

The Rotating Beacon

The Newsletter of the UK Section of IFFR



February 2012

A Letter from the Air-Com

30 December 2011

It was only yesterday that I had my last bout of 'Pilot Envy'... as the Lady Catherine and I were alighting a BA777 (second class) and the very young looking three striper was standing outside his office thanking his passengers for flying with him, in his new livery 'to fly to serve' - I was struck. Why had I not become a professional pilot, doing 1200 hours per year, flying all sorts of planes to every destination on the earth! Enjoying the thrill of being totally in charge and responsible.

This is not forgetting being upgraded every few years to a bigger and better aeroplane.

Just imagine being put through the paces into a 380 or the very brand new 787 Dreamliner... just the name creates goose bumps on my neck!

And I'm sure you haven't forgotten.... The company not only pays you to do this, they also put the fuel in the tank, pick up the account for maintenance and when away your overnight accommodation, meals and transport. Is it Utopia I ask?

Then talking to the Captain and humbly explaining that I have a

Piper and fly a bit! The aeroplane is a bit old (in fact very old), not too fast, climbs OK but you have to be very careful of ice, has an auto-pilot and a G530.

Before I had a chance to add that it costs a fortune, he nearly kissed me! "You lucky bugger." was his response. "You fly when you want, go where you want, pick your own passengers, eat and drink where you want (not forgetting bottle to throttle in 12 hours) and don't have to put up with complaints.....you also have a proper job!"

"You're an extremely privileged and lucky group of people.... Flying for pleasure" exclaimed the Captain, "being able to fly with friends."

Let's all make 2012 "the year of recruitment" and safeguard our wonderful organisation. A healthy and active younger Membership is paramount to our continues success.

The 2012 Goal.... Get a friend in the Club!

James Alexander

Front Cover: The Red Arrows in a missing man formation over Chatsworth – their first display after the Bournemouth accident. Photograph – Angus Clark

Leipzig - August 2011

Jim Hull reports - Firstly a little about myself. I have been flying a Cherokee 140 for over 10 years mainly in a syndicate. Over the years I have flown with my wife Janette to numerous places in the UK, France, Germany and Italy.

My main club is the IBM Flying Club. Many of our outings are recorded in "Newsletters" on www.flyibm.com. I am also a member of the AFA - Army Flying Association - where I met Graham Browning. Not that I was in the Army, I served with the RAF on national service way back in 1954-6. Currently I am grounded for two reasons. Our syndicate was disbanded in March 2011. This coincided with me getting a frozen shoulder, limiting my right arm movement. I am told it can take 2 years for it to clear.



Jim navigating, Graham flying

Graham asked me to accompany him to the German Austrian Section meeting in Leipzig as his planned partner was ill. I jumped at the chance to fly again. Right hand seat was fine; Leipzig was an interesting place to go; the program looked interesting; I am also learning the German language - another chance to practice. A great combination.

Graham had a GPS which he said he didn't use much so I borrowed

it, a GPS96C. Although an old model it turned out to be a very useful tool. Graham supplied the route he planned to fly and I programmed it in. The weather forecasts were bad so it was doubtful that we could fly as planned. We agreed to go a day early and stop overnight at Antwerp. Next morning the weather didn't look good

with the probability of CB and thunderstorms. Discussion with the Met people resulted in the decision to go to Leipzig as early as possible before the build up. That proved to be a good decision as we never encountered any.

We arrived in time for lunch. We renewed friendships and met new members. A bus took us to the Marriott Hotel. An hour to settle in then off on a walking tour with a

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Leipzig continued.....

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young guide. We heard about the people's uprising in the Opera Square and city centre. We then went for our evening meal at an outdoor restaurant, where Charles Strasser and Feroz Wadia joined us.

On Friday we had another walking tour around the city centre starting beside a mural depicting the time of the Berlin Wall. We visited into the St. Nikolai church which had been the centre of the peaceful revolution in 1989. It was then on to St Thomas Church which has had Boys' Choirs singing since 1200. Outside a statue of Bach reminded us of his links with Leipzig, the Church and the Choirs.

A visit to a cafe had Alisma Clark jump as she was asked to look into a large mirror; to say all hell let loose would be a good description as the devil appeared in the mirror, smoke, noise and swinging pictures added to the atmosphere.

A more sinister visit followed - the Stasi headquarters. Now a museum it records the awful system of repression and spying that East Germany suffered over the years. We saw tools of the trade, hidden cameras, record systems, uniforms and medals for the regime. I am really glad that has now ended for these people. We had lunch in top floor

of a skyscraper which houses the University in the Augustus Platz.

In the afternoon we went on a bus tour around Leipzig suburbs. Old surface coal mines were being transformed into lakes for recreation. We drove to a Battle of the Nations Memorial. This commemorates Napoleon's defeat at Leipzig by the coalition armies of Russia, Prussia, Austria and Sweden in 1813. We were given an hour and half to explore this and we needed all of that time. Most of us climbed to the very top. We then returned to St Thomas Church to attend a service with the organ playing and the Boys' Choir singing. That evening we had the Gala Dinner with speeches from Ulrich Starke German/Austrian IFFR Chairman and then Peter More, current IFFR World President .

Saturday proved to be the highlight of the week end. Another bus took us to Naumburg to see the Cathedral there. It was amazing that it had survived the war and Communist rule. Artefacts were laid out to present the Christian message. Some of these were models of what we were to see in the Cathedral. We were given headsets so our guide could address us with high quality information. Load bearing stones were carved with statue figures depicting human feelings. The Ca-

thedral layout depicted moving from one state to another life, purgatory, judgement, heaven or hell. Figure depicting all of these states were well carved and very expressive. To realise this has been in existence since the 12th Century and is in such good condition was an inspiring and thought provoking experience.

Next we went to Freyburg to visit wine cellars. We had a guided tour and several tastings. It was amazing



Winzervereinigung in Freyburg

to see so many barrels and stainless steel containers holding 20 or 40 thousand litres each. There we had a buffet lunch, with wine of course.

Back at the Hotel we had free time which we used to good effect. Graham and I planned the route back home. We revised the GPS route to include EBKT (Kortrijk) airfield that Angus Clark had recommended. Then we had a Flight Plan session with Feroz who showed us

a website where we could file flight plans directly from the computer. Much easier than the UK Avpex.

The evening meal was a walk away in a cellar in the Town Hall. Afterwards we had a session in the hotel lobby on their computers swapping aviation web sites - useful stuff!

Particular ones that I picked out were: www.airports.de;

www.aviatorjoe.net ;

www.euro.wx.propilots.net

(choosing either Bracknell 120 hrs or USAF 120 hrs in colour);

www.Accuweather.com;

www.metoffice.gov;

www.avbrief.com;

www.orbitfly.com and

www.eurofpl.eu . The latter was Feroz's site that we used to file our flight plans

The flight home was rougher than we expected. We bounced along in a 30 knot headwind. Ground speed was down to 66 knots at times.

We didn't make EBKT but diverted to EBZR (Zoersel) who could supply avgas for cash. We resumed our course, cancelling landing at EBKT and choosing to land at Calais for more fuel and to file another Flight Plan to Middle Wallop. This was an interesting trip for me, lots of new experiences, new friends and a very successful IFR event.

Jim Hull

EURO 2011

No – not a football tournament but an 11 day flying tour in France and Italy!

This year the French meeting in Lyon was followed a week later by the Italian Fly In to Turin. When Continental events have occurred on consecutive weekends Alisma and I have often done a bit of touring in the intervening week. We decided to link them – but where should we go? As we have toured extensively in Southern France we looked for something different. Corsica was chosen as it was well placed between the two venues.

With the French meeting starting at mid day on Friday we would not get there in time from Netherthorpe starting on the day. We decided to leave Thursday and overnight at Macon. The weather forecasts did not auger well for the South of England or Northern France where there was a warm front. As we flew south the undervalued Volmet service kept us in the picture on the UK weather. As we passed to the east of Stansted the cloud had risen to 2500. At Southend the sky began to clear. We crossed the channel at a comfortable FL55. We could see solid cloud below us ahead but this was forecast to clear further inland. So it proved as we progressed happily in VFR on top and descending in the clear in plenty time to remain outside the Paris TMA.

After a flight of less than 3 hours we were at Troyes – our favoured first stop when flying into France. For the first time we were met by two Customs officials – I had given the required notice of the flight the previous day. There was no difficulty but curiously they didn't want to see our passports – only my pilot's licence. We refuelled the aircraft and ourselves, checked the Met at the local station and in less than an hour we were on our way. Or so we thought. Doing our pre-flight checks we didn't have "mag drop" more "mag pop"! Fortunately the excellent Troyes Aviation is based on the field. They immediately put a mechanic on it. After half an hour we were on our way – the problem — a dead plug.

Macon airfield is well placed on the edge of the town needing only a short taxi ride to our city centre hotel. A pleasant walk in the late afternoon took us around the town and along the promenade that borders the River Saône. The following morning we visited both the current cathedral built in 1816 and the ruins of the original one which dates back to the sixth century. A 20 minute flight took us to Lyon Bron to meet up with French Section. Brian Madden and his passen-

ger Chris Lynch were already there as were World President Peter More and his wife, Shirley. At the end of a very pleasant lunch at the airfield restaurant Ian Kerr, Ron Wright and Kiwi Mal McLennan joined us having flown in from Panshanger.

In the afternoon we had a conducted tour of the Basilica which dominates a hill to the west of the city. From the square adjacent to the Basilica we could see the three distinct urban areas that make up



On the steps of the Basilica

the city – the old town, the area between the confluence of the Saône and the Rhone and modern city to the east of the Rhone. The Basilica, built in the late 19th century, is dedicated to the Virgin Mary who saved the city from the cholera epidemic which swept Europe in 1823. The internal decoration is awe inspiring being made with multi coloured mosaic tiles. Our excellent English speaking guide took us on a guided tour past a well preserved Roman Amphi-

theatre into the old town. We then crossed the Saône to the venue for our evening meal. There we were joined by Catherine and James Alexander.

On Saturday morning we set off by coach to the medieval town of Pérouges. This had been reduced to ruins over the years as its buildings were plundered for their stones. Restoration began in 1911 and is now complete. It is a living village with most of the houses occupied and has shops and restaurants. It

was back to the coach and on to an excellent lunch. The majority of us sampled the delicacy of frog's legs. These were rather smaller than those that I had previously eaten – obviously 2011 was not a good year for frogs!! After this we visited a vineyard with the required and very pleasant tasting. Unfortunately as our aircraft

was going to sit in the Corsican sun for five days it was not practical to buy a case although we were greatly tempted. The Gala dinner took place in the evening in "La Maison Borie" in the modern city.

The following morning we had a two hour boat trip on the Saône – illustrating again that a city or town looks so different from the water. Lunch was back at the airfield res-

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Euro 2011 continued.....

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taurant. As the wind was forecast to get up around 1400 we decided to leave at 1200. Unfortunately the wind had not read the forecast and arrived early. We had an unpleasant turbulent flight until we were in sight of the Mediterranean coast. We spent the night at an hotel at Cannes airport and set off first thing the next morning. The weather was clear and sunny for the hour's flight to Calvi in Corsica. We had got the airfield and VFR approach details as we do for all French airfields from the www.sia.aviation-civile.gouv.fr website. I thoroughly recommend this website. Its Notam facility is far superior to the UK AIS equivalent and covers all of Europe.

Calvi and Corsica proved an excellent choice. The five days would justify a few thousand words of their own but I'll leave it there.

On Friday we had clear weather for our flight north to Genoa and then on to Turin. We planned to fly over the sea at FL65. There was a Danger Area on the Italian side of the FIR boundary which went up to 6000ft so that should have kept us clear. It was not to be – immediately after crossing the boundary we contacted Milan Information to be told that we were too high for a

VFR flight – the maximum height was 3000ft over the sea and 1000ft over land. “At FL65 you would interfere with IFR traffic” Absolute nonsense – what IFR traffic would be operating at that height in that area? We did as we were instructed and descended.

On approaching the coast we could see that the mountains that guarded our route to Turin were covered in cloud. We were now in the Genoa CTR and talking to them. We orbited a few times – checked with Genoa the weather at Turin and also at an en-route airfield – both were CAVOK. Just as I was about to divert to Genoa and wait for things to clear given the VFR height restrictions the Genoa controller suggested that we go out to sea where it was clear. He would then allow us to climb as high as necessary to get above the coastal cloud. That is what we did – having got to other side in the clear the controller said goodbye to us with “Have a good weekend” - what an absolute gent showing both common sense and a concern for safety!

The approach into Aeritalia Torino was clearly specified but was tight both in terms of height and routing. Ian Kerr and his crew were already there when we landed we were joined by Feroz and Raye Wadia who had flown in commercially.

Friday's activities were split in two. In the afternoon we visited the Museo dell' Automobile – one of the largest motor museums in the world and truly innovative in terms of presentation. Among the inevitable Ferraris and Fiats there was a Mini, an E-type and even an Austin 7. After dinner we had a late night tour of Turin not only to see the sights that were not apparent during the day but also to visit it when it



Relaxing outside the Carignano Palace

was less crowded. Just by walking around an interesting city with a knowledgeable guide you learn so much more. This was again apparent on Saturday where we visited so many interesting sites – Palaces, Cathedrals, Parliament Buildings and the home of the Turin Shroud. At the gala Dinner in the evening we were joined by the President and members of the Rotary Club of Ciriè – Valle di Lanzo.

Saturday night was punctuated by series of violent thunderstorms. On

Sunday morning the weather was 'on the deck'. We decided along with Ian to forego the Sunday morning programme and wait for the weather to clear. An added problem was the presence of thunderstorms on the coast near Genoa. The incomparable Meteox website (www.meteox.com) was critical in updating us not only on their progress but also on their likely path. The cloud began to lift and Ian, with the benefit of his FAA IR, was able to leave.

Two hours later with the cloud having cleared and the thunderstorms at the coast having moved east we left. The weather through Italy was good. Along the Mediterranean coast the wind picked up and by the time we turned north towards the Rhone Valley things became decidedly unpleasant. As the valley narrowed, however, the wind dropped. Our journey, after that, was straightforward. We spent the night at Lyon.

In the morning the weather was a bit 'iffy' but as we flew north we got on top of the clouds. At Troyes where we refuelled the weather was clear. It was then back to Netherthorpe albeit with a headwind. All in all a great 11 days flying with 18 hours in the air.

Angus Clark

Eurasia Adventure 2011



Last July Chris O'Connell flew his Grumman Traveller to the Ukraine and Turkey. He was with the European Section of the American Yankee Association. 3000nm were flown in 30 flying hours using 1200ltr of Avgas. In recognition of this epic flight Chris received the IFFR Trophy at the Annual Christmas lunch held at the RAF club in December. In addition to Chris crews came from Germany, the Czech Republic and the Ukraine. It is not possible to cover the trip in detail but published here are excerpts from the messages that one of the team, Jörg Trauboth, sent as they flew.

Saturday July 2, Jasionka/Poland 3 Grummans arrived safely from Southend, Bonn, Kalovy Vary & Olomouc, as per schedule. The weather was better than forecast with good tailwinds. A great start with a super kick off evening in Jasionka. Tomorrow we are heading to Chernivitsi, our first stop in the Ukraine, where we will meet our guides down to Odessa/Crimea - Yuri and Andrew in their AA5, Our routing will be VFR on IFR routes because no VFR maps are available for this area.

Sunday, July 03, Chernivitsi/Ukraine We left Jasionka this morning at 0845 local. The uniforms in N267MT perhaps shortened the security process. 30 minutes later the Grumman 3 ship crossed the Ukraine border. The 2 hours flight was under the control of Lliv Radar who were really helpful. Chernivitsi is an airport in the middle of the Ukraine near Romania. The reception was impressive. A delegation of about 20 persons, from

customs, security and handling, gave us an extremely friendly welcome. Andrew and Yurii appeared. Yurii had organised the truck transport of a 210 ltr AVGAS barrel from Kiev to Sherinivitsi. (3.66 US\$/ltr). All aircraft got enough fuel for the next leg. Tomorrow we will fly along the Moldavia border to Odessa, with Yurii and Andrew as lead of our 4 Grumman ship.

Monday July 4th, Odessa/Ukraine Looking out of my hotel room, I see the beach. The beach of the Black Sea! We did it! Our 4 Grummans arrived in the early afternoon after a 2.5 hours flight to Odessa airfield, a grass strip near Odessa. The formation was led by Andrew Fertschuk in the AA5 of Yurii. Andrew spoke in Russian to the various military agencies and guided us professionally in English through the G airspace. It is the first time that foreigners have done this without an official navigator. Grummans have never before been on this route.

Wednesday, July 7 Crimea /Ukraine After another fuel fill up out of barrels, our 4 Grummans took off this morning and flew in formation along the coastline heading East and South East in the direction of the Crimea. Andrew guided us again in fluent Russian and English. The mission was to find a small grass airfield, with a 700 m strip, about 80 km North of Sebastopol. It was not too easy to find the strip which was a mixture of grass, sand, stones and other tyre unfriendly material. The local aero club was more than friendly. Our flight plan to Tulcea for refuelling and to Istanbul the same day has been accepted. Our flights will go along the Black Sea coastline via Romania and Bulgaria. Before we do this, however, we will leave Sebastopol tomorrow, by bus, to see an ancient Greek area (Chersonese). We will get back to our airplanes for a sunset flight across the Black Sea back to Odessa.

Friday, July 8 – Crimea & leaving to Istanbul The second day at the Crimea gave us the window to see Yalta where Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill made history. What a drive along the coastline through the mountains! The magnificent tour through the conference centre of February 1944 was worth the journey of 4 hours. On the way back, we stopped at a German Military Cemetery and got an impression about the war in this area with so many young men killed. We refuelled out of the barrels and had a last farewell with Yurii and Andrew who have done so much for us. We remained over night in the simple but cost free airfield rooms. We had an early take off to the Odessa International 10km away. This was the day of flightplan trouble. Sepp's flightplan was not accepted and Jorg's permit to leave the Ukraine was not issued by the authorities.

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Eurasia Adventure continued.....

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Hard work with a handling agent and Andrew, some 120 US\$ for each aircraft, including customs and handling, and after 3 hour's bureaucracy in Odessa, we left for Tulcea.

Enroute down the Black Sea, extremely nice flying weather with about 20°C OAT at 7000ft, great views on Constanta, Burgas and Varna. As we crossed the border to Turkey, a hell of air traffic communication started. Istanbul control spoke like a machine gun without any interruption. For 70 NM there was no way to find a gap to say who we were and what we wanted. We flew as a formation and finally got a response. Lovely flight above the Bosphorus between the Black Sea and Marmara Sea.

Sabiha Gokcen is a high traffic international airport. When we were on finals we had an extraordinary experience for some of us who fly from smaller airfields – the airliners had to wait. After 2hrs 40mins I was very happy to see "my" flight safely down. Thanks to the help of Mehmet, who will finish now his Grumman tour at his home base of Istanbul, we got fast handling. A bit later we met Maureen, Chris's wife, in the hotel, where we are now recovering from another great day.



Arrival in Istanbul

Monday, 11. July 2011 - Good

Bye Istanbul Southend-Bonn-Jasionka-Chernivitsi-Odessa-Crimea-Tulcea-Istanbul....a cultural injection in one week and in about 20 hours flying time. Presently the temperatures are above 30°C and the crews need a rest. We therefore cancelled the fly out to Canakkalle (Troia) and Hamman. The aircraft are refuelled, the flightplans are accepted and we are ready to leave this wonderful city.

Tuesday, July 12, Samos Perfect take off from Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen. 3 Grummans climbing to 6500 ft across the vast Marmara Sea. Good guidance from the radar controller. Chris was in front with the bit slower Traveller. 2 hours flight down the western coastline of Turkey. Handover from Izmir Radar to Athenia and Samos approach. Very bumpy when landing Runway 09 at Samos airport. Aircraft safely down in Samos where it is 35°C. Good to have reserved three of the few available parking places.

Thursday, July 14, 2011 Corfu When we arrived early morning at the airfield, Samos tower informed us, that Megara, our planned GA airfield near Athens, would not be open before 1200 local. The wind situation was also difficult with 20-30 kts forecast from the North. We considered going to Athens international, the only place in that area with AVGAS and took it as an alternate. 1045 local all 3 Grummans headed west at 3500 ft, via Mykonos and the VFR routings South of Athens. On the way to Megara we recalculated the remaining fuel and agreed that both the Tigers would continue to Corfu and Chris in his Traveller would take fuel in Megara.

There are many negative reports about GA flying in Greece. The bureaucratic effort is enormous. On the ground things are complicated and far away from the standards that we know. Greece has no published AIP, nor any VFR/GPS maps. All over, however, GA in Greece is much better than in Turkey where flying for foreigners is much more restricted.



**Chris receives the IFR trophy
from Air Com James**

Saturday, July 16 Dubrovnik-Losinji

-Back Home A great flying day on

Thursday. While the others routed along the coastline we and Chris climbed 8000 ft and crossed Albania before we started our descent into Dubrovnik. We saw the airfield, which was situated in a perfect hilly landscape, from far away. A wonderful first impression of Croatia. We hired a guide for a late afternoon tour of Dubrovnik. I had been in the town before it was destroyed in the 1991 war by bombs, artillery and fire. We saw a perfectly restored city and began to understand what the war did to this unique city and its people.

When we celebrated with a great fish dinner in the city, with much talking about our experiences during the tour, we did not know that this would be our last group evening. As Losinji, the end of the tour, was only a 2 hour flight away, we had decided on a late take off. When I switched on the master I had neither instruments nor comms. The battery was clearly flat. We decided to stay and work on the problem. We said 'good bye' to the other 2 crews. By the time we took off the next day the others had left Losinji for Stockerau near Vienna. We headed for Graz then onto Borkenberge and Bonn. Near Nurnberg, we heard Chris talking to Munich FIS. He had to remain over night in Belgium before landing in Southend the next day. The Czech crew arrived home safely in Olomouc on Saturday. Q

Helsinki August 2011

George Ritchie reports on the Scandinavian meeting

On Thursday 18 August I woke early, wondering “would I be going to Helsinki or not”. As I sat eating breakfast nervously daughter Katie walked in, grin on face, and announced “Well Dad, have you got your bag packed?” I knew then that she had passed her exams and would off in the autumn to Leeds University to read Economics – and that I was free to head off to Finland.

One champagne lunch later, I was on the Norwegian Airlines flight from Gatwick to Helsinki. Arriving at midnight meant that I missed seeing those who had flown themselves to Helsinki Malmi – the busy GA airport just a few miles South East of Helsinki Vantaa airport.

I caught up with the party over breakfast on Friday, in time to join the 09.00 bus back to Malmi for the day’s flying trip to Vampula, about 90nm North-West of Helsinki. At the UK meeting in Newcastle Svend Arendsen had kindly offered that I could fly with him in his Bonanza. So, with Karl-Göran Eriksson in the back, we departed, last of the group of 4 aircraft, one Danish, one Finnish, one

Norwegian and one Latvian, cleared to leave the zone to the South not above 700’. This route takes you to the coast and then offers a spectacular waterfront view of Helsinki city and its islands. 5 minutes of 700’ cloud just west of the city saw us following the motorway closely before we reached the zone boundary and could punch through on top at 1500’. Another 5 minutes and blue sky all the way



George, Karl-Göran and Svend in the Bonanza

with air so clear and smooth that it makes you wonder if the God of Aviation was a Finn.

Vampula airport is in itself an amazing story. Leevi Laitenen and his family bought the land in 1998, were granted a permit to build an airport in 1999 and in 2000 they laid a 900m asphalt runway and apron. The airport opened in 2001

on Leevi's 70th birthday. The airport now boasts a hangar with control tower above, a cottage with a large sauna and a lake and waterfall outside. Refreshed by our saunas, and fed on soup, reindeer casserole and coffee, we were ready for the return. Having levelled off at the heady height of 1300', Svend kindly let me fly back and make my first Bonanza landing. Not a bad effort if I say so myself.

But the fun was only half over. We bundled into cars to head up the hill to the Finnair Flight Training Academy to test our skills in their DC8



In control on the simulator

simulator. Used for line training until 2 year ago, it is now available for use by wannabe jet jocks like us. Our host, Jorma Pajunen, would set us up at the threshold of Vantaa's runway 22 ready for departure. Full power, and with the co-pilot calling out speeds, rotate at 140kts, clean up and climb to 3000' to see the lights of Helsinki city

below. Left turn onto downwind, descend to 2000', wait for radar to say when to make the rate 1 turn and establish on the localiser, and then descend to land back on runway 22 again. I cheated – finding it easier to look out the windows and use the PAPIs to establish myself on finals visually. And yes, you really did forget that you were not in the real McCoy until application of reverse thrust. Dinner on Friday night was in the hotel with the evening ending much later at the bar.

After a leisurely breakfast on Saturday we set off mid-morning for our

guided bus tour of the City Centre. We visited the Temppeliaukio Kirkko – an underground rock church with a glass ceiling at ground level. Our second stop was at the market place on the waterfront. Here Audun Johnsen's secret vice revealed itself – a limitless passion for fresh blueberries. We then boarded our privately chartered boat for a 3 hour lunch cruise around the

islands and waterways of the Helsinki archipelago. With the sun shining, and the bar well stocked, we enjoyed an afternoon of warm sunshine, cold beer and warm friendships.

It was back to the city on Saturday night for the Gala dinner at a tradi-

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Helsinki concluded.....

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tionally themed Lappish restaurant. Around 30 of us sat down to mushroom soup served in the traditional wooden Kuksa cups, reindeer steak kebabs and a dessert of bitter berries, served in a bowl made of frozen ice, onto which one applied liberal quantities of hot caramel sauce. If you got the mix right, it was the perfect temperature and neither too sweet nor too bitter. World President Peter More conveyed his and Shirley's appreciation of the weekend, conveyed the congratulations of IFFR to the Scandinavian section for their 25th Anniversary and in return was presented with personal Kuksa cups.

Greetings were offered from the visiting Sections and on behalf of IFFR UK, I conveyed, as requested, the apologies of Ian Kerr, explained the clash with the Swiss meeting

and assured our hosts that next year the British contingent would be back in Oslo in larger numbers (so, folks, don't let me down!) And then the highlight of the meeting.

Audun's personal computer beeped and after much fanfare conveyed the result of its deliberations. Gustav Rosenlew was this year's winner of the Nordic Aviation Trophy. Worthy recognition of the support given over 25 years by one of IFFR Scandinavia's founder members.

The Scandinavian section held their AGM on Sunday morning, although a number of folks (me included) missed it, needing or preferring to start their journeys after breakfast. To end, may I offer my thanks to IFFR Scandinavia, and especially Raimo Makkonen and his team for another great weekend. See you all next year!

George Ritchie

Coming Events

March 28	Air Commodore's Lunch	Sherburn
April 25	Air Commodore's Lunch	Sywell
May 17 - 20	German/Austrian Section Meeting	Linz
June 1 - 3	Benelux Section Meeting	Texel
June 15 - 17	UK Section Meeting	Oxford
June 30 - July 4	Malta Air Rally	
July 17	BBQ - Michael Pudney's	Southminster
August 17 - 19	Scandinavian Section Meeting	Oslo
August 23 - 26	European Meeting	Prague
September 14 - 16	French Section Meeting	Aubenas
December 10	Christmas Lunch	RAF Club

Congratulations Tom.....again!!

IFFR's wing walker and fundraiser extraordinaire 91 year old Tom Lackey has received national recognition.

Tom was named 'Fundraiser of the Year' at the Daily Mirror 'Pride of Britain 2011' awards ceremony in October in London. He received the award from model Elle Macpherson and members of the Red Arrows team. Red Arrows pilot Flight Lieutenant Zane Sennett, 36, said: "Tom is an absolute character, an extraordinary person,



Tom, Elle and the Red Arrows

and it was an honour to meet him and give him this award. A lot of younger men would struggle to do what he did, and he raised such an immense sum for charity."

Are you receiving IFFR e-mails?

The Chairman's "Air Com Newsletter" and other information has been sent to IFFR UK members at least monthly over the last year using the IFFR Member Manager system. So if you have given us an e-mail address and are not getting the messages, your spam settings are probably the culprit – particularly if you are using Aunty BT.

If you have this problem, make sure you have iffir@spokes.biz in your contacts/addresses file and if applicable in your "white listing". If you are using BT internet you may also like to try the following: Go to <https://login.yahoo.com/config/login>. Log in using your name@btinternet.com and pass-

word. Check "Spam" folder for any messages you might want. Click on "My Account" normally next to "Sign Out". Click on "Spam Guard" and enter password again. Click on "Spam" in table on left hand side. Click on "Edit" against Spam Guard in central section. Click on "Spam" in table on left. Un-check "Control SpamGuard" and click on "Reset Filter". Consider loading virus protection software such as Norton. Then finally, send an e-mail to iffir@spokes.biz and check you have received a reply from me.

Hope this works for you - **Rodney Spokes, Membership Secretary, IFFR UK**

Rescue the Candy Bomber!

The Berlin Airlift took place between the summers of 1948 and 1949. Operated by the RAF and the USAAF it sustained the citizens of Berlin with the basic necessities of life. This is the story of the last remaining Candy Bomber. Once it helped Berlin, now it needs help itself. At the moment this grounded Douglas DC-3 is whiling away its days in a hangar at Schönefeld Airport. This now lame duck brought

lar tours in the skies over Berlin. The rumbling noise from the two radial engines reminded many of the time of the Berlin Airlift. And then came an emergency landing. “Luckily nobody was injured”, says Frank Hellberg the boss of Air Service Berlin and now also chairman of the non-profit organisation set up to rescue the Candy Bomber, “We want to get the DC-3 up and running in time for the opening of the



flour, coal and bread to the people of Berlin - and chocolate for the children waiting at Tempelhof. As the sweet greetings floated down in their handkerchief parachutes, the Berlin children were quick to name the planes “Rosinenbombers”. To this day they are a symbol for the city’s will to survive.

Until last summer the plane, which was built in 1944, was doing regu-

lar tours in the skies over Berlin. He has already found an engine which can be used to replace the one that was damaged in Coventry. “This way we can make one plane out of two”, he explains. This is important because the Berlin DC-3 is the only one of its kind with a licence for commercial passenger flights in Europe. “That’s why tourists came from all over to Berlin; it’s the only place you can experi-

Continued opposite

The Malta Air Rally

Ten years ago Alisma and I did the Malta Air Rally. It was a great experience and we have often thought of repeating it. I know that Chris O'Connell who, with Maureen, accompanied us feels the same. The great attraction of the event is that all the competitive elements are completed when you shut your engine down on arrival in Luqa. The tests includes timed arrival, spot landing, concours d'elegance and flight planning. For those who want to take it seriously the challenge is there – for those who want to go for the ride the flying experience and social aspects are first class.

How you route to Malta is down to you – either down through Italy or across the Mediterranean from Corsica, Sardinia and possibly Sicily. Chris and I can tell a fair story

about landing in Palermo. Have a look at the website

www.maltarally.org/ to see if this for you. Even if you don't want to fly yourself the organisers are happy to take those who want to participate only in the social events – again see the website.

This year's event takes place 30th June – 4th July. If you are interested drop me an email at clark.calver@gmail.com so that I can keep you in the picture. Already Air Com James Alexander, Feroz Wadia and Chris O'Connell have said they plan to go along with us. Hopefully we may have some more. Think about it.

Angus Clark



Rescue the Candy Bomber (cont.)

ence flying with a DC-3.”

The total cost of the repairs is estimated to be about €650,000.

“We’re having talks with several large companies“, says Hellberg, “but as the saying goes, ‘every penny counts’, so anyone with a love for historical airplanes can contribute”. He has set up a donation account: Deutsche Bank, account no. 197 194 400, bank code 100 700 24, IBAN: DE29 1007 0024 0197 1944 00 BIC (Swift –

Code): DEUTDEDBBER. Former Chair of German/ Austrian Section Gerhard Wrede has asked that the appeal to get the Candy Bomber back in the air be passed on to the UK Section given the airlift's association with the UK .

“People of this world, look upon this city and see that you should not, cannot abandon this city and this people.” A quote from a speech made by the Mayor of Berlin in 1948. This could apply to the Candy Bomber too. It should not be abandoned.

IFFR UK Meeting 2012

Oxford – ‘City of Dreaming Spires’

**Friday 15th to
Sunday 17th June
2012**



The Airfield

Oxford Kidlington EGTK - 20mins by taxi from Oxford,

The Hotel

The Royal Oxford Hotel - book direct on #44(0)1865 248432. Limit of 25 rooms which will be held until 16th April. Doubles/twins £282, singles £240 and triples £346. This includes full English Breakfast.

Outline Programme

Friday evening - dinner in Café Coco in the hotel.

Saturday - Morning - free time to discover Oxford. Afternoon - visit to Blenheim Palace home to the 11th Duke and Duchess of Marlborough and birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill. The palace is surrounded by 2,000 acres of ‘Capability Brown’ landscape parkland and beautiful formal gardens. Evening - dinner at Balliol College in the famous Fellows’ Dining Room.

Sunday - Morning - cruise on the River Thames. Lunch at the Thames Barge Pub, then home.

Registration

A detailed programme and registration forms are available at www.iffro.org.uk Registration is required by 16th April.

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