



Fife Flying Club



Issue 20 November 2008

Chairman's Welcome...

Hello Ladies & Gentlemen

Hope you all have managed a few flights since our last Newsletter. Lets hope for those wonderful crisp Winter mornings. Our Annual Fireworks & Bonfire Night on 2nd November 2008 was a great success, and a great time was had by all. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Guys (!!) who helped build the Bonfire - that was no mean feat!!! Many thanks to Richard who was inspirational with the Fireworks Display. Also to Julia and her Team who provided the excellent Soup and Stovies.

That time of year has arrived again and our Wings Dinner is taking place on 12th December 2008, where we will present those Students who have attained their PPL and also First Solos (which I do remember only just - maybe next year I will get my PPL). If you wish to attend please contact Julia @ Fife Airport who will organise this for you. Party central!!

It would be great to see you all there. Happy Holidays Kate

auntycats@tiscali.co.uk

Calendar of

Crail Fly-Out – Sunday 7th December.
Wings Dinner - Friday 12th December
Eshott Fly-out. - 14th December.
FFC AGM – Thursday January 15th, 7pm.

Christmas Dinner and Wings Night



The Christmas Dinner and Wings Night is on Friday 12th December, 7 for 7.30pm.

The tickets are £20 per person, with drinks and nibbles on arrival. Dress code is black tie or smart suit and tie.

Still to be confirmed is a disco for after the meal...

Tickets still available – call Julia at the desk - 01592 753792.

Crail Fly-Out

What's the airfield that we've all flown to dozens of times but never landed at? Yup, it's Crail. By arrangement with the owner we have permission to fly in to Crail at any time from 0900 to 1500 on Sunday 7th of December. Details will be on a poster in the greenhouse on the day and info sheets will be available explaining the runway, circuit, parking, etc. (Also check the website) Landing fee will be £15 (considerable work goes into clearing the runway for a fly-in) but worth it!

Eshott Fly-Out

The annual fly-out to Eshott will be on Sunday 14th December. We're not expecting Eshott to feed us this year, so bring a picnic... See website for more details.

Private Pilot Refresher

After a very positive response to the Private Pilot Refresher Course, we are pleased to confirm the course cost: **£349.00 Inc VAT**. These short courses comprise: 2 hours of comprehensive pre-flight briefing; 2 separate 1-hour retraining flights with a qualified instructor; comprehensive post-flight debriefing; open, two-way feedback discussions; takeaway handout information about exercises flown, and a company provided aircraft (C152 or C172).

From our feedback the main areas for revision are stalling and PFL's. However, we can tailor the course to suit individual's needs. This is all to help you feel safe and confident about your flying so that you can continue to get maximum enjoyment out of it. The course is available to all PPL holders who must be current members of Fife Flying Club. To book a course, or if you have any further questions please contact Tayside Aviation at Fife Airport on: **01592 753792**

Aerobatics Diary

I can remember standing in my grandmother's garden in Fife when I was 14, watching UAS Bulldogs doing aerobatics north of Windygates. At the time, I could not begin to imagine how I would ever be able to do something as amazing as that... It seemed so far away and unattainable.

As you know, I've been doing the AOPA aerobatics syllabus with Syd Utting at Dundee on the Grob. In late September, Syd decided I was ready for the test, and on the 5th October I turned up at Dundee to fly with Pete Anderson, the Examiner. I was nervous and not 100% convinced that I felt ready for it, but, I thought - "Banzai!" - let's get on with it.

Pete walked out to the Grob with me, smiling and rubbing his hands together and saying "Let's do some spins! I love spinning!" I grinned silently and got on with the checks. I decided the best thing to do was just fly the trip as if Pete wasn't there - I was 100% in charge and should make sure I did everything right.

Once in the air, things went quite well, with Pete even pitching in and offering hints and a demo on how to improve my barrel rolls. The sequence, of five manoeuvres back-to-back (a loop, half-cuban, stall turn, loop with a quarter turn then a slow roll) went really well with a minimum of height loss, no engine red-lining and me even correcting onto the display line midway.

The spins were fine - it was the unusual attitude recoveries that took me by surprise. I was used to them being set up academically for me.... Pete likes to set them up from realistic situations. So he pulled us into a loop and pulls over the top, me now lost as to what was going to happen - then, on the start of the downhill leg, at low airspeed, he pulls a bit too hard and tickles the rudder a bit - the result, a stall with rudder input - an incipient spin situation. In the instant before the plane seemingly bucked, rocked, and rolled all over the place, he calmly said: "You have control"..... and he smiled.

In the ensuing microsecond, my initial thought was something like (but less polite) - "You're kidding yourself, if you think I have any sort of control!" But the training kicks in quickly and a simple "stamp and clamp" - hold the controls firmly neutral - and the plane sorts itself out, and the recovery from a gentle dive with about 50 degrees of bank was simple after that. An initially bad situation that becomes a non-event, if you know what you're doing.

The AOPA training does not make you an expert aerobatic pilot. It only makes sure that you are safe enough to fly basic aerobatics, and more importantly, get yourself out of dodgy situations safely, without damaging yourself or the plane (or your underwear). Pete was happy that I matched these criteria, and passed me.

A week later, flying the Grob from Fife, I did my first solo aerobatics trip, just offshore on Largo Bay. No-one else around, there was a broken layer of cloud at 2,000 feet on shore, perfectly flat above, with a good horizon. I flew loops, rolls, stall turns, a half-cuban, some max rate turns - and would have done more but the cloud was beginning to thicken up below and getting back to Fife might have got awkward, so reluctantly I gave up and went back.

But as I was pulling over the top of the loops, I could see figures on the beach below me and I wondered for a second if one of them was maybe a 14 year old. Looking up, wondering, imagining... AL

The CFI's Column

Many thanks to Tim Humphrey, CFI, for coming along to the Club night in October and giving a well-prepared talk on "current issues" as he sees them at Fife. Those of you who weren't there missed a good night - and the following is my summary of some of the things he said. (Speak to Tim for more detail). In no particular order....

Students need to turn up and be **prepared** to fly - too often they are not in the right frame of mind for training. Do some work on your next flight long before you head off to the airfield. (Run through the flight in your head while you drive up to the field - mentally rehearse what you might be doing). The more preparation you do on the ground, the better your flying will be. Being late can mean you are stressed - make time for your flying, set off half an hour early. Have a decent headset with you (best if you buy one, so you are familiar with it). A fuel strainer is handy. Remember that you need an A-Check sign-off before you go flying - and need to come back to the greenhouse to sign for the A-check before going back to the plane to fly. Check the Aircraft Technical Logs thoroughly during your checks. And don't log "customer complaints" as aircraft defects - every defect has to be looked into, and if you're complaining about tatty seat covers, talk to an instructor before you log it as a defect! Remember to make time for Pre-Flight Authorisation - make sure there's an Instructor around if you're a PPL. Make sure you get the time in that you need for your Certificate of Revalidation. Instructors will be asking for Log Book Evidence - 21-day/6-week/90-day rules, etc. Is your Medical in-date or about to expire?

On Radio Telephony, try to minimise pointless waffle & colloquialisms (and use of the word "currently"). Make sure you listen out before speaking. Double-clicking as a means of acknowledgement is not on! Don't change to Leuchars too soon as you leave the circuit. Get a request for something into your initial calls - it helps the ATS operator. On the apron, park "herringbone" fashion so that when you start up, you don't blow the plane away behind you. Lookout before starting up - especially behind. Remember to do your On-apron instrument checks. When backtracking for 07, use the delta to echo taxiway - that way if you break down you won't be on the active runway, and you get extra time to check the aircraft as you taxi. Avoid Runway Incursions - don't pull-out to backtrack if someone is on finals. When making "Vacated at" calls, make sure all of your aircraft is over the line before saying you've vacated.

Departing and joining the circuit - remember the published joining procedure for Fife is overhead at 2,000 feet, and there's no "extended base leg". Think before you try to depart by climbing on the downwind leg and depart to the north - someone may be joining in the opposite direction - so listen out. Don't barge-in from South East (Thornton) for RWY 25, nor come straight-in from West (Kelty) for RWY 07. You should be going for the overhead at 2,000 feet and then descend dead side. Don't go to the overhead with the QNH still set. Beware of being crosswind ignoring established circuit traffic, and don't undercut downwind traffic in a faster aeroplane. Too many pilots seem to assume that announcing their arrival means they are clear to join or rejoin the circuit pattern - they must make themselves aware of the circuit traffic and remember that traffic in the circuit always takes precedence. Don't make premature announcements of "downwind" - make sure you know what "downwind" actually means, and where you should be. Don't orbit on final approach for spacing (it's been done!), and avoid over-flying noise-sensitive areas. Make sure you stick to Fife's established circuit pattern and don't make up your own.

On the Hanger Apron, make sure you can safely taxi your aircraft past others before getting in and starting up - pace out the distance if you're in doubt. Get some assistance for taxiing. If the Fire Engine has been left out and is in your way, ask for it to be moved. And don't pull other planes out of the hangars and leave them out while you go flying - you might get stuck away from Fife and you're inconveniencing other people!

There was a lot of good stuff in Tim's presentation - I hope this rather cramped summary does it all justice.

AL

COMMITTEE NEWS

Next Committee Meeting is on 2nd December 2008.

The awards below are believed to be correct – if you've been missed, let the Editor know!

AWARDS



November

Peter Crabb – Solo Qualifying Cross Country – at last, because the weather's been so poor!

October

Alan Laing - AOPA Aerobatics Certificate

September 2008

Steven MacFadyen 1st Solo (one of our youngest Students ever at 16yrs 3 months)

ATSOCAS

A new "Air Traffic Services Outside Controlled Airspace" (ATSOCAS) interactive guide is now available on-line. The Airspace & Safety Initiative is a joint CAA, NATS, AOA, GA and MoD effort tackle the major safety risks in UK airspace. There is a new set of services that will be available from ATS's. and the need for these arose from a top-level discussion between the CAA Chairman, NATS Chief Executive and MoD Assistant Chief of the Air Staff following a number of incidents where light aircraft infringed controlled airspace, or military and commercial flights lost separation outside controlled airspace. A DVD describing the changes (eg RIS and RAS will disappear to be replaced by terms such as "Basic Service", "Procedural Service", etc) will be sent shortly to all PPLs and NPPLs in the UK. You can have a look at the DVD at www.airspacesafety.com **All pilots will need to be aware of these changes which will come about from March 2009.**

FFC Treasure Hunt

Fife Flying Club's Annual Treasure hunt took place on Sunday 2nd November and for once it was graced with some good weather! Unfortunately, this made it all the more disappointing that only two aircraft participated. With perfect flying weather, where were the rest of you?!

The two teams that tackled the 94NM route were Altefaht, with team members Roger Archer and Alex Smith in G-BITF, who set a clue solving time of 28 mins and a flying time of 70 mins with no penalties, and team G-WIFE, with team members Andy Reid and Andrew Brown, who set a blistering clue solving time of just 12 mins thanks to Andrew's incredible local knowledge, and a flying time of 45 mins.

With the hotly contested handicaps applied, the result was the narrowest of victories in a long time in the Treasure Hunt with the G-WIFE team just winning by 10 points. Congratulations to Andy and Andrew who will receive their trophy at the Wings Dinner. Commiserations to Roger and Alex who made a valiant effort and got so close to victory.

It was certainly an interesting experience setting the route and thinking up the clues and I would like to thank Stuart Chapple for his assistance throughout.

The clues used are listed below and the answers will follow in the next newsletter.

1. Could this be where James Bond's fourth adversary lurks? The perfect place for his yacht is nearby.
2. You may be joined on your wingtip by the ghosts of Fireflies and Barracudas as you fly over here, but don't be fooled by the name.
3. The Argyll and Sutherland Highlander's home here overlooks perhaps the most famous bridge in Scotland.
4. Perhaps the single malt made here was inspired by a castle?
5. This place sounds like a salaried river crossing.
6. Hislop's, Clark and Taylor's will all challenge you here.
7. An ancient cathedral built around 600AD. Perhaps the Ochils watch over it?
8. Do the craftsmen and blowers here come from up north?

CR

Here's a thought. What would happen if you lost your logbook? How would you prove that you had the hours you claim you have? Once in a while, photocopy your logbook and keep the copy away from the book itself.....

Living the dream?

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?

Pete Malone

Fife to Berlin – Part 2 – Berlin to Fife.....

Our return to Fife was intended to be pretty much a mirror of the first flight but with a more southerly routing into middle France and an overnight break at Le Touquet or St. Omer. As the weekend in Berlin drew to a close however it became all too apparent that utterly horrible weather was coming up from southern France and the plan was therefore revised down to a day and a pretty direct route from Berlin to Holland, and then, if possible, across the North Sea to Norwich for refuel and on to Fife.

The 415 weather précis was: **15KM NIL/- RA, OCNL (WDSR FRONTS) 7KM RA, ISOL (OCNL FRONTS) 3000M +RA, ISOL 1500M +TSR, BROKEN/OVC CU SC 015 – 030 / 060 – 080, ISOL SCT/BRN ST 007 – 012 / 015. Mod icing and turbulence.** (See below right for the BBC radar picture on the day).

An early start with final planning meant we missed out on the last part of the Socata trip but were airborne by mid morning. Tempelhof was much quieter, a trickle rather than a flood of aircraft departing, but it was still impressive, looking down into flats as we banked round from 09L to head off west. The weather was initially OK but there were increasing bands of cloud – including particularly low ones sitting on the ground – as we stooged on towards Hamelin (no rats visible) and then past Gutersloh (no Harriers there any more) at around 2000 feet, enjoying the somewhat unnerving sight of the upper blades of umpteen enormous wind turbines scything through the clouds beside us. The Germans obviously aren't troubled by the same NIMBY mentality as here! Thankfully, there were still lots of broken patches to see the ground through, albeit diversion to Stadtlohn Vreden was a fall back had it got worse as we knew they were still flying from Box 2.

Happily, as we turned north west towards the VOR at SPY on the Dutch coast, a route which took us just north of Schiphol and under its TMA which starts at 1500, the weather "improved" to the extent that the ground cleared, the cloud base descended to about 1200, and it started raining! Viz in front was more than adequate and we were reassured by obvious flying training going on as we passed to the south of the aerodrome at Teuge - the Dutch are clearly less put off by poor weather although they don't have hills to worry about. By the time we reached Edam, the cheese town north of Amsterdam, the weather was become distinctly poorer, with heavier rain and a lowering cloud base at times. Good service from Schiphol though, and we could hear traffic coasting out ahead of us so decided to plough on and see what was what, particularly as the interesting airfield at Lelystad was an easy diversion ten minutes from the sea.

Needless to say that was where we were about twenty minutes later! The weather simply got to the stage that neither of us was happy pressing on and it was an easy choice to turn back to the security of refuel, food, and access to updated weather and rainfall radar. Again though, it was interesting to see how much flying was still going on in spite of the weather when we joined a very active circuit of three fixed wing and one helicopter before landing.

Lelystad is another must if ever in Europe. In good weather it must be phenomenally busy given the number of aircraft and training schools (and it's A/G only). It has restaurants, an hotel, Aviodrome (a large aircraft museum including a KLM 747), easy train access to Amsterdam, self service petrol, very good briefing services, and, naturally, extremely helpful staff. Flight plan closed we refuelled ourselves and the plane, went online and updated with the latest weather, discovering that there was likely to be a break we could take advantage of between bands of rain sweeping up from France and Belgium. Better still, the alarmingly long sea crossing of 105 miles would be at a fast pace given the forecast winds. The flight plan was rejigged to land at Humberside, and we were in a much happier frame of mind, quite reconciled to the possibility of calling it quits and taking Easyjet if need be. Our good humour was then only enhanced when the airfield manager offered to take us to inspect the Catalina flying boat we'd seen on landing. It was immaculate, flyable, and open for group hire trips including a water landing. How about that for a FFC away day!?

Airborne, it was west again to the North Sea and coasting out over yet more ranks of wind turbines planted just off shore. Then into a somewhat monotonous sea crossing at around 2000 feet for most of the way with varying amounts of rain, cloud and hypersensitive attention to engine noise and instruments! Undoubtedly that sort of crossing is not a first option, particularly with a rough and forbidding sea below and grey skies all around. But, in truth, it wasn't as bad as we had imagined which was down to a combination of factors. First the tailwind was extremely strong – our g/s peaked at 189 knots so we were belting along, even undertaking a much slower 172 at one stage. Second, the service provided by Schiphol and then Anglian radar following hand over at the mid way point was excellent and very reassuring. And thirdly we were hardly out of sight of a boat or ship for the bulk of the crossing - the North Sea teams with vessels from tugs and fishing boats to super tankers and even the latest Cunarder.

Additionally the weather was definitely improving by the time we came in sight of the English coast, so much so that we forgot land fall at Great Yarmouth and instead took a short cut to pass alongside Cromer and then head direct over the Wash direct to Humberside. Little if any traffic to affect, so an easy approach for 03 albeit with a strong crosswind.

Given we were only stopping for customs and change over of pilots we were allowed to park on stand 1 which normally takes holiday jets. Comedy as we were solemnly led into the building to meet customs, pay the landing fee, use the toilet, and then go back out through a full security check to return to the plane. An ATC expedited take off to get out the way of 757 coming in – you just want to use all of a big runway to see how high you can be at the other end - was followed by a serene flight into ever better weather back to Fife, routing Humber Bridge, overhead Teesside, Newcastle and then the final stage in brilliant sunshine up to North Berwick and home.

As we crossed the Forth – now a puddle given the earlier part of the day - we could clearly see Crail and mused at just how flawlessly G-WIFE had performed and how shot the rubber band attaching us to Fife now was. Berlin, even with at times marginal weather, had been done in a day involving five and half flying hours. So where next, money allowing?!

Thanks again to Andy's Reid and Brown for this article. If you missed the first part you'll find it on the FFC website at www.fifeflyingclub.co.uk

