



Chairman's message

Welcome to the July 2016 issue of the Newsletter. I hope you enjoy reading it. We haven't had one for a couple of years so the committee were delighted when Alan Laing volunteered as Newsletter Editor. Thanks Alan, for picking up the baton.

In September 2013 I wrote an item for the Newsletter about converting my UK PPL to an EASA one. It's a convoluted process but once it's done it's done. However, at the end of the article I made what was meant to be humorous remark, "*I've got the licence and I won't have to go through that again until UK withdraws from the EU and we all have to revert to UK licences!*"We look forward with interest to see how that's all going pan out. In the meantime, enjoy your summer flying.

Invasion! 6th June 2016

No – not that invasion, but a friendly one in the opposite direction.

On Monday 6th June 14 aircraft of a French aero touring club, Rallye Aero France, landed at Fife. They had first contacted us in October last year so this event has been long anticipated. The 14 aircraft are based at 14 different airfields in France. They assemble every year at a suitable airfield before setting off on an international tour. This year they met at Caen and crossed over the Channel to Biggin Hill on Friday 3rd. After taking in the delights of London's great monuments over the weekend they made for Duxford.

The weather for once was kind when it mattered. CAVOK all the way for the French pilots. An easterly breeze threatened to bring the haar in from the coast, but it did not materialise until late evening, by which time it was irrelevant.

Steve Murray was on duty at the radio desk and he tracked them on flightradar24 all the way up from Duxford where they had been visiting the aviation museum. It's a great website for this type of task. For the afternoon of 6th June it was "Fife Radar 24".

The first to arrive was a Mooney M20M piloted by Hervé Thébaud with 4 POB including the tour guide Eric Thomson. They were closely followed by a Cirrus SR 22. There was a 20- to 30-minute gap then the remaining 12 aircraft followed in quick succession. As well as Mooney and Cirrus other types were Pipers, Cessnas, Robins and Socatas. A type we don't usually see around this neck of the woods is a Gardan GY80, a neat little 4-seat low-wing retractable,



cruising at 125 kts. The airspace in the overhead was a bit crowded for a while but they all fitted themselves into the circuit after Steve had given them the vital numbers. All were on the ground by a few minutes after 7pm. The barbie was timed for 7:30 so it was all good except I hadn't allowed for the fact they would need refuelling. The queue for fuel took until 7:45 to clear and then pilots and crew were at the bar looking for a cool lager. Well, wouldn't you after 2½ hours in a light aircraft on a hot summer afternoon ?

As the barbie got underway I gave a short speech of welcome to the visitors and presented an inscribed quaich on behalf of the Club to their chairman Jean Michel Collineau. Jim Watt presented a bottle of Glenrothes single malt and a Tayside Aviation shield. Jean Michel replied in like fashion and

presented us with two cases of very fine wines as well as a couple of dozen caps with the Rallye Aero France logo and an aeronautical chart of north west France. He pointed out his home airfield of Angers to me and said we now had no excuse not to visit. Each French aircraft arrived equipped with a bottle or two of wine from their own home region which they shared generously with FFC members. It certainly helped the BBQ go down.

Jim Watt had flown in during the afternoon in his Cessna Bird Dog with Drew Dudgeon, chairman of Tayside Flying Club, as back-seater. Part of its rich history included a spell operated by the French government security services, so that was a point of interest for the visitors. Whilst the incoming haar was too late to be problem for the French pilots it was certainly a problem for Jim. He had to leave the party early as Dundee was about to be enveloped in the mist. However, he made a couple of low passes to the delight of our guests and FFC members alike, before heading up over the Lomonds. The six cylinder engine certainly makes a satisfying rumble at full chat.

Our members made a lot of friends over the all-too-short couple of hours the French were with us. Their bus arrived at 9pm to take them to an Edinburgh hotel. They did the tourist sites in Edinburgh, Stirling and St Andrews before flying up to Inverness on Thursday 9th. Well, 13 of them did. One of the Cirrus SR22s developed a fault while doing his power checks and had to stay at Fife. As for the others, their luck ran out the next day. On Friday 10th the weather closed in and prevented them reaching Broadford so they took a bus tour to Skye and stayed overnight before heading back to Inverness. They eventually left Inverness on the Sunday afternoon and headed off down the west coast. They successfully dodged rainstorms until they reached Lancashire where eight of them had to divert into Blackpool. The other five made it back to France that day. The "Blackpool Eight" were still there on Thursday 16th. I haven't heard from them since but I'm assuming they are home. (See letter below – Ed).

On Saturday 18th André Gonzalés and his wife Christine came back to Fife to take the Cirrus back to France, it having been repaired by an engineer from Perth in the meantime. His flight plan was down the east side of the country, then along the south coast before crossing Channel to Guernsey. The forecast was not good. The cloud base was expected to vary from 600ft to 1800ft for most of the way, but no rain. They set off from Fife at around 11am with optimism, but anticipating having to make a precautionary landing somewhere on the way. He took my email address and promised to let me know how things turned out. An email duly appeared. They had reached Guernsey in one leg of 3hrs 15mins, the weather gradually improving as time passed.....



How did it rate, purely from Fife Flying Club point of view? The aircraft on the apron made an interesting spectacle for aviation photographers and enthusiasts. A photographer from the "Courier" newspaper put in an appearance. Best of all, however, it was a great opportunity for FFC members to meet aviators from

another country and to represent the Scottish GA scene to them in a good light. As far as Rallye Aero France is concerned, their 2016 tour will no doubt go down in their records as memorable. It started very well but then they ran into one of the worst, most prolonged, periods of poor summer weather for many a year. As one of the Frenchmen said to me over a glass of wine at the barbie, "That's how the cookie crumbles." He was referring to something else at the time but it turned out to be prophetic. C'est la vie.

Chris Anderson

(Chris later received the following letter from Jean Michel)

Dear Chris,

It was very nice meeting you and we do thank you very much for the very kind welcome you let us have. Our members, pilots and passengers really appreciated it. Again we were sorry to be late due to weather conditions which did not allow better entertainment but, due to your warm welcome, we immediately realized



that we were at best of Scotland's clubs. (Editor's highlighting!!) Weather conditions again, made it impossible, to fly from Inverness to Broadford, and we had to organize a bus to get there and spend the evening. Back into Inverness next morning, we were lucky enough to fly over the Lochness, ready to take the picture of Mr. Monster's head out of the water . . . but it probably was its rest day!

We flew to Blackpool and got stuck there until Thursday morning, when we had a quick opportunity and made it home on Thursday afternoon. It's a damn (bad) year throughout Europe this year, but we finally had 99% of the circuit completed.

I recommend JacTravel as a super organization and Eric Thompson as a top guide, we didn't get not bored at all!

When you come to France, you already have the VFR chart and my contact information, you are more than welcome to the Loire Valley.

Thank you to all of you again, With kindest regards, Jean Michel. Rallye Aéro France

Editor's note – Chris Anderson and the FFC Committee did a huge amount, with great support from Tayside Aviation and the Topsy Nipper staff, to make the visitor's time at Fife memorable. The club owes them all a vote of thanks – and Jean Michel's comment above says it all.

National Flying Kids Day, 18th June 2016.

The charity "Aviation Without Borders" organises the above event every year. Stan Stewart, a Trustee of the charity, is a member of the flying club at Fife. For the past few years, FFC has participated in the event, with pilots flying the club Warriors or their own aircraft on the day to give local kids an opportunity to see the world from above.

This year, we had kids from the Muirhead Outreach Project and the Aberlour Childcare Trust. A spread of ages from about 6 years old up to late teens. By the end of the day, we had flown 17 kids and probably 8 or 9 of the adults who were there with them. Thanks to Chris Anderson for the organisation of the flight rota, the pilots from the club who came along (I'd name them all but would be sure to forget someone) and the private owners who made microlights and aeroplanes available. Thanks also to Don Imrie of the local scale modeller's club who brought along four flying models – including a 1/12th scale Hercules. Unfortunately, operational issues on the day meant we couldn't get a slot in the day's flying to get a model aircraft airborne.

The Topsy Nipper did a grand job in providing burgers, crisps and juice for the kids. Pilots can reclaim half their costs for the flying from the charity – the majority of FFC members donate these costs to the charity and Stan is able to

give the kids the added treat of lunch as well as a result.

The feedback, as in previous years, is that everyone (pilots included) had a great day, and for once the sun shined on us as well! ...AL



Above - Don Imrie (with the radio control set) and some of the kids. The Hercules is powered by the two inboard engines, the outer props windmill in flight. Another photo over.....



Some of the kids from the National Flying Kids Day and Chris Anderson, FFC Chair (on his knees), and some of the pilots who participated on the day.

FFC News:

Airfield Closure – The airfield will be closed from 5pm on 23rd July through to close of play on Sunday, 24th July for a Car Show.



Grob Group - Tayside Aviation has been disposing of its Grob Herons and replacing them with Aquilas. There are two Grobs left unsold at this time. One of them will be operated as a group owned aircraft by Tayside Flying Club. The remaining one will have a zero-timed engine installed and will also be available as a group owned aircraft, based at Fife - if there is interest from Fife members. Tayside Aviation will set up the group and will sell nine shares for £5000 each. Interested individuals or groups of individuals should contact Jim Watt at - james.watt@taysideaviation.co.uk .

Deeside Gliding Club – Has organised a fly-in, open to all, on Saturday 16th July. Details of this have been sent out in an eNews already. This is an opportunity to land at an airfield usually restricted to gliding activity. There are two hard runways, 520m and 540m long. Opportunities on the day to fly gliders and motor gliders, with a barbecue starting at 1pm. The airfield is east of Ballater and west of Aberdeen.

Cumbernauld Airport: To celebrate it's 50th Anniversary Cumbernauld Airport is having a Fly-In, Barbecue and Spot Landing Competition on Saturday 6th August 2016, weather permitting, if weather is bad it will take place on Sunday 7th August 2016. Landings will be free on that day for single engine non-based aircraft.

They would be grateful if you would let them know if you will be Flying-In and they look forward to welcoming you to Cumbernauld Airport.

Aquila Night – As we have said above, Tayside Aviation at Dundee are re-equipping with 2-seat Aquila aircraft for basic training. We are working with Tayside to arrange an evening that will suit the most members so that some of the aircraft can be brought to Fife for “taster” flights. (Priced very reasonably around £25 for a trip). Powered by Rotax engines, with a variable pitch propellor, the Aquilas will be an interesting change from the Grobs that they are replacing. Watch for an eNews announcing the date.



A great and interesting way to spend a club night! And get another type in your logbook....

Edinburgh Air Traffic Control Tower visit – this is in the process of being arranged. An eNews will give dates and times when we have them.



The Scottish and North of England 1:500,000 scale maps have been updated – new versions on sale at the portacabin, £15.00 each.

We hope you have enjoyed this newsletter – if you have any articles, points of view, photos, etc, that you would like to share with the other members through the Newsletter, please send them to the Editor – Alan Laing – at alandi@globalnet.co.uk.
