



THE ROTATING BEACON

SPRING 1989 BULLETIN

of the

INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP OF FLYING ROTARIANS

UNITED KINGDOM SECTION

WINTER MEETING - ROCHESTER

Once again we found that the combination of a fly/drive weekend held at a Crest Hotel convenient for both pilots and motorways, with a good speaker and an opportunity to see something different in aircraft is the formula for a successful Winter meeting. The attendance for our most recent event was a record. A party totalling 26 members and wives, including several new faces (among the members !) assembled at Rochester for a light lunch before listening to a most enjoyable talk from Rotarian James Goodson, former Lt. Col. in the USAF. His introduction to the hardships of war was being torpedoed in the SS Athenia only a few hours after war was declared. This encouraged him to take to the third element for participation in the conflict, and as at that time America had not yet declared war he joined the RAF where he flew Hurricanes, Spitfires, Thunderbolts & Mustangs, claiming 32 enemy aircraft before being shot down himself in 1944. Many of those present were his contemporaries and during question time stories ranged from hosts to guest and back before he was finally released with sincere thanks from all present for a most amusing as well as entertaining afternoon.

After the talk we held a brief programme planning session before adjourning to prepare for dinner, a protracted but pleasant meal during which the new members had a chance to get to know the regular supporters, and in keeping with tradition we ultimately retired to bed with no speeches other than the customary welcome from the Chairman. Once again the weather had done its best to deter those intending to fly, but Barry Paget beat the system by flying in from Devon on Friday and home again on Monday. Jimmy Kumar, Roy Carey & Brian Russell flew in together from Coventry, and the irrepressable Feroz Wadia, now without his trusty Comanche, brought a 172 down from Edinburgh via Norwich. Dave Jenkins had been obliged to phone from Swansea when the authorities declined to open the hangar doors to extract his aircraft due to the 40 kt gale - Feroz commented that it was always that windy in Scotland, had we not heard of "the windy city" !

On the Sunday morning those with cars helped to take the whole party down to Chatham Historic Dockyard for a tour of the naval museum. This is a working museum and during our visit we saw ropes being made on equipment which has provided them for the Royal Navy for 150 years, as well as a host of other exhibits illustrating the history of the Medway since medieval times. The highlight of the tour was again aeronautical. The last surviving Sunderland Flyingboat in flying condition is being restored there and by prearrangement we all enjoyed a conducted tour over it. The nature and style of the cabin decor and flightdeck fittings took many of us back to our childhood and stirred dreams that one day perhaps IFFR could charter it for a nostalgic trip across the Channel and back to reality. As the day progressed the party reluctantly broke up to return home by road or air after a weekend of good fellowship and with plans for the next reunion.

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If anyone feels that there would be sufficient support for a flight in the Sunderland if this could be negotiated, and is willing to handle the planning involved, will he please inform the Chairman so that the idea can be given further consideration. No castings are yet available.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
United Kingdom Section : I.F.F.R.

Notice is hereby given to all members that the next Annual General Meeting will be held at Coventry Airport, on Saturday 20th May 1989 at 11.30 am. Nominations for Office, and Resolutions for consideration should be sent to the Secretary in writing to arrive not later than 3 days before that date

A G E N D A

1. To receive and approve the Reports for the year ended 30th September 1988 published in the Winter Edition of 'The Rotating Beacon'
2. To receive & approve the Accounts for 1988 published as stated above
3. To receive and approve a current membership & financial report from the Secretary/Treasurer
4. To consider the following propositions proposed by Rotn I.J.Branson :
 - (a) That the U.K. Membership Subscription be increased to £15 p.a.
 - (b) That in view of the poor financial situation in the USA we revert to paying an affiliation fee of \$5 per member, asking for nothing in return thus saving the cost of production and distribution of an outdated Directory and of a Newsletter of no interest to U.K. members.
 - (c) That the U.K. Section pays the balance of the full International subscription on behalf of the section Chairman. †
5. To elect the following Officers for the Section :
 - (a) Chairman
 - (b) Secretary/Treasurer
 - (c) European Liaison Officer
 - (d) Bulletin Editor
6. To determine the approximate date of the next AGM
7. To consider comments received on the Programme of Events & Bulletin
8. Any other competent business

John D. Ritchie : Secretary

† These Resolutions may be contrary to the Constitution of IFFR adopted in 1978 as modified in 1987 to provide for the collection of International & Section dues and remittance in bulk by each Section, but the Chairman has determined that members should have another opportunity for debate thereon.

Members intending to be present are requested to give advance notice to the host member of Coventry Phoenix Club, Rotn. Jimmy Kumar, Executive Air Eng. Ltd. Coventry Airport, Warwickshire. Phone 0203-305646. FAX 0203-305546. Please state numbers & accommodation requirements for overnight stay. Airfield open 09.30-19.00 weekends. Customs PNR or use Birmingham. Contact phone on meeting day as shown OR Coventry Airport 0203-301717.

PILING IT ON - The Dawn to Dusk Rally.

At 0620 am on Sunday 19th June last Cessna 172 G-MOGG flown by IFFR member John Pile of Haverfordwest West accompanied by F/Sgt Marc Palmer of RAF Brawdy together with Edgar Evans and Meyrick Voyle climbed out of a thick ground mist from Withybush Aerodrome on the start of an eight hour trip covering 500 nautical miles in the Tiger Club 'Dawn to Dusk' competition.

They had chosen for their project the 53 castles in Wales & The Marches, aiming to arrive at each one at a given time and to photograph them all from the air. It was a demanding test of flying skills, navigational technique and photographic expertise.

The first leg, from Haverfordwest to Cardiff for breakfast, took in 17 castles, and then off to Shobden for a further 12 shots. The third stage was on to Liverpool knocking off another 9 castles before lunch, thence to Caernarvon for another 9 and then back home via a further 6 photographs.

The plane was refuelled twice en-route, at Cardiff & Caernarvon, and on completion of the flight the navigational log, photographs, fuel chits and all supporting documents were collated into a portfolio and submitted to the Royal Aero Club for judging. The annual event had attracted almost 50 entries, and on the previous year John and his crew had taken 10th place. On this occasion only a single point separated each of the first three contestants and our member was delighted to learn that not only had they taken the third prize but that they had also been awarded the prize for the best navigational log.

The prizegiving was held at Stationers Hall in the City of London on 7th December, when the prizes were distributed by H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh himself an experienced pilot. The prizewinning crews together with their wives had the opportunity of chatting with the Duke following the prizegiving ceremony and returned home to the Principality well satisfied with the success of their efforts and with the Award Certificate, the silver medallions, and the £150 prizemoney which they had so well earned. Our congratulations go to them all and their enterprise should be a stimulus to other IFFR members contemplating competing in national events.

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SUMMER PROGRAMME 1989

May 5/6/7	Jersey Air Rally : Hosts Jersey Aero Club & Rotary Clubs
May 20	A.G.M. at Coventry Airport. Formal notice see Page 2.
June 24-28	IFFR members are invited to enter the 20th Malta Air Rally
August	German IFFR meeting in the U.K.)) Details awaited.
Sept 9/10	French IFFR Rally in BELGIUM)
Sept 23/24	Provisional date of Autumn Meeting in Edinburgh.

FLYING FOR CHARITY

In the past it has been unlawful for pilots without commercial licenses using planes operating on private Certificates of Airworthiness to use their services as prizes or rewards for charitable purposes. Any such flights had to be entirely free of charge even the price of a raffle ticket being enough to infringe the regulations. Cost sharing among joint owners or users, or even reimbursement of the cost of a flight made on an employers business may have been 'use for hire or reward' in the eyes of the Authorities. Now all has been changed from 1st April (ALL FOOLS DAY ?)

Private flights now include :

Flights for the purpose of a flying race, contest or exhibition even if the actual cost is paid or a prize given to the pilot or owner of the plane

Flights in respect of which the pilot reclaims from his employer the actual cost of using the plane.

Flights on which not more than four persons are carried each of whom pays a proportionate share of the actual costs of the flight.

Flights in respect of which one or more joint owners pay the actual cost to the other joint owners. (Bet you thought that was legal anyway !)

Flights for which the only payment is made to a REGISTERED Charity AND for which the written consent of the C.A.A. has been obtained

In the past IFFR has held events at which underprivileged children were given free trips in members planes. These being entirely voluntary did not infringe the regulations, but now you will be able to offer such trips as Rotary Raffle Prizes IF you obtain the necessary consent. Details of the conditions on which consent may be given will be published in an A.I.C. but recent enquiry of the C.A.A. indicates that they will expect the pilot to be aged under 60, to have a certain minimum experience comparable with an IMC Rating, to fly exclusively VFR by day from a licensed airfield, and for the plane to have been subject to maintenance inspection within 2 months before the intended flight. In practice therefore a combination of age, weather and impecuniosity may restrict the privilege in many cases.

The free flights for the children were discontinued following an accident in 1980. Do members think that the time has now come to revive the idea ? If so will anyone suggest a venue & date and arrange for his Rotary Club to handle the ground arrangements ? Some of our members have given free flights to Rotaract members. Can we pursue this on a more widespread basis ? What about your next District or National Conference ?

MEMBERSHIP

We regret to announce the resignation of the following members of IFFR Peter Allum, Dennis Bothwick, Noel Collier, Bill Dutton, Don Forrest, Leo Ingham, Douglas James, Cliff Jones, & Alan Turner. Many of them have been members for many years but have now left Rotary. We shall miss them.

We are pleased to welcome into membership of IFFR Graham Browning, Bill Ewington, Michael Liston, Paul Nicholson, & Keith Worthington, all of whom have joined us since last October. Apologies to any whose name I have omitted. Full details of all members are given in the new Membership List.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Truro, Cornwall

Dear John,

I am sorry there was no opportunity to thank you officially for all the work you did to organise our meeting at Rochester as I did not get a chance to see either you or David Rowe before you left on Sunday. For this reason I felt that I would like to write and say how much I appreciate what you did. The talk by Jim Goodson was most entertaining & both Beryl and I enjoyed it, also the dinner in the evening. The visit to the dockyard was also very interesting and a very good idea which made the most of the morning. Finally I had a fantastic flight home on the Monday - CAVOK all the way as I flew to Seaford and along the coast to the Isle of Wight where I called on friends at Sandown before going to Bournemouth & finally ending up at Bodmin at 5.30 pm. Thanks again for a super weekend.

Yours in Rotary, Barry Paget

Radlett, Herts

Dear John,

I shall not be renewing my membership of IFFR this year. I was disappointed when having paid my subscription last year I was treated as a completely new member with a new IFFR number ! This despite my efforts after Francis (*Willinger*) was killed to keep IFFR alive in this country together with a few stalwarts who met at my house including your goodself. I feel that my efforts to make Flying Rotary in this country independent may have lead to my alienation in America. I did not expect a medal for my efforts but I did expect to be treated as a Past Chairman of IFFR GB.

However that is now in the past and I feel that I can no longer support the Fellowship with the enthusiasm it deserves. I am sorry to leave at a time when all the past and present efforts are paying off and membership is increasing rapidly. Still Good Flying to you and all members for the future.

Yours sincerely, Dennis Bothwick

Letchworth, Herts

Dear Dennis,

I was indeed sorry to receive your letter resigning from IFFR membership. While sympathising with your feelings on the subject of membership number (*I have been given 3 different numbers in 1976, 1985 & 1987*) we must realise that unlike other Fellowships which originated in the U.K. IFFR started in America and adopted a constitution incorporating a standard subscription at the 1978 R.I. World Convention. When the U.K. Section declined to pay it is not surprising that our membership lapsed, being reinstated after the 1986 A.G.M. when dues were paid.

I have been offered my original number and I am sure that the same courtesy would be extended to you and other U.K. members on request. The subject of payment of International capititation fees remains a sore subject for several of our members and I anticipate that this will be raised again at the forthcoming A.G.M to be held at Coventry in May. I trust that you will feel able to be present to express your views as after all your efforts in the past we would not like these to go unrecognised.

Yours in Aviation Rotary, John D. Ritchie

MEMBERSHIP LIST

AS you will observe the Committee has decided that the time has come for the issue of an updated Membership List. Your copy is enclosed herewith. This has been limited to the membership of the U.K. Section as at 1st March 1989 as no recent details have been received from other European Sections. Now that the list has been computerised it is intended to publish this at more regular intervals in future. Please advise any changes required.

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WHY DID YOU LEARN TO FLY ?

IT all seems a long time ago, back in the days when we thought that ATOL was a desert island, and ABTA an up and coming Pop Group. Ever since the children were old enough to travel we had always taken our summer holiday in one of the Spanish Balearic Islands, perming Majorca, Ibiza and Minorca like picking pools winners. Our favourite, as with so many other English families, was Minorca. The smallest and least spoilt of the three, with long sandy beaches and a small airport as yet uncrowded by the tourist masses from the mainland it was a natural choice when we decided to make our first "fly-yourself" summer holiday.

MOTHER had some natural resistance to entrusting the whole family to a single-engined flight across what seemed to be a wide expanse of ocean, but reassured by Father and encouraged by daughter who had achieved her P.P.L. and was looking to widen her experience of cross country flying, we loaded the trusty Cherokee 180 after careful weight and balance computations and set off for the sun. Having received us previously as package tour members the hotel had been content to accept our booking and after clearing customs at Luton and heartened by a good VFR weather forecast we flew down to Tours in the Loire Valley and thence to Perpignan for an overnight stop.

THE following morning the warm Mediterranean sunshine cheered us as we pre-flighted the aircraft for the sea crossing. Charts and frequencies were rechecked, life jackets donned and daughter confidently taxied out and we climbed up into the clear blue sky, bound for ten days of sand and suntan. Radio contact was readily established and we were told to maintain our VFR level and report once the island came into sight. ATC routed us clear of the airline traffic and skimming over the rocky terrain we soon landed and were directed to park at the far side of the apron, in company with several other light aircraft and well away from the slipstream of the commercial carriers.

SATISFIED that the plane had been properly secured we made our way through the Police and Customs control to the airport offices where we deposited the flight bags and documents to await our departure ten days later and set off to enjoy our holiday. As was our habit no thoughts of home were allowed to interfere with our enjoyment. Speaking no word of Spanish we read no newspapers and watched no television. The days sped by and we made friends with several of the other guests at the hotel who seemed surprised at our enterprise in making the trip in such a small plane. For no more expense they had been able to make the flight in greater comfort in a half-day and were assured of their allowance of duty-free spirits on the return flight, barred to us by considerations of weight and safety. Although invited to see the islands from the air none of them was inclined to accept. At last the final morning dawned and as the coaches rolled up to collect the tour members we climbed into our taxi and set off for the airport.

THERE an incredible scene greeted us. Not the customary calm spaciousness of the departure hall, slowly filling with suntanned holiday makers taking a final cooling drink before boarding their waiting jets bound for home. The whole place was a seething mass of hot and harassed humanity. Coaches arrived full and departed empty - no incoming planes full of pallid northerners to occupy them. Tour representatives were besieged by anxious parents seeking news of what had happened. All too soon it became apparent to us that we were likely to be the only people destined for England to leave Minorca that day. One of the major Tour operators had suffered a financial collapse, leaving in its wake a situation never previously encountered. As a father I knew just what those other fathers were suffering. The worst part must have been the total uncertainty of how and when they would ever get home. To-day matters are so different. On the rare occasions when such a situation arises a well established machinery swings into action. Other carriers with spare capacity pick up the slack, and although some inconvenience and expense is inevitable the underlying feeling of abandonment has gone. Not so then.

WITH the utmost difficulty and the help of a surprised Spanish speaking courier we succeeded in persuading the policeman guarding the entrance into the airport offices that we had lawful business within, and made our way to the appropriate officials. As ever they were the height of courteous efficiency, and indeed seemed relieved to have something positive to do. Our licenses were checked, MET information provided and a VFR flightplan filed for our return via Perpignan. We were obliged to pass once more through the departure lounge to produce our passports to the Police control. Had it not been for the burly armed member of the Security staff detailed to escort us we should not have reached the apron intact. Never in my life have I experienced the feelings of frustrated envy that burned into our backs as we struggled with our baggage through the crowd.

FOR us on that day a swift pre-flight check under the impatient eyes of our guard - we had refuelled on arrival - no VFR departure delays, and we quickly taxied out for a return flight as uneventful as the departure had been traumatic. As we flew over the sea we were unaccustomedly silent, our thoughts being with those left behind, and deep within us the feeling that we now knew that the long and difficult hours of flying training had all been worth while. When asked 'why do you bother to fly your own plane?', I may talk of the freedom and satisfaction which flying yourself can bring, but I shall never forget the day when being able to do so was so important.

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The above contribution was received from one of our members. We would not want the "Rotating Beacon" to become simply a schedule of events past and future and any similar stories or reminiscences of your flying experiences will be gratefully received. The Editor reserves the right to edit items for publication but would be happy to assist with any "ghost-writing".

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This Bulletin is published by, and all contributions, suggestions, letters and other comments should be sent to the Editor :

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