

THE ROTATING BEACON

SPRING 1991 BULLETIN

of the

INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP of FLYING ROTARIANS

United Kingdom Section

DAWN TO DUSK

Once again our enterprising member John Pile, a Flying Instructor from the Havertordwest School of Flying, has made an interesting and topical entry to this competition. In company with another local pilot, Marcus Palmer, and two observers, John flew 720 n.m. in one day, visiting and photographing no fewer than 25 Battle of Britain Airfields in Southern England and then submitted a "log" complete with comparison photographs of the same airfields in 1940. How appropriate for the 50th Anniversary of the Battle.

Judging of the entries in this keenly contested prestige event was in the hands of H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh, assisted by Robert Pooley, John Farley the BAe Chief Test Pilot, and others. The entrants and their wives were invited to the prizegiving ceremony, held at the Lansdowne Club in London on 25th January, when Group Captain John ("Cats Eyes") Cunningham awarded to John & Marcus certificates for "Enterprising Aviation" - a fair description of their ingenious entry.

JERSEY AEROCLUB RALLY

At the time of going to print indications are that seven or eight IFFR planes will be competing in this event, which is being held on the May Bank Holiday Weekend, although due to unforeseen problems the usual Bank Holiday visit to Dinan has had to be cancelled. Our stalwart Channel Island members Charles Strasser and Graeme Le Quesne are flying to Czechoslovakia on the preceding weekend for the Charter Presentation to the Czech Rotary Club which Jersey Rotary Club has sponsored with financial support to the tune of £1,000. As they are not due back until the eve of the Rally no IFFR or Rotary Dinner will be held on the Friday night, but members will be present at the Aeroclub Rally Dinner and Prizegiving which will be reported in the next issue of "The Rotating Beacon".

MALTA RALLY

For those who are looking for something different and further from home an invitation has been received for IFFR members to participate in the Rally, to be held on 29th June to 3rd July. This falls nicely between our Caledonian Rally in Edinburgh on 1st June and the International Meeting in Cambridge on 13th July. Full details and an application form can be had from the Malta Rally Organiser, Rally House, Robert Samut Square, Floriana, Malta phone 242860 or fax 237182. This is not an official IFFR event but a report from any member participating would be welcome for inclusion in a forthcoming Bulletin.

SYWELL ON SUNDAY

Congratulations to Brian McGraw of the Wellingborough Club assisted by his President Caradoc Roberts and fellow member Bernard Smart, Desmond Vaughan President of the Northampton Rotary Club, and Chris Parker Chairman of the Sywell Aero Club, accompanied by their respective wives, who arranged the successful first event of this year's calendar. As ever, the spring weather was unkind to us, the strong winds in Edinburgh and Shobden grounding even the intrepid Feroz Wadia as well as Brian Strawford, and causing such severe colds to James & Elsie Frost our helicopter members from Oxford that they were obliged to cry off.

Those who succeeded in getting in by air were Ives & Sheila Branson from Biggin Hill accompanied by their dog (*no Peter has not regrown his beard*), Barry Paget from Bodmin, the three Mustgetheres from Coventry - Roy Carey Brian Russell & Jimmy Kumar, Malcolm Hill with guest Frank Settle from Crosland Moor, and Robin James from Peterborough Conington with Mike Church & Bob Huckle. The latter three must have had the shortest flight to an IFFR meeting on record, beating the previous record of Geneva to Annecy held by Marc Bonnet !

Irwin Rodgers accompanied on this occasion by Carolyn continues to hold the unbroken record for attendance by road, and this time was matched by Bob Bowers from Leicester and Trevor Marriott from Retford. Unhappily none of the other three Committee Members was able to be present but their absence did not in any way diminish the enjoyment of the event by those who were present, and who gave such a good start to the IFFR Season.

CAMBRIDGE IS GO !

The U.K. International IFFR Meeting at Cambridge on 13th/14th July is going ahead as planned. Full programme details, hotel and airport information will be sent to you and to all the European Sections within the next few days. Note the dates now, and enjoy a weekend in one of the most beautiful University Cities in the company of your friends. (*Gala Dinner in the Great Hall of Queens College on Saturday evening*). DON'T MISS THIS ONE.

HAS ANYONE GOT A SKY-HOOK ?

Among our membership we have helicopter pilots, glider pilots, and ballóonists as well as the more conventional power pilots of varying degrees of qualification and experience. Save for the gliders, the other members usually succeed in getting airborne by their own efforts, but we have now received an enquiry from Graham Browning, asking whether any IFFR Pilot member has a plane equipped with a tow-hook suitable for giving him an aero-tow. This would enable him to attend one of our Rallies by car, towing his glider behind him, and at the conclusion of the event he could be pulled up into the sky before cruising silently home to base, where presumably he would light the fire and put on the kettle to welcome home his wife after her struggle with the homebound traffic ! Would anyone interested in combining forces in this manner please give Graham a call one evening on 0980-622038. It would certainly add a new dimension to the event.

FIRST PAST THE POST IS THE WINNER

Your newly appointed Events Co-Ordinator Erwin Rodgers has scored a memorable first when arranging the Summer Programme. We have been invited by LOTUS CARS of Hethel, Norfolk, to visit their factory for a conducted tour of the plant in which the luxury sports and saloon cars are manufactured, a buffet lunch, and an opportunity to test drive some of their cars on the test circuit, on the runway and perimeter track of the former RAF Airfield.

This meeting is to be held on **Saturday 31st August**, and the attendance is strictly limited to no more than 30 persons, arriving either by road, or by air at Hethel between the hours of 10.00 am and 11.00 am local, when a temporary radio facility will be opened for us. No more than 10 planes can be accommodated and the event which will be in great demand is strictly on a "First Come - First Accepted" basis. Those who have enjoyed the LOTUS hospitality on previous occasions know that this is a great day out, and in keeping with our traditions ladies will be welcomed. In view of the limited numbers no guests other than a lady or fellow Rotarian accompanied by an IFFR member can be accepted, and names should be advised as soon as possible direct to IRWIN RODGERS, phone 061-336-3846 or FAX 061-335-0824. He already has two firm bookings so DO NOT DELAY.

HETHEL is about 7 NM south of Norwich - strictly PPR and only open to us on the occasion of this visit. No fuel or Customs facilities, Air-Ground radio only and late arrivals CANNOT be accepted as the runway is part of the test track. An Elan or Elite up your tail at 140 mph would quite spoil even your best landing.

GRANITE CITY OR WINDY CITY ?

IF you just cannot manage to get to Hethel but fancy a visit to Scotland instead, you have the choice of two dates. The first is our FIRST CALEDONIAN RALLY to be held in Edinburgh on the weekend of 1st JUNE. Our host is Feroz Wadia IFFR #3446 who has recommended that arrivals use Glenrothes with Edinburgh as the alternate in order to avoid the expense and problems of the International Airport. He assures us that no passport is needed to cross the border and that a warm welcome awaits us. He will arrange transport to the Capital in time for afternoon shopping for those arriving on Saturday morning, and the evening entertainment will be a real "Ceilidh" which my dictionary defines as "an informal gathering for story and song". I suspect that any singing will be the result of imbibing the customary 'wee dram' and have never known pilots short of stirring tales ! On the Sunday morning the Annual General Meeting will be held at the Hotel, giving an opportunity for all those attending (including the ladies) to put forward ideas for improving the Section, suggestions for future events, and for the election of Officers for the forthcoming year. For those able to stop over until Monday a visit is planned to a whisky distillery to see how the largest export from Scotland is created. Please contact FERAZ WADIA by phone - 031-556-2345 or FAX 031-556-1012 AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, as the date is only a month ahead and he needs firm numbers to make reservations.

The second date for a trip to Scotland is 9th to 11th AUGUST when we are invited by the Aberdeen Flying Club to visit the Granite City Rally. The entrance fee of £10 covers ALL landings AND parking for the weekend. This is not an official IFFR event but for those interested full details can be obtained from the Coordinator, Geoff Greavey phone 0467-681654.

PARMA HAM AND PARMESAN CHEESE

Once again we are invited by our Italian IFFR Friends to participate in their International Meeting, organised in conjunction with the Inner Wheel Club of Parma and the Parma Aero-Club. This takes place on MAY 25th & 26th, and will celebrate the opening of the International Airport "NATALE PALLI" at Parma. This means that foreign visitors like ourselves will no longer have to contend with the incredible delays and bureaucracy which we faced at Genoa Airport on the occasion of our visit to Parma in 1984.

On arrival by 12 noon and after registration lunch will be provided at the AeroClub followed by a tour of the fascinating Old town before returning to hotels to prepare for the Gala Dinner to be held at the Ducal Palace, in the company of Rotarian visitors from other Clubs. On the Sunday morning there will be conducted visits by coach to the Magnani Foundation to see the production of Parmesan Cheese and to a ham processing plant in Felino to see the time and skill taken to prepare the delicacies for which this region is famous. Lunch at a nearby restaurant concludes the meeting and you will be transported back to the Airport in time for departure home.

The cost is modest for the hospitality provided :

Registration fee L. 170,000 (about £80) per person,
Hotel : Single room L. 85,000 (£40) or Double room L. 120,000 (£55) per night

PLEASE phone, fax or telex AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE to the Secretariat :
Phone 010-39-521-815031/815641 : Fax 010-39-521-816784 : Telex 530443 or to the Host President, Ugo Sassi on 010-39-521-816971. The Hotel is the HOTEL FARNESE Via Reggio 51/A Parma Phone 994247 Fax 992317

AIRPORT DATA : ICAO Code LIMP, Elevation 164 ft, Runway 1640 metres asphalt

AVGAS 100 LL available. Weather & Customs present for arrival & departure with English spoken and a Tower frequency of 118.45.

For those making a first visit to Italy this event will provide a glorious introduction to a fascinating part of that beautiful country. Those who have been before should need no encouragement to repeat the experience.

++++
+
+ OBITUARY +
+ JOHN STUDHOLME +
+ We regret to announce the death of John, a member of the Reading +
+ Rotary Club, and a member of IFFR for several years, who passed +
+ away on 23rd October last after fighting against cancer for two +
+ years. He enjoyed his membership and the news of the Fellowship +
+ brought to him by the "Rotating Beacon", and we shall miss him. +
+ +
++++

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME ?

On my weekend visit to France, breakfast was brought to my room accompanied as usual in the smaller provincial hotels by a copy of the morning paper. Priding myself on my French, I read with interest that the Minister of Tourism, a local man, had been concerned that the impact of the Channel Tunnel and the relaxation of Customs barriers had caused a substantial increase in the number of tourists visiting the Pas de Calais to the detriment of provincial centres further inland. He had persuaded his colleagues in Government that a cost effective method of ameliorating the problem and stimulating tourism generally was to facilitate the expansion of non-scheduled air traffic, as the majority of French provincial towns have suitable airfields nearby. This had reduced the burden on the road system in the north, but at first increased the pressures on the major international airfields. It was therefore necessary to expand the use of provincial and Club airfields to accommodate the extra air traffic, and with the assistance of other departments this had been achieved.

To overcome the problem of Customs & Immigration control at the Club airfields without the expense of regular attendance, his Ministry had sponsored the installation of tax machines. Pilots of non-scheduled aircraft from abroad had only to send a fax before departure, giving details of the aircraft and particulars of the persons aboard, and so long as the pilot signed the fax message and general declaration on arrival all formalities were waived. A similar procedure applied on departure, and the signed faxes and declarations were dispatched at regular weekly intervals to the authorities for collation. This arrangement had been agreed with the authorities in the U.K. Germany and the Benelux countries and negotiations were in hand for flights from Italy, Spain & Switzerland. Spot checks by the aviation branch of Customs had confirmed that breaches of the privilege were negligible, due to the benefits of compliance to the pilots concerned, particularly in the private sector.

The consequent increase in general aviation traffic and the reduction on pressure at the major international ports of entry had so surprised the Civil Aviation Authorities that they had agreed for an experimental period to waive the requirement of filing VFR flight plans for all flights to which the concession applied, so long as the aircraft was radio equipped and established radio contact with the arrival airport before landing so that the fax received could be traced and verified. This had substantially reduced the burden on the ATC authorities for the benefit of the VFR traffic. A VFR flightplan remained mandatory for flights to the few international airports such as Roissy, Orly, Satolas & Nice where the great majority of aircraft had always been on IFR flightplans. Much co-operation had been received from the authorities in the adjacent countries where the extension of similar facilities had proved beneficial overall.

At that point in the article I was obliged to turn the page, and doing so I fell out of bed, only to realise that it was still dark and neither breakfast or newspaper had, in fact, arrived. I should have appreciated the likely consequences of a dinner on the preceding evening of seafood, followed by grenouilles, a chateaubriand and then brie. The one fragment of recollection which remains is the dateline on the paper - 30th June 1993. Was this a premonition, dream, or nightmare ? We can all speculate !

(Contributed by an author who insists on remaining anonymous. Ed.)