

Squadron Buzz



Fleet Air Arm Squadron
linking former, current and future naval aviators

Issue No 60
Dec - 2011



Helen & Doc Holliday hurry 'Fast Eddie' from Ouessant to Quimper



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Airfield Quiz

The clues were a “strip” with “naval connections and is **mentioned in this issue**”. Pages 12 & 13 of issue 59 were devoted to Tony Ashmead’s magnificent strip and Hangar at Batchley Farm so I expected to be inundated with correct answers. Sadly there were only three: Peter Lovegrove, Tony Ashmead, and the Hollidays in that order although Sir Raymond and Lady

Jeanette got it some time later after a tiny bit of prompting.

The Christmassy scene below hides an airfield where I spent some very happy hours fettling and flying. Owned by the RAF but used from time to time by the RN it has a reputation for friendliness which I can vouch for. Flying started here in 1911 by the Royal Engineers who set up a Balloon Squadron. By 1919 it was a Naval Fleet Training school and in February 1940 a Hudson launched from this airfield located the german prison ship Altmark enabling the release of over 200 POWs. Although still well alive today I am led to believe it is sadly in competition with another adjacent, (Ex RN), airfield one of which is scheduled for closure in 2012.



[Buzz 60 Mystery Airfield? Answers to Ed please.](#)
Email morsuepj@ntlworld.com or 07703162288 or 01243374681

From THE Editor

Apologies for the late-ness of this Diamond



Jubilee Christmas Issue of the Buzz but Moore Mansion festivities have been at an all time high this year such as to completely blow my programme out of the water! This may even be the last paper Buzz! All 'electronic' members will have gathered this possibility from the emailed survey reproduced on page 4 of this issue. As mentioned by 'the Boss' Michael Ryan, at the AGM, in order to match the provision of Squadron benefits and activities to members expectations and desires we need to conduct a survey to find out what you all want. For those without email please fill in the survey form on page 4 and send it to Michael Ryan ASAP but before the 15th Jan which is when the planning meeting is programmed.

In this Buzz Kevin Crumplin is 'first up' on page 5 with a fascinating report exposing his devotion to building and rebuilding boats and aircraft. It is amazing he has anytime to write considering the prodigious number of hours it must take to produce such 'works or art' as his three restored tiger moths. Keep up the good work Kevin, we look forward to seeing something of them at the next flyin. Page 9 has a report by Tim Nicholas on our visit to Shobdon. Hosted by Andrew Eames it was a very enjoyable event enhanced by an imaginative navigation and tactical reconnaissance exercise in which the editorial Arrow came third! The very successful Squadron Dinner at HMS Collingwood is written up on page 11. We were honoured by guests FAA boss Admiral Cunningham and Midshipman Tom Warner both of whom gave interesting speeches from 'either end of the spectrum'. The Squadron ATCO Peter Moorhead gives some timely advice on how not to infringe on page 13, more important than ever in the Olymic year I would say. Winner of the 2011 Buzz trophy, Brent Owen, on page 16, presents an amusing tale of his trials & tribulations whilst attempting to gain ownership of Russian aircraft 'going cheap' in the late 80s. Part 2 will follow in the next Buzz..

The wind today, (4/1/12), is gusting 50 knots at Deanland and has just blown over and wrecked my bird table in soggy Emsworth. Hopefully we are getting exposure to all of all this non flying weather now, such that it will be really good later on for our flying programme. I hope, whatever the weather, you all have a brilliant new year.

Happy Landings

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil". The signature is stylized with a large, looped 'P' and a long, sweeping tail.

FAA Squadron FlyPro Survey 2012

1. **HOW MANY EVENTS SHOULD WE HAVE IN 2012** (Normally we have 9) Enter your number in box
2. **WOULD YOU ATTEND EVENTS** By Air By Road **(A** for Air, **R** for Road, **B** Both
3. **THE BUZZ** – We produce 4 a year. Most people like the printed version but it is costly.
- a) How Many BUZZ issues should we have each year
- b) Would you accept some or all issues on the Web Site www.faa.squadron.org.uk **Y** for Yes **N** for No

Month	Date	BROAD EVENT DESCRIPTION	YOUR SUGGESTIONS & TOPIC IDEAS	YOUR LOCATION SUGGESTION	Will You Attend
March		End of Winter Lunch			
April		Training & Safety Session Has been a weekend in past			
May		Existing Event and/or Something for our Flying Companions			
June		Military Flavour e.g. Gathering of Helicopters at Westlands			
July		France short flight times and up to 3 nights away. 2.5 hrs flying			
August		Summer Party – Picnic & BBQ. Lee-on-Solent for a change			
September		Military Visit			
October		End of Season Lunch			
November	Sat 24 th	Annual Diner at Wardroom HMS Collingwood.. Fly in Lee			

Confessions of a Serial Builder

By Kevin Crumplin

The boss has “requested” that I write up a few notes about my activities since leaving the Navy . The first memory I have of flying is sitting on the top of our house roof as a youngster gazing up at the Harvards and later Vampires from Dunnottar airfield doing their thing above our house-I wanted to be there! When I arrived at Dartmouth



in 1960 from South Africa my two unfulfilled desires in life were sailing and flying. Ab initio on Tiger Moths at Roborough and soloing in a Jet Provost at Linton on Ouse convinced me that I had made the right choice. However, before completing my pilot training, “Expedition training” brought a very painful and abrupt end to my naval pilot ambitions when I had a canoeing accident which caused serious damage to my left knee and included the removal of the kneecap and other bits and pieces. Continued pilot training was now out of the question and the Navy offered me the option of either immediate retirement with a disability pension or becoming a Sea Vixen observer. I, being of unsound body (and obviously mind !), opted for the coal hole. Life as an observer was certainly different. Michael has his own tale of how he and I ferried a Vixen to Malta-but that is another story!. It was a great life and I will be forever grateful to the Navy for teaching me to fly, sail and dive- and paying me to do it! On leaving the Navy I picked up on my other passion, sailing. First with the restoration and racing of sailing dinghy’s, then onto more serious building, (I could not afford to buy). First the restoration of a 1931 sloop, then building a Ruffian 23 quarter tonner, (Solent and Cowes racing). Next a 31 ft. half tonner and finally a plans built Oyster 42 centre board cutter - 5,500

hours build time, (which still remains in the family). Extensive European / Caribbean cruising and a couple of Atlantic crossings eventually satisfied my sailing ambitions and, to be absolutely frank, I was starting to find being



constantly cold, wet and sleepless slightly less enticing! More importantly I had, by this time, undergone two further operations on my leg which had restored sufficient function to turn to G.A.flying. I would have liked to have bought a Tiger Moth but they all appeared well beyond my pocket so I opted for a kit built microlight Sherwood Ranger. It turned out to be a good choice, took about 500 hours to complete and provided endless pleasure at a very low cost. The biggest limitation was all up weight (390kg) which meant a max. fuel load of 21 litres. Soon after completing the Ranger a friend and I joined forces to build a RV6. I



can't recall exactly how long it took us to complete, probably around 1500 hours. It was a great success and we spent many happy hours rocketing around the country. Climbing out of the Sherwood into the RV required a step change in concentration and reaction time (Ranger cruise 55kts v RV120-40 kts!). A combination of a number of factors - narrow farm strip,

rough ground, high corn, cross wind and flying from the right hand seat, (i.e. another story of pilot error!), found me somersaulting the RV in a cornfield and in the process writing off all our hard work. Fortunately I was already well underway on my next project - a plans built Starduster TOO. Fully aerobatic, fuel injected 200 hp Lycoming, inverted oil and constant speed prop, a real beast. Building the Starduster required a CAA welding certificate so I bought the books, a welding set, lots of steel and got on with it. 2,500 hours and many mistakes later G-STOO took to the air at Henstridge with Ray Harper doing the initial test flying. The Starduster was great to fly and like all taildraggers with big wide engines up front and no visibility a "challenge" to land. The Starduster





and I had a rather unexpected meeting with John Beattie in his



Wasp near the numbers on 09 with both aircraft ending up as write offs. The Starduster is now well on the way to "recovery" and I hope to see it back at Yeovilton early next year. While completing

the Starduster another friend asked me to buy his Sherwood kit as he was going through an expensive divorce. I jumped at the chance as this was a kit which could be built under the later microlight rules which increased the max. all up weight by 60 kg. (thus solving the fuel capacity problem). I sold the first Sherwood machine and am currently flying this second machine which sports an uprated Jabiru engine and increased fuel capacity (39 litres). With the completion of both the Starduster



and the Sherwood I was beginning to look around for my next project. Tony Young at Henstridge offered me his Tiger Moth, (G-ANEW), which had been taken apart and very badly stored for around 40 years. Tony had sold one of the wings and the rest of the aircraft had been very seriously cannibalised. The remaining wings had most of their ribs smashed together with broken leading and trailing edges. It was not worth the price being asked so I found another part restored Tiger Moth, (G-AMIV), and started the process of restoration. I was very surprised when some months later Tony approached me and said he was going to concentrate on his vintage and classic cars, clear his hanger and scrap the Tiger. He said I was



welcome to it if I gave him what I thought it was worth and cleared it from his hanger as “soon as possible”. That is how I ended up with my second Tiger (G-ANEW). I decided that, if at all possible, I would restore this Tiger at the same time, in the full knowledge that the sourcing of missing parts would be a costly exercise.. The plan from the start was that all the Tigers would be restored to their war-time state. i.e. camouflage, Gosport Tubes, morse keys, original flight instruments, blind flying hoods, ‘Windy ASI’s, etc. The RAF and CAA gave permission for the aircraft to use their original military markings.



G-ADWJ, G-ANEW & G-AMI V

I was getting towards the end of the restoration when I was offered another project (G-ADWJ) which attracted me as it had gone into service in 1935 and was put into store shortly after the war i.e. was over 75 years old and had not flown for around 65 years.

By this time I had clearly become obsessed and apparently lost all touch with reality ! The Starduster accident and a family illness have delayed the originally projected completion dates but G-AMIV finally received it's public Cof A in June and flew off to it's new owners(Air Fighter Academy) in Germany .G-ANEW was certified in July and will be remaining at Henstridge for the foreseeable future. G-ADWJ has been rigged and should be ready for test flying before the year end and will also be kept at Henstridge



G-AMI V



G-ANEW



FAA Squadron Visit to Shobdon- 8 Oct 11

Words by Tim Nicholas, Pictures by Andrew Eames

Saturday the 8th October 2011 saw the Fleet Air Arm Squadron at Shob-



don in Herefordshire on the last of this year's flying events, (bar those hardy souls who may arrive at Lee by air for the Annual Dinner). Shobdon airfield began its military life in 1940 as Pembridge Landing Ground, where it was used to train Army Air Corps Cooperation units on Lysander and Fairey Battle aircraft. It then began its major role as a glider training base, and in May 1942 opened as RAF Shobdon with three grass runways. There were plans to surface all of them, but the marshy ground made this too difficult and in the end just 27/09 was built, albeit double the standard runway width to facilitate glider operations. Eventually over 1300 glider pilots were trained, mainly in preparation for Arnhem and Normandy. At the end of the war operations ceased, and in 1953 Shobdon was closed and the site handed to Herefordshire Council. In the 1960s the first light aircraft began to arrive and the airfield saw renewed activity with a flourishing flying club and parachuting centre. Parachuting has now ceased, but the club continues. Although the airfield was never used by the Fleet Air Arm, there is a connection with the Squadron, because the land on which the airfield was built forms part of the Shobdon Court estate, and is now leased by them to the Herefordshire Flying Club. The estate is owned by Richard Corbett, whose father was a keen aviator and FAA Sqn member. Our organisers at Shobdon was Andrew Eames, local man and ex Bootie, who despite his self deprecating jokes about Royal Marines, put together a top day out which involved several words of more than one syllable and a fiendishly complex TAC R navigation exercise prior to arrival. His close links with Here-



Patricia & Andrew Eames take charge

ford Cathedral clearly paid off, as we had the only decent flying day in what seemed like weeks of gales prior to the visit, and the promise of more to come afterwards. A total of 7 aircraft took part, all of which completed the TAC R. This comprised a



timed departure from an IP, identification of numerous things at specified grids and a spot landing at Shobdon. The joker in the pack was the question about the number of satellite dishes at the Madley communications station. It looked more like a field of aerials covering half of Herefordshire. The official answer was somewhere in the 70s and I don't think any of

us saw more than 50 or so. Over coffee on arrival the marks were added up and the top pilot Rob Keene in his Flexwing G-CGAL, declared overall



winner. Andrew provided some very generous prizes for both the winner and the runners up, and with Hereford Cathedral 'Goody Bags' available for all participants, nobody went home empty handed. Drinks in the clubhouse were followed by a hearty lunch in our marquee outside, and thanks to the excellent catering we were all a hint sleepy as we departed the airfield for the short drive to Shobdon Court where Richard and Penny Corbett gave us a very interesting tour of the estate church and parkland. The church is currently under restoration with help from a Heritage Lottery Grant. Penny explained that work was recently delayed here due to the arrival of a single bat, but despite the efforts of the 'Bat Lobby' to stop work and protect it, it insisted on moving back in with the builders. A very pleasant walk through the gardens and down through the grounds was followed by a quick cup of tea back at the airfield and a return you our various bases. All in all it was yet another enjoyable and successful day out for the Sqn, and our thanks must go to Andrew Eames for his excellent organisation and provision of ideal weather for a good day's flying.

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Squadron Dinner at HMS Collingwood – 26 November 2011

By Phil Moore

Forty Squadron members and their guests greatly enjoyed the fifteenth annual dinner at HMS Collingwood on Saturday 26th November. Michael Ryan's TB10 'swanned' into Lee pm Friday with new member Ralf Wood in the LH seat getting used to the slightly slower Tobago pace compared to the high speed hawks he normally flies at Yeovilton. Saturday dawned bright but breezy with a twenty knot headwind from the Hollidays home at



Nuthamstead not that it bothered Fast Eddie, (G-EDRV), cruising through the bumpy headwind at 140 knots they landing at Lee midday to be hangared by PNGC and conveyed to the Osborne view to join the fifteen strong squadron lunch party admiring the brave kitesurfers and sailboarders in the seething solent. Next serial was the AGM at 1730 conduct-

ed by Michael Ryan who gave a fairly upbeat state of the squadron report albeit reminding the assembly of his firm resolve to retire from the leadership post before the next dinner November 2012. Any budding Squadron COs out there? Don't be shy, see Michael Ryan. Next came John Marriot our treasurer who reported the squadron funds to be in the black but that a new bankers order form was needed to identify membership status, (hopefully to be issued with this Buzz). Next it was time to gain some 'flying speed' as we welcomed our Guests, Rear Admiral Tom Cunningham, his wife Sally and Midshipman Tom Warner in the splendidly appointed, (and reasonably priced), Collingwood wardroom bar. I really do love that build up, getting to chat with new people and catch up with Squadron friends some not seen for a while. Sitting down to eat we discovered that the



galley had again excelled with venison, duck and a chocolate soufflé to delight the palate. The wine, port, cheeses and biscuits complementing the event in their inimitable way. Michael Ryan presided introducing Admiral Cunningham who gave a most

The Admiral entertains



inspiring speech comparing the Tarranto spirit of achieving great things with very limited resources, to the present day Fleet Air Arm, which although having been dealt a very significant blow to resources this year, would no doubt rise above it all doing the very best that can be done with what we have remaining. The head of the Fleet Air Arm was followed

by Midshipman Tom Warner who is currently at the opposite end of the ladder holding at Fleetlands waiting to start his BFT in 18 months time. Tom expressed his gratitude to the Fleet Air Arm Officers association and the Squadron for providing the gliding course at Lee on Solent which inspired him to join the Navy. He was particularly grateful for the powered flying opportunity provided by the Squadron which he carried out with Dick Roberts in his Zennair Zodiac. The final speaker of the night was Desiree Holloway who gave a very interesting discourse as to how her job as a pharmacist enabled her to afford to learn to fly mastering even the mighty Auster a love for which she retains. The Buzz trophy, which Phil Moore had greatly improved by adding a beautiful Swordfish model was presented to Brent Owen for his Auster articles in Buzz 57 & 58, Roger Dunn being a worthy runner up for his articles in Buzzes 56 & 57. Sunday morning dawned bright and flyable which after a brilliant 'pussers' breakfast that is just what the Boss and the Hollidays did from Lee back to Yeovilton and Nuthamstead respectively.. Another Splendid squadron dinner, methinks we could be back at Collingwood in 2012 get it in your diary now. Many thanks are due again to HMS Collingwood Wardroom Mess President for providing such a splendid venue, to the MCA, and Britten Norman for letting us use the airfield at Lee, to PNGC



Brent gets the Trophy

for Fast Eddie's sojourn in Q Hangar and not least to the Boss and his team for organising it all.

Fast Eddie got ready



The Boss 'rolls' for VL



From The Tower

By Peter Moorehead

For the last two years I have been representing the British Gliding Association at meetings of the CAA's Airspace Incursion Working Group (AIWG). This article which was originally written for glider pilots has been adapted for a number of GA flying organisations



Ten ways to infringe Airspace.

1. Don't do any pre flight planning

It very easy to get airborne on a local flight with no pre-flight preparation and on finding conditions better than expected to "bimble" off further than planned.

2. Fail to plan adequately

Having made adequate plans, conditions are not what you expected and you set off on a different un-planned route.

3. Use out of date information

Out of date maps are a major contributor to airspace incursions. Changes to airspace do take place, it is your responsibility to have up to date information

4. Use unsuitable information

How correct is the data provide to your electronic device? Has the provider updated the product, have you installed it and are you aware of any changes?

5. Have a GPS that is not fit for purpose

Is you GPS really suitable for the task? Is it big enough to read the information and can it cope with varying light conditions? How long will the battery last? Does it have the detailed information you need

6. Using a GPS than is not set up correctly

How many of us have some gadget and not read the instructions. The time to find out how the thing work is on the ground, not in the air.

7. Fly to close to airspace to allow for errors

If you are flying within 5 miles of controlled airspace how long will it take you drift into CAS in a 20kt crosswind

8. Mis-read the chart.

In some areas the charts are quite complex. The area around East Midlands Airport is notorious for numerous level changes

9. Be distracted.

A considerable number of airspace incursions occur when the pilot has been distracted either by changes in the weather, passengers, or fiddling with the avionics

10. Take unqualified advice

"I was told" is a common excuse offered for many indiscretions.

There are many experienced pilots willing to offer advice which is not correct, partially correct or open to mis-interpretation.

You are the pilot in command, the captain of the aircraft. In law therefore it is you who will be held responsible.



Money Matters

By John Marriot — Treasurer

As you will recall, all members of the Squadron are asked for a voluntary contribution each year (Minimum £25) which is needed to cover the costs of such as the quarterly "Buzz", postage, admin., and donations to Bertie Vigrass's gliding scholarship etc. As far as your treasurer knows and believes, every member has submitted a banker's order for at least that amount, some for more; but there he has a problem, in that the Treasurer's Trust Account we use at the Nationwide operates through the medium of old fashioned pay-in books. The Nationwide system records amounts paid into the account and the dates thereof, but not the **names of the contributors**, so your treasurer cannot know who has contributed what., even more relevant in the cases of those who have been particularly generous., who deserve at least an acknowledgement. Back in the recent past when Peter Lovegrove received cheques for the contributions, and kept meticulous records of everything, there was no confusion. So, may I beg your indulgence and ask that members revise their standing orders to make the contributions to a different Nationwide account, details of which, along with a new bankers order, will be sent out with the next Buzz. This new account will be "on-line" and will record **contributor's** names. Of course, anyone who prefers to use cheques and snailmail instead, may do so.

Disorder in Court— Genuine quotes!

Q: What was the first thing your husband said to you when he woke up that morning?

A: He said, "Where am I, Cathy?"

Q: And why did that upset you?

A: My name is Susan.

Q: Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?

A: No, this is how I normally dress when I go to work.

Q: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

A: No.

Q: Did you check for blood pressure? A: No.

Q: Did you check for breathing? A: No.

Q: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

A: No.

Q: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

A: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.



The Yak Diary

By Brent Owen

I suppose it all started with the news in December 1989, that Lithuania was in the midst of a gentle revolution against the Russian occupation. Actually it was only gentle for those of us who were several thousand miles distant, for those on the spot it was at times somewhat fraught. I had been flying a friend's P51 Mustang and had been lusting after my own W.W.2. fighter for some time. It seemed to my fractured logic that it might be a good time to go to this first Soviet country to be free. I resolved to find a fighter reputed to be lying around in the old Soviet Bloc while things were still in turmoil over there. Towards the end of January I organized a few days off to go and explore the possibilities. In fact I had something of a casual introduction, in that my old friend Jonathan from Fleet Air Arm days had just bought a beautiful sailplane from over there. He claimed that there were old Russian aircraft tied down and perhaps available. He put me in touch with a flying club and arrangements were made. The difficulty in planning a trip to Lithuania at that time was that there were so few flights, only two per week via Lithuanian Airlines from Heathrow to Vilnius



the capital. The day of departure dawned and I thought that it might be a good idea to check on the status of the flight. A period of minor panic ensued when a major travel agency attempting to check for me

could find no trace of the airline. I had made a reservation from the U.S.A. but it appeared that no one in the U.K. had any information. The travel agency assured me that if the airline did not appear in their computer it could not exist. I did consider a series of 'Our computer is better than your computer' type of catcalls, but resisted and called Heathrow instead. Eventually after a number of transfers, and many minutes of 'Hold on while we check' (at British Telecom rates) the answer came back...."yes we have heard of them, and we think they are handled by British Airways". A call to British Airways was obviously required, and was perhaps not the most reassuring. We have no knowledge of them!. A cup of tea was the only solution at this stage, then with some misgivings, but no alternative I set off to Heathrow and found that yes indeed BA does handle TE, Lithuanian Airlines, but unfortunately, No indeed, we cannot issue your ticket even though we see that you have a reservation. Feeling rather like a character with whom Lewis Carroll might feel quite familiar, indeed comfortable, I found the situation just that bit more ludicrous than irritating, so my sense of the ridiculous won the day. I was very tempted to go and have another cup of tea, but was a little afraid of what people might think if

I found myself sharing a table with a damned white rabbit and a lot of other little creatures drinking out of tiny cups. Lord only knows what they would have made of Alice. I was also getting a little short of time, so instead went to American Airlines desk and threw myself at their mercy, and was able to buy a ticket with no problem. Ticket in hand I wandered triumphantly back to the BA desk. (I still maintain that the smirk was justified) only to be told that the flight was closed out. It was still 45 minutes before departure so I did feel a bit hurt. Throwing oneself on the ground, kicking screaming and foaming at the mouth seems to be the rational approach that many of our passengers use at times like this, and I admit to being tempted, but I tried the much less interesting and more mundane tears and groveling approach. Perhaps the airline identity card also helped. The TE Yak 42 is about the size of a DC 9 but with three engines. The



interior looked extremely tired and shopworn as we boarded through the aft airstairs. The flight attendants could not have been more charming, and we were soon on our way. I was chatting with a seatmate, a Canadian who it transpired was the President of North Group International, a security company advising the Lithuanian Government on security matters. When I mentioned the possibility of visiting Moscow he warned strongly against travelling by road or rail. He felt that the break down of law and order and wandering bands of armed nasties made surface travel unduly hazardous even when compared to air travel by Aeroflot! Looking at the general air of disrepair of this ex- Aeroflot aircraft I wondered if he could have a point. He also told me that the Russians were extremely sensitive concerning security matters and if I did go to be sure that all documents were in order. I sent my card up to the cockpit and was invited up front. The captain immediately jumped out of his seat and invited me to try my hand. Naturally the autopilot was clicked off and it was apparent that this

was a most uncomfortable thing to fly. It had rock hard ailerons and seemingly slightly divergent stability in pitch, though I felt slightly constrained to experiment too much given a load of passengers and in an ATC environment. The crew was delightful and allowed me to fly it to the top of descent before switching seats again. We discussed all matter of things including their salary which amounted to \$40/ month as I understood it. However their English was a little sketchy, and my Lithuanian and Russian needs a lot of vodka to become anything like fluent, so I may be a little off with the calculation. I stayed there for landing, standing casually against the bulkhead. The flight engineer didn't bother to strap in so I thought it must be alright. All the procedures and checklists seemed similar to ours, so it felt quite familiar and comfortable. When we arrived at the terminal at Vilnius, a very dark and dreary affair, the captain waited for me to clear all immigration and wouldn't allow me to leave until he had checked out who was meeting me. "So many bandits" he told me! He met Egis on my behalf and had a chat with him apparently finding that they had mutual friends. The captain pronounced himself satisfied and wished me luck with my search. All very alien and dramatic. Egis had brought a flask of mint tea, a thoughtful gesture typical of the entire visit. During the drive to Kaunas, about 120 Kilometres or so, he told me that he and his wife had been fish geneticists. She had a PHD and he was the director or expedition leader of a number of remote scientific bases. Kamchatka and Mogadu were two that were familiar to me. When we arrived I found that a small apartment had been arranged for my use. Toilet and washbasin, but no shower or bathtub, toilet paper or plug for the basin, or even hot water to put into the basin.....and it was January! Fortunately, though never a Boy Scout I had come prepared. The folks at the Kaunas Flying Club had gone to a lot of trouble. I was taken to a sitting room area where there were a number of people to meet me, and a spread of



cold cuts and drinks. A truly pleasant welcome, though I must admit to avoiding what appeared to be slices of raw bacon fat. In any event, a delightful evening and greatly appreciated. Morning dawned with crystal clear but bitterly cold skies. A super day for YAK flying before starting the quest for a Russian or even German fighter. Egis came to collect me for a busy morning. First for photographs for a Russian visa, (for some reason he really wanted to take me to Moscow) and my necessary Kaunas Flying Club identity card. Breakfast at a rather bleak restaurant, then off to the airfield some distance away, I think about 30 Kilometres from Kaunas. The Flying Club was based at a beautiful large grass airfield which I commented on. "We can thank the Germans for that, it was a Luftwaffe base during the war" came the answer. On one side the Flying Club and the LAK glider factory, on the other side the ominous presence of the Russian Air force in the form of a line of An2 and other aircraft. The Russians were still firmly in occupation. Our Yak 52 was out and ready, so in the cold raw snow I did a thorough inspection. Initially the aircraft was



disappointing to look at. The paint was not badly applied so much as very worn. The Lithuanians freely acknowledged the shortcomings with a shrug and just said "Russian paint ... it is rubbish, comes off in rain" There was this consistent derisive attitude of Russia and all things Russian, including the armed Russian troops looking very stern and alert, though of course they did love their aeroplanes. By this time as luck would have it, the weather had closed in and was down to a low feature-

less overcast with snow showers. I really wanted to fly that YAK regardless of weather. It has been said by those nearest and dearest that I am not all that bright at times. The YAK uses compressed air to start the engine, and in fact all other services. The engine sprang into life with a bang and after clearing its throat of clouds of smoke, was soon purring with a silky idle, and all of its 9 cylinder radial engine sounding very pleased with themselves. The fellow who jumped into the rear cockpit spoke very little English, and my vodka induced Lithuanian from the previous evening seemed to have faded somewhat. I had only met him briefly a few minutes previously and had no idea who he was. He told me to take off and promptly climbed into the overcast at 170 metres. We tried all sectors around the field, but that was the best we could find before losing touch with the world. I tried a few coordination manoeuvres and was very impressed with the handling. A voice from the back..... "You like roll?" I was not all that excited about rolling around the world with an unknown in the back in that weather which at that time had lowered to a little over 300 feet, but naturally would much rather die than admit it to this Lithuanian stranger. Life in this aircraft was feeling so good to me at that moment that I felt that no matter what trouble this fellow got us into at this altitude I could recover from it. So, "I am pilot" he said, and around we went crisp straight and level, absolutely beautiful. "You are pilot" came from the back. Quite pleased with myself I was too as we rolled round. The Voice....., once more from the back. "I am pilot" Eight point roll. Very hard sudden segments, head banging on the side of the canopy, the nose never moving from its point ahead. The voice.... "You are pilot" I tried, promptly lost my place. There may have been five points, could have been nine, and mused around. I think he must have been impressed one way or another because, The Voice "You try landing now?" Actually I am not sure that there was a question in his pronunciation or pleading. In any event I tried a few which seemed to work out. As mentioned before, all services are via compressed air. Every time the undercarriage or flaps are selected the released air exhausts under the cockpit floor. A bit like dragons' breath really. A satisfying gasp of approval after landing as the flaps are retracted, a snort of contempt after a sloppy take-off. With the brakes sneering from time to time as we go zigging and zagging from side to side back to the hangar. Actually, regardless of comments read concerning the difficulties of taxiing due to the differential braking system, I found it very similar to that of the Vampires and Hunters of 35 years ago, and those years disappeared within the first minute or so. I can honestly say that the taxiing business resulted in only very little zigs and zags, and those quite necessary in my opinion to see in front of the nose. Well that was the best I could come up with at the time. A small crowd waited for us and asked politely how I had enjoyed the aircraft.



“Wonderful” said I. “Shame about the weather, but we were able to manage a couple of rolls”. “Yes we were watching “ said they collectively. “I did the second one “ I said proudly, but with suitable and touching modesty. “Yes we could tell” was a bit of a conversation stopper in the circumstances I felt. However, essentially they are very kind people, and after some shuffling about and kicking the snow and slush while searching for some kind comment said. “The landings were excellent though.” Honour while bruised, was not totally shattered. It turned out that the fellow in the back seat, you remember the one that I had been expecting to save if he tried to fall out of the sky from 300 feet, had been a member of the Soviet aerobatic team! Thank you Lord for not allowing me to say anything too stupid about rolling around the sky in unpleasant weather. Later I brought him over to assemble the first aircraft and give advanced aerobatic and handling instruction. He was a really good man who unfortunately became another who went that little bit too far one day. We put the aircraft away, the weather by this time having developed into driving sleet and snow and very cold. I thought it probably about time for a little freshener. Sure enough off we drove into a wooded area off the perimeter of the airfield, where among the trees were grouped a number of simple chalets, one of which belonged to one of the pilots. “Was it difficult to get permission to build a cottage right here on the airfield?” I asked. “ Don’t know” said he, “ I never bothered to ask”. Rather different from the mindless obedience that we imagined of the archetypal Soviet citizen of legend! Come to think of it rather different from the archetypal ever obedient conformist American or British citizen of fact! It came to me then why I felt so

comfortable with these folks. They seemed to work on the principle that regulations were to be used as a casual guideline rather than firm delineations. Once more there was a spread of food and of course drink waiting for us, and the bargaining began because I really wanted one of these aircraft. It was all very relaxed and pleasant, and by the end of the afternoon I owned a YAK 52, the first of many.

To be continued.

The Afghani Footballer

The Liverpool manager flies to Kabul to watch a young Afghani play football. He is suitably impressed and arranges for the player to come over. Two weeks later Liverpool are 4-0 down to Chelsea with only 20 minutes left.

The manager gives the young Afghani striker the nod, and on he goes. The lad is a sensation. He scores 5 goals in 20 minutes and wins the game for Liverpool.

The fans are delighted, the players and the coach are delighted and the media love the new star.

When the player comes off the pitch he phones his mum to tell her about his first day in English football. 'Hello mum, guess what?' he says 'I played for 20 minutes today, we were 4-0 down but I scored 5 and we won. Everybody loves me, the fans, the media, they all love me.'

'Wonderful,' says his mum, 'Let me tell you about my day ... Your father got shot in the street, your sister and I were ambushed and assaulted, your brother has joined a gang of looters and all while you tell me that you were having a great time.'

The young lad is very upset. 'What can I say mum, but I'm really sorry.'

'Sorry?!!!
Sorry?!!!'
says his
mum,
'It's your
bloody fault
we came to
Liverpool in
the first
place!'



Idiots Guide to Inertial Navigation

By Andy Marson,
Vulcan XH558 Navigator

At the end of WW2 bombing accuracy was dependent on GEE and Oboe both of which relied on external electronic sources which could easily be jammed. Therefore, an independent navigation aid was required and with the coming of the V2 rockets the inertial navigation system (INS) was born. Self contained and with much improvement it has now become remarkably accurate it has become the mainstay, along with GPS, for all modern weapon systems. However how it works remains a mystery to most, preferring the fact that it relies on the PFM principle (pure flaming magic) to explain what one cannot understand. With this in mind a simpleton's guide for aircrew was developed which is reproduced below.

The Aircraft knows where it is at all times. It knows this because it knows where it isn't. By subtracting from where it isn't, or where it isn't from where it is - depending on which is the greater - it obtains a difference or "deviation ". The INS then uses these deviations to generate corrective demands to drive the aircraft from a position where it is to a position where it isn't. The aircraft then arrives at a position where it wasn't. Consequently, the position where it was is now the position where it isn't. In the event that the position where it is now is not the same as the position where it originally wasn't, the system acquires a "variation". This variation is the difference between where the aircraft is and where the aircraft wasn't. If the variation is considered to be a significant factor, it too, may be corrected by the INS. However, for this to occur, the aircraft must also know where it was. The "thought process" of the system is as follows: because a variation has modified some of the information the aircraft obtained, the aircraft is now not sure where it was. It now subtracts where it should be from where it wasn't and by differentiating this from the algebraic difference between its deviation and its variation it obtains a difference, called "error", which is usually attributed to the navigator. This error is quite rightly attributed to the navigator, after all the INS is in his cockpit and if he will insist on touching it he must therefore take the blame when it produces error. For the technically minded it actually works by having a gyro system which aligns itself to the rotation of the earth, true east, and accelerometers then measure movement. The integration of acceleration then gives velocity ----- simple.





The Squadron Buzz is the quarterly "Newsletter" of the Fleet Air Arm Squadron. The editor invites contributions including photographs from all members (e.g. Reports, Letters, News, Anecdotes, Flying Information etc.). Please submit for Buzz No 61 by the deadline date of Friday 24 February 2012 to :

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