Tatenhill filled with miserable looking Instructors downing copious amounts of coffee and wandering aimlessly trying to



find unsuspecting students to teach the finer points of stalling to. As there were no students around, we were talking about where we'd flown to when someone mentioned Caernarfon, a place I had never actually been. Conversation soon turned to what was the best way to get there and when we were going.

"You fly us there John and I'll buy lunch."

The plan was to fly from Tatenhill direct to Hawarden and then follow the coast to Caernarfon. From there we would fly down the west coast to Aberdovey and then cross the wild expanse that is the heart of Wales to Shobdon. From there we would come back to base. The planning bit was easy, the hard part was finding a day when the British spring weather was not going to keep us on the ground drinking coffee and teaching stalling. However, a superb day did arrive with light winds and crystal clear blue skies. Robin G-BKVL was to be our steed for the day. John and I went down to the bottom hangar, pulled her out and taxied her to the fuel bay.

"I'll put some fuel in if you want to ring and find out if they're open" said John.

"Not a problem, consider it done" I said.

Before we got strapped in John checked the oil.

"Hmmm, someone's overfilled the oil" he said.

Ok we thought, not a problem, we'll keep an eye on it and off we went.

The conditions were perfect; it was one of the nicest days for flying for a long time, especially after all the snow we had over Christmas and New Year. We trundled northwest towards Hawarden listening in to a very busy Shawbury controller before changing to Hawarden. Everything was coming up on time, just as it was planned to. If you haven't done this trip yet, I strongly suggest you do. The Welsh coast is second to none from the air. On the left you can see the mountains rising up to the south and on the right you have a perfect view of Liverpool and the offshore wind farms. You can see Great Ormes Head, a prominent limestone headland which is run as a nature reserve and is home to a herd of two hundred feral Kashmir goats. Its disused mines and caves are home to huge colonies of the rare Horseshoe bat.

Approaching Bangor and the town of Caernarfon you have to contact Valley Radar and descend to 1500 feet. This is due to the huge amount of fast jet traffic that is present at RAF Valley, home of 208 Squadron, which provides fast jet training on the BAe Hawk, and 19 Squadron which deals with weapons and tactical training. Also based there is 20 Squadron, which is the Search and Rescue unit, flying the Sea King helicopter. The Valley controllers are very helpful but beware, they transfer you over to Caernarfon radio very late. We joined on the downwind to runway 02 which is Caernarfon's longest runway and has a long backtrack to get to parking if you land long. This begged the question from John on final,

"Do you think I can stop before the intersection with 08?"

Taxiing in, we parked our trusty little aeroplane outside the new terminal building and walked in to pay the landing fee and purchase a well earned all day breakfast. As we sat looking out over the airfield with a hot mug of coffee we discussed our route back; Caernarfon to Harlech, follow the



coast to Aberdovey then turn left and fly direct to Shobdon. We still had plenty of fuel and a little too much oil but the aeroplane was flying beautifully and we had no cause for concern. A quick walk round the aircraft revealed nothing so we jumped back in. For this leg, I was to do the radio, something I will regret probably for the rest of my flying career. As we start I ask for radio check and airfield information and instantly the response arrives.

"G-VL Caernarfon radio, readability five, runway zero two, QFE 1002."

Excellent I thought but why hasn't he given me QNH, that's of much more use to me as I'm going out of the circuit. I respond,

"Strength five also, runway zero two, QFE 1002, request QNH".

I am sure everyone has done it at some point. You say something and as soon as you've said it, you realise that what just came out of your mouth was quite possibly the most senile drivel possible. This is exactly what happened. My very understanding colleague in the left hand seat burst out laughing as did the very kind gentleman in the tower whose response was, "You're at sea level QNH 1002". Oh dear! Enough said.

Once after start checks were complete we noticed engine idle was very low, the engine was almost cutting out. Every other indication was satisfactory so we carried on. The departure was standard and we handed over to Valley once more for a basic service. The controller was very glad of someone to talk to as we suspected that he'd been quiet due to the unpronounceable volcano that had been causing havoc throughout Europe. We cruise climbed up to an altitude of around four thousand feet and conversation turned to where we would land should there be a problem. There is the disused at Llanbedr and a small strip called Talybont. Dotted along the coast are also some fairly big fields, which, if push came to shove you could land on. However as you move inland it becomes a little more arduous. There is very little habitation and the ground is steep and rough with limited terrain in which to safely land an aeroplane in an emergency.

As we reached Aberdovey we turned to head direct to Shobdon. There is only one way to describe this leg of the trip, exquisite. The scenery is simply magnificent and the view from four thousand feet is endless. Shobdon popped into view behind one of the hills and we made an approach to the field, a delightful little place. We stopped for a short break here and then climbed out en-route back to Tatenhill past the elegant Clee Hill. Listening in to Birmingham approach, we could hear the delight in the controller's voice that he could vector a 767 onto final instead of vectoring a cup of coffee to his mouth as a result of the volcano.

That line on the chart was exactly where it should have been on this leg as well and Tatenhill appeared without too many surprises. We landed and taxied back to the hanger. Stepping out of the aircraft and gathering our gear, I noticed that there was a considerable amount of oil on the nose gear fairing. Odd I thought, the breather doesn't normally do that. Looking back along the underside of the fuselage, the aircraft was covered in what appeared to be a green substance with the consistency of oil. Its appearance was no co-incidence.

The aeroplane was taken out of service and was found to have three cracked cylinders; the fourth cylinder head was loose from where the oil had leaked. The whole trip had been flown with no indication of a problem. The only thing that was suspect was the low idle speed, which we put down to an incorrect maintenance setting. This incident shows how robust these aeroplane engines



actually are. It also demonstrates the fact that anything can go wrong at any time and the conversation about where we would land in an emergency had more significance than we could ever have imagined at the time.

It is very humbling to think that we were probably only ten minutes away from complete engine failure. What would the engine indications have been? Would there have been any at all or would the engine just have failed? These are questions I think every PPL holder should be asking on a regular basis even when your aeroplane is flying perfectly well. Where would you land in an emergency and what is your best glide speed for the aeroplane that you are flying? What would you do? Would you be prepared?

That aside, it was a fantastic trip and I urge everyone to do it at least once in their flying career.

Chris Chalmers-Brown

Flying "Words of Wisdom" 2

Flying is a great way of life for men who want to feel like boys, but not for those who still are.

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

First Solos

David Cliff / Tuesday the 12th of October.

Nicky Hewins / Saturday the 30th of October.

Richard Lyons / Tuesday the 16th of November.

John McManus / Wednesday the 24th of November.

Kevin Arblaster / Sunday the 12th of December. Well done Kev!

Matthew Blackwell / Sunday the 12th of December.

Fuel Testers

In the last issue I mentioned the ongoing problem that we have with fuel testers. Nothing's changed. I'm tempted to put new ones in our aircraft, but unfortunately I know that they won't stay in the aircraft for very long. Therefore I suggest that pilots buy their own testers. They can be bought at the airfield or from companies such as Transair, AFE, Pilot Warehouse, etc.

Martin Handley.

Flying "Words of Wisdom" 3

If helicopters are so safe, how come there are no vintage helicopter fly-ins?



OH BUGGER - IF ONLY THE RUNWAY WAS TWICE AS LONG.... AHH THANKYOU!

What happens if your destination airfield is within your usual runway length required - then find you can't get out?

I have spent many hours learning about the different effects asphalt, grass long and wet, uphill, tailwind, crosswind etc have on TORA & LDA required, and pored over the runway distance charts that let you work out just how much extra distance you need (and secretly thought how ridiculously over the top they are). Probably some of that belief is from my many hours also flying a hard-fixed wing microlight - to all intents exactly the same 3-Axis as GA planes just lighter, and I can get into my home airfield in 100m - cross wind! However - my previous flight to the one being described here was to test my STOL skills in the PA28 Archer, checking with Mike Shelton whether we had any markers along Tatenhill runway to measure 100,200,300, 400 metres from the numbers - an excellent idea for those wanting to improve their skills (I think) - but none as yet so I walked the length and made mental notes against land marks like the Heli hanger, and the mast etc. I even managed to nicely land and exit in approx the first 350m in the Archer with full tanks and 2 heavy blokes. However none of this made it any easier when having everything thrown at me on my next trip.

It was predicted a lovely day for flying so I took my Dad and brother to Shuttleworth-Old Warden for lunch and look around the museum. In the morning I rang for PPR before I left and told them I was in a PA28 and they said all was fine.....

First warning sign (take notes) it was hard finding the airfield. I've landed at 31 different airfields, 20 of them grass strips - so I'm pretty used to looking for the elusive long grass line in amongst the surrounding fields. I knew the bugger was here, my GPS also said I was right over it - but it took a good circle to spot it - I later realised this was because the grass was very long! There was a gentle but 90 degree crosswind, and only one runway long enough to land so I set up and came in. Just as I was 50ft coming over the hedge and road I hit a little turbulence even with a quick adjustment I still felt a go-around was safer especially as this was a new airfield to me - so by the time I had kept her straight given the crosswind my wheels touched half way down the long wet grass of the 648m runway - but fine as I was already full power going-around.

The next approach was better and now I was a little thankful for the slight uphill elevation helping me break before the end of the runway and active ROAD! Here's where it sounds confusing. This aerodrome has its runway cut in half by a small road, only one half is open to the public. Little alarm bells began ringing for me for the return exit - but first things first - lunch and the museum - after all that's what we came for. I knew we would be a couple of hours so I would reassess things when we came out.

I kept watch on our time, leaving plenty of reserve to handle the departure, bearing in mind the early sunset hour. There was still little wind but it was 90 degree crosswind. I could go either way 03 or 21. Noting the grass was long and wet but there was a tree-hedge line at the end of 03. So I started from there heading uphill on 21 where the runway officially finishes by this minor road that runs across it, but at least there was another 600m of flat ground for clearance over the closed other half of the runway allowing a shallow but safe climb out.

All set with back to the hedge checks done, and off...



Only just doing 40kts at $\frac{3}{4}$ of the runway so brakes on and taxi back for a second attempt (actually God knows why I bothered, nothing was going to change!) This second time I had to slam the brakes on and swerve to the right - but now towards gawping onlookers who had stopped by the road to watch the fun - missed them and hooked it round like a hoodie would have handbrake turned his pimped up ride! - (er sorry Tatenhill that was literary licence - I responsibly had full throttle back, braked then did a tight taxi turn back - nowhere near the road).

Resigned to going back to the front office to explore options! I had several - a) lose weight by draining off my 1hr reserve fuel(30kg), not my first or favourite option! b) leave my passengers behind(200kg), a bit peeved off, and tell them to get the train home, c) we could all get the train home - return on a drier day, with more favourable wind, d) ask my passengers to get a taxi over to the nearest aerodrome with a longer tarmac runway and I fly over to pick them up, and e) finally see whether the other half of the runway was really inoperable - if Ok get staff to block the road off and open up the other half.

Anyway the staff at Shuttleworth were very helpful, the Chief Engineer came out in his fire truck(Landover) and closed the road off and suggested If I taxied right back to the opposite end(now open) I would be coming down hill and should now clear the trees at this end. I had a little think about this and did some mental arithmetic. You can slave over those runway distance charts all you like it will always only give you a number - just a number. Yes it is true the distances required are ridiculously long - but for a good reason - that's what it really takes. However, looking at the wind sock flapping up and down, veering and backing, feeling the firmness of the grass under your feet, looking at the slope of the runway walking it or having a dry run is also part of the assessment. The exact number is not a science, wind changes even as you are taking off. But boy oh boy those charts are really true when everything is against you - twice the runway is what you want and today I was lucky - we could simply open up the other half and hey presto and I had twice the length. What a fortunate place to learn an important lesson. The numbers now looked OK, but there is ultimately only one way to be sure. So passengers fully briefed again ready for another possible TO or cancel but this time the breaking would be longer as downhill on wet grass! That all factored in, checks done, flaps up for best run up speed - Hey Ho off we go!

Unfortunately the run up air-speed was not as encouraging as I would have liked by half way - we still had that crosswind. The little road was under and now behind us then speed picked up as we hit V1. To help us on our way I pulled 2 stages of flap that gave me lift-off.

This of course reduced speed to stall, so as expected putting the nose gently down and flaps up one stage, teetering with the stall warning buzzer sounding off like Morse Code, but speed quickly rose, and then the next stage up, keeping straight and level. As speed now hits 80 I turn into wind for normal climb and 1000ft into the clear, with a sigh of relief and a thought about was that close or just about having everything in the book thrown at you and really using everything I had learnt as PUT?

A direct journey home was needed to get back before sunset having used all that spare time up. Another thought - You would think that Cottesmore LARS would know of Tatenhill's existence it's not a million miles away! So prepare yourself by knowing your ICAO codes (EGTH,EGBM) - save repeating yourself 3 times!



Due to all the delay - I now just made it home before the 30 min after sunset rule - and on this final point, being this close to sunset meant it was dark in the cockpit and I couldn't find the internal dash lights - why...

Because it was bloody dark and I had never needed to learn where they were before. Every flight is a new lesson, some more than others! Enjoy flying safe.

Richard Bisiker

Flying "Words of Wisdom" 4

There are Rules and there are Laws. The Rules are made by men who think that they know better how to fly your airplane than you. Laws (of Physics) were ordained by nature. You can, and sometimes should, suspend the Rules but you can never suspend the Laws.

About Rules:

- a. The rules are a good place to hide if you don't have a better idea and the talent to execute it.
 - b. If you deviate from a rule, it must be a flawless performance e.g., If you fly under a bridge, don't hit the bridge!!
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From Rob Rowley.....

Iranian Controller....."unidentified aircraft, you are in Iranian Airspace, identify yourself.."

Response....." I am British aircraft and am in Iraqi Airspace"

Iranian Controller.... " British aircraft, you are in Iranian airspace, leave immediately or I shall send interceptors"

Response....." I am British Tornado GR4 fighter aircraft in Iraqi Airspace on combat patrol.....Send `em up...I`ll wait!!!!

Iranian Controller... (silence!!!!)





FOR LITTLE JACK IT WAS THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS,
FLYING ABOVE THE ROOFTOPS WITH HIS FRIEND
THE SNOWMAN - UNTIL SUDDENLY
IT ALL WENT HORRIBLY WRONG



FLYING EVENTS

To be published early in 2011 - watch this space! If you have any suggestions for flying events or would like to help, please contact Jon Faulkner (esfc2007@hotmail.co.uk)

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

SOCIAL EVENTS

The following is a list of planned forthcoming Social Events for 2011:

Friday January 28th 2011

Quiz and pie and peas supper (exact menu to be confirmed) in clubhouse.

Please note this is a Friday evening function and not the usual Thursday!

Thursday February 24th 2011

Photographer and author Graham Robson will talk about a recent flying holiday, where with 3 friends he rented two Cessna 172s and travelled up and down California over 8 days. He has also authored four books as well and many, many magazine articles on his other passions, old piston-engined aircraft and wrecks !

Thursday March 31st 2011

ESFC AGM followed by a talk by Dave Plange, who has ferried aircraft from U.S.A.

Thursday April 28th 2011

A talk by Keith Wilson, a photographer for Pilot magazine, who has worked for Grob in Germany.

May 2011 (date to be confirmed)

An evening with David Gunson a former air traffic controller and one of the most in demand after dinner speakers in the country.

June 2011 (date to be confirmed)

A talk by Julian Sanders. Earlier this year Julian and his girlfriend constructed a 4 seat Jabiru and have been touring Europe since July with bicycles and a tent. They have flown into 80 (mainly small) airfields to visit friendly clubs and to understand the surrounding regions.

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
01283 730201

