

The Rotating Beacon

The Newsletter of the UK Section of IFFR



October 2010

A Letter from the Air-Com!

I was delighted to be elected as Chairman of the UK section of IFFR at the AGM a few weeks ago in Bembridge.

Catherine and I owe so much to IFFR. It all started some 16 or so years ago when Keith Gledhill, a very prominent Northern IFFR pilot, suggested I should send my £10 to the secretary. My flying, usually in a crappy old PA28 140, was at the stage of still being tied to the Blackpool tower by a 50 mile string, not quite brave enough to let loose.

Our first International excursion was to Stornoway. Well, this seemed like flying to New York. We set off from Blackpool and managed to get to Deans Cross, only to return to spend the night in St Annes, due to bad weather. Next day, with Catherine's encouragement we made it to Prestwick and joined the rally. (Catherine adds – my first experience of “time to spare go by air”)

I was ‘tailend Charlie’, but without the encouragement, friendship, advice, and all the other things that help a learner flyer, I would be still stuck in Prestwick.

I owe so much to IFFR. and look forward with relish to putting something back into the organisation that has given us so much

pleasure. I see my role as Chairman (‘Air Commodore!’) is to promote private flying, with IFFR as the catalyst. My first goal is to get our members to join me at my monthly Air Coms Lunch. These outings should give us an opportunity to invite potential learners, giving them airtime and encouragement to ... ‘take the wheel and have a go’..

Secondly I see my role as to encourage all IFFR members to continue to fly. If you attend nothing else make sure that you are at the Newcastle AGM weekend in July 2011! Go to the European rallies which are great fun and easy to get to. The next World Rally will be in New Orleans in May. The UK section has had four World Presidents, so let us send a large contingent next year.

I have sent out a first draft of the 2011 Year Planner. As dates become confirmed, the planner will be updated and will feature in my monthly e-mail. How about a day at the Boat Show in January, or a Christmas Dinner at the Travellers Club in Pall Mall? Please join me in 2011, having fun and playing with our boys toys.

Air Com....

James Alexander

Front Cover: Spitfire Mk IX at Warbirds over Wanaka 2010. Article page 8.

Sywell Mid Week Meeting

The Sywell Meeting drew the same enthusiastic response as previous mid week meetings. The airfield, with its new hard runway and elegant Art Deco buildings made it an ideal venue. After coffee in Pilots Mess first a conducted tour of the Sywell Aviation Museum which is housed in a three Nissan huts. The volunteers, who run the museum, had specially opened it for our tour.



Part of the group outside the Museum

There cannot be another museum in the world that houses more aviation exhibits per square foot than this. That it won the Museum of the Year award in 2007 is no surprise. Although many of the exhibits are of 2nd World War origin the museum covers both the early days of aviation and the post war period. It places a strong emphasis on its Northamptonshire links. During our tour there was an impromptu flying display by a de Havilland Devon from the Air Atlantique Collection which just happened to be visiting.



The Fokker Tridecker Replica

After lunch in the Aviator Hotel we were taken under the care of Chris Parker who chairs a trust which maintains a unique example of Britain's civil aviation history – Miles Messenger G-AKIN. The aircraft has strong Sywell links having been based there since 1952. I had a very personal interest in the aircraft as this was the type, but not the actual aircraft, in which I first flew.

Chris, however, is about much more than a single aircraft and has earned a name for himself as the airfield's unofficial historian. He even provided an item of interest to motoring buffs present with his 1960's Volvo Amazon.

Alongside the Messenger in the hangar was a replica of a World War One Royal Aircraft Factory BE-2C. This aircraft was originally built in 1969 by David Boddington for a proposed Biggles movie. The aircraft was completed

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Bembridge — Isle of Wight

Friday

The first excitement of a fly in is to hear your friends talking to Air Traffic control somewhere east of Birmingham, Colin Walker calling for flight level 55 and Ian Kerr chatting away! Then meeting them for a reunion drink at the Aero Club, overlooking the runway and the hills behind. This was the first time

that we had seen our world president Peter and Shirley in the UK, although we have spent two holidays with them on American trips. Charles Strasser had popped in from Jersey in his Skycab, Malcolm & Margaret arrived with Jeff and Margaret in their very polished Arrow, Jane and Michael in from Essex, and the O'Connells in the Tiger all marked 10/10 for perfect landings. Whilst waiting for all the tail enders to arrive we enjoyed lunch in the airport café. Britten Norman, the home of the famous Islander and Trilanders factory opened their doors to give us a tour of the works. Neil Smith, Jim Mun-



At Britten Norman

dell and Ron Wright all engineers started to dribble. Whilst Joyce, Janet and Marlene Mundell just enjoyed watching their men having fun.

We arrived at our hotel and found that we were looking out straight onto the sea, with cruise liners and container boats sailing by in the sunshine. Whilst, most people settled a contingent led

by John & Patricia headed some 300m up the coastal path to the Lobster Pot ... just for a Pimms or two. This little group gather up the Scandies and Vikings. Kurt, Leif and Svend. Some two hours later

The evening began with a short walk to what we were promised was a spectacular house for drinks before dinner... 'Beach House'. "What a beautiful house" we said as we crunched up the immaculate gravel drive. But no – as we got nearer we realised that our first view was only of the garages! Our hosts, Robin & Pam Bachelor and kids had not only champagne but

Verve (the one with very small bubbles) and canapés a la fantastic served for us in the immaculate gardens over looking the sea, and it's just for holidays! Father, Chris who was flying with Ian was justifiably proud. What a wonderful couple of hours. Dinner at the hotel was more than excellent, wine flowed possibly a bit too fast on some tables. Ian Kerr kept his cool in the face of a busted budget!

Saturday

The Purple Route was declared for an early morning arrival. Yes, it was for the Clarks. Just down for the day! Breakfast was the usual efficient buffet. On the way back to our rooms (some had to take a bus because they were in the next parish) Line Dancing classes were in progress in the ball room. I did observe George and Caroline, Dolly and Norman stop and nearly go in for a lesson. I think Rodney and Pam had slipped in for a few numbers during breakfast! On the chara and tour of the Island, with the Wadia team indefatigable in their efforts to keep us well informed and happy. Roaring down



Welcoming party for President Peter and Shirley

the I of W motorways and reaching speeds of 23 MPH. or 40K for our Europeans mates. Just like wakes weeks of old! Stopped to buy pearls and a cuppa, then onto the miniature village village and lunch. Once again the New Zealanders Mal and Diana couldn't believe Pommies have such good food. Home for a snooze. The day culminated with a Last Night of the

Proms event, held on the lawns on Queen Victoria's holiday home, Osborne House. Norbert, (Ulrich had a better offer) and members joined in with 5000 Brits, enthusiastically waving of Union Jacks

as we sang "Jerusalem" and "Land of Hope and Glory." Another beautiful evening, culminating in a fantastic firework display. The evening would have been very much richer if the event could have been preceded by a stunt flying display by Frank in his RV4. Some of us spearheaded by Jean and David Hayes stayed up 'til nearly midnight and joined the bar disco.

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Benelux Meeting at Maastricht

MAASTRICHT - where is it? – the only thing I knew about it was that John Major signed a Treaty there! So when Ron said he would like to go on this trip I was intrigued. We decided to go by Eurostar to Brussels and then get a train to Maastricht – no chance – the organisers

Marianne and Henk Schrier said that it was a very tortuous journey and very kindly offered to meet us at Brussels and stay with them and they would then take us to the airfield the next day. We were delighted and had a most enjoyable evening with them before the event.



**Ian Kerr, Simon Barlow and
Kiwi Mal McLennan**

The next day after lunch at the airfield whilst watching the planes arriving some of the ladies went shopping – what a place to be – the shops are wonderful and very stylish but we resisted the temptation to buy and only ended up with ice creams from where we were told the best parlour in town. Most of the others went to EuroControl which I understand they all enjoyed.

Later we were driven to our hotel – the Chateau St. Gerlach where the Treaty was signed - they do have a Bush Room but I am not sure if they have a John Major room as well – I felt it was an honour to stay there and have mentioned it proudly to many of my friends. The hotel itself was beautiful and in wonderful grounds and Ron and I were only sorry we were unable to stay longer and take advantage of all the amenities.

We were allowed a short rest before meeting again for drinks and dinner in one of the beautiful dining rooms where the food was delicious and Liora entertained us with her

traditional IFFR anthem.

On Saturday morning we were given the option of visiting a local coal mine or having a conducted tour around Maastricht which we opted to do so I cannot tell you very much about the coal mine but I understand it was very interesting. Our tour guide was Marianne – the wife of the organiser – she had not originally planned to do this but had been let down by the appointed tour

guide. She was excellent and made the trip very interesting and entertaining. I certainly had no idea what a historical place Maastricht was.

We all met up again for lunch in a flour mill/bakery – can you believe it – in the middle of Maastricht. Our lunch was delicious and while eating we were given a short history on the mill and its operation.

Very little seems to have changed over the years and it was most interesting to see how it all worked. Some of us bought bread or cakes which were delicious but which we personally found difficult to pack when we came home! Off we go again this time to the largest vineyard in Belgium called the Wine Castle Genoels-Elderen at Riemsta vineyard and winery – did you know that Maastricht made wine – I certainly didn't. We were shown the vines and the type grown – mainly Sauvignon, I believe. I am a great wine drinker but not very knowledgeable but I enjoyed walking through the grounds and seeing the various types of grape none of which were very sweet as Maastricht has insufficient sunshine to ripen the grapes as in hotter countries. The wines we sampled were very tasty and we all



Lunch in the flour mill

slept on the coach going back to the hotel before enjoying a Gala dinner in one of the hotel's beautiful dining rooms. We were entertained with speeches from the President Feroz Wadia who encouraged all members to try and enlist new

members and also from the President of the Benelux IFFR — Karel Waagenaar. Both speeches were very entertaining.

All good things must come to an end and on a rainy Sunday morning we all reluctantly trudged to the airfield to say goodbye and watch the aircraft take off. We personally were again lucky enough to be driven to Brussels to catch our Eurostar.. Such fantastic hospitality!

From my experience the whole trip was beautifully organised by Henk and Marianne Schrier with their team from the Benelux countries — Ron and I thoroughly enjoyed it as we do all the IFFR events.

Finally we were pleased to hear everyone arrived home safely.

Joyce Norfolk

Warbirds over Wanaka

There can be a no more stunning setting for an air show than that of Wanaka in South Island, New Zealand. Warbirds Over Wanaka takes place every two years over the Easter Weekend. On a previous trip to New Zealand Alisma and I resolved to return, not only, to cover the parts of New Zealand that our earlier trips had missed, but also, to time the visit so that it coincided with the Wanaka event.

So it was in March of this year that we began our visit in the north of North Island, travelled down the east coast before arriving at the capital Wellington. These few words cannot do justice to a journey that was only to be rivalled by what we were to experience in South Island. Space does not permit a full travelogue!

From Wellington it was over to Cook Strait to South Island where we had the good fortune to meet up with the New Zealand IFFR Section for a weekend meeting. After sampling the delights of the wine area of Marlborough and the dramatic scenery of the New Zealand

Alps with their glaciers we eventually arrived at Wanaka with its lakeside setting.

It is hard to capture, in words, the special appeal of Warbirds Over Wanaka. The location is brilliant – in effect a bowl created by the hills and the mountains. The ‘cast list’ – in spite of the relative remoteness of New Zealand – was truly international. The most stunning piece of airmanship came from a former

world aerobatic champion from Lithuania – Jurgis Kairys. His display was outstanding, incredibly skilful and perhaps just a bit near the edge for comfort. Talking to some aerobatic pilots who

share a hangar with me back in the UK they were unanimous in their view that Jurgis flies absolutely to the limit and perhaps, on occasions, just beyond.

Also taking the breath away was a wing walking act from Germany where the wings were walked! Not for Peggy Krainz the relative safety of a central static position as she climbed out from the cockpit and dangled her legs over the leading edge.



Jurgis Kairys

The spoof of the day involved a New Zealand Air Force helicopter. A series of announcements were made asking that a car be removed as it was blocking an emergency exit. After these proved fruitless it was announced that the car would be removed by helicopter to a place of safety. As the car passed over the display area the rope apparently snapped with the vehicle accelerated to the ground to the shock of the crowd – then reality dawned – we had been had!!

In 2001 the New Zealand government completely removed the Air Force's fighter capability by cancelling the purchase of 28 F16 fighters and disbanding its three fighter squadrons.

Heavy transports and helicopters now dominate. The big noise for the display therefore came from the Australian Air Force's F18 Hornets. After their ear splitting arrival from the rear of the crowd they put on a faultless display of fast jet aerobatics.

World War II aircraft were well represented. An aircraft of special interest was the Catalina in which a number of New Zealand IFFR members have an interest. I had the privilege of flying in this genteel



The Catalina

workhorse a few years ago and it was heart warming to see the genuine affection in which this old lady is held by the locals. Other aircraft of that vintage included a Japanese Zero Fighter, a P-40 Kitty Hawke, a Corsair, a Yak 3-M and a Mustang. Without a doubt, however, pride of place went to the Spitfire – the emotion generated by its solo passes to the accompaniment of Vera Lynn singing 'We'll meet again' was tangible among the 40,000 crowd.

I could also mention the Tiger Moths, the Vampires, the Harvards, the Dakotas and the Yaks that added depth to the display but it was the setting

that made it. Not just the high ground but also the shallow valley of River Clutha.

This gave a natural bolt hole for the more adventurous pilots to disappear into and draw gasps from the crowd as they feared the worst!

Yes, a truly memorable two days in this part of South Island, New Zealand.

Angus Clark

Bembridge — Continued

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Lots of serious talking in the corner by various with Chris Seifert our new IFFR member and about to join Rotary!

Sunday

Breakfast was the again a military exercise of perfection. Eggs of many styles and all perfectly cooked. The Benelux party of 19, now well established on the lower eastern upper deck took full advantage of not having croissants and cheese. French stuff! Again members were seen loitering around the Line Dancing ..

Rumoured ...Bill and Eileen Montgomery and David and Thelma Marks.

Back on the chara again we crossed the Island again at great speed to the Batteries where we saw some more views of the coast and The Needles. Lunch was at the sister Warner resort just outside Yarmouth. In the afternoon many of us went back to enjoy the interior of Osborne House. I particularly liked the Swiss Chalet in the garden, where the Royal children learned to cook, and entertained their parents to tea. And the Bathing Ma-

chine, to preserve Royal Modesty when swimming.. I could hear Tom and Constance and Len and Joy discussing whether Mr Brown and Victoria had been a little naughty or not!

Monday

The weekend ended with the AGM of the UK Section. Huub van Heur and other section leaders advertised their 2011 Flyins congratulated those responsible for a weekend

that combined with so much fun and hospitality. My husband outlined his enthusiasm for IFFR in general and his



Last Night of the Proms

plans for the UK Section in particular. Monthly lunch with the Air Com, fun and flying. John Bowden reported the bank had £8000 on deposit. The incoming Air Commander declared bar open.

A big thanks go to the Feroz & Raye and Nergus Wadia, Ian Kerr and Simon Barlow.

See you in *Newcastle* next year.
22nd to 25th July 2011

Catherine Alexander

Child Discipline

Most people nowadays think it improper to discipline children, so I have tried other methods to control my grandchildren when they have had one of 'those moments'. Since I'm a pilot, one that I have found very effective is for me to just take the child for a flight in the plane during which I say nothing and give the child the opportunity to reflect on his or her behaviour

I don't know whether it's the steady vibration from the engines, or just the time away from any distractions

such as TV, video games, computer, iPod, etc. Either way, my grandchildren usually calm down and stop misbehaving after our flight together. I believe that eye to eye contact during these sessions is an important element in achieving the desired results.

There is a photograph on Page 12 of one of my sessions with my grandson, in case you would like to use the technique. It also works well in cars.

Anonymous!

Sywell — Continued

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and shipped to the USA for the filming, but it never did get its starring role as the movie was axed. It was flown briefly in the US before it crashed on the way to an air show. The wreckage ended up being stored in a barn and was all but forgotten about until it was discovered again and brought back to the UK. The machine has now been rebuilt to an exceptionally high standard by Matthew Boddington and Steve Slater. Matthew, the son of the original builder, was there to give us a full description of the work.

Also on hand was Paul Ford with the Fokker Triplane replica that he

had built with Matthew. This was so realistic that the writer was making some critical comment on the engine valves only for it to be pointed that these were purely decorative – the engine being rather more modern!

A short visit to the micro light hangar completed an excellent day. A personal regret was that the man who had put all the arrangements together – Colin Wilsher – was not able to attend. He was on a previously planned holiday in Spain. That the day went so well is a tribute to the work that Colin put in to make it a success.

Angus Clark

Shares in G-IFFR for sale

Want to take a family of 5, or a group of friends touring in Europe? 2 quarter shares are available in this much loved iconic Cherokee 6-300 aircraft based at Henlow, Beds.

Full external re-spray and avionics upgrade just completed. £15k per share, £175pcm, and fuel (55 – 60lph) at cost.



Photos at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/16245201@N05/sets/72157624864802611/>

Contact George Ritchie on 01462 486699, or at george.ritchie@btinternet.com for further information.

Child Discipline

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