

The Rotating Beacon



UK section 50th Year Celebration in Norwich

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A letter from the Chairman

Dear Flying Rotarians & friends

It is some time since the last Rotating Beacon was published, largely due to my time constraints, as it has been a very busy period for Jashu & me. I've had many IFFR activities and other commitments with several organisations. For the last six months we have been living in temporary accommodation whilst purchasing and then modernising the property. We have downsized and moved in just two weeks ago, boxes everywhere!! My thanks go to IFFR member Duncan Moffatt for taking on responsibility for future Rotating Beacons, this being his first edition.

We have had a number of mid-week UK Fly-in events as set out by James Alexander at the beginning of the year and then each one being hosted by an IFFR member. Some visits were affected by the weather, but in May we went to Sleaford, July to Fife, September to Cark, October to Fenland. I was able to attend them all and had an enjoyable and interesting visit (see reports) Thanks to the organisers. For next year we are thinking of having some events at weekends as not everyone can get away during the week.

Continental visits have been numerous and once again our UK section has been well represented at all of them (see reports). I attended meetings at –Essen in May, I was weathered out for Groningen at the end of May. Jashu & I had a wonderful time at Linköping Sweden in August and then a week later Rodney Spokes our Membership Officer joined me to fly into Siegerland Airport for the German event.

Jashu and I thank all of you who attended the Norwich weekend in June and making it such an enjoyable and friendly event. We had good representation from abroad and what a lovely sight of all the planes parked at Seething Airfield (see report). It took a lot of hard work to organise this event and thanks to Angus for being in charge of registration and finance, this took a lot of pressure away from me. I look forward to next year when our weekend will be on the Isle of Wight at the end of June. I know the organisers, Brian, Mike and Feroz have worked hard to give us a very interesting programme, not sure if they have started taking singing lessons yet!!(Reference to Norwich). The Brochure is out so please go on line and register now, already many have signed up and once again I am pleased that our friends from the continent and also our World President will be attending.

Our next event is our very special Christmas lunch at the RAF Club London. Always a great day out, we have an excellent speaker in Peter Greenyer who has a collection of vintage aircraft. We have better capacity this year using a larger dining room, so if you haven't

yet registered please consider doing so. Angus is once again taking on registrations. My thanks to John and Diana for facilitating our use of the RAF Club.

IMPORTANT – My term in office finishes at our AGM on 30th June next year. PLEASE give thought to becoming my successor or encourage an IFFR member to do so. It is an enjoyable position, it is not too onerous and I have had a very supportive committee. We now use the Zoom Video Conferencing facility which makes things much easier.

ALSO – John Bowden who is shortly to retire has said that he wishes to step down as our UK Treasurer. He has done an excellent job over the years and on behalf of our UK section I thank him. We therefore need a replacement for John, so please consider this position and I know John will do everything to enable a seamless transfer for the new incumbent.

In October Jashu and I together with Mike and Margaret Cromati attended the Jersey Rotary District 1110 Conference. I had agreed to attend it following a discussion earlier in the year with Charles Strasser about the importance of highlighting Fellowships within Rotary, particularly IFFR. We had a stand in the "Hall of Friendship" with many people coming to talk to us, some were flyers and some interested in aviation. We were the only Fellowship there, but it highlighted the opportunities for Rotarians to pursue within Rotary particular interests/hobbies they may have. Many thanks to Charles for hosting us and my thanks to Mike and Margaret for their help over the 3 days. We had some spare time and therefore explored the Island and visited some excellent restaurants, it was a good three days.

Well that's enough from me. If there are some articles not included in this edition they will be in the next one which should be in January/February. Also anything you think that could be of interest to put in the Rotating Beacon please send to Duncan. For those of you who we won't be seeing at the RAF Club, Jashu and I wish you a very happy Christmas and best wishes for 2019.

Sincerely and fly
safe

Peter

November





ESSEN

May 2018

Report by Mike Cromati

Having been fog bound on the Island we could not make the French meeting at Reims in April we were looking forward to making this our first IFFR trip this year.

The weather Gods were much kinder to us this time with only a little hazy fog to contend with. Margaret had decided that she was going to Spain for a few days with a friend of hers so that left just Bob, Marius and myself in the Aztec.

As soon as we were airborne we went to London for clearance to join the airway, we were not so lucky and all we got back was remain outside controlled airspace. Several calls later with 20 mins gone by, still with no clearance we had reached Lydd. We finally received clearance and were promptly handed over to Brussels.

This left us a little late in arriving at Essen so after putting the cover on and clearing customs the coach had departed for the hotel. So we asked the airfield staff if they could phone for a taxi.

On arriving at the Sheraton hotel there was just enough time for us to deposit our bags in our

rooms and grab a spot of lunch before boarding the coach to have a guided tour around Essen with a look at the modern company buildings that were at the forefront of the coal and steel revolution in the Ruhr valley in the late 1800 and 1900.

Dinner was taken at the hotel with a buffet style meal, Angus and George kept us entertained being the last table to leave.

On the Friday morning we had free time to go off and explore around the hotel so we decided to go to the Museum Folkwang. Today Museum Folkwang is one of the most prominent art museums in Germany with outstanding collections of painting and sculpture from the 19th century, Classical Modernism and the post-1945 period, as well as photography, to which Museum Folkwang has dedicated its own department since 1979.

Lunch was taken at one of the many café's close to the hotel before boarding the bus to the Zollverein Coal Mine industrial complex which is one of the largest former industrial site in the city of Essen, now protected as a Unesco world heritage site for future generations.

The mine started production in 1847 and closed in 1986 with a total of 12 shafts and an annual output of 3.6 million tons, the coking plant built in 1957 ceased production in 1993 and was ranked as one of the largest in the world.

This was a guided tour in English and was very informative and we were shown inside the buildings and explained how the coal was washed and separated along with the equipment used. The early conditions of miners was pretty grim and the life expectancy was around 40 years if they survived the pit gasses, roof collapses, and flooding.

Considering that 92% of Essen was destroyed by allied forces during the war this coal mine was spared. Probably because during the recession in 1922, 20% of the mine was purchased by the United States and only one bomb fell on it during the second world war.

Then it was time to return to the hotel for a quick shower and change before boarding the bus to go to the Jagdhaus Schellenburg restaurant with its spectacular views over the valley and winding river.

Saturday morning was a 9 am departure from the hotel for more sightseeing of the coal and steel industry.

We first went to view a disused mine that the buildings had been recycled as a restaurant and hotel, workshops etc. then it was off to see how the miners lived in the tied accommodation. The workers higher up the pecking order had the slightly larger houses at the front of the estates and even had toilets.

Most houses that had immigrant workers like Polish farmers for one had a plot of land with them to help the workers feel more at home where they could grow a few crops and keep a goat (poor man's cow.) With all the mine shafts and tunnels all over the area there has been a lot of subsidence and areas have sunk by up to 21meters along with many houses suffering structural damage. A huge amount of water, several billion ltrs. has to be pumped out of the whole area every year or it would flood by up to a couple of meters over a vast area. A legacy left by the previous mining generation. We then disembarked the bus to walk around a huge disused coking plant and steel making facility along with it's own Gasometer, which

has now been turned into a diving facility. Then it was on to take the bus up to the top of one of the slag heaps which had had a view point erected on the top. Being a clear day the views were spectacular. I never realised that the Ruhr valley was so vast .

Lunch was taken at a new shopping complex just along the road, after lunch we made our way to the huge Gasometer Oberhausen which is now a museum with a picture exhibition currently on two floors called the Call of the Mountains. Above this is a huge auditorium that has a mountain as seen from space projected down onto a mirrored floor.

We then took the lift up to the roof and there was a walk way all the way round with spectacular views over the Ruhr area.

At 5pm it was time to return to the hotel and change for the Gala Dinner at 7pm. Which was as equally as good as the first evening, whereupon there were many discussions as to the weather the following day and had the thunderstorms gone through the UK etc.

We decided to leave the hotel at 11am along with Diana & John and go to the airport having filed a flight plan for 12.30pm having paid the landing fees and a last look at the weather and a discussion with the tower. Once we took off we followed our track out to the airways joining point and were immediately cleared to join the airway. We then had a lovely run all the way back to Sandown. Peter, Angus, Feroz etc went out on the town by the looks of the picture I got sent and stayed another night and had a lovely run home the following day.

Our thanks go to Norbert and Ingo and the team for organising a superb event.



Of boats and buggies!

Benelux Meeting – 25 to 27 May 2018

Report by George Ritchie

With a planned flight time of just under 3 hours from Henlow to Groningen – and with losing the hour when flying into Europe, it was an easy choice for us to make to decide to leave from the UK on the Thursday afternoon, stay overnight en route, and make it a leisurely journey. And, as a VFR pilot, I'm jolly glad we did.

Flying with Ron Wright and Joyce Norfolk, and Ron's daughter Vanessa, we left the UK on a technically fine afternoon: no clouds, no rain, and no forward viz. The stagnant high pressure over Central Europe that seemed to blight us for much of May was doing its best to thwart us once again. But, nonetheless, we had a pleasant flight to Midden Zeeland, which now boasts a fantastic brand new 4-star hotel only 15 minutes' walk from the airfield which looks out over the Veerse Meer <https://www.hotelhetveersemeer.nl/en/>. I can't recommend it highly enough as a great place for an overnight stay, if one wants an easy weekend flying trip from the UK. At 6.00am in the morning, Vanessa had wonderful views of the

sun rising over the Meer. 30 minutes later, though, and we had visibility of 100m in fog!

In the end, we only had around an hour or so's wait for the sun to start to break through and we were on our way, rather more fortunate than Chairman Peter, Rodney Spokes and Martin Wellings, who all found themselves unable to get out of the UK VFR because of cloud on the deck and rain. We arrived at Groningen airport in time for lunch, joining IFFR friends from Holland, Belgium, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Scotland and the Isle of Wight.

Onto the bus, and the first stop was the Hooghoudt gin distillery, a family business that has been making the finest Genever gins since 1888. A first welcome drink (a gin with ginger ale) was followed by a guided tour of the distillery, from the old wooden barrels to the latest totally mechanised bottling plant. And then it was time for more tasting. Another Genever with bitter lemon, gins that tasted like whisky and brandy, and all manner of fruity and herbal flavours in between. Flying makes you





thirsty, so we sampled willingly and often, thus ensuring that by the time we were due to head for the hotel, the entire party was full of bonhomie.

Our base for the weekend was the Hotel de Ville: very pleasant indeed, ideally located in the heart of the old town, and with a generous cancellation policy of benefit to the VFR pilots. That evening it was only a short walk to the impressive Prinzenhof Hotel for an excellent fish dinner with fresh local asparagus so good that former WP James had to charm the waitresses to bring him all they had left in the kitchen.

At this point, I should interrupt the narrative to explain that knowing that we had quite a bit of walking to do over the weekend, I had arranged to hire a mobility scooter so that Ron could take part in all of the activities. We had flown G-IFFR 4 up, with weekend bags, full fuel, and mobility scooter and we were still 50lbs inside all up weight – its amazing what you can carry in a Cherokee 6. Anyway, following dinner, we adjourned in groups to sit outside at one of the bars surrounding the bustling market square for a final nightcap. I'm not quite sure who started the "Benidorm Bastards" game, but a number of us took it in turns to do time trials around the square on the scooter – Formula 0.5 style!

A fine Saturday morning saw us split into groups for a guided walking tour of the old town – a major trading centre in the Middle Ages. A key part of the city is the University of Groningen, one of the oldest in Europe, founded in 1614 and now educating over 30,00 students, each of which has at least one bicycle.

The tour was followed by a soup and salad lunch, complete with one of those Dutch/Belgium croquette things that one never quite knows what is in them, but delicious all the same. Then a short walk to the Groninger

Museum for another guided tour. The building itself is a contemporary work of art, standing in the canal that encircles the city centre. The art collection inside is one of the finest in the Netherlands. The afternoon ended with a one-hour boat tour of the canals surrounding Groningen.

The Saturday Night Gala dinner was in our hotel. Some previous Benelux Gala dinners have been a bit of a marathon ordeal, but the meal and the

timings this year were spot on (albeit still black tie). All too quickly the meal was over, to be followed by the usual speeches of thanks and invitations to forthcoming events elsewhere in Europe.

Sunday morning dawned fair in the Netherlands, but with yet another forecast of thunderstorms developing in the UK from mid-morning, we decided to head for Ostend and to check the weather there. En route, Dutch Mil Info kindly routed us around one line of TS that was directly on our track. When we checked in with the weatherman at Ostend, we could see that as yet none of the TS had materialised: "Run to your airplane and go

quick" was his advice – which we duly heeded, enabling us to arrive back into Henlow early afternoon.

And so ended another fine weekend of flying, IFFR fellowship and the pleasure of another new destination explored. Next year – it will be back in Belgium - Brasschaat, I believe.

George Ritchie
June 2018





IFFR Italy 2018

The 2018 Italian meeting in Lugo took place the weekend before the UK Norwich event. As one of the Norwich organisers it was essential that I got back a few days before its Thursday start. The problem was that the Lugo event did not finish until the Sunday evening and the journey could take 8 hours of flying alone. A Monday morning departure with good weather all the way would be all but essential.

I have never done more detailed planning for a trip than I did for this one. New charts, routes - easterly, westerly, high level, low level and alpine with customs here and customs there. So many options but it was all to no avail! Alisma and I planned to link up with George and Caroline Ritchie who were to be joined by Feroz Wadia. Looking at the weather we all agreed that, even if we got out of England, and that would be a challenge, France was a no, no, due to thunderstorms all weekend.

It was George who came up with Plan B. Many of the budget flight options had gone by then. Ingenuity came up with a Ryanair flight to Verona,

a rental car and a return Eurowings flight by way of Cologne. Our flight out was from Stansted at 7:00am. Anyone who has flown out of Stansted on a Friday at that time knows it is not a pretty sight. Hen and stag parties have begun fuelling up for their weekend.

With the changed arrangements a very moving opportunity arose. It was ten years to the day that George's father, John, fellow UK member Kevin Young and two Italian members were killed in a flying accident during an IFFR event. A memorial had been erected at Passo dello Borcola after the accident. This was only a 90 minute drive from Verona airport. We were all very moved, not only to find the memorial in good shape, but to see that the grass around it had been recently cut. An Italian flag, flying at half mast, at the nearby Chapel, added poignancy to our visit.

After leaving the pass by way of its nineteen hairpins we had a three hour drive to Lugo. Here we met up with the rest of the party. The U.K. Section was well represented with John and Diana Davy, Mike, Margaret and Marius Cromati,

together with Bob Field. They had all arrived earlier on scheduled flights so had enjoyed an afternoon of helicopter flying and Ferrari driving - yes - but only on simulators!

IFFR Italia Chairman Giuseppe Berardo had laid on a very full programme for the weekend. Perhaps it was too full as we rarely had time to draw breath. Had it been less demanding we would not have enjoyed so many unforgettable experiences. The weekend began with a very pleasant dinner with members of Lugo Rotary. They made us very welcome.

Saturday was a special day in Lugo. It was Italy's Republic Day, which celebrates the abolition of the Italian monarchy in 1946 but it was also the day when the town recognises its flying hero, Francesco Baracca. Baracca was a First World War flying ace having downed 34 Austro-Hungarian aircraft. The emblem on the side of his aircraft of a prancing horse became that of Ferrari.

The formalities of the parade lasted some time. Each contingent of servicemen, past and present, and civic dignitaries was greeted by a serenade from the military band. The climax was the arrival of Francesco Baracca's coffin in its stone enclosure on an army truck.

Following these formalities we had a guided walk. The Paviglione a 19th century covered market, a remnant of the silk trade, was particularly impressive. More understated was the Teatro Rossini which honoured the composer, another famous son of the town. In the afternoon we visited the Baracca museum. It was a small but very focused tribute to the aviator.

In the evening we had the Gala Dinner. This for me was the highlight of the weekend. Held in the open air at the Aero Club we enjoyed wine and an

excellent buffet. Singers entertained us but the pièce de résistance was the magician. First he performed table magic. When you thought you worked how "how he did it" he floored you completely. His more formal show after dinner was even more baffling.

After a late night it was an early morning. At 7:30 we set off for Bologna 40 miles away. Our first visit was to the former home of Guglielmo Marconi, famous for his pioneering wireless work. I had not appreciated how the British had played a key role in the development of his technology. Ship-owners, in particular, could see great value in having early information of cargoes coming across the Atlantic. As they say, the rest is history. The iPhone that we have in our pockets today all goes back to Marconi's inventiveness.

In the afternoon a very well informed guide walked us around Bologna. Particularly memorable was the Basilica of St Stephen with its complex of six churches. Among them was the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This was created in the 5th century when Bishop Petronius wanted to have a building reminiscent of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. It was a truly outstanding collection of religious buildings.

The final event of the day and the weekend was a dinner in the Officers Club in Bologna. This was attended by members of Giuseppe's own Rotary Club, the eClub of District 2072. The Club has an impressive history of service with projects linked to India, Sweden, Serbia and Montenegro as well as closer to home in Italy.

So ended a very special weekend. It had started on a sombre and respectful note but carried on to two days of interest, fun and fellowship. Giuseppe, many, many thanks.

Angus Clark



Norwich Cuts the Mustard

June 7th - 10th 2018



A light hearted account of our visit

Brexit on Hold as IFFR UK shows solidarity with Europe

We were blessed by perfect weather, which lasted all weekend. Pilots arrived from (in alphabetical order): Austria, Benelux, England, France (well a Swiss living mostly in France), Germany, Isle of Wight, Jersey, Norway, Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland – and the USA. A total of 14 aircraft were lined up on the tarmac at Seething airport, near Norwich.. We were all given a photo to prove it, kindly provided by Seething Aero Club. Members looked after us very well and gave us a great welcome.

The airport had been an American Airbase during the war, and there is a museum in the old Control Tower, lovingly cared for by guides who can remember as children the excitement of the war years. We could have spent much longer there.



Historic Norwich invaded by Danes

We stayed at the Maid's Head Hotel, almost adjacent to the cathedral. It is reputed to be one of the oldest in England. On a history walk through the city next day, Svend was proud to hear of its earlier conquest by the Danes, led by Swein Forkbeard in 1004. Much trade with Europe in the middle ages on the River Wensum led it to being the second largest city in England. A fascinating city with so much to see.

The vast Romanesque cathedral was originally a Benedictine monastery. It is difficult to

comprehend that all the stone used to build it 900 years ago was brought in from France. Several of us attended evensong there which was a moving experience

Their best known product is Colman's mustard, and we all given a souvenir tin to take home.



An Evening Jazz cruise on the Broads

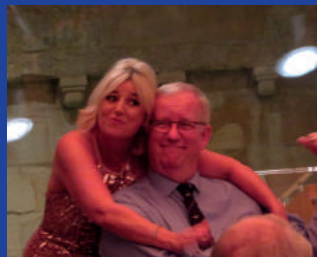
We embarked at nearby Wroxham on the Vintage Broadman, a paddle steamer, for a leisurely trip along the Norfolk Broads. It was a perfect evening and the water was like glass. We waved from the top deck to the locals in their picturesque thatched houses along the banks. A delicious buffet dinner was enjoyed listening to the jazz band, and catching up on news from friends. It was dusk when we arrived back to take the coach home.

Rotarian plays havoc with historic Library at Blickling Hall

The gardens at Blickling were in full bloom and we enjoyed a walk taking in panoramic views, and the bird life on the lake. A great visit.

World President Svend seen in clinch with Night Club singer

The Farewell Dinner at Norwich Cathedral began with champagne and canapes served in the cloisters, enjoying the evening sun. Then a delicious dinner in their beautiful function room, overlooking the cloisters of the cathedral. After dinner and the usual pleasantries, the evening really got going. Peter Jude's sister Annette accompanied singer and entertainer Susie on the piano – to a series of popular songs, during which she engaged with the audience, shall I say! World President Svend clearly enjoyed her caresses...



IFFR Chairman singing sensation in Britain's got talent

(but don't give up the day job)

Next our chairman Peter launched into a spirited rendition of "Delilah", with the audience getting stuck in as well at the end of each verse. He finished with an appropriately moving performance of "Every time we say goodbye" A fitting end to a wonderful weekend.

Catherine Alexander



Maureen's first impressions

Our First event with the Fellowship. 7-10th June 2018.

This was our first weekend with the Club. Duncan had attended a couple of Christmas Lunches at the RAF Club in London with our host and family friend Peter Jude, and we attended one of the evenings at a gathering in Cambridge four years ago. This was enough for us to know we would really enjoy everyone's company, especially with a whole weekend of quality time together.

How right we were, from picking up Hub from the hotel and then Bill and Eileen at the railway station on Thursday morning, to saying goodbye to everyone on the Sunday, we could not have wanted for a more awesome event, (apologies to those who think this word is overused – you are right – it is), but I know those that attended would allow me to describe it as such.

We were kept busy, but even though the hotel was next door to the Cathedral, and very near the shops of course, only a few of us managed to fit in the guided tour and the evensong in the Cathedral, I do believe most of us managed to shop though....

Friday morning Peter had arranged a city walking tour operation for the 60+ members, with one of the three guides being President of a local Rotary club, how fascinating was that? some of the history of Norwich brought to life as we walked along the river and cobbled streets, now busy with commercial outlets.

During that evening we took a boat on the broads, the calm weather helped us enjoy the magnificent scenery and wildlife, all helped along with a lovely supper AND a Jazz Band. I spoke to many people who were able to renew childhood memories of family holidays and learning to sail on these same waters. A few people had not experienced the Broad's before, particularly those from abroad. Duncan's description, brief as it was (I jest!) helped them appreciate how the many miles of waterways had developed as well as the exceptional thatched holiday homes that lined the river paths.

The bus tour to the Blickling Estate the next day was fascinating, the gardens and house were magnificent, steeped in History ranging from the Tudor times to the present day, a tour of the Gardens was absorbing, leaving us running out of time to catch the coach back to the Hotel

Then the "Tour de Force"

Saturday evening at the Cathedral, we started with canapes and superb aperitifs in the cloisters. Dinner followed in the most delightful room which featured a ceiling designed from peaked domes of glass, Peter showed off his background knowledge in music, while his sister, Annette, with her good friend, Susie, entertained us. I am sure World President Svend will not forget his moment of fame for quite some time! During breakfast on Sunday I did overhear someone say, 'well – I wouldn't want to be the one who organises the next event, how do you follow that!'

Speaking for myself and Duncan, (nothing new there then!) we felt exceptionally lucky to have shared the company of such an international and esteemed membership; two current flying members over 90 years of age. We also had a member recorded in the Guinness Book of Records as being the oldest flying helicopter pilot in the world!!.....apparently storing the machine in his garden!

Angus was acknowledged with a presentation for his exceptional work in helping Peter organise the event, which made him, and all of us proud of the way the weekend had given us so much good fellowship.

Thank you, Peter, Jashu, and all the organisers for such a polished and elegant event.

Maureen Moffatt

Fife Fly-In

(Fife/Glenrothes EGPJ 11th July, 2018)

Bill Montgomery and his wife Eileen hosted the Fife (Fife/Glenrothes EGPJ) fly-in on the 11th July at and was attended by 9 people. We received a warm welcome from our Scottish friends and enjoyed a meal at the Topsy Nipper restaurant at the airfield

Malcolm Barnard, Bill Montgomery, Eileen Montgomery, Angus Clark, Mike McGreavey, Sandy Fyfe, Steve Walker (apologies for the legs), Peter Jude (chairman) and Ian Wilkinson

As a newcomer to the IFFR and only having my PPL for 3 years I was passenger/co-pilot for Angus, and Malcolm and I enjoyed the fantastic scenery on our 1 hour 45 minute journey from Netherthorpe (EGNF).

The highlight was being directed to fly over the centre of Edinburgh, taking in Holyrood, Edinburgh Old Town & Castle and the Murrayfield Stadium. We then took take a parallel course, south of the 24/06 runway at Edinburgh airport, north beyond the 06 approach and directly over the bridges on the Firth of Forth.

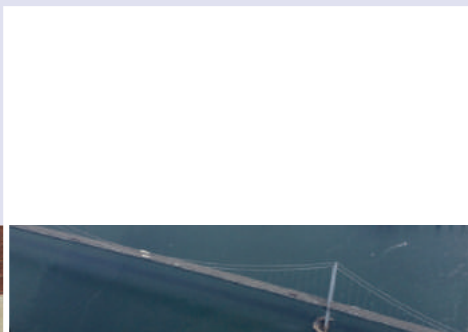
From here it was only a few miles north east to the airfield next to Glenrothes Golf Course, pity there was no room for any clubs in the aircraft.

With the small amount of cloud and excellent weather Peters' route from Humberside (EGNJ) must have been quite a sight as he went virtually all the way up the coastline with a direct approach to Fife across the Firth of Forth.

On the other hand Mike nearly didn't make it due to dubious looking weather in Perth.

Looking forward to the next meeting in?? Hope to see you there.

Steve Walker





Scandinavia 2018

This was to be the biggest trip so far undertaken by the aircraft since its overhaul completion in 2017. It was also the first time I had taken a full plane load on a long distance trip, joining me for this journey were my parents, Peter and Jashu Jude and Bob Field.

On the evening of Monday 6th August, Peter and Jashu arrived at our house in Shanklin having driven down from Skegness. Peter reprised his role as 'First Officer Jude' and he would be assisting me for the Oostende to Billund and Billund to Linköping legs of the flight. The baggage allowance was strict, not so much for weight reasons it was the centre of gravity position that was proving to be problematic. All calculations and important decisions are best made having enjoyed dinner so we went for a lovely meal at the White Horse in Whitwell which we very much enjoyed.

The old saying of "If the weight of the paperwork equals the weight of the aircraft you're good to go" couldn't be more true. Having amassed 5,200lbs/2,359 kgs of paperwork; FO Jude had the pleasure of reading through all of the NOTAMs and he gained in depth knowledge of every single wind turbine that had been erected from the UK all the way to Sweden! Between us we picked out the 4 relevant pages out of the 120 that effected our route, mainly military exercises scheduled by the Belgian Airforce, however that wasn't directly on our route but something we should be aware of.

Just 10 minutes behind our planned time, we took off on Tuesday 7th August at 7:40 am. The Aztec is sometimes called the Aztruck! It isn't known for it's speed but it can out-lift all others in it's class, so very

much like a truck, you can almost get away with throwing whatever you can physically fit in it and go! 6 onboard with the C of G just sitting ahead of the aft limit G-AZYU lifted effortlessly into the air, Bembridge's 800 metre long runway providing adequate length. The Aztec has the standard 'barn door' wing, no pretty tapers or exotic wing fences or winglets, it gets airborne using brute force and stays there using brute force, and on this beautiful morning the 2 x 9.2 litre Lycomings were singing nicely and with some co-operation from London Control we were relatively quickly established in the short cruise at 10,000ft.





Our first stop was Oostende – This was supposed to be a fuel stop and our entry point into Schengen. We ended up staying a bit longer! After a normal landing we suffered a fairly catastrophic puncture during the last phase of the roll out, fortunately we were doing less than 40 knots when it happened.

I managed to carefully manoeuvre the aircraft clear of the runway onto the taxiway, the Oostende fire brigade leapt into action and within minutes were on the scene. Unfortunately the equipment they had was not sufficient to lift the Aztec, the plan was to lift the flat tire and put a support under it so the aircraft could be towed to the gate, such provisions were only in place for a Cessna 152 or a Boeing 737! The ground staff and Duty Manager were exceedingly helpful and they sourced us a hotel in Bruges as the nearest engineer we could get hold of couldn't reach us until that evening and that would only be to move the aircraft. A 'small fee' to the engineer was paid and he turned up with a jack to lift the aircraft, and then a very simple but effective trolley was placed under the remains of the tire, this wooden platform was supported by 4 supermarket trolley castoring wheels! After blocking taxiway E for over 6 hours, the procession assembled – Every vehicle with a flashing light and every shade of high visibility jacket was present as G-AZYU was hooked up to the van with a rope. The procession of vans, cars, fire engines, men and the aircraft then cautiously set off. I had been told it would be at walking pace and I was placed into the aircraft to steer it behind the van.... A tense sprint later, the aircraft was on stand 1 and was made secure before the tire and wheel were taken off. 50 knot winds were forecast that night, but the stand was sheltered to a degree and the engineer secured the aircraft on a stand to hold up the wheel-less side. Now we had to wait for the tire to come so it was off to the hotel for a very nice evening stop in a beautiful converted town house in central Bruges.

The next morning came - We were supposed to by this stage be waking up for our first full day in Vejle where

we had planned to spend some time with Svend and Carina before continuing onto Linköping on the 9th August. I was keen to get going but we were entirely in the hands of the engineer. At midday the engineer informed us that the new tire had arrived and he had fitted it to the wheel, this was a good sign but he then announced that he would fit it 'after lunch.'

At 5 pm work finally began on the aircraft, by this point we were all suitably fed up and had worked our way through the menu of the airport restaurant, our staging post for the last day. The engineer knew what he was doing and his work was very good, however the final bill for a simple tire change was astronomical but unavoidable we had no option unless we wanted to stay there and fly our own engineer out. Biting ones tongue is all one can do in these situations, we were being ripped off and we knew it, so did the engineer. We had cleared Schengen the previous day as it was the only thing we could do, we then uplifted the fuel and at 18:15 local time we finally took off and set course for Billund.

G-AZYU was as keen as we were to get there and flew at maximum speed towards Denmark. The winds and air traffic control were in our favour, we had a strong tailwind and a ground speed close to 250 mph. This is one of the most beautiful flights I've ever flown, 10,000ft with the sun setting behind you over the North Sea on a gin clear evening with just a few fluffy clouds here and there. The 380 mile flight took just 1 hour 42 minutes and the runway lights at Billund came into view as we made our final approach to Runway 27. We pulled onto stand at 20:10 after a long taxi down the rest of what we didn't use of Billund's massive 3,400 m runway! Svend was there to welcome us and after a quick dash back to Vejle to drop bags off at the hotel it was immediately onto the restaurant which Svend had very kindly managed to keep the kitchen open so as we could sit down to our evening meal joined by Carina. A very long day of waiting a short burst of busy flying and then dinner in the company of friends – The day improved exponentially!



All too soon it was time to leave Vejle, we arrived at Billund Airport and prepared the aircraft. Svend would be flying his Bonanza OY-BVN and also flying from Billund would be our friend John Bowden a fellow UK Section member in his RV G-CDMF. As I was supervising the loading of the aircraft and allocating various bags to various luggage holds I noticed that we were short on one bag. The only logical place for it to be is with Svend in OY-BVN. Fortunately we managed to get a message to the control tower who managed to stop Svend before he took off, Svend taxied over and the bag was identified as that as the one missing from our manifest – The bag's owner was greatly relieved! Rather than delay Svend by offloading it, he agreed to take it to Linköping, so after a quick recalculation on our own loadsheet, G-AZYU was loaded up and the luggage holds closed and we some 25 minutes after Svend and shortly after G-CDMF took off and set course towards Sweden!

10,000ft or "Flight level one hundred" is a significant figure, it's the maximum allowable altitude we can fly an unpressurised aircraft at without oxygen, it's also the altitude at which Air Traffic Control basically leave you alone! Below that altitude, you tend to get radar vectored a lot which adds time and burns more fuel, and if ATC are busy and there is lots of other traffic you can sometimes temporarily end up going way off your desired track! Our flight plan to Linköping had us take off from Billund, fly the standard instrument departure and then more or less head straight to Linköping. It was virtually a straight line except one slight turn over the JON VOR. Scandinavia laid out before us, it was another nice day with a fair amount of cloud but still sunny and good visibility vertically and horizontally. Tailwinds were once again prevalent in Scandinavia so it was a quick flight time of 1 hour 30 minutes. We could hear G-CDMF on the radio, he was routing VFR and at a lower altitude so we caught him up and he landed just after we did at Linköping. Sweden Control radar vectored us onto the ILS Runway 19 and then we were transferred to Saab Tower. Our 670 mile journey from Bembridge was safely completed!

Getting back home would prove as challenging as getting there. The UK and much of Europe had just had a relatively stable period of very dry hot weather. This all changed whilst we were in Sweden. Due to our heavy load we very much depend on getting up to the high level we need to to bring our fuel burn down, as the days passed in Sweden it was clear that the tailwinds that sped us here would hinder us on the return. The return to Billund was going to take 2 hours, not the brisk 90 minutes it had done on the outbound journey. The routing on the way home was proposed to be as it was on the outbound, this was for weight and balance purposes as we were very limited on how much fuel we could take with our centre of gravity limits. An additional stop off for fuel was needed in the Netherlands – specifically Groningen.

Another problem we faced was our lack of power at altitude. Unlike many aircraft in the IFFR fleet

G-AZYU is normally aspirated, we do not have turbocharged engines. With Oxygen a turbocharged Cirrus will happily climb up to 25,000ft often escaping weather that we can't. This is something we have to consider when there is known or forecast icing. The Aztec is certified to fly in known or forecast icing conditions, but from experience I know it doesn't particularly do well. De-ice boots require half an inch of ice build up before you can deploy the boots and anything more than that it won't be able to get rid of it. G-AZYU picked up ice once after spending less than a minute in a cloud with an outside air temperature of +4 degrees c. The indicated airspeed immediately fell by 20 knots and once clear of the cloud it took 45 minutes for the ice to melt off and the speed to return – it was too little for the boots to deal with, but significant enough to seriously degrade our performance.



I called a weather briefing when we arrived back from the Gala Dinner. Thunderstorms were forecast along our route, the general picture for Scandinavia too looked bleak, particularly Denmark where we intended to have our overnight stop. Roland very kindly provided me with a phone number and I spoke directly to the MET Office at Arlanda International Airport in Stockholm. Arlanda confirmed what we'd seen in our weather briefing. With the full load, we simply didn't have enough fuel to make it to Billund safely, the only way we could get back was to fly VFR at low level under the thunderstorms. This was only considered because the storms were isolated and we could avoid the worst bits. Linköping didn't have any refuelling available on Sunday, we had refuelled for a return trip to Billund upon arrival, but that was with the expectation we'd be routing back at 10,000ft not 1,500ft. We were in a tight situation, there was no way we could fly into thunderstorms and even avoiding them picking up any ice with a full load at 10,000ft we'd have no available power to safely maintain cruise at 10,000ft. The forecast for Denmark was the main problem, this was where we needed to refuel, it was unavoidable. I made the



decision based on my own judgement and also what Arlanda MET office had said to me, I decided that we would remain in Lingköping for one possibly 2 more nights and wait out the weather. I wasn't happy about it but I was responsible for 5 lives plus my own, making the wrong decision wasn't an option.

The following morning Jashu had a decision to make, she had work commitments back in the UK and with no guarantee of when I could get her back it was with regret that we started to look at alternatives. Ryanair from Arlanda to Stansted was the only guaranteed way to get Jashu home in time for work, so it was with sadness that we said goodbye to her and she went with Roland and his family where she would spend the night and then fly to Stansted the next morning.

Shortly after everyone left I began to look at the weather, there was a chance, all be it a small one that later that afternoon I might be able to get us out of Lingköping. I watched flight radar24, the other members in our party most of who were going in the opposite direction had made it and none had had to turn back. Keen to do something I started to look at the figures before taking it any further with the weather. With Jashu now going on Ryanair, that freed up one of the rear seats, this moved the centre of gravity forward, this now meant that G-AZYU could uplift enough fuel to bypass Denmark and fly straight to the Netherlands. The weather in Groningen was excellent, the problem was Sweden and the approaching storms and Denmark where they'd already started to take hold. Now that I knew the aircraft could do the trip the next problem was fuel, we didn't have enough to fly directly to Holland, Thanks once again go to Roland who was able to translate the voice message on various different airport offices, we managed to find an airport 40 minutes away due south. ESMX was the designator, a big airport with international destinations. My first

choice would have been Jongköping which was more enroute for where we wanted to go, but sadly they didn't open until much later, and our only possible weather window was from midday to around 4 pm.

The decision was made! I asked everyone to pack their things as quickly as possible, within 90 minutes of deciding to go, all the phone calls and flight plans were completed and G-AZYU was airborne setting course for ESMX. The wind was fierce, we had just our inner tanks filled so the ride was rough and it was at this point I was pleased with this routing, on our path to Jongköping there was now a particularly nasty cell building up and there was another cell to the east, it seemed for now that we were in the clear in terms of visibility and storms but the turbulence was enough to warrant me helping the autopilot hold the course! The landing at ESMX was challenging, a full crosswind and windshear reported between 20-50 feet above the runway. There was a sharp shower that went right over us just as we got out of the aircraft to re-fuel it, not a good omen! My plan was now to get as far as possible, anywhere west would be a bonus! When flying in weather like this where it's possible but comes with challenges it always has to be a constant process of assess what's going on and re-assess it, what was working 15 minutes ago may not work in the next 30 minutes etc..

By the time we'd paid up and had a toilet break it was time to go, the aim was to reach Groningen in Northern Holland. All the weather stations on the way showed acceptable weather limits for the purpose of VFR flying with the only bad area being over Denmark as we'd anticipated. At 15:30 G-AZYU took off, now with her outer tanks full of fuel the effect was profound, she rode the oncoming turbulence very well and it went from being thoroughly unpleasant on the previous sector to barely noticeable on this one. Also at this low altitude should we get caught in a cloud and find ourself icing up, we have the full power available from

the engines. G-AZYU will maintain the full 500 horse power it's rated to at 1,500 feet so we had an abundance of power in hand to deal with any unexpected weather. The downside of course being the fuel burn: 140 litres per hour at this altitude. I would take approximately 2 hours 50 minutes to get to Groningen into a 30 knot headwind all the way. We had 5 hours of fuel on board so this was in our favour.

The flight over Sweden was clear, then as we approached the coast we got the first band of rain, it was light rain but persistent, the OAT was +11c and we were for now clear of clouds. The visibility dropped in the rain showers, down now to about 6,000 metres. We were receiving a service from Copenhagen control, we were under radar all the way so that was also another plus. As we progressed I kept asking for the weather at airports ahead of us and also behind us, if the weather turned nasty at any time I was going to divert immediately to the closest instrument equipped airfield, this is what I'd briefed everyone onboard to expect if this needed to happen. Peter got to see all of those wind turbines he'd read about in the NOTAMs that was our primary concern, we had sight of the surface but we were below the MSA when you consider the turbines, 1,700 feet was the MSA we were 1,200 to 1,400 feet but in sight of the surface, again I had briefed that in the event that we lost visual contact with the ground, we immediately climb to MSA. At it's worst the visibility dropped to 3,000 metres in rain. I slowed G-AZYU to 140 knots and we proceeded cautiously, we were however in a good airport rich environment, there were several appropriately equipped airports all within 15 minutes or so of our position and we were able to maintain this airport rich route all the way through Denmark right through to Holland. As we left Scandinavian airspace the weather began to slowly improve, and it continued to do so all the way to Groningen where 15 minutes before landing we broke through the murk and into bright sunshine, by this time it was around 6pm. Just under 3 hours after leaving Sweden, G-AZYU made it's final approach on the ILS 23 at Groningen, we'd been here 3 months earlier so it was a familiar airport. With immense relief I got out of the aircraft, we'd made it out of Scandinavia. Storms were due to be over Scandinavia for the remainder of that week, Belgium was due for a severe storm the following day but it was due to clear through so at this point I still had no idea of when I'd get everyone home I just knew that we wouldn't be stuck for the rest of the week in Scandinavia.

Accommodation that night was basic, but the food was 5 star! As anticipated, Belgium was showing some pretty nasty weather, again these were isolated storms so if visible they could be avoided. I hadn't expected to make it this far so I wasn't going to push it, I'd simply apply the same principle that'd I'd already done.

We woke the next morning to an overcast but high cloud base, it was also drizzling, the weather was due to close in later that day so it was imperative that we left Groningen by 10 am. I knew this, the passengers

knew this, sadly our taxi driver did not and this put us 30 minutes behind! I'd once again decided to take far more fuel than was legally required, at low level and with the prospect of routing off course to avoid weather I didn't want any additional surprises!

The storms today had far more of a presence, you could see them and feel them, Amsterdam is a good indication, when you hear jet airliners asking for deviations off course to avoid weather you know it's about! Today's pinch point was ironically going to be Oostende! They had thunderstorms in their forecast with the same vague times stated that the met office provide which doesn't really help anyone! Resisting the temptation in the first radio call to Oostende approach "Hello it's us again, we're back!" I asked them for their latest weather including thunderstorm reports in the area, this was the make or break, if they were forecast to the west of Oostend we'd yet again be spending more time in the airport cafe! If they were to the East we'd be landing at Rotterdam. Oostende reported clear of all thunderstorm activity, I also asked them to get the weather for Lydd our first landfall on the British coast; the early murk had lifted our channel crossing was clear and midway across having been flanked by thunderclouds on either side and above, we popped out. Our low level flight was complete, we landed 30 minutes later at Bembridge. 700 miles at 1,000-1,500 feet an incredible way to see 4 countries.

Safety at all times won – This is not typical VFR flying, contingencies were always in place the aircraft has power at it's disposal and the means to de ice itself if it iced up. It also had 4 pilots onboard, one Instrument rated. 4 pairs of eyes looking outside.

Flying IFR is easy – you do what you're told when you're told to to it.

Flying VFR is challenging – it's looking outside, it's being aware of who's airspace you're in

Flying VFR in marginal conditions – is tiring, you're in a constant state of alert all your senses heightened.

Flying IMC – Is as hard as it gets. While I was looking in flying on instruments, Dad and FO Jude were looking outside.

Particular thanks go to Dad and Peter for all of their assistance on the trip, it's my job to make the decisions and do the flying, but their assistance to me is invaluable and I thank them both.

Marius



An unforgettable weekend at the aviation capital of Sweden Lingköping

Thursday 9th - Sunday 12th August

The weekend began with arrival at Lingköping Aeroclub on Thursday afternoon, we were warmly welcomed by Scandinavian club members who provided BBQ hamburgers with trimmings and of course a selection of cold beers to help us recover from the dehydration of flying. This was followed by a very interesting seminar presented by the senior air traffic controller, who explained their innovative remote control tower service. Briefly air traffic controllers are being replaced and the air communications service for several airports is being transmitted from different airport locations via video cameras and sophisticated software to a single air traffic controller who views several airports on a wide screen at a central location. Imagine if you will, Biggin Hill airport having no staff in the control tower and a live video feed monitors the whole airport, this is then transmitted to a single controller who is simultaneously receiving a live feed from Southampton airport but is located in a central control tower somewhere say in Sweden and communicates directly with the pilots requiring service for each of these locations. Science fiction it is not, it is happening now .

Later the city mayor hosted us at the city hall and gave a brief history of the city. This was followed by a guided tour of the city. Lingköping is one of the oldest cities in Sweden founded in the 12th century. Today the city has approximately 150000 inhabitants. The sky line is dominated by its cathedral which in parts dates back to the 12th century. Nowadays the city is known for its high tech industry and its university along with the SAAB aircraft manufacturing and test facilities. On the Friday arrangements had been made for one group to visit SAAB aircraft factory whilst the other half of the group enjoyed a visit to an art exhibition 'The Art of the Brick' at the SAAB Arena. On display where the truly amazing Lego creations of the Artist Nathan Sawaya; a new Yorker who quit his work as a lawyer in order to sit on the floor and play with Lego bricks. The following day we visited Vadstena village situated on the second largest lake in Sweden was not short of excitement. We were taken on a guided tour of the historic buildings dated from the 14th century including the first monastery dated 1350. Vadstena castle is



also one of Sweden's best preserved castles. However the highlight of the day had to be the sounds and sight of an array of classical jaguar cars which were attending a motoring event being held in the castle grounds over the weekend. The evening concluded with a boat trip along the canal. Disappointing were the frozen prawns which lead to somewhat boyish behaviour with beer flowing accompanied by singing and dancing and a rendition of 'Alice'. Everyone knows the chorus of is Alice but apparently not Angus who may still be looking up Alice on Google. Our last night was another memorable occasion with a guided tour of the Malman airbase museum followed by The Gala dinner held in the midst of these historical aeroplanes in the exhibition hall was a fitting tribute to Roland and his team for organising another great IFFR event. For us Brits from the UK section it was also a time to be proud again. Last year the recipient of the Nordic Trophy awarded by IFFR Scandinavian Section was our very own George Richie. This year deservedly it was award to Feroz Wadia. Congratulations.

Frank and Rabab



Hamburg Post Convention Fly Away

6th - 15th June, 2019



The post-convention Fly Away is in the planning.

Join us by flying directly to Braunschweig or fly with us from Hamburg after the convention. The fun starts on June 6th.

The initial plan will take us through some of Germany's most beautiful cities and interesting parts.

We start with a visit to VW Auto city in Wolfsburg. The airport to aim for is Braunschweig.

On the 7th -9th Visit to Erfurt and Weimar to see some of the historic sites as well as experiencing the ambiance of the old city centers.

Next stop is airport of Giebelstadt EDQG we will stay in Würzburg overnight 9th - 10th visiting the Castle Marienberg Residenz and the "Altstadt" (Old town) of Würzburg.

On the 10th we fly on to Speyer where we will visit the technical museum which covers all from underwater world to space. In Speyer we will also visit the Dom and the very charming "Altstadt". We stay in Speyer 2 nights.

On June 12th we fly to the final destination for the fly out. In Koblenz we will experience a



cruise on the River Rhein between the rolling hills filled with wines. We will stay 3 nights in Koblenz as it has lots to offer.

The farewell party will be in the evening of the 14th and on the 15th we will leave Koblenz.

There are train connections from Koblenz to Frankfurt airport where there are connections to the whole world.

A more detailed plan will be sent out later this year. Registration around January 1st. The fly out will be limited to 50 persons.



Jersey



Visit our website www.iffr.org.uk for application form



New England
Report to follow

UK Section visit to Fenland

10th October 2018



We had an excellent turn out for this re-arranged visit kindly organised by Angus. The weather was good which enabled flyers to arrive from all parts.

The airfield has an excellent club-house and restaurant, two grass runways long enough for most light aircraft.

As usual we were made most welcome by local members at the club. It was nice to see Rotarian & IFFR member Carole Broom attending for the first time with husband Graham. Also the return of John Dehnell now back flying who kindly routed via Skegness to pick up Chairman Peter.

Food was good, fellowship excellent and good flying. This was probably the last Fly-in event for 2018, looking forward to next year.



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We look forward to meeting you!

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