



Fife Flying Club

Out of the blue

Issue 12 June 2007

Chairman's Welcome

Well despite our best efforts, once again the weather has taken its toll on recent efforts for fly outs. However your committee's spirits remain undampened and I for one am looking forward to the forthcoming Kirkwall trip.

Following our most recent committee meeting, the diary of events has been revised and, regrettably, we have decided to postpone some planned events. The most notable being the 7th July Fly In/Open day. This has been postponed to a date in September to give more time to agree the precise format and purpose.

Caledonian Seaplanes have also asked to postpone their talk as they are in the midst of bringing their new Maule into service.

As an alternative we are planning a 'planes 'n flames' night on Thursday 21st June. Fear not - we're not going to torch any ageing Cessna's – more details inside.

Onwards and Upwards! – Andy Reid

What's On Guide.

The What's On guide is now a separate flyer which you should receive with this Newsletter. Watch the Club notice board for information about upcoming events.

Future Fly-Outs

23 rd / 24 th June	Kirkwall (standby seats only now)
22 nd July	Prestwick
4 th August	Treasure Hunt & BBQ
1 st /2 nd September	Glenforsa

Polly Vacher visits Fife

Intrepid round-the-world aviatrix Polly Vacher flew into Fife Airport on Saturday 2nd June as part of her round-Britain trip designed to take in all 206 airfields in the Jeppesen airfield guide.

Low cloud and mist meant that her departure from Dundee (where she'd landed the day before from Aberdeen) was delayed by a couple of hours, but she finally touched down about 1215.

On board were Kitty Walker and Jan McDonald from the Forth and Tay Disabled Ramblers' Group. The disabled ramblers usually get around on electric scooters, but since Polly Vacher is supporting the "Flying Scholarships for the Disabled" charity, she has been carrying a disabled person on each leg of her trip. Kitty has never flown in a light aircraft before, and reckoned the short hop from Dundee to Fife was "tremendous" and she could totally recommend the experience to anyone.

Tea and biscuits were laid on at the Topsy for Polly, who was keen to get on to her next stop in Edinburgh. Polly sold several copies of her book "Wings Around the World" at Fife, and signed the copies – proceeds from the sale going to the charity.



CLUB NEWS

The next Committee Meeting will be on 4th July, at 7.30pm.

Achievements



PPL PASSES

lots in the pipeline if only the weather would improve

FIRST SOLO

Nigel Pybus

Well done !

Bienvenido

to new Instructor Pedro Rusinanez who hails from Spain.

Lets hope he can bring some of that sunny weather with him.

For Sale

AOR 8200mk2 handheld scanner in excellent condition with mains and car charger and manual.

£175 ono.

Contact Paul Laing.

Aircraft Shares

Shares are currently available in several Fife based aircraft.

See the notice board for more details.

'Globe'trotting Simon

Many of you will already be aware that Simon will be leaving us shortly to join Globespan.

CHALLENGE ANDREW (BROWN)

The Fife Flying Club Annual Treasure Hunt was one of the events which succumbed to the recent bad weather. But don't despair, it has been rescheduled to 4th August.



As a reminder - teams of two will first have to solve eight clues which will reveal eight waypoints. This is against the clock, which then stops to allow flight planning. The clock then starts again for the flying part which runs from wheels off to wheels on. A digital camera is required to prove that the waypoints have been overflowed.

As in previous years it is hoped that students might take part in booked sorties with their instructors.

A 152 has been set aside between 10.30 and 16.00 for PPLs and slots should be booked with Julia/June. Teams are also expected from Fife-based aircraft. Also, students/instructors with existing bookings are encouraged to consider swapping their planned lesson to take part.

A handicap system will operate to allow for speed differences (aircraft - not brains).

The hunt starts at 9.30 and all competitors must be landed by 16.00. The result will be announced and the trophy presented by 16.15

This year the clues are being set by reigning champion Andrew Brown, who helpfully advises that the points are probably to be found within the area running from Elie to Stirling to Crieff to Cupar and back to Elie. Flying time should be no more than an hour at 90 knots and a little local knowledge, a little aviation history (not Balado Bridge again), and a good road map might help!

Orange Jump Suits and Blonde Wigs are optional but encouraged as they will attract bonus points !

PLANES 'N FLAMES

This months club night has been rescheduled to 21st June and will now take the form of a BQQ and Plane fest. If successful the committee hope to make this an annual event to rival Oshkosh and Sun 'n' Fun !

The evening will kick off around 7pm and finish when we all leave or get thrown out.

Private aircraft owners are encouraged to come along and let members look over and if possible, take them for a short flight in the aircraft.

It is also planned to hold a short briefing for the Kirkwall Fly Out during the evening therefore anyone attending this event is encouraged to be there.

Editor's Note

A huge thank you to Peter Malone, Chris Inchley and Bryan Gayle for their contributions to this months newsletter. If you have any articles you would like included please send them to me via June or Julia.

Alan Laing

WHAT ! NO ENGINE ?

Some years back I was persuaded to give gliding a try, though not without a pause for thought - I reckoned that proper aeroplanes had an engine in the front and I remembered one occasion, cruising cross country at 2000 feet, when I watched from above as a glider, fresh out of lift, put down in a potato field. But gliding is an economical way of getting into the air, it offers new challenges, and I had spent too many years not getting properly airborne to pass up the opportunity.

Once started, I quickly found that there are some key differences from powered flying, not least the proximity of other aircraft. Another glider circling under cumulus cloud is a sure sign of lift, and the best bet is to join in. So 4 or 5 aircraft in the same thermal is not uncommon, and ridges can get even more crowded - I remember days with 8 or 9 gliders on the face of the hill, though sensible rules of the road allow all these aircraft to work the lift safely in the same space. And when the wind suddenly drops and the lift peters out, everyone scrambles for the airfield at the same time, a far cry from the orderly separation of rejoin and circuits at Fife. Another difference is the way you look at clouds.

A good eye for developing cumulus clouds can see you holding 3000 feet, more on a good day, and summer cloud streets can ease you across country. But what takes you up another level is wave lift, often marked by the high, sharp edges of lenticular clouds, well above the normal limits of Cessna flying. North westerly winds, blowing over the Grampians, can produce a standing wave of rising air over the mountains, probably up to 20000 feet or more. Secondary waves form downwind, like ripples downstream of a boulder in a river, and lenticular clouds often form in ranks at the peak of each wave, marking out the rising air. As a form of lift for glider pilots, wave has two characteristics; it is incredibly smooth, and the rate of climb can be very fast indeed - the vario can threaten to go off the clock. The downside, and it is just that, is that what goes up must come down, and somewhere between those lenticular clouds, air will be sinking just as quickly. So the trick is to cruise along the front of rising air watching the vario carefully to make sure that the glider is centred in the lift.

My first encounter with wave was at neighbouring Portmoak, where I had come for an autumn course. I had about 3 hours dual in my BGA log book and, some barely relevant background in Tiger Moths and Chipmunks. On the third day our instructor, Andy, landed from a dual sortie and hurried me into the front seat, explaining that he had found wave on the previous flight and it was too good a chance to miss. Launches in the Portmoak two-seater were by aerotow, in contrast to the winch at Perranporth where I had started, and the great advantage of aerotow is that you can go in search of lift. It was not long after release that we found ourselves in wave with +8 showing on the vario, but with no sensation of the turbulence associated with thermals or hill soaring. We flew along the edge of the smoothly rising air until the vario started to drop, then did a 180 turn in order to ease back into the lift. In 10-15 minutes we had worked our way up to 10000 feet. Andy checked I had got the feel of it, and then indicated it was time to get back and pick up a visitor from an English club while the lift was still around, someone who, like me, had not yet flown in wave.

With an "I have control" from the back seat, he stood the K13 on its nose (typical ex-Lightning pilot), set the speed-limiting air brakes, and we went from 10000 to 1000 feet at

120 kts in around 45 seconds. At 1000 feet over Loch Leven I hear "You have control - a nice circuit and landing". This is the difficult bit. I am aware that part of me is still at 10000 feet, but I am not sure which. Brain and hands eventually settle into some sort of order; 800 feet over the farmhouse, downwind checks, a short base over Scotlandwell, 200 feet over the road, airbrakes fully out, touch down. Something must have gelled, as the following morning he sent me solo.

I flirted with wave several times after that, but the most memorable occasion was in the Junior, a compact glass fibre single-seater to which I had graduated, via the club's Vega, from the metal and fabric K8. It was a bright April day, with a brisk northerly wind, good ridge lift over the RSPB reserve at Vane Farm, and the hint of lenticular clouds high above some less promising stuff at 6000 - 8000 feet. These are the sorts of day when glider pilots set up a barograph and get it initialled in the hope that some new barrier can be crossed. I avoided the mistake of forgetting to switch the baro on, and was aerotowed onto the edge of Benarty Hill, dropping a couple of hundred feet to put a 'notch' in the trace so that the examiner could clearly see the start point if I wanted to make a claim. Silver and gold height gains for glider pilots are 1000 and 3000 metres respectively and I knew anyway, with no oxygen in the Junior, I would have to start low down. The problem was that the lift I had caught was hill lift, not wave, and it topped out at about 1800 feet. There were one or two other gliders 1000 feet above me, clearly getting into wave, but there seemed no way of bridging the gap.

The tick of the barograph in the back kept acting as a prompt, and I worked the hill lift for over an hour, trying to find the key. It came together when I allowed the glider to drift back just behind the ridge. Not normal practice, but where, out over the Loch, there was only sink, now the vario suddenly showed additional lift, and its smoothness confirmed the glider was in the right place. The next thing to do was to find the line of the rising air, but fortunately the medium cloud itself acted as a good marker, and I found myself soaring its upwind edge as if it were some suspended cotton-wool cliff. Before long it was left behind but, at 10000 feet, the rate of climb began to drop off, as I lost both concentration and lift.

High lenticular cloud indicated it was still around somewhere (one Portmoak glider made 18000 feet that day), and eventually the Junior scraped, not very convincingly, up to 12000 feet. This was a landmark height, not just because the gold 3000 metre climb was in the bag, but because the highest I had ever been able to persuade a Chipmunk to go was around the same level - the Gipsy Major just ran out of oxygen! Thoughts of oxygen also suggested that 12000 was high enough for one day, and I pushed out northwards into wind. There was fast wave-associated sink over Loch Leven, but I pulled the airbrakes anyway to speed up the descent as more cloud was coming in quite quickly, and the airfield seemed a long way down through the gaps. Total flight time was 2 hours 23 minutes, much of it hard work searching for wave, but 45 minutes or so of pure magic. However single seat gliders are not built for people much over 6 feet in height. On the way down it was beginning to hurt a bit, and I was glad on touch-down to have some friends shoe-horn me out of the cockpit and then do the pushing bit to get the glider back to the launch point - another difference from power.

Chris Inchley

LIVING THE DREAM ? – PART 1

One of the flying instructors at the club had just got his first flying job outside instructing. He flew a Britten Norman Trislander taking the mail at night from Edinburgh to Kinloss. The whole shift was no more than four and a half hours from checking in to checking out, so he could still instruct in the afternoons. The flight required only a single pilot so for company he would invite club members to join him and get a bit of experience with a commercial operation.

For the benefit of those who have not seen a Trislander it is a stretched version of the Islander with a third O 520 Lycoming engine half way up the fin and an extended nose to balance the weight. It sits close to the ground and you step in like stepping into a car. It also has multiple doors down both sides like a charabanc. Oh! There I go showing my age again.



We met at Execair where the flight plan, load sheet and tech log were attended to. Following the external checks, we got clearance to taxi to the cargo terminal where we were met by a red Royal Mail van and three baggage handlers. The mail bags were thrown in then periodically compacted by the handlers by hanging on to the luggage straps and pushing the bags down the back with their feet. With 1.3 tons of mail on board we departed on time at 01.30 hrs. There followed a delightful 50 minute flight on a clear night in the company of the winking lights of many other aircraft. I thought to myself. I could do this!

Next time I flew with him it was a foul winters night. I had fortunately missed most of the pre flight checks. Standing on a ladder trying to add oil while the wind whipped it away as soon as it left the bottle is no fun. We stayed in our seats while the handlers loaded the mail and only left them briefly to check the doors. "G-JU you are cleared to take off 25 direct Grice, wind 220/25 gusting 35." We were in and out of IMC all the way. Each time we went IMC the rain lashed the windscreen all but drowning out the considerable engine noise. It also sprayed in the tops of the doors on both sides 'till we were soaked. Thankfully the weight of cargo helped damp out the bumps but we had no such luxury on the way back as the empty fuselage drummed to the beat of the three engines.

Back at Edinburgh that night once again I said to myself. I could do this! But would I want to?

Peter Malone

LIVING THE DREAM ! – PART 2

As many of you know I left to pursue a job with Scotairways flying the Dornier 328. I recently had the circuits at Prestwick and my colleague on the flight deck could not but help notice the massive smile on my face as he announced " you have control ". as I said just before I opened up the power levers " dreams do come true " We sat at the end of runway 31 at Prestwick. " Are you ready " - " Ready " came the reply. the condition levers were put to max, the power levers were advanced to take off, " auto feather armed, speed alive on both " was the call. " set take of power " was my reply . " 80 knots " - " checked " " V1 " called at 111 knots, "rotate" called at 116 knots, the aircraft was pitched to 13 degrees and away we went.



To all those students out there who are pushing for the big job. Trust me all the hard work ITS WORTH IT!

Happy flying guys, will see you when I do my part time bit!

Very Junior First Officer B. Gayle, ScotAirways



2007 Calendar of Events

June		
* 21 st	Club Night, 7pm for 7.30pm - Planes 'n Flames	Tipsy Nipper
23 rd / 24 th	Mid Summer Fly Out	Kirkwall

July		
3 rd	Committee Meeting	Tipsy Nipper
12 th	Club Night, 7pm for 7.30pm	Tipsy Nipper
22 nd	Fly Out (11:30 - 18:00)	Prestwick
! 28 th	<i>East Fortune Airshow</i>	<i>East Fortune</i>
! 28 th & 29 th	<i>Red Bull Air Race</i>	<i>London</i>

August		
* 4 th	Treasure Hunt followed by BBQ	Fife
7 th	Committee Meeting	Tipsy Nipper
9 th	Club Night, 7pm for 7.30pm	Tipsy Nipper
* 18 th	Fly Out (11:30 - 18:00)	Carlisle
! 25 th & 26 th	<i>RAF Spirit of Adventure</i>	<i>Balado Bridge</i>

September		
! 1 st /2 nd	Overnight Fly Out (15:00 Sat - 12:00 Sunday)	Glenforsa
4 th	Committee Meeting	Tipsy Nipper
13 th	Club Night, 7pm for 7.30pm	Tipsy Nipper

October		
2 nd	Committee Meeting	Tipsy Nipper
11 th	Club Night, 7pm for 7.30pm	Tipsy Nipper