



THE MICROLIGHT AVIATION CLUB

Newsletter Number 251. November 2006

Tuesday 28th November – 7:30 for 8:00pm at The Northbrook Arms, East Stratton

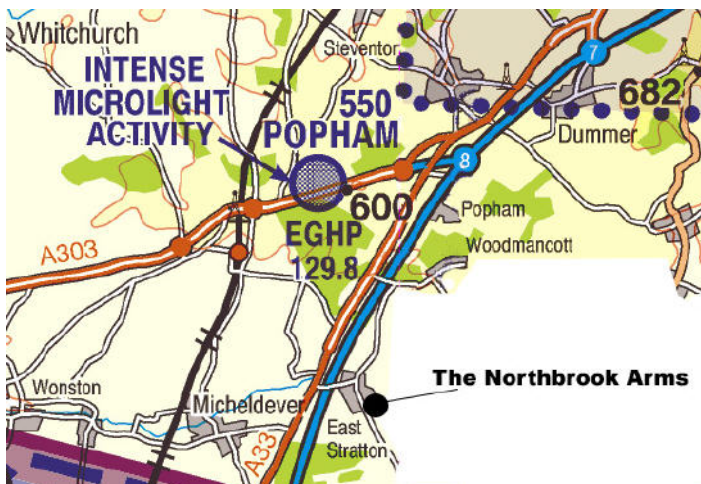
Red 10 (Road Manager) - Flight Lieutenant Andy Robins

Flight Lieutenant Andy Robins (37) was born in Halton, Buckinghamshire and was educated at Salisbury Cathedral School, Wiltshire and Gresham's School, Norfolk. Andy became a Combined Cadet Force cadet and completed a Royal Air Force Flying Scholarship.

After completing his A-Levels, Andy joined the Royal Air Force and was selected to fly the Tornado GR1/4 (a 2-seat ground attack aircraft) as a member of squadrons based in Scotland, Germany and Norfolk. He took part in military exercises around the world and served operationally over southern Iraq in 2003. During this time, he was Mentioned in Dispatches; a military award for bravery.

Before joining the Red Arrows in 2005, Andy spent two years as a flying instructor with 72(R) Squadron at Royal Air Force Linton-on-Ouse in Yorkshire. 72(R) Squadron is responsible for teaching the Royal Air Force's future fast-jet pilots, using the Tucano TMk1 aircraft.

When not at work, Andy enjoys travelling and most sports. He describes his skiing style as "speed rather than skill", and has recently started sailing with the Royal Air Force Yacht Association. He is currently working to pass his 'Coastal Skipper' exams.



The Northbrook Arms is accessed from a turning off the A33 which goes over the M3.

*Access to the A33 from:
M3 southbound - exit at J7.
M3 northbound - exit at J9. (There's no exit at J8)
A303 eastbound - take the first or second Micheldever Station exit then follow the map to the A33.*

**Congratulations to:
Graham Hancock, Dave Dollery, and Dave Haigh on their first solo flights and to Mike Kirrage De Hond and Peter Jordan on their successful General Skills Tests**

FOR YOUR DIARIES: CLUB EVENINGS.

28th November 2006.

Aero's and The Red Arrows, by Flight Lieutenant Andy Robins.

See Andy's 'biog', provided by RAF Scampton. Come along and meet the man himself.

December 2006.

No club evening in December.

Too close to Christmas. We shall all be busy wrapping up 'pressies'.

30th January 2007

Chasing the Morning Sun by Manuel Queirzo

On 28th February 2006, Manuel began his flight from the UK and 39 days later became the first British pilot to circumnavigate the world in a British registered homebuilt aircraft. This was a Vans RV6. He did consider flying a microlight, but decided this couldn't carry sufficient fuel for the 2000+ mile leg across the Pacific!!

Manuel will tell the story of his flight. Come along, it should be interesting.

All talks 7.30 for 8.00pm at the Northbrook Arms, East Stratton.

Don't forget. We have a 'deal' with the Northbrook. Buy a pint, at least, when you come.

Graham Jupp:

Mac's bit

The Eurostar DV-97 is here now and I can't understand why more people aren't asking to fly it.

Maybe it's because there is only one aircraft and most people want to come at weekends so they can't get on it. Anyway, there it is.

Any ideas?.



The MT-03 gyroplane came into Popham the other day. It appears that the current delivery if we ordered one right now is March next year. Don't know what to do about this one.

Any ideas?



Last month's meeting was Graham Slater showing us all about the Tecnam Sierra VLA model which was very interesting. Again, anyone got any ideas about this one? Being a VLA model the current legislation requires the CAA to insist that the training is done at a licenced airfield. This of course precludes Popham. However, the new EASA ruling which presumably will bring in the new 'Sport' aviation rules says that the licenced airfield situation will change that and many other current situations - don't quite know what these are yet though but current scrutiny of the airfield magazines will surely eventually enlighten us. At £70,000 though this is quite a lot of capital outlay for an aeroplane we can't quite readily put to our normal use.

Any ideas?

The Lonely sea and the Sky

By Sir Francis Chichester

Published by Summersdale in paperback.

Over the coming months we will print extracts from this book, concentrating on the flying sequences and you will see that flying has not really changed much in the last 70 years...

Part 1. Learning to Fly. Our hero finally gets his 'A' licence and, aged 28, buys a DH Gipsy Moth.....

The aeroplane was so new that it had not yet been fitted with a compass. I was 'flying by Bradshaw', following the railway lines across country, and I wondered if I could fly by the sun. The sky was overcast, with ten-tenths at 1,000 feet. I climbed up into the cloud, and proceeded until I had passed through a 9,000 feet layer of it to emerge at 10,000 feet in brilliant sunshine over a snowy white field of cloud. Not only had I no compass, but no blind-flying instruments at all. I reckoned that if I got into trouble I could force the plane into a spin, and that it was bound to spin round the vertical axis, and that therefore I should be sure to emerge vertically from the cloud. After flying along for half an hour by the sun, I climbed down through the 9,000 foot layer of cloud. I then wanted to find out how accurately I had carried out this manoeuvre, and I used a sound principle of navigation. I fixed my position by the easiest method available – I flew round a railway station low down, and read the name off the platform. By some extraordinary fluke I was right on course. I probably uttered for the first time the navigator's famous cry 'Spot on!'

He visits his family in Devon.....

After taking my sister for a flight I made a bad landing on a rabbit burrow, bounced into the air to find an oak tree dead ahead. I could not take off again and plonked down with a bang. One wheel hit the side of a cart track; daylight burst through the side of the fuselage, and the plane came to rest with a drooping wing. The damage to my cocky pride was worse, and I scratched my head hard. Then I thought of George Moore, the local carpenter who used to be my sparring partner when I was a boy. I rushed off for George, and we got busy with hammer and saw. We quickly replaced the fractured ribs, and added one or two extra. Eighteen hours later I was in the air again.

After this I settled down to serious flying training. For hour after hour I practised landing into wind, across wind and downwind, and then in a confined space. I used to plant my handkerchief ten yards inside a fence and practise touching down on it. Then I would move it 150 yards from the fence, and practise ending my landing run on it. This last (without brakes) was the hardest manoeuvre of all, because of the

variable wind. For half an hour a day I practised forced landings. I used to climb to 1,000 feet, cut the engine, pick the best field I could see, and land in it. At first I always overshot the field. I imagined that my motor really was dead, and that to undershoot would be fatal. Eventually my skill improved, so that I could just skim the trees or the fence, and drop into the field I had picked. I played this game with serious concentration, and one day I put up a 'black' ; after I had rolled to a halt on the grass with my dead motor after my forced landing, I found myself staring at Windsor Castle a few hundred yards in front!

I also liked to put in half an hour a day on aerobatics. I used to do my loops over a long stretch of straight railway line, so that I could check each loop for accuracy as I flattened out.

On 15 October I took off and landed in moonlight. This gave me twenty-three minutes of intense enjoyment; I had a feeling of complete isolation and solitariness, and the thousands of lights below intensified the feeling of being completely cut off. I looped, and did a few stall turns for the same reason that a dog barks at something which scares him.

He decides to fly to Australia but to gain experience by flying round Europe first, 2 months after gaining his licence. This is 1930.....

That flight round Europe started on 25 October, and it was a sporting adventure from beginning to end. Joe King came with me to Paris. 'Let's go,' said Joe, and pushed the throttle wide open. I assumed that he wanted to take off himself, so I let go the controls. We were a long time leaving the ground, and then only just cleared the trees on St. George's Hill by a foot or two.

'What on earth are you doing?' shouted Joe through the speaking tube.

'Nothing,' I said indignantly. 'I never even touched the controls.'

'Nor did I,' said he.

I don't think that manoeuvre can be repeated.

At first Joe kept on asking me if I knew where I was, and where I was going. Crossing the Channel was my first flight over water, and I climbed up to 6,000 feet. Joe complained bitterly of the cold, so I landed at Abbeville in France, where we had some cognac. After this his worry diminished enough for him to sleep in the front cockpit until we reached Paris. Here he dropped off, and left me to continue on my own. I refuelled at Nice, where I landed on a deserted strip on the beach, thumbed a lift from a passing car into Nice, and returned with tins of petrol in a taxi. I went on to Milan.

Next day I was late in getting away from Venice for my hop to Ljubljana in Yugoslavia. As I flew over Trieste it was already twilight, and I could see that I would not reach Ljubljana before dark. However, I decided to risk that. But as soon as I climbed over the hilly country inland I ran into

mist. If that persisted, I should be unable to see Ljubljana at all. I suddenly realised that I must land immediately, while I could still vaguely see the ground below. I was over a narrow valley, which was divided into hundreds of thin cultivated strips. I chose the best looking strip, came round in a steep turn, and landed on it. Unfortunately, it was too dark for me to realise that it was freshly ploughed land, and as the plane slowed I could sense the wheels sinking. Up came the tail, and the Moth went on to her nose. Once again I found myself dangling from my safety belt ten feet from the ground. It was too dark to assess the damage, but next morning it turned out to be only a broken propeller. I spent an interesting ten days in Novi Vas pri Rakeku until a new propeller arrived.

I moved on to Belgrade, which I left in bad weather. For 60 miles I flew down the Danube with the hills on each side in thick cloud and mist. I was disappointed that the Danube was a dirty brown instead of the blue, which Strauss had led me to expect. By the time I reached the Iron Gates I was flying in a huge tunnel with a cloud ceiling. After entering Rumania the cloud gradually lowered until I was dodging telephone poles in the mist. Finally, I had to land in a field where I was immediately surrounded by a running, shouting crowd of barefooted peasants.

The mist cleared sufficiently for me to take off again. I bypassed Bucharest, and skirted the Transylvanian Alps, flying over clusters of oil derricks. I was headed for Iasi in the wide valley of the River Prut. Just before dark I crossed a wide range of hills to find the Prut Valley a dense sea of white fog with Iasi somewhere at the bottom.

An ice cold wave of fear passed through me, but it left me cool and clear-headed. I turned in a vertical bank, opened the throttle wide and set off to retrace my route at full speed. I had been flying over forest-covered hills where there was not enough flat ground to build a house on, but I remembered having seen a valley with some flat pasture 30 miles back. Night was falling when I arrived. I could still see the ground directly below me as I flew low. I chose a piece which seemed clear of obstructions, but I then had to turn twice, and find it blind, because it was too dark to see anything ahead. I flattened out, and landed nicely, then held my breath, waiting to hit a fence or run into a ditch. My luck was in; it was a perfect landing. This is one of the few occasions when I landed without anyone seeing the plane. Next morning I flew to Iasi with the mayor, Advocate Popovitch.

From Iasi I flew north to Czernowitz, later Czernauti and now Chernovtsy on the boundary of Moldavia and the Ukraine.

From Czernowitz I flew over hundreds of miles of dense forest, interlaced with streams and rivers and with few signs of people. I refuelled at Warsaw, and again at Poznan. I was making for Leipzig, but I ran into fog near the River Oder and landed in a huge stubble field at a place called Reppen.

After Reppen I landed in a field in the Black Forest, and although I did take on some petrol there, I really did it for fun.

I landed at Leipzig and from there flew on to the Junkers Works at Dessau, where I had a flight in a small all-metal Junkers monoplane. I thought it was heavy on the controls, and glided like a brick compared with the *Gipsy Moth*.

On leaving Leipzig I had an adventurous day. I landed in a field when I could not penetrate the fog near Munster. I waited an hour on the ground, and then tried again. I still could not get through to Munster, so I made for Osnabrück. Here, the area round the field was completely enveloped in fog. I cruised round for some time, and then landed in a field at Jeggen. I got someone to pinpoint the exact position of the airfield on my map and tried again. I flew low up a shallow valley, only to find it closed off by fog on the ground. I turned round to retrace my track down the valley, to find that meanwhile the fog had dropped on to the ground at the other end, and I was completely trapped. I was attacked by panic. There was no time; the fog was dropping everywhere to the ground; already I had not enough height to turn properly banked but had to slither round in horrible skidding flat turns. However, I saw a field, which I thought suitable, and successfully found it again, after sliding round in a horrible semicircle. I pulled off a good landing.

Next morning I found Osnabrück. The airfield officials knew I was coming and shot up red Very pistol lights in the mist as I approached.

After that I had no more adventures before returning to England. I re-crossed the English Channel fifty feet above the water, grateful for no hazards. I was sorry Joe King could not have seen it.

Next month, the trip to Australia.....

Article from LOOP.

Just do it !

Sign up now for SkybookGA, the online flightplanning service.

When something is easy and quick, we do it. When something takes ages, its a bit of a nightmare, and even then you're not entirely sure you've done everything correctly, well ... You get the point.

The first scenario sums up SkybookGA. Put in your route details, click the button, and hey presto! Full details of your planned flight with any NOTAM or TRAs affecting the route, plus up-to-date weather - all approved by the CAA.

The second scenario sums up the non-SkybookGA way. Work out your route, go to the AIS website, get the NOTAM, revise the route, go to the Met Office, get the weather ... And at the back of your mind there's a little voice chiding away, "What about Royal Flights? What about the Red Arrows? What about TRAs?"

The American expression, "It's a no-brainer!" springs to mind. Remember, LOOP readers can have a free one month trial of SkybookGA. Just go to our website, www.loop.aero and click on the banner on the home page.

The only vague inconvenience about this free one month trial is that we ask for your credit card details during the sign-up process. Your card will NOT be debited with any money during the first month. We're so confident that you'll love SkybookGA that you will want to continue once the free month is up.

Then, and only then, will your card be debited with £39 - the price of a year's subscription.

During the free month, and the year afterwards you can make unlimited use of Skybook-

GA. Plan as many flights as you want. Go where you want - circumnavigate the globe with SkybookGA if you want (if you do, let us know). Save the flight details if you plan to do it again - all you do is open the flight, click 'update' and SkybookGA will go and get the current NOTAM and weather for you.

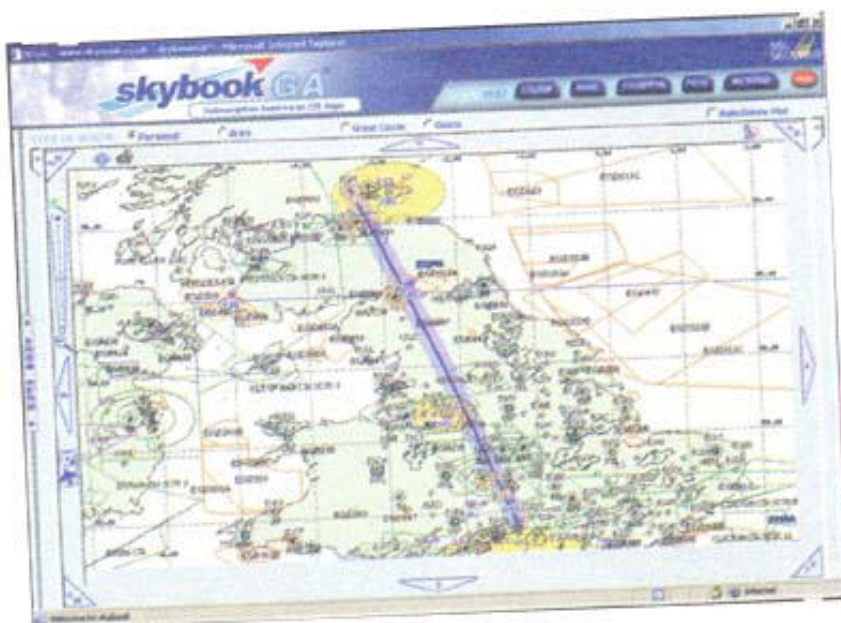
Let's take a run through SkybookGA, this time on a flight from Oxford to Perth.

1) PLAN THE ROUTE

Using SkybookGA's easy interface, start by putting in IFR or VFR, planned flight altitude, and width of the flight plan corridor you want to gather NOTAM about. Then, select the Departure Airfield and Destination Airfield. SkybookGA draws a straight line route.

2) INSPECT THE ROUTE

One of the joys of planning with SkybookGA is diving down to the detail of the route. The straight line route in the example shown here takes you through controlled airspace.



First there's Birmingham's CTA. Now, you could ask for clearance, or you could fly underneath the various layers, or you could fly around the CTA. It's up to you.

The key thing with SkybookGA is it makes it easy to prepare a couple of options when having to deal with controlled airspace.

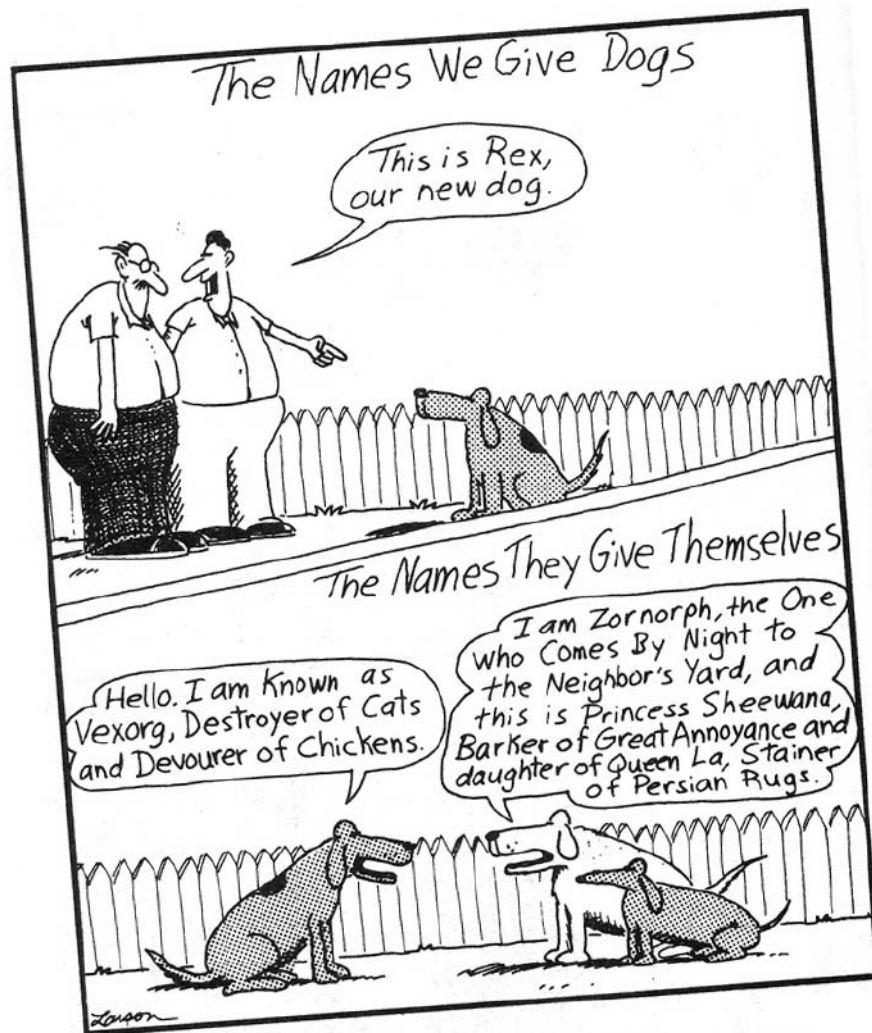
3) GET THE NOTAM

Click Get Met then another button to see the Route Pack. This is the detailed plan of the flight. Then it delves deeper into Enroute Information - both Met and NOTAM.

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