



International  
Fellowship of  
Flying Rotarians

December 2021

Issue 116

The newsletter of the UK Section of IFFR

# *The* Rotating Beacon



## Listed Hangar at RAF Scampton

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*You provide the transport, we provide the refreshments and the sights!*

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# A letter from the President



## President's musings

We re-started flying at the end of the summer with a highly successful fly-in/drive-in to RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire, home of the Red Arrows and historically bombers (617 squadron, the Dambusters) and V bombers during the cold war. One or two members managed to get to some overseas meetings which will be reported elsewhere in this issue.

As I write we're a couple of days away from our RAF Club Lunch. Unfortunately, seriously denuded with European members due to the new UK covid restrictions but we expect to welcome World President George Chaffey and wife Carol.

We have had a highly successful series of monthly Zoom meetings ably facilitated by George Ritchie. Our intention is to continue these into 2022 but combine with other European and world-wide meetings as well and hopefully have a full programme of fly ins in 2022.

On a personal level my mature PA28 was put in for a 50 hour service in September and compression problems found in 3 of the 4 cylinders and oil leak into the induction system in the 4th! Unfortunately they couldn't be repaired so I am waiting (3 months so far) for new cylinders from Lycoming to arrive. I'm not hopeful anytime soon and because I need an adapted aircraft, and there aren't many of those around to hire, it looks like I'll be grounded for sometime. The joys of owning a 44 year old aircraft! Hey ho.

Remember, the Fellowship is not just for pilots but for any Rotarian with even a slight interest in aviation. Invite your friends to participate in the best Rotary Fellowship!

Take Care and enjoy the Christmas celebrations and holiday and hope to see you in 2022.

Tony Flinn

President UK Section of IFFR.



# Fly-in to RAF Scampton,

20th June, 2021

Tony Flinn

8 IFFR aircraft flew into RAF Scampton and numbers were supplemented by 10 vehicles making a total of 46 IFFR members and a couple of Rotarian guests. Visiting this active military base was a rare treat and we were grateful for the assistance of the RAF personnel for coordinating arrivals and departures and shepherding us to and from the Heritage Centre and Junior rank's mess. Air Traffic Control Officer John Baxter deserves much thanks.

The visit began in the listed hangar housing a range of exhibits including Hawk, Gnat, DH2, Hawker Hunter, Phantom and SU22 aircraft as well as ordnance including the nuclear Blue Steel missile. We were initially left to our own devices to explore the comprehensive hangar. Most of the party were then shown upstairs to the museum by Heritage Centre volunteers.







RAF Scampton has had a rich and varied history: from being the base for 617 Squadron (also known as the Dambusters) to housing one of the United Kingdom's nuclear deterrents in the post-war era - the Blue Steel Missile. On the night of 16 to 17 May 1943, 617 Squadron dispatched 19 Lancasters from Scampton. Led by Wing Commander Guy Gibson, the main bulk of the squadron attacked the Sorpe, Eder and Möhne dams with an additional aircraft tasked to perform an attack on the Schwelm Dam. Both the Eder and Möhne dams were breached, however eight of the Lancasters dispatched failed to return and 53 aircrew were lost. Following the raid Wing Commander Gibson was awarded the Victoria Cross, becoming Scampton's third recipient of the award. On the day of the raid, Wing Commander Gibson's dog, Nigger, was run over by a car and killed on the A15 outside of the base and was buried later that night. His grave is situated outside Gibson's office at No. 3 Hangar.

While most people learned about the Base's history in the museum, two of us unable to climb the stairs were treated to in depth information about the Soviet built SU22, Phantom and Hawk aircraft.

The RAF staff then escorted the party to lunch in the Junior Officers' mess.



RAF Scampton is home to the RAF Aerobatic Team, The Red Arrows, unfortunately away in Poland at the time of the visit.

All in all, a very successful visit and an important airfield to count as visited for the pilots. RAF Scampton is set to close in 2022 with most personnel and the Red Arrows relocating to neighbouring Waddington. Another good reason to chalk off the Airfield as visited. Many of the attendees were not regular Fly in visitors so it was good to meet many there.



**More information on the heritage centre can be found at**  
**<http://www.sbap.be/museum/scampton/scampton.htm>**



# IFFR Germany Annual Meeting: Baden-Baden

August 2021

George Ritchie

After the Danish Government's red-listing of the UK stopped us from attending the IFFR Scandinavian section meeting in Billund, we had high hopes that the meeting in Baden-Baden would give us the first chance in 18 months to fly G-IFFR into Europe. Feroz and Raye Wadia were due to fly with Caroline and me in G-IFFR from Duxford and Angus and Alisma Clark would come in G-JBDH from Netherthorpe. Sadly, pre-departure Covid19 testing (not strictly required, but prudent) resulted in Angus (who had no symptoms) testing positive, and having to miss the trip.

Raye and Feroz drove up from the Isle of Wight to Hertfordshire on the Wednesday afternoon to be ready for a Thursday morning departure. On arrival, weather checks suggested dubious VFR conditions on the journey out on Thursday, and definitely non-VFR conditions (with thunderstorms) for the return on Sunday. The decision was quickly taken to switch to Plan B and use the £10 per head Ryanair tickets from Stansted bought earlier in the year as a back-up.

Ryanair to Koln-Bonn and then hire car to Baden-Baden saw us arrive in time to meet with WP George Chaffey and Carol who, having arrived a couple of days earlier, had had time

to find the best restaurant for a fun, and typically German dinner. Baden-Baden is now a UNESCO World Heritage site as one of the "Great Spa Towns of Europe". Originally becoming fashionable in the 19th Century, to this day it remains popular as the summer residence of the rich and beautiful (and Victoria Beckham), characterized by the elegance of the Belle Epoque.

Friday morning was the main arrivals day – with the numbers flying themselves reduced as a result of others driving or taking commercial flights on account of Sunday's forecast weather, and compulsory Covid19 testing at the hotel on arrival, so as to be ready for the coach trip the following day. Old friendships renewed over lunch at the hotel, we then had an excellent guided tour of the city in the afternoon learning about its history from Roman times when the heated waters were first discovered to today. Sadly, in the pandemic world, the spas remained closed. But nonetheless plenty to see from the Dahlia Gardens through the stunning riverside park to the very pretty and vibrant centre and the opera house – leaving us all agreed it is worthy of its UNESCO listing. Friday night we were back at the hotel for the Gala dinner.



Saturday was “Black Forest” day. A coach trip south through the rolling countryside in brilliant sunshine, our first stop was at Vogtsbauernhöfe. This is an open-air museum showing the architecture and traditional way of life of the Black Forest over 6 centuries. After a typical “Black Forest Vesper” lunch (not that typical – no Black Forest gâteau for dessert), we went on to the little village of Schonach – the cuckoo clock capital of the world where we were firmly told how cuckoo clocks originated in Germany not Switzerland. In addition to seeing the largest cuckoo clock in the world (the size of a large house) we visited the watch manufacturer Rombach & Haas. This family business has been in existence for almost 130 years and is now owned by the President of the Guild of Cuckoo Clockmakers. A wonderfully passionate character who reminded me of Pinocchio’s maker Geppetto, he showed us the traditional ways of making clocks, and then how he has specialized in completely reinterpreting the Black Forest cuckoo clock for modern modes of living. We then made our way back through the Black Forest National Park to the outskirts of Baden-Baden for a superb outdoor dinner, save for those who were fleeing home quick to avoid Sunday’s storms.



Sunday was as rubbish as forecast. We made our way back to Koln-Bonn airport through the thunderstorms. Only the Swiss PC12 made it out that day. The remaining pilots spent another day in Baden-Baden, before heading home on the Tuesday. So, not quite the trip we’d planned, but nonetheless great to be catching up with our European friends once again.



# IFFR Italy Section Meeting – Salerno:

September 2021

George Ritchie

Italian Section meetings are always slightly chaotic, but wonderfully entertaining gastronomic experiences – and this year was no exception. With the Covid19 situation, we had always planned to fly BA to Naples and take the train south. And a good thing it was too as Italian bureaucracy was conspiring to stop aviators getting there.

The local authority had planned to start runway resurfacing work at Salerno in October, but then brought it forward to September, closing the airport completely. IFFR member Lucien Caoduro from Slovakia set off in his Diamond Twinstar for the nearby combined civil/military airfield at Capua, only to be told he couldn't land due to not having the right permits. As he diverted to Naples, he was asked who his handling agent would be. When he said he hadn't got one – this was a diversion, he was refused permission to land there as well. Fortunately, Twinstars have great range - he finally ended up landing in Rome! Given the parking charges there, he flew north to his second home in Vienna and took a commercial flight back from there to Naples.

But such tribulations aside, a small but perfectly formed group, including WP George and Carol, finally assembled in gloriously warm Mediterranean sunshine in Salerno. The promised Friday afternoon guided tour of the city became a self-guided tour, as we wandered off the main streets into the meandering streets of the old quarter.

Friday night was one of those gloriously chaotic “family” evening meals in the best Pizzeria in town. Sat outside in the warm evening air, more Rotarians, including the local club President and DG joined us as the evening wore on.







On the Saturday morning we drove north of Naples to the Tecnam factory at Capua. Tecnam has its roots in the Partenavia business founded in 1948 by Gino and Giovanni Pascale. The Partenavia aircraft were all given a "P" designation followed by the year of design. Their most famous creation is of course the elegant Partenavia P68 light twin. In the mid-1980s, the Italian Government was keen to take a hand in Partenavia. The Pascale brothers decided to sell up and become a supplier to the new business (which folded in due course). And in 1986, the Pascales founded Tecnam. Today they manufacture a range of supercool aircraft, all with typical Italian style, from the P2008 2 seat trainer (think C152 with sex appeal) through the P2010 4 seat tourer to the P2012 mini-airliner. We had a tour of the museum (photos permitted) and the production line (no photos).

Capua is the Buffalo Mozzarella capital of the world and the simple lunch we had nearby with Mozzarella made on the premises and home-grown tomatoes was amazing (but curiously, we saw not one buffalo in the fields). Then on for a visit to the Royal Palace of Caserta - the largest royal residence in the world (and another UNESCO World Heritage site). Amazing - with 5 floors and over 1,200 rooms, including two dozen state apartments, it puts Blenheim Palace in the shade. Saturday night was Gala Dinner night, and once again the Italians did not fall short - a 6 course meal in a private venue looking out over the Bay of Salerno, ending with the induction by WP George of three new members of IFFR Italia.

Sunday morning saw us down at the harbour for a cruise along the Amalfi Coast to Positano. After wandering the streets (full of tourists, but apparently only a fraction of the pre-pandemic numbers), we hopped back on the boat to Amalfi for a late lunch in the main square. Compulsory Neapolitan ice-creams consumed, it was time to head back on the boat to Salerno. We ended up dining in a small family fish restaurant near our B&B, offered sparkling wine and oysters as an aperitif.

Seeing how close we were to Pompeii, we had arranged to stay an extra day and visit the ruins on the Monday with George and Carol. We had a first class 3 hour small group tour with a local guide from <https://www.walksofitaly.com/>. Worth every penny. Then back to Salerno for a final dinner as the sun set over the harbour, before an easy return home on the Tuesday. Thanks to Enrico Maranzana and his team for another great meeting.



# IFFR Ukraine -

## Chartering of the Ukraine Squadron

George Ritchie



airport so as to be on the first flight of the day came a bit hard. Arriving in L'viv mid-morning, I was met by Olha Paliychuk, the District 2232 (Belarus and Ukraine) Rotary Service Community Committee Chair who has been the driving force behind creation of fellowships in Ukraine and District Governor Volodymyr Bondarenko. I was taken to our hotel next to the opera house, where I was introduced to my host Borys Bodnar, who had been born of Ukrainian parents in Leicester and lived there until 4 years ago. We had a leisurely late lunch whilst waiting for Nik and Manuel to arrive – hosted by local Rotarian Dirk Lustig, originally from Geneva. Talk about being thoughtful about how they took care of us.

We then made our way to the Leopold Hotel, the meeting place of L'viv International Rotary Club (one of 8 in the city) for the Charter ceremony. Around a third of the 23 charter members were able to be present (numbers in the room being limited to 15 by local Covid restrictions). Unfortunately, DG Volodymyr could not join us -his car had been broken into outside our hotel and a large quantity of cash -and his DG's chain of office – had been stolen and he was still with the police. PDG Vira Syryamina deputised for him. Speeches over, IFFR pins pinned, and Charter duly bestowed, we were given a tour of the city by one of the local Rotarians – an official guide, before adjourning for an excellent, typical Ukrainian Charter Dinner.



IFFR is growing worldwide and the latest addition to the family is the Ukraine Squadron. Following an initial approach from Rotarians in Ukraine, World President George Chaffey and Nik Amman, European Region Vice-President of the Swiss section have been working now for well over a year to make this happen. The chartering took place in L'viv on Thursday 18th November, in a ceremony attended by WP George (by Zoom), Nik, myself in my WPE capacity, and Manuel Meier of the Swiss Section.

Following the path trod recently in Hong Kong, the Ukrainians are initially established as a "Squadron" under the patronage of the Swiss Section. This will give them time to fully establish themselves and show they are capable of managing their own affairs and organising their own events. Once fully established and proven to be self-sustaining, they can expect to become a section in their own right.

With return fares (Wizzair out and Ryanair back) costing only £40 in total, it seemed too good an opportunity to miss – but a 4am departure for Luton



Sadly, the weather wasn't up to flying on Friday morning, but pilots are always happy to kick tyres on planes. So, we drove out to the club airfield at Tsuniv, west of the city, to check out elderly Antonov AN2s (still used by the parachute club), Yaks (including the private mount of AOPA Ukraine Chairman Khazan Gennady who Angus, Feroz and James had met on a previous visit) and a variety of western aircraft. These included a Socata TB20 Trinidad, a C152 and a number of glass panel ultralights. A Beech Baron was undergoing a rub down for a bare metal respray in the paint shop. This looks a great airfield for an IFFR visit one day . . .



We returned to the city in time for another late lunch, a couple of beers in one of L'viv's micro-breweries and an Uber back to the airport in time for the evening flight back to Stansted. A great short trip, and a pleasure to see so many new IFFR members with such excitement at being chartered.

And finally – a special thanks to Caroline for driving me to Luton at 4am on Thursday morning and bringing me home from Stansted at 11pm on Friday night.







# Saint Etienne and Issoire

**Cyrus Wadia**

A foreign IFFR trip always involves some extra paperwork but in the current times it seems that is an understatement. The combination of Covid and Brexit has added quite a bit to the number of different printouts, online forms and bureaucracy. Still after a long break from touring we kept telling ourselves it would be worth it. And so it was.

Feroz and myself left a day earlier to avoid worsening weather and had a good flight to Châteauroux LFLX, staying well east of the approaching thunderstorms. I can recommend it as a location for clearing customs (4 Hour PPR), efficient and cheap (free for aircraft under 2 tonnes). The runway provided more than enough length at 3500m, and it soon became evident that it was being used as a storage location for unused aircraft in the current downturn, mostly it seemed from Asian airlines.

We continued on to Issoire LFHA to make the most of the better weather and met up with Angus and Alisma who had routed further east. The next day Diana Green and John Davy arrived as well as Michael and Beate our hosts from Andorra and all the others. We had a fascinating tour around the factory of Issoire Aviation who make the APM light aircraft and is the successor company of Wassmer. The light aircraft are a small part of their production, which is supported and made possible by their main earner; the fabrication of parts and panels for various civil and military aircraft including Airbus, Eurocopter and Dassault. Very impressive for a family owned company. Equally



impressive is what you can do with time and funds at hand and an interest in collecting aircraft..... we got to see several hangars that contained the owners twenty or so aircraft. His "toy box".

Then onward to Saint Etienne for the main event, and dinner with the Rotary Club Saint-Étienne 3 Vallées. It was encouraging to see a young and active club, both in the age of the club and its members. It was founded as part of an initiative of the district governor to set up satellite/new clubs that attract a new younger membership and allows them to develop their own culture.

Saint Etienne has a history of coal mining and later manufacturing (arms, bicycles and woven ribbons feature) and the Friday itinerary covered all of these. We travelled around the compact city by foot and in trams which were convenient and efficient, with the main stop just by the hotel and train station. The first visit



The gala dinner was back at the hotel and the highlight was a presentation by a **blind pilot**. Yes you read that correctly. The presentation covered the origins of this unique French association, and obvious questions around how it is possible. The equipment used was demonstrated and some of us had a go at using it (on the ground, I must add!). I have huge admiration for the skills needed. Imaging flying on instruments with sound as the only input, and you start to get the picture (pardon the pun). The association is known as Les Mirauds Volants and their website is worth a read (allowing for the obvious filter of Google Translate!)

was to a coal mine followed by an excellent lunch which set the standard for the rest of the trip. The afternoon consisted of a visit to the Museum of Art and Industry to see the other half of Saint Etienne history and an impressive collection of arms through the centuries, as well as bicycle and ribbon production. A somewhat eclectic mix, but something for everyone.

The Saturday was a full day out of town on a coach for a visit to a former Carthusian monastery that is now a functioning village. Then a great lunch on board a boat on the Loire gorges with beautiful scenery and wonderful weather. Our return trip took in a site designed by Le Corbusier with the expected unusual architecture which included a cone-shaped church.



Sunday as usual was departure day however some of us extended our tour of the Loire region to take in Le Puy-en-Velay LFHP and Tours LFOT. But that is another story.

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**The recently refurbished plaque I had placed at the National Arboretum in Staffordshire during my time as World President**

It is located on an area designated "Rotary Ridge" in the Arboretum where there other Rotary Memorials

**Angus Clark**



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