

Wings Dinner

The annual Wings Dinner was held in the Topsy Nipper on Saturday 11th December 2010 during what has generally been acknowledged as the worst spell of winter weather experienced in many years. For a time it looked as if we might have had to cancel (or at least postpone) the event however, a break in the weather provided a bit of a respite and some 40 folk were able to enjoy yet another superb dinner provided by Julia and the catering staff at Glenrothes.

After the meal itself, the usual list of awards were presented for those who, during the year, had achieved either their First Solo flight or their (N)PPL qualification (or even both!). Special mention must go to Garrick Smyth who, having had to split his test into two sessions on separate days, managed to sit and pass the final part on the day of the dinner itself!

Karen Simpson scooped the Student of the Year award on account of her enthusiasm and unflagging support for the club throughout the year before the final award of an Honorary Lifetime Membership was presented to Stewart Webb. Stewart is one of those rare people who eats, sleeps and breathes flying and has been the backbone of FFC for many years - suffice to say, he was rendered pretty speechless (and for Stewart, that's saying something!).

We had ordered a special gift for Stewart but, unfortunately, it hadn't arrived by the night of the dinner however, it's here now so we hope to arrange a bit of a presentation at one of our upcoming Club Nights so watch out for news on that front!

Once again, many thanks to Julia and her team for all the work they put into making it another thoroughly enjoyable evening.

EDINBURGH ZONE INFRINGEMENT

By Alex Vesco

I departed Fife EGPJ at 14:45. VFR routing Kelty; Wallace monument; Strathaven; Kelso; Earlsferry and back to Fife airfield.

I flew visually to Kelty. Already the low sun was causing difficulties with forward navigation. I thought that this would be less of a problem once turning South at Wallace monument. I Changed from Fife 130.450 to Edinburgh Approach 121.200 prior to reaching Kelty to advise them of my route and request a basic service. They gave me the QNH 1014 and basic service. No squawk code was requested by Edinburgh. About 5 minutes later they

asked me to contact Scottish 119.875 as there were multiple contacts in the Stirling area. I contacted Scottish who gave me a basic service and a squawk code (I didn't write this down so cannot recall what it was). By this time I was roughly 5-7 miles east of Wallace monument and the turbulence from the high ground to my starboard was causing me a moderate amount of stress. The aircraft nearly winged over at one point. I had considered turning back but reasoned that my next turning point at Wallace monument would take me away from the turbulence. At Wallace monument I took

up a new heading of 196 and started the stopwatch. My leg would run for 16 minutes. The clock started at 15:07 so my ETA at Strathaven was 15:23. I radioed to Scottish to advise my new heading and ETA and that I would like to contact Cumbernauld to advise them that I would be transiting overhead North to South. I contacted Cumber-

nauld who acknowledged my intentions and advised me of two in-bound aircraft for Runway 08. They advised me to contact

Glasgow Approach on 119.1. I contacted Glasgow and received a basic service and asked to squawk (again I didn't write the code so unable to recall). By this time I was behind the curve. I did not have visual contact with Cumbernauld airport as my first clear visual reference and became bewildered with the numerous roads I had thought would be useful fixes but were difficult to see distinctly in the glare of the sun which had now moved into my right of centre. I am astonished to realise during this reflection, in the comfort of my own home, that I was convinced that I was off course, far right of track when I spotted the high masts to the NW of Shotts over to my left during the flight; even though my track marking on the chart took me to the right of them. This perhaps reveals the amount of stress I was no under. I was on track but somehow convinced I wasn't even though the chart and my planning was bearing out. I struggled to discipline myself to keep to my planned track such was my urge to track further to the left. After 16 minutes I saw a town under

the nose but could not see any confirming features due to the sun. Up ahead was a wind farm and so I thought I must have gone too far to the South. I informed Glasgow that I was now at Strathaven and taking up a new track of 085. Having turned 085 I just felt that this was wrong (although if I had stuck to it I would have been closer to my

planned route). They acknowledged my message and handed me back to Scottish. I now immediately knew that I was lost. I radioed Scottish and requested a fix. They suggested that I re-contact Glasgow and ask for a radar fix. The Scottish controller had phoned Glasgow so they would be expecting my call. Glasgow gave me a different squawk and shortly identified me as being 9 miles to the east of Shotts and 29 miles to the east of Glasgow runway. They also told me to contact Edinburgh as I was, by this time, in their zone. I must have dog legged back up into the zone from nearby Strathaven. I contacted Edinburgh. They gave me a new squawk and instructed me to turn north as I had infringed their zone and was causing difficulties. I was so shocked and upset I could hardly speak. I felt as if I had knocked down a child in my car. I headed North and exited the Edinburgh Zone at Kelty. I landed at Fife and telephoned Edinburgh ATC as requested. I could hardly speak. The air traffic controller's kindness and empathy only added to my surge of self horror and emotion. I expected a perfectly deserved dressing down on the phone. She informed me that the infringement would need to be reported and that I continued on p5.

ATZ: Edinburgh
Date: Tues
23/11/2010
Time: 15:25 approx
Weather: Low sun.
Visibility: poor flying to the west and south from glare.

PART ONE OF MY 2½ PART GFT

By Garrick Smyth

The 25th of November loomed large as the date for my Skills Test approached. Tim Humphrey was the only instructor I hadn't flown with at Fife. Though there was another option based at Dundee I preferred to decline, accepting instead 'the devil I knew' [no offence Tim].

I had done all the preparation I could without knowing the navigation route to be taken. I arrived into good time and 'hung about' too-ing and fro-ing between the 'greenhouse' and the restaurant. I was given the route at Fife/Callendar/Alyth prior to Tim's arrival as he had been unavoidably delayed at

I inadvertently clicked the PTT button a couple of times. . .

Dundee so I went through to the classroom and I plogged the flight.

It was apparent by the time Tim arrived that the limited daylight meant we weren't going to get the whole test done in one. Given the choice whether to do the navigation or the general handling part of the test I plumped for the former on the basis that I didn't want to do the PLOG again for a different set of weather conditions.

I had already done the 'A' checks, I don't know why some people seem to worry themselves about being watched whilst doing this, it wouldn't have bothered me either way - it's a checklist! you don't have to remember anything, that's the point.

We took off on 25 departing overhead to the north (I used the lakes between the Lomonds as my start point).

As we approached my first waypoint, Yett's O' Muckart, I started to panic, where the heck is it? I cursed the fact that windfarms seemed to be popping up everywhere these days and could no

longer be relied upon too much for navigation. No worries it was nestling between the hills as I knew it was (beware self doubt). I was a bit north of track so added the drift and closing angles to get my revised heading, saying the heading, ETA and altitude to Tim who gave a non-committal acknowledgement. Things were going well although I had to keep an eye on my height discipline.

A few minutes later Dunblane popped into view, which I confirmed with the usual three convincers, I was bang on course.

The second leg saw the dreaded request to make a diversion and whilst assuming the 'racetrack' position and fumbling about the limited cockpit space with my map I inadvertently clicked the PTT button a couple of times and before I had the chance to 'own up' to Scottish

Information, Tim had done it for me (honest I was going to do it). "Never-mind", I told my self "don't rush this, take your time and get the diversion right", you know how difficult adding 2 and 2 can be up here!



Diversion plotted, call to SI made, I headed off toward Perth, I'd flown up this valley before, and I was well ahead of the aircraft. With a few technical questions answered pretty well, if I say so myself (electrical, alternator, flaps, type stuff) and with Perth of to my 11 o'clock we broke off to do a bit of VOR work (a bit of advice, familiarise yourself with the different boxes, FE has an all-in-one affair).

We were starting to lose the light and whilst we had plenty of twilight left, it was after sunset. Nevertheless, it was interesting joining the circuit in low light conditions, the strangest thing was the lack of instrument lighting (all the dash lights are U/S) but also the hint that, in many ways navigation was easier at night due to the illuminated towns and cities. With only half the test done Tim couldn't give me any feedback although I felt I had done ok.

Snow, Snow and more Snow, Fife snow bound, when the heck am I going to be able to do part two? Well I did it and I'll tell you how next time . . .

MENDELSSOHN PILOT SUPPLIES

THANKYOU

A big thank you to all at Mendelssohns Pilot Supplies. They very kindly donated a headset and flight bag for our Wings night dinner in December, and their gifts certainly added more sparkle to our raffle. You probably know the name as they are listed in every major flying / aviation magazine, but what you may not have realised is that they are a local Edinburgh business with their office in Colinton Road. Friendly folks they are too.

This is the main website: www.gps.co.uk
They also have a facebook page:
www.facebook.com/pages/Mendelssohns-Pilot-Supplies/159077100795663

A SEMINOLE EXPERIENCE . . .

By Alan Laing

Burning off some Business Air Miles, I was out in Florida again at the beginning of November 2010, hoping to catch the second last Space Shuttle launch. Alas, it was delayed a bit (until February!) but I paid my usual visit to the Florida Institute of Technology (FIT) flight training centre at Melbourne International Airport to do a bit of flying.

I love night flying so spent one trip at dusk in a PA28 Warrior, and ended the session flying a night GPS instrument approach under Orlando Centre control back into Melbourne. As I don't have a FAA licence, all of this was under instruction, which I don't mind as it's always good getting PU/T time in the logbook.

Later in the week I treated myself to something different. My first left-hand seat trip in a twin-engined aircraft. My first pilot trip in a plane with variable pitch props. And my first flight flying with retractable undercarriage. I paid for an hour's ground instruction from Mike Rozborksi, a FIT CFII, CFI, etc. One thing I love about aviation is – when you think you've learned all you can, there's a ton more to learn and then some.

So for an hour Mike patiently went through all the things you have to consider in preparing to fly a twin. It's much simpler in a single-engined aircraft – if the engine fails you don't really have much option other than to land. In a twin, you do have that spare engine – but you need to know, given the OAT, QFE, runway length, take-off distances, braking distances, etc, whether or not your runway is long enough should you have an engine failure just before or after rotation, etc, etc, etc. I was introduced to the P-factor (worse at high alpha!) and lots of other things that went in one ear and straight out the other. The hour went quickly. One thing that was interesting was that given the OAT (87F) and QFE, and Melbourne's actual height

above sea level which is only 33 feet, this equated to a pressure altitude of 1,400 feet – which would have a noticeable affect on the aircraft's performance. As a result, our predicted 1,450fpm rate of climb on two engines (given our weight – full fuel, two adult males and 100lbs of ballast) would become 160fpm on one engine...

We gave up ground school when my brain became full and got out to the aircraft – N880FT – with the sun still above the horizon and the temperature still in the 70's. Immediately, the cockpit was familiar – the shell is effectively the PA28 cockpit, but

there's only one RPM gauge and I had a good hunt for the second one - then it clicked, one dial, two needles . . .

without the engine stuck on the front. But there the similarity ends. There's at least two of everything that you have in the PA28 – two throttles, two carb heats, two prop levers, two mixtures. Four separate Mag switches. Two fuel pumps. And a fuel selector panel between the seats that allows you to crossfeed from one wing tank to the opposite engine and vice versa. All of these have to be checked. Confusingly, there's only one RPM gauge and I had a good hunt for the second one – then it clicked. One dial, two needles, marked "R" and "L", but with the engines stopped one needle is hidden. A rocker switch starts the engines – left for left, right for right.

After a good walk-round and thorough cockpit preflight we were

off. Handling the two throttles comes naturally but getting the two needles in perfect alignment means the throttles are always slightly staggered. It would be easy to become too focussed on the needles and not on the flying. Take off was fine and we climbed



straight ahead, out over the sea to the east of Melbourne, and up to 4,500 feet for some general handling, steep turns and some stalls. Stalls in a twin are fine – there's so much excess power that recovery is pretty well instant.

As we turned and played around, I became aware that there wasn't a big propeller thingy out in front of me. Looking out the window, there was one on one wing, and one on the other. The word "Seminole" is painted on the inside of each engine cowling, but looking out, for a second I was thinking – this could be a Mosquito or a B-25 or a Wellington..... And then I got it. Something in the seat of my pants. Get the two throttles in exactly the right place and you get the most beautiful thrumming resonance from the engines, as they both purr away in unison. Gently tweaking the throttles gets it just right... and you could fly like that forever. Magic. Put it on a tape and you've got the best relaxation therapy tape you'll ever buy.

Mike offered to shut down an engine to let me see how the plane handled but I declined because of time, so he tweaked one engine using the prop levers and throttle to simulate a failed engine and I was able to fly compensating with rudder and

continued on p6.

MEET THE MEMBERS FIVE MINUTE INTERVIEW

Martin Sinclair

First flight (Passenger): 1968 Vickers Viscount- Manchester to Orkney.

First flight (At controls): Bulldog-1984 Leuchars

Favourite Aircraft: Spitfire.

Favourite holiday destination: New York.

Which animal would you like to be?

Dog - Loyal & Dependable!.

Favourite sport: Shooting.

Logged hours: 160.

Favourite logged destination: Glenforsa.

Actor to play your life story: Tom Cruise.

Favourite film: A Perfect Catch.

Joke: What's the difference between Ironman & Ironwoman; Ironman is a superhero and Ironwoman is a simple order!

Favourite cuisine: Chinese..

Best airline flown: Aer Lingus.

Dream dinner guests: Johnny Cash, Marion Cotillard.

Dream car: Aston Martin DBS.

Favourite book/author: Tom Clancy.

Worst Job: Measuring council houses.

Birth place: Manchester.

Favourite song/band artist: ACDC.

By Greg Logan

would hear from the CAA in due course. I completely accept this and will assist them in their enquiries to the best of my ability.

Lessons Learnt:

Early decision to turn back if recognising flight is not going well. Turbulence and sun glare were two major factors in causing debilitating stress.

Earlier decision to contact ATC to say I am lost or not coping with my navigation. Far more important to AVOID infringement rather than hope it all comes together, especially when in the vicinity of two major control zones. I should have asked for radar assistance very soon after my southerly track when I was losing my visual reference points.

They might have thought I was stupid to be navigating in such glaring conditions but at least I would have avoided a zone infringement.

Recognise the power of ones own mind (confirmation bias) to confuse when stressed. I was actually on track during the leg to Strathaven but even though my plog routed me to the right of the masts, I was convinced I should have been to the left of them.

Keep to the planned heading and altitude until you have sorted the problem out. Don't fly on instinct! I am writing this in the hope that others may learn vicariously from my experience. I am still awaiting a

letter or visit from the CAA. I think that much more emphasis be made on avoiding infringement. It should be way up there with spin avoidance and inadvertent stalling. I am astonished at how easy it was for me to fall into this infringement. After one sleepless night shuddering about what might have happened, I remain shocked and astonished and full of shame at my own stupidity. I hesitate to say that I will NEVER be in this situation again but I know that I'll be asking for assistance the MOMENT I feel out of the curve in future. I have also resolved to purchase a GPS unit to assist me in navigation primarily to avoid control zones infringements. The one thing that the very kind air traffic

*.. turn back if
recognising
flight is not
going well. . .*

controller did emphasise was that all ATC's are there to HELP. Just ask. I accept any negative comments and derision that will undoubtedly come my way but what I really hope is that this account serves to elucidate just how easy it is to fall into this trap and if it helps pilots like myself to avoid a single zone bust then it has been worth it.

might be possible.

There are some great articles in this edition of the newsletter. Once again, Alan Laing's been and done some interesting flying in Florida but it was Alex Vesco's account of his experience with the Edinburgh Zone that reminded me of an occasion a couple of years ago when I was over Balloch with the weather closing in. My route home via Drymen and Thornhill was blocked and I felt I was getting pushed southwards towards the Glasgow Zone. Getting more nervous, envisaging a Zone Bust of my own, I called Glasgow Approach, explained my predicament and asked if I could fly up the inside of their zone boundary to bypass the weather. They couldn't have been more helpful, granted me a Zone Entry and straight away, I relaxed as I no longer had to worry about that invisible "fence". Don't be reluctant to talk to ATC – they're there to help. I'm also keen to support the training side of things – not just for students

but providing "refresher" opportunities for PPLs as well – by arranging Club Night talks on various piloting topics and possibly also Ground School sessions, particularly for students working towards their PPL exams.

As a club, we usually have a fairly busy schedule through the course of a year and 2011 promises to be no different. Please do look out on the website for details of upcoming events and do speak to me or anyone else on the Committee if you have any thoughts or suggestions.

I hope to see you around the club. Have a great year's flying!

REVISED FLYING PRICES

The soaring fuel prices have mean't some small increases in the Tayside's pricing strategy. Here are the key changes.

PPL Training
C152: £159 (+3)

PPL Hire

C152: £135 (+3)

Grob: £153 (+3)

C172: £144 (+3)

Arrow PA28: £198 (+3)

10 Hour Training Pack

C152: £1430 (-30)

Grob: £1635 (+35)

bank on effectively one engine only. The sun was going down and I wanted to do some landings so we headed back to Melbourne and I flew a couple of landings on runway 05, the smaller runway at Melbourne. As we were climbing out from the second one it became officially night as the sun had disappeared and it was noticeably darker. The remaining 5 landings were all recorded as "PU/T, Twin, Night" in my logbook. Great fun, but I kept getting reminded to get the undercarriage up – given our rate of climb on two healthy engines, getting to circuit height was a bit quicker than in the TB9 and I couldn't get used to having to do so much so quickly.

The Seminole has a handy mirror on each engine cowling so you can see the nose gear, even in the dark – so the check is "Three greens, no reds and one in the mirror" as you come downwind and lower the gear. My BUMFITTCHE check actually worked for once – the "U" is for undercarriage....!

The variable pitch props kept me busy too. Full forward for take-off, retarded a bit for downwind (noise abatement), then full forward again on finals – but this last action causes a bit of a pitch change which has to be sorted out on finals.

My last landing was on runway 09 – the full length airline capable main runway at Melbourne. All the lights were on and it looked just like Heathrow. As with all the landings I had no problem flaring, even in the dark and with all the lights around – funnily enough, the landing light on the plane really does do the job it is supposed to do and helps you judge where the runway is and lets you flare just right.

We taxied in, parked up, shut down and tied the plane down and walked in past folk heading

out for their night trip. One hour 40 minutes had passed and it was pitch dark and still shirt sleeve warm under a clear sky. There is nothing that compares with walking away from a plane after a trip like that.

My enduring memory of the trip – hitting that resonant note with the engines. Hypnotic! And flying circuits in half the time it takes in the TB9. As ever, flying with FIT (that's my third visit now) is always a pleas-

ure – as I've said before, a very professional bunch of folk running a superb operation, all geared up to get people flying. The instructors are superb and infinitely patient and professional. Thanks in particular to Steve Nisbett and Mike Rozborski. As Arnie says, "I'll be back....."



No one is immune from making mistakes How not to infringe - Ten Top Tips

Airspace infringements continue to be one of the UK's main aviation safety risks. The UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), through its Airspace Infringements Working Group, is currently working with industry to tackle the issue. The Group has issued a list of top ten tips to avoid an infringement.

- Navigation is a skill, and needs to be practised regularly, both planning a flight and conducting it. Safety Sense Leaflet 5 (available on the CAA website and in the LASORS publication) contains good advice on VFR navigation, but it only works if you read and apply it!
- If you plan a route through controlled airspace, remember that a crossing clearance may not always be possible and consider that route as your 'secondary' plan. Your primary plan should avoid controlled airspace - and don't forget to make your overall time and fuel calculations using the longer, primary route!
- Where possible, avoid planning to fly close to controlled airspace boundaries. If you do need to do so, be very careful. A small navigational error or distraction of any sort can lead to an infringement – and it doesn't take much to ruin your day!
- Pilot workload rises rapidly in less than ideal weather - and so do infringements. If the weather starts to deteriorate, consider your options early and if necessary divert or turn back in good time.
- If you wish to transit controlled airspace, think about what you need to ask for in advance and call the appropriate Air Traffic Control (ATC) unit at least 10 nautical miles or five minutes flying time from the airspace boundary. This gives the controller time to plan ahead.
- Thinking before you press the transmit switch and using the correct radio phraseology helps air traffic control to help you - and sounds more professional!
- Be aware that ATC may be busy when you call them – just because the frequency doesn't sound busy doesn't mean that the controller isn't busy on another frequency or on landlines.
- Remember - the instruction 'Standby' means just that; it is not an ATC clearance and not even a precursor to a clearance. The controller is probably busy so continue to plan to fly around the airspace. Only fly across the airspace if the controller issues a crossing clearance.
- Your planned route through controlled airspace may appear simple on your chart but the traffic patterns within that airspace may make it unrealistic in practice. Be prepared for a crossing clearance that does not exactly match your planned route but will allow you to transit safely. 10. Don't be afraid to call ATC and use the transponder.

CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME The committee are always keen to receive comments, suggestions and criticisms so that we can make sure we properly represent club members views. Everything we do is aimed at promoting and improving the club and we can't do it alone so please email Peter at chairman@fifeflyingclub.co.uk. Also if you have any articles for the newsletter please send them to Garrick via the website at www.fifeflyingclub.co.uk.