

**INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP
OF FLYING ROTARIANS**
United Kingdom Section

THE ROTATING BEACON

SUMMER 1998 BULLETIN

PROGRAMME

- August 7-8-9 Granite City Air Rally, Aberdeen - contact Ian Kerr
August 14-16 Scandinavian Section Weekend at Bornholm, off Denmark
August 29-30 Summer Meeting - Duxford, Southend, and Dieppe
Sept 12-13 French Section 25th Anniversary Meeting - Loire Valley.

Details of the above events are available on request. Seats are wanted from Southern England for both Duxford and France on a Cost sharing basis. Please phone or Fax the Secretary on 01462-684941 if you would can help.

AUGSBURG 1998

Ever since the formation of the German Section of IFFR at Juist in 1986 events arranged by them have always been well supported by the U.K. members. The 1988 International meeting at Augsburg was no exception. Five aircraft from Biggin Hill, Henlow, and Jersey braved the frontal system lying across northern France to enjoy a busy weekend in fresh Spring weather.

The programme included a tour of the German Air & Space Centre conducted by the Director who spoke throughout in English with occasional explanation in his own language for the benefit of some of the ladies, followed by lunch on a steamer while cruising around the nearby lake, and ending that day with a visit to and substantial dinner at a local monastery. Next day we were given a conducted tour on foot around the old city, with a welcome in the newly reconstructed City Hall from the Mayor, a fellow Rotarian. The evening was occupied by the IFFR Dinner, enlivened by a pair of entertainers whose songs and antics crossed all language barriers.

Too soon it was Sunday morning, but before leaving we visited the only Balloon Museum in Europe where we were received by the founder, the first man to cross the Alps in a hot air balloon. John Bowden, accompanied by Luis Henriques from Portugal, had the misfortune to suffer carburettor problems on his departure but nursed the aircraft back into Augsburg without incident. Once again it was the familiar faces at this re-union, and with most of the summer programme ahead of us we look forward to seeing some new faces (as well as the old ones) at Bornholm, Duxford and Saumur.

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WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ROTARY CLUB</u>	<u>BASE</u>
Malcolm Barton	Lock Heath	Phoenix Farm
Walter Burton	West Linton	Edinburgh
David Clark	Kirkham & Rural Fylde	Blackpool
Keith Harding	Aldershot	Blackbushe
Nigel Harradine	Bristol Breakfast	Lulsgate
Peter Saunders	Crewe & Nantwich Weaver	Liverpool
Rodney Spokes	Leicester	Leicester
Jeff Watkins	Bath West	Kemble

This is a welcome increase on previous years. We look forward to meeting them and ask all members to keep on the lookout for new members both at Rotary meetings and at their Flying Club or Airfield.

HATS OFF TO SUZI DUNCAN

You thought that learning to fly was difficult - well just consider Suzi Duncan, she did it without the use of her legs to control the rudder. The following article is taken from the Australian AOPA Magazine and tells her story better than I can.

Mary and I had the privilege of hosting her for a night on her recent visit to Old Warden, not just to see round the museum but to take a ride in an open-cockpit 1932 Blackburn B2 flown down from Brough by BAC pilots for the occasion. Now Suzi is touring Britain in support of her Vision Air Program to encourage the disabled to realise that they can overcome their disability and share with us the freedom of the air. And if you think that Moorabbin where she learned to fly is a quiet country airfield just ask those who flew from there in the Australian IFFR Fly-round which followed the 1993 Melbourne Convention.

An Inspiration

By Arthur Pape, AOPA Senior Vice-President



Named in honour of a former president of AOPA, the Bill Adams Award is awarded by AOPA in recognition of outstanding service to General Aviation. Suzi's story is an inspiring one, and it will become quite clear why she was chosen.

Somewhat coy about her age, let's just say she looks younger than she actually is.

At about one year of age Suzi was struck down by Polio, and her mother was told Suzi would never walk or even breathe for herself. She in fact spent almost a year in an iron lung. With months on end in hospital, she missed out on considerable schooling. A change in medical management resulted in the encouragement to do as much as possible for herself. In time she became obsessed with her physical fitness and escaped the confines of her disability by learning to ride a horse. The horse became her first legs, and gave her a taste of freedom never before experienced.

Her mother taught her to swim and encouraged her to extend to the limit. All the while she grew stronger and more determined to live to the fullest capacity her disability would allow. In time she learned to walk, first with and then without sticks.

By her mid-teens she wanted to fly, but believed that people with disabilities like hers could never hold a license. Following failed hip surgery in 1991, she was again told she would never walk again, but Suzi didn't give up. Invited to accompany a friend on a night BFR, Suzi met Dick Gower, a no-nonsense examiner of airmen. A month later he rang her and said, "I believe you'd like to learn to fly".

Suzi re-stated her belief she would never pass the medical. Dick's response was, "Bad luck, but I've booked the plane for

all fours.

Working with CASA and the Royal Vic. Aeroclub workshop, she was instrumental in the development of a hand-held device that people with no legs could use to manipulate the rudder controls. This device is incredibly beautiful in its simplicity. It is now known as the Vision Air Hand Rudder Controller.

Attached to the left-hand rudder pedal bar on the co-pilot's side, the control gives the leg-less pilot access to the rudder without interfering with access

simultaneously to the throttle

Another modification is in front of the firewall, where

two cylindrical bungy clamps

(pictured below) are fitted to arrest the inbuilt rudder damping of

the Cherokee. The device has been

supported by CASA from the outset, and has now been approved. Suzi expects approval by the UK CAA within weeks and from the FAA in about the same time frame.

After obtaining the instructor rating, Suzi, with co-founder Ian MacDonald, set up Vision Air, a foundation to promote and encourage learning to fly by the disabled. Ian, by making his modified Cherokee available at cost, enabled Vision Air to become reality.

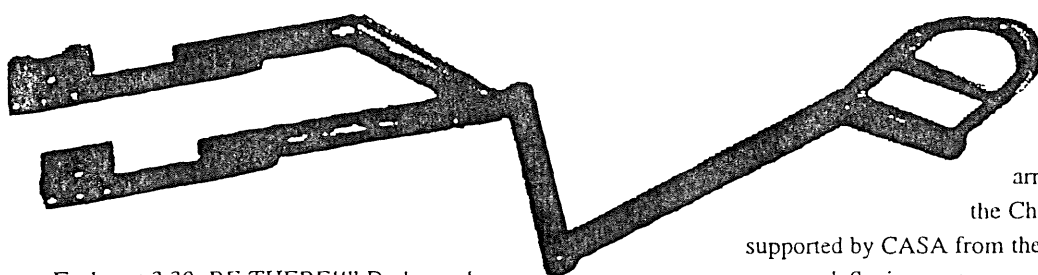
Suzi remembers the initial consternation at Moorabbin

Friday at 3.30. BE THERE!!" Dick taught her well and showed no mercy. He instilled added toughness over and above what she already possessed, believing that she had two significant obstacles: being female and being physically disabled.

Learning to fly gave Suzi the courage to learn to walk again. For her, flying was rehabilitation and the road to independence. She disciplined herself and experienced profound freedom for the first time in her life.

Flying gave her the first chance at real employment. Within three years of hard slog, she had the CPL and could fly without aircraft modification. The instructor rating followed within 12 months, and the vision of helping others with disabilities became her clearest goal. She had an intense wish to help others with disabilities to experience the freedom, independence and sense of equality she had come to know. Another 12 months later, she held the command instrument rating.

Though nothing to do with flying, she's proud, and rightly so, of having climbed to the 19,500ft Mt Everest on

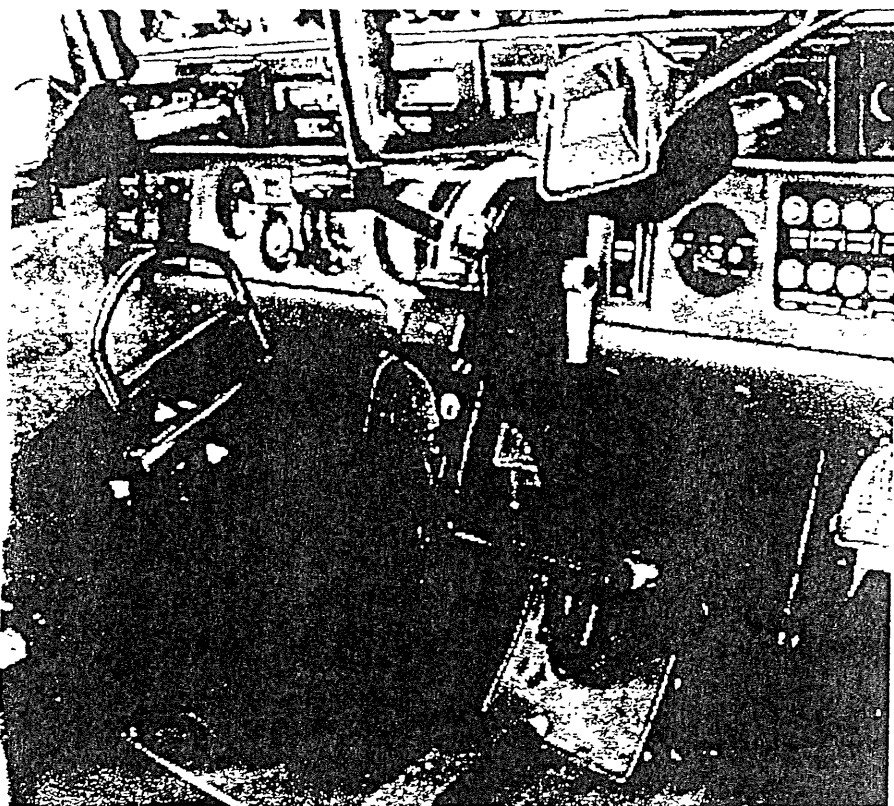


caused by the sight of the first wheelchair pilot. Now though, she says, it barely rates a mention. She has noticed a broad acceptance of the notion that disabled people can fly and do it well.

In July 1997, Suzi was awarded the Churchill Fellowship, originally to allow her to travel to the USA and the UK. The aim was to study how aircraft modifications in those countries are done to allow disabled pilots to fly. The added aim is to promote the Vison Air hand rudder controller. She also intends to take a close look at the International Air Tattoo, a UK programme set up in honour of Douglas Bader that provides scholarships for disabled pilots. She will also be examining medical certification for the disabled in those countries. In this she is receiving excellent support from Jeff Brock of the CASA Office of Aviation Medicine.

To sit in the same room as Suzi is an inspiration. She has done what to many would seem the impossible. That she could do all that and still remain focused on helping others is nothing short of heroic. Suzi has given her all, and done so at great personal financial cost. To progress her vision, she has gone into debt. Though very shy on this issue, Suzi needs some help. Through AOPA, you can send a donation to help this courageous woman in her fantastic and selfless work. AOPA will set up a fund to do just that and I have no doubt our members will dig deep to support her. All donations will be sent directly so Suzi after receipting by AOPA.

Congratulations Suzi Duncan, the AOPA Bill Adams Award winner for 1998. ➔



IFFR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - INDIANAPOLIS 1998

EUROPEAN REGION REPORT

The remit of a regional Vice President is to co-ordinate the activities of the national Sections within his area, to encourage participation in inter-Sectional events and where possible to promote the formation of new Sections. In Europe with members in twelve countries speaking eleven different languages this presents a challenge.

The European Region comprises Sections in Benelux, France, Germany, Iberia, Italy, Scandinavia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Each of the Sections will present their own reports on their activities last year, so my comments will be general. I only regret that I was unable to attend all the various international meetings.

Over the years a regular pattern has evolved, with the German and U.K. Sections each holding a major international event in alternate years, and smaller domestic meetings for their own members. France, who this year celebrate its 25th Anniversary of IFFR, combines with the Swiss to present a gastronomic tour-de-force each September invariably well supported by the undernourished British, while the four Scandinavian countries co-operate to an extent unusual for Europeans by holding successive meetings annually in turn.

After a lengthy period in abeyance the Italian Section rose like a phoenix with two well attended meetings and an excellent Bulletin. We only wish that we had received prior notice so that old friendships might be revived.

In spite of the best efforts of its President Luis Henriques the Iberian Section remains predominantly Portuguese, all attempts to encourage participation by Spanish Rotarians having so far failed, but hope springs eternal ! Regrettably the formation of a Greek Section remains in limbo, all contact having now been lost.

As you may appreciate, IFFR in Europe provides a true example of the International aspect of Rotary the need for which may not be immediately apparent to those members elsewhere who share a common heritage and language. Long may it continue.

John D. Ritchie
Vice-President - Europe

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A full report of the proceedings at the Annual Meeting in Indianapolis with details of the Accounts will be published in the World Bulletin in due course.