

# Squadron Buzz



Fleet Air Arm Squadron  
linking former, current and future naval aviators

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**COVER .... Yeovilton 1964** How times have changed!

The last mystery airfield was Coventry Airport answered correctly by Jeremy Miles. Mind you it took him two attempts, but even so he was the first one.



Buzz 77 Mystery airfield ?? .... Answers to the Ed please  
Email [owen2@comcast.net](mailto:owen2@comcast.net)  
Or.....brentowen12@gmail.com

# From

## The Editor

It occurs to me that the Fleet Air Arm is a strange organisation. I suppose more accurately I should say that the people who choose to serve in it are a somewhat strange group. Think about it, many of those of us who belong to our Squadron only served for a relatively short time, some during their National Service period, but apparently that short time made such an impression and perhaps was so valuable, that we remain attracted to, and feel part of the service even though at something of a distance.

I have noticed an interesting example of this in myself. I served a relatively short time in the Fleet Air Arm compared with others in the Squadron, cut short to an extent by the typically short sighted political masters at the time. I then served for thirty years with a major airline. If magically, as has happened with the offer to fly Hunters a year or so ago, someone called to say that the Scimitar had been pulled out of the museum and needed to be flown to a carrier, my reaction would be, "Give me an hour with the book of words and a few MADDLS (Mirror approach dummy deck landings) and I will be there". On the other hand, if American Airlines called me to ask me to take a flight to Heathrow in my old 767, I would ask ..... "How much will you pay me?". A silly story perhaps, but it is an indication of the lasting impression that our early years have made upon us. As I say, the proof is in the fact that we are members of '**The FAA Squadron**' and long may we continue. What an interesting and diverse group we have. Pilots from the last of the piston aircraft period, to the first and last of the fixed wing jet period, until that is, we have an operational carrier with aircraft to put on it. We also have members from the earliest helicopter days, to the present amazingly capable helicopters. I wouldn't want to sacrifice my fast jet experiences, but these modern helicopters are fascinating, particularly with the wide variety of duties, from rescue to offensive/defensive actions. They have avionics and weaponry systems that we could not even imagine fifty years ago, and would certainly be superior to the weapons available to us flying such aircraft as we operated in the late fifties and early sixties. I would love to fly them.

Pity we can't go round again for a second term!

**Brent Owen**

## **A recent flying trip to Scotland by Anthony Stevens**

Yep, Life's a Beach, well that's what it says on the T Shirt!

On a recent flying trip to Scotland I achieved another ambition in my flying career and that was to land on the beach on the Isle of Barra in the Outer Hebrides. As we all know opening and closing times of aerodromes are decided by the rising and setting of the sun, not so on the Isle of Barra where it is decided by the tides and hence the moon. I'm led to believe that Barra is the only airport in the world that actually has scheduled aircraft landing on a beach. See attached photo of the Twin Otter which had recently arrived from Glasgow.

Our holiday base destination, the Isle of Islay, sports not one but eight distilleries! The most recent old distillery to re-open is the Bruichladdich distillery which apart from producing some very nice malt, one particular strain being for sale in the local pub at £25 per tot! But it also produces the Botanist Gin from a secret recipe that only three of the staff are privileged to be in the know. Such is the secrecy that the three gents in question carry out production when the place is closed. I believe at the moment there is some discussion as to who the recipe will be handed on to, so that the next generation of distillers can keep the tradition alive. So if any of you are drinkers of this particular gin, beware if a solution is not found soon then it will be no more in a few years. Fear not though, I'm sure the 'canny' Scots will work out something.

Well back to the preparation for the sojourn up there. My girlfriend had booked a very smart apartment in a converted school house in a picturesque fishing village, well it had been in the past, now it's just a picturesque village next to the sea called Port Charlotte on the island of Islay. Here we were going to meet up with her son and daughter-in-law who were travelling up there by car.

We had planned our departure for Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> May but the weather didn't look that good so a delay of 24 hours to the Sunday when the forecast looked more favourable. Sunday came with low cloud across East Yorkshire but with the promise to clear as the temperature went up. By 11:00 the sky had cleared to broken at 2,000 ft., well sort of! At that time the west coast of the UK was reported to be basking in brilliant sunshine with clear skies. Therefore we would be flying into good weather. Checking all the TAFs and METARs for our scheduled route, the only blot on the horizon appeared to be an area of low cloud around Durham Tees Valley which wasn't scheduled to clear until late in the afternoon. With all the planning done, lines drawn on the chart, latest wx reports, NOTAMs all checked, Skydemon all programmed and ready, so off we set. I'd PPR'd Islay on Friday as the Air Pilot gave only limited opening times at a week-end purely for a scheduled flight on Saturday and one on Sunday when they wouldn't be opening the airfield until 15:00 local for 1 hour only. However, I was delighted to learn that they were actually opening from Noon local through until 17:00, so I had an excellent window.

Arriving at my local airfield which is some 400' above sea level and whilst the clouds looked pretty high from my back garden, they now appeared a tad low at the airfield! However, by the time the a/c was out of the hangar, pre-flighted and my entire girlfriend's luggage loaded there was just room to squeeze in my modest hold all. I normally only do a 'weight and balance' calculation when carrying more than two plus luggage but seeing the amount

she had brought along I thought it prudent to do one! My steed being a 180hp, 4 seat Robin Regent! You get the picture and we were only going for a week!

Steadily the clouds appeared to be breaking up so we climbed aboard and with the final checks done it was 'up, up and away'. In the overhead with everything cleaned up, I put in a quick call to Humberside and once acknowledged turned north towards the North Yorkshire Moors. Once I given my destination, Humberside asked if I was going to the whisky Festival, showing my ignorance I didn't know there was one! Later to discover that's why Islay airport was opening at noon for the afternoon to allow for the departure of flights for whisky goers or in this case leavers, this being the last week-end of the festival! Continuing the climb to 2500', giving Pocklington a wide berth as they were holding a major Gliding Competition we settled down in the cruise. However, I noticed it appeared very murky over the North York Moors so I altered to a north westerly heading intending to fly up the Vale of York. Linton is closed at the weekend, well most weekends, it is RAF after all! This was confirmed by Humberside who passed me on to Durham Tees Valley. A call to them didn't get a response which I put down to being on the edge of their radio coverage. It was then that I noticed the darkening skies ahead. Obviously the predicted clearing weather hadn't occurred yet. I went down to 1000' and ahead it looked no better. I was greeted with a wall of blackness all the way down to the ground level. I explained to my girlfriend that there was no way I was going through that. Having had an estimated TOPS from Humberside of around 3500' it was time to make use of the IR so up we went, punching a hole in the clouds breaking out at 4000' in crystal clear skies for as far as the eye could see. Dialed up 1013 on the altimeter and fly the semi-circular heading.



*Overhead Durham Tees Valley*

By now I was in contact with Durham Tees who cleared me through their airspace then passed me onto Newcastle as I took up a north westerly heading across the Pennines, keeping clear of the danger area there. Didn't want the SAS taking pot shots at me!! SAS that's the weekend warriors, i.e. Saturdays and Sundays! Soon I was talking to Carlisle, only air ground at a weekend; naturally they were quite busy in the excellent weather. The clouds were now breaking up into small clusters of cotton wool. Keeping clear of Carlisle I

went on to Scottish Information as we coasted out over the Solway Firth. Scottish then passed me on to Prestwick as we tracked towards Turnberry after which it was back to Scottish as we passed over the Mull of Kintyre. Next Ailsa Craig 'hove to' into sight to the south with the Isle of Arran to the north.



*Ailsa Craig from 3000'*

Before too long we could make out Islay on the horizon. Continuing over Port Ellen, talking to Islay Tower I was given clearance for a straight in approach to runway 31.



*Final on to 31 Islay. Just lining up in a stiff cross wind.*

The light aircraft park is at the other side of the airfield from the main terminal area and alongside the main road, right next to a car park and viewing area. Following taxi instructions from the tower, I was eventually marshalled by a couple airport firemen onto a parking stand. After shutting down, getting out and receiving a warm welcome to Islay from the two of them, I explained that we were meeting family and as the terminal was one heck of a walk away could they come back and collect us both with all our luggage, remember the luggage! Then take us across to the terminal where we would meet my girlfriend's relatives. 'Och yea canna noo bother with that, just get ya people to come doon to yon car park' he said indicating to the car park but a short walk away. 'Then just climb over yon fence no bother'! With that, they jumped back into their shiny Fire Engine and sped off back to the terminal!! Welcome to Islay.



*In the photo you can just make out the tower and terminal over my shoulder!*

Just at that moment we spotted our ride racing past on the road just to the left heading for the terminal. So with some frantic waving of hands we attracted his attention and with a 180 he came back to collect us from the car park just out of the photo to the left. And we did just climb over the fence!!

As I said at the start apart from this being a relaxing holiday enjoying the surroundings, Scottish hospitality, the whisky and the local brew which is excellent and cheaper! I wanted to get Barra International, as it is known locally, into my log book. Checking the Air Pilot makes Barra sound a little daunting with a note to be attempted by experienced pilots only, so what makes an experienced pilot, well someone who has landed on sand I guess!! Also they require 24 hours' notice which I duly did, explaining that I was planning on coming the following day to which the controller replied in laid back Scottish lilt, 'Och no bother, just call again in the morning before yea set off"! So I duly called again in the morning speaking to the same friendly controller. He gave me the local weather which sounded promising saying they'd had a few light aircraft in already! I explained that I'd never been in before, again receiving a laconic 'Och it's no bother, but if you want to just do a low fly by before going around to land'. That was my briefing, were as I'd been expecting all sorts of 'do's and don'ts! So off we went climbing up in to a gin clear morning, albeit with a strong but steady wind of 18 knots on the ground.



*Crossing the Island of Tiree, reputed to be sunniest place in the UK. You can just make out the long runways of the wartime aerodrome which are still in use today with regular flights to Glasgow. During WWII it played a major part in protecting the convoys from U Boats as the merchant ships ploughed across the Atlantic.*

Next stop Barra, where I was requested to orbit keeping clear until a schedule passenger flight had cleared.



*Barra International from 2000' Terminal Buildings. Runways*

The tower then asked my intentions to which I requested a low pass then to join the circuit and land. This was approved and I was given 07 as the runway in use and to call final.



*Here on final approach to runway (?) 07. Tower & terminal Runway marker board.  
Cockle Picker*

Having spoken to my brother who until he recently retired was a commercial pilot, at one time flying for Logan Air in Scotland, he'd flown many times in to Barra and explained to me the only points to worry about was standing water if the tide had just receded and the Cockle Pickers who gradually walk out following the tide, completely oblivious to the fact that they are on an active airfield! Well I'd timed my arrival to be well past High Tide so no standing water or Cockle Pickers. There were people, but they were hardly visible in the distant at the water's edge. I have to say that landing on the sand at Barra was akin to landing on a Billiard Table, it was as smooth as silk! Even though I say so myself, a real greaser! Even my girlfriend asked 'have we landed?' as I turned to taxi back to the terminal! We then enjoyed a superb home cooked lunch in the terminal café with a magnificent view out across the sand. Frequented by locals who come not only for the good food but to watch the comings and goings of airborne traffic. Well actually there's not a lot else to do on Barra! If time permits a wander into the town of Castlebay is worth a visit. You may even get a lift from one of the friendly locals.

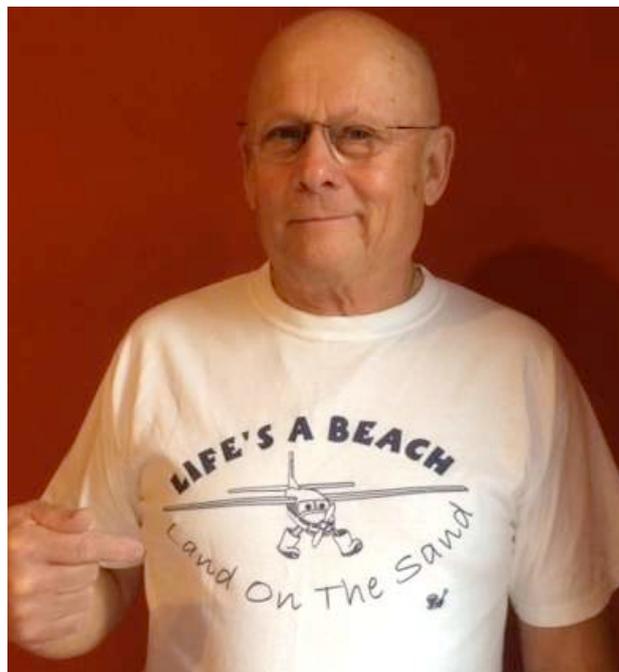
Some of you may recall an Ealing Comedy film made in black & white and still available called 'Whisky Galore'. The hilarious story of a shipwreck that was plundered by the small local population living on Barra. It's based on a true wartime story of a ship call the *s.s. Politican* which having set sail from Liverpool in 1941, was bound for the Caribbean. It was in the early days before all ships had radar and in foggy conditions working on 'Dead Reckoning' navigation the ship ended up aground. Actually on the Island of Eriskay just to the north of Barra. All the crew were rescued but the locals soon discovered the cargo of whisky. As you can imagine it is quite a remote place with little if any officialdom, so soon the locals suffering from the shortages caused by the war thought this was a gift from heaven and helped themselves! If you have a chance to watch the film, there are many scenes filmed in and around the town of Castlebay on Barra. Having been there recently and comparing views with the 1940's film, I can tell you that little, if anything at all, has changed since the making of the film



*Logain Air Twin Otter recently arrived from Glasgow. An almost brand new one which sported the very latest in glass cockpits.*

in 1948! Who said 'time cannot standstill'? It certainly appears to have done so on the Isle of Barra! Ironically a new film of 'Whisky Galore' has recently been shot and is due for release this year, if not already out there in the cinemas.

Naturally I did more flying whilst up there but then that's for another article!



If you haven't flown into Barra then I can thoroughly recommend a visit. So as the saying goes, 'Been there, done that and got the T Shirt'!!

Footnote:-

*There is another interesting side story about the wreck of the s.s. Politician, one that has been kept secret for many years and is not universally known. At that time the UK still had several overseas dependencies' in the Caribbean area to where the s.s.Politician was bound. As well as the whisky her cargo consisted of several boxes of new GBP currency for countries such as Jamaica, then still under the British Crown and using sterling. Mysteriously most of this money went missing! However, it was never discovered amongst the islanders. The HM Revenue Officers and police, when they finally arrived on the island to take charge of the wreck, only recovered what was left of the whisky. The crew of s.s.Politician however, were all rescued, returning home for survivors leave before being dispersed and appointed to other ships sailing world-wide. Eventually some of this missing money started appearing for exchange at banks in various parts of the world. Although it was never proved the supposition is that this money was 'nicked' by some of the crew as they abandoned ship!*

### When Insults Had Class...

These glorious insults are from an era "before" the English language got boiled down to 4-letter words.

**A member of Parliament to Disraeli: "Sir, you will either die on the gallows or of some unspeakable disease."**

**"That depends, Sir, " said Disraeli, "whether I embrace your policies or your mistress."**

**"He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire."**

- Winston Churchill

**"I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play; bring a friend, if you have one."**

-George Bernard Shaw to Winston Churchill

**"Cannot possibly attend first night, will attend second... if there is one."**

-Winston Churchill

-Samuel Johnson

**"In order to avoid being called a flirt, she always yielded easily."**

-Charles, Count Talleyrand

**"His mother should have thrown him away and kept the stork."**

-Mae West

**"Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go."**

-Oscar Wild

## LETTER FROM AMERICA

Flying weather is finally upon us. Here on the east coast of the U.S.A. we had unseasonably warm conditions in February and March, then just as we let our guard down, bitter cold weather attacked us as the shrubs were flowering. Open biplane flying is most definitely more appealing under clear skies with 30C temperatures.

I was in the U.K. in March and was blessed with some of the best flying weather whilst in the U.K. that I have had for some time. I flew a friend's beautifully restored Fairchild 24 to a lovely grass airfield with a very good restaurant. I can recommend Fenland if the urge strikes to blow the cobwebs away to get your 100 hundred Pound ..... (Sterling you understand not Avoirdupois) 'Bacon Butty', but I hope that the over officious marshaller we encountered has taken himself elsewhere.



I also had the opportunity to fly my old Auster Mk3 (G-BUDL) to Middle Wallop for a fiftieth anniversary, Alouettes as I remember. Again the weather was perfect, but Middle Wallop was rather conservative when allowing a collection of Austers to appear in their jealousy guarded airspace, but we from Spanhoe, should have impressed those interested, by appearing exactly on slot time. Due to the restrictive slot times, we had to make our way down the day before and spent the night at Old Sarum which was a total delight.

Accidentally, earlier this year while suffering from Auster withdrawal symptoms, I came across an Auster Mk1 which needed a new home. After having lunch with the most delightful fellow, I now have yet another Auster. I know it makes little sense, but for some reason the Auster still appeals to me, so that when this restored, but not flown 1942 Auster was offered with a rather questionable engine, it seemed to be a shame to ignore it, rude almost. Yet another Auster project will be occupying my time when in the U.K.



Here at home I have been building another of Vans Aircraft types, the last one was an RV9A, this time it is an RV8, which for those not familiar is quite a sporty 180 Kt or so aerobatic aircraft. There are worse ways to spend retirement!

Not a Trumpism !!

In the early 1950's during a debate on the Middle East problem, Warren Austin an American diplomat, and U.S. delegate to the United Nations, sternly advised Jews and Arabs, to sit down and "Settle their differences like Christians".

**Some things never change !**

### More Rules of Thumb

We continue to have folks running off the end of the runway both during take off and landing. Here is a thought or two to consider.

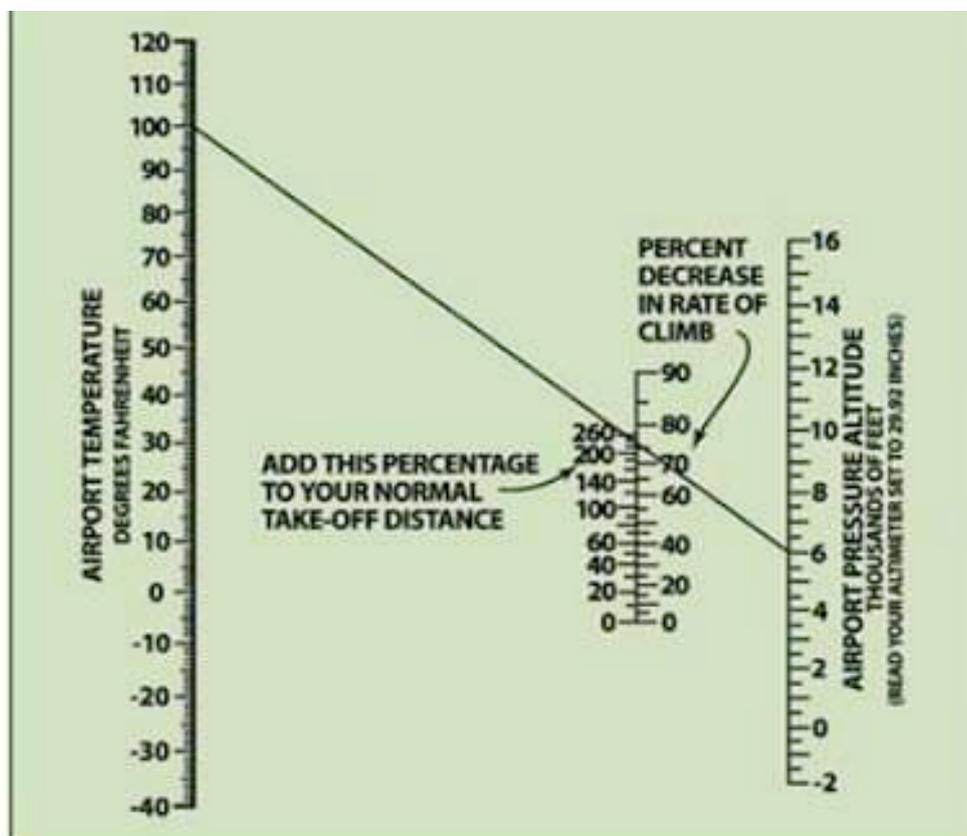
1. T/O length increases by 15% for each 1000 feet of density altitude. This may not often be of significance in the U.K. but check the density altitude with 30 C plus and 1,000 feet or so above sea level. Then add a wet grass runway and it may surprise you.
2. A **10 %** in aircraft T/O weight increases T/O distance by **20%**
3. If you don't have **70%** of your T/O speed by the runway midpoint, **ABORT!**
4. This is interesting. Subtract **10%** ground roll for each **12 knots** of headwind, HOWEVER add **10%** ground roll for each **2 kts of tailwind!!**

5. An upslope of only 1% results in a 22% increase in ground roll. A downslope of the same amount decreases the ground roll by only 7%.

**Consider this.** From the previous, there is enough information to make an informed decision whether to take off downwind, downslope, or into the wind but with an upslope. Runway slope can be found on the airport information page.

This is a useful one to have tucked away in the back of your mind. It is particularly useful to impress a youngster with a calculator that you can do it mentally. **Density altitude increases or decreases 120 feet with each 1C from standard**, which we all know is 15C at sea level.

I think that the following chart is quite useful and to many, rather surprising as far as aircraft take off performance is concerned. It is know as the Koch Chart. Britain has recently been experiencing temperatures over 90 F or 32 C. Using the chart, let us look at an airfield at only 500 ft above sea level (ASL) Drawing a straight line between 500 ft to 90 degrees, the resulting affect on takeoff performance is rather though provoking to say the least. It can be seen that there is a **25% decrease** in rate of climb and almost **40% increase** in takeoff distance required.



We all know that engine power reduces with pressure altitude, but again include this with the density altitude consideration. Not only is there less 'LIFT' in the air as an old accident report claimed, but the engine power is reduced by 3%/1000 ft density altitude. So for example with a 5000 ft density altitude, not only is there less 'lift' in the air, but the engine is attempting to get you airborne with only 85% power. This explains the full throttle, 75% 8,000 ft. chart in the aircraft performance pages.

I think that is enough for one session, but we all need to cast a thought about the varying affects of relatively minor changes in the environment, particularly if we are flying in unfamiliar country. I was flying across the U.S. in an unfamiliar aircraft, (T34 Mentor) It was very easy to forget that the some field elevations were at 5,000 ft and higher, with temperatures about 30 C. This, after leaving a sea level field with an early morning temperature below standard. There were considerable changes in density altitudes during the trip from take off to landing, easily forgotten with potentially disastrous results.

**I had just finished writing the piece concerning Rules of thumb, with particular emphasis on density altitude considerations, when I was rather too intimately involved in a fatal accident. It might well turn out to be associated with a lack of appreciation of the effect of unusually high temperature affecting density altitude and takeoff performance. A most unfortunate coincidence!**

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### **Food for Thought**

I was just about to leave for the day on Saturday evening, when a friend there asked me to fly with him in his newly restored Auster Mk9. It was his first flight in the aircraft and he felt that he needed a little ballast in the right seat as a 'confidence builder.' The flight went well, he flew the aeroplane quite well, and in fact I commented that he was flying rigidly by 'The numbers'. Good to see, but sometimes we need to feel the aircraft, and let it talk to us. The aeroplane itself was well prepared, so I had no hesitation in encouraging him to fly it the next day, but would fly with him again if he felt more comfortable with a little company.

Sunday was a beautiful day, but hot by U.K. standards. We met back at the airfield with two of the other local enthusiasts working on another Mk9 Auster. I then left to work on my project. Rather short of time, so was not sorry to see Tom taxiing out without me. I heard his take off with the engine sounding quite normal and healthy, but followed by a sudden silence. Not unduly concerned wandered out of my hangar to look for him flying, but unable to see him in the circuit began walking towards the departure end of the runway. The column of smoke made it obvious that something more serious than an off airport landing had happened.

Two of us arrived at the accident site together, but the fire was very intense. I then noticed movement above the standing wheat crop. We dragged the badly injured survivor away from the flames. There was no hope for the pilot.

At this point we are not sure what caused the accident. The reason for me even mentioning it here before the accident investigation has been completed is that there are perhaps three scenarios worth considering. Normally presupposing a reason for an accident before the official investigation is completed is unacceptable, but on this occasion I would like to remind us all of a couple of points. I have written on this subject before, but it is worth repeating.

I have mentioned him before, but my first instructor, John Hill was a fount of information. He once commented that it is your friends who will kill you. I didn't understand at the time, but he explained that when flying with a friend rather than someone who was not so companionable, there is a tendency to relax, not paying as close attention as other times. During critical phases of flight, one is well advised to pay close attention regardless of who is at the controls. Who knows, if indeed there was a medical problem perhaps someone paying close attention could at least have kept the wings level until the situation could be sorted out.

His other gem was. "Pre-plan your emergency" How can this be is the immediate question. Before every take off, professional pilots plan their actions in event of an engine failure or fire. As a matter of course before every takeoff I try to have an idea of immediately where I am going to head for in event of an engine failure.

There is a possibility from the patchy memory of the student pilot survivor, that the pilot may have suffered some kind of medical problem, but recent

reports put that in doubt. There seems to be indications from the impact site that the engine was at high power on impact.

Now let us consider the day in question. The field elevation is approximately 500 feet. The temperature was approaching 90 F. Although in normal operations the runway length is adequate, increasing the required runway length by 35/40 % changes the situation drastically. The first impact was at the end of the runway displaced to the left by 10/20 metres or so. It can be well imagined that flying an unfamiliar aircraft, arriving at the end of the runway with marginal flying speed could easily be beyond the experience of a pilot flying his unfamiliar aircraft.

It is probably worth a word concerning the time when any one of us could be caught out with a high density altitude situation where the end of the runway is upon us and we run out of options. It has now be reported that my friend apparently was anxious to climb out of ground effect and stalled. In a case like this it is essential to be patient, remain within ground effect and allow the speed to build. If the terrain doesn't allow this, then put the aircraft back on the ground UNDER CONTROL.

It seems unlikely in this case, but a sudden engine failure on takeoff is always a challenge. There are two difficulties when practicing engine failure during takeoff. In the first place, the engine really doesn't like having the power suddenly reduced to idle from full power. Secondly, at idle, the engine is still producing thrust. After a real engine failure, if the propeller is still rotating, the increase in drag is instantaneous and very considerable. Climbing out during takeoff the reduction in airspeed is dramatic. Not only that, but there is an immediate reduction in airflow over the elevators. The answer obviously is to lower the nose to maintain airspeed. I know, within our group this is teaching granny to suck eggs, but experienced pilots can go through an entire career without ever experiencing an engine failure on takeoff.

To finish this recent reminder, forgive me for making these two points. Whenever we are flying with someone else, mentally be prepared for any sudden emergency. It could be medical, or perhaps a birdstrike disabling the pilot at the controls. In event of an engine failure, immediately push forward to establish a glide speed. Don't even think about diagnosing the problem until the glide speed has been established. Remembering that if you can get the aeroplane on the ground under control you will be in a much better situation than otherwise.

As always **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO TURN BACK**. A thousand feet is probably a good rule of thumb as a minimum height for a 180 degree return.

### Early Jet operations

We are all members of the FAAOA. In the FAAOA magazine which has just arrived, there is an interesting article originally written in 1965, concerning an assessment of the Sea Vixen operations in front line service by Lt.Cdr. Michael W. Hancock.

We all admire the effort and dedication that has gone into restoring and maintaining this lovely aircraft in flying condition, and what a great advertisement it is for our Fleet Air Arm, but in front line service it had its problems. Even at the time, I admired the observers who were strapped into that awful hole unable to see out to any great extent. As far as handling, it was considered perhaps to be a more gentlemanly aircraft than the Scimitar of the same period, but the conditions under which it flew were challenging to say the least. The author points out that out of 145 built, the loss rate was 37% with 55 fatalities. I would guess that the majority of those fatalities were observers, but that is just a guess based on personal observation at the time. He is rightfully critical of a loss rate of 37%, however, at the same time the Scimitar had a loss rate of slightly over 50%. Out of 76 built 39 were lost. I don't know what the loss rate was of the Buccaneer, but I would imagine that the Mk1 Buccaneer was close if not equally bad. It is a sobering reflection of the times!

### **BRITISH NEWSPAPERS**

Commenting on a complaint from a Mr. Arthur Purdey about a large gas bill, a spokesman for North West Gas said, 'We agree it was rather high for the time of year. It's possible Mr. Purdey has been charged for the gas used up during the explosion that destroyed his house.'  
(The Daily Telegraph)

Irish police are being handicapped in a search for a stolen van, because they cannot issue a description. It's a Special Branch vehicle and they don't want the public to know what it looks like.  
(The Guardian)

Mrs. Irene Graham of Thorpe Avenue , Boscombe, delighted the audience with her reminiscence of the German prisoner of war who was sent each week to do her garden. He was repatriated at the end of 1945, she recalled -  
'He'd always seemed a nice friendly chap, but when the crocuses came up in the middle of our lawn in February 1946, they spelt out 'Heil Hitler.'  
(Bournemouth Evening Echo)

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### **FAA Sqn. Flying Standards Weekend 22-23 April 2017**

This year's Flying Standards Weekend proved to be a very good gathering blessed by fair weather and a mixed crowd of members. As usual the day was divided into two parts, the lectures and flypro followed by an informal dinner in the Gallery Room in the Wardroom and VL.

A total of six aircraft flew in from several locations the furthest being Biggin Hill and the nearest Henstridge. A good number of members came by car to more than make up the numbers.



The programme proper was introduced by Cdr Terry Tyack RN (Wings). Roger Dunn then gave a fascinating presentation on GPS approaches.



Jon Cook, Head LAA Coach then took us on a guided tour of the pilot licencing regulations and made a very complex area much easier to understand. His presentation certainly dispelled some myths and misunderstandings at least one members intends to take up flying again using the privileges of the National Private Pilot's Licence (NPPL).

Tim Nicholas gave a good round up of recent development in aviation matters including the application by Exeter Airport to establish a large Class 'D' zone that takes in most of East Devon. Last but by no means least Simon Wilson gave us all a timely reminder of the operating procedures at VL.



Following a lovely lunch provided FAA Museum, the sun was shining and the winds were light so we went flying. Some members with aircraft kindly made the offer to take those members without aircraft flying and I do recall seeing a lot of grinning faces afterwards. Another group led by John Beattie headed off for a three-ship formation, tail chase followed by a few formation aerobatics. I had the privilege of taking Bill Covington in the back of my RV4 for what turned out to be a very enjoyable and informative flying experience. Once the aeroplanes we put to bed we crossed over to the Wardroom to prepare for our evening meal. This proved to be a wonderful social occasion with the bar at either end and a superb meal in between. Much merriment, banter and laughter was the order of the evening.



Thanks for to the XO CDR Barrie O’Sullivan RN for kindly allowing us to use the facilities along with Wings for introducing our programme. Thanks also to all our presenters and to Lauren Richardson and Simon Wilson for conducting the revalidation flights.

## Film

### Sully

*I don’t usually watch aviation films, the film makers’ depiction of the drama during an emergency or malfunction is so unlike anything that actually happens with the occasional malfunction or emergency, at least the ones that I have experienced or observed. For this reason I was reluctant to see ‘Sully’. You will perhaps remember that this was the occasion when a US Airways aircraft had a double engine failure after a goose attack, and successfully ditched in the Hudson in the New York Harbour.*

*It was well depicted except for a little over dramatizing of the enquiry afterwards, and the fact that in a modern cockpit, in the face of a serious emergency there is a great deal of noise generated by the automated attention getters and computerised checklists. The real story should have been that in fact everyone, the controller, first officer, flight attendants and of course the captain all did exactly as their training required, with no drama or raised voices. Unfortunately this was somewhat glossed over, lost in the greater drama of the ditching itself.*

*As an aside, I do know that although the ditching itself appeared to be relatively gentle, in fact there was major impact damage to the aircraft.*

## Book

### Fly Navy

*This book is one that gave me several evenings of real pleasure. The subtitle of 'The View from a 'Jungly Cockpit' is a series of personal accounts collated by our own **John Beattie**. Not only is the content fascinating, covering the period from 1958 - 2008, but the book itself is very well presented. The amazing thought came to me, that it covers fifty years of helicopter operations. My first helicopter ride is still fresh in my memory, was after being pulled from the sea by a Dragonfly. I can vividly remember looking up at the oil stained belly, hoping the engine kept on churning away. Engine failures were not uncommon in those days, the thought of that oily belly falling on to my head didn't appeal. It still seems very recent.*

*It should also be noted that all proceeds from the sale of this book go to the **Royal Navy Heritage Flight** of which we are all proud.*

Speaking of which, I have just heard that the Sea Vixen, which has had such effort expended on it, was landed gear up one Saturday the 25<sup>th</sup> of May. Apparently after an airshow at Duxford, where the gear and flaps were extended successfully for the show, they failed to extend on arrival back at Yeovilton. As could be expected, it was a perfectly executed landing on the tanks with little if any damage to the airframe ..... of course, this will be old news by the time you read 'The Buzz'

**Aug 19 (Saturday)**– Summer BBQ at Kemble

**Organiser – Tim Nicholas** [timfionanic@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:timfionanic@tiscali.co.uk)

This lovely Cotswold airfield and its excellent AV8 restaurant will play host to this year's summer BBQ.

**September 14 (Thursday)** – Jersey Air Show

**Organiser – Tim Nicholas** [timfionanic@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:timfionanic@tiscali.co.uk)

The Squadron 'French' deployment will not take us to the French mainland this year, but to The Channel Islands, and specifically to the Jersey Air Show.

**October 28 (Saturday)** – Brighton Airfield

**Organiser – Anthony Stevens** [ags8491@gmail.com](mailto:ags8491@gmail.com)

The final fly in of the year for lunch will be to this friendly Yorkshire airfield, which is also home to a collection of classic aircraft. A decent café awaits us for lunch.

**November 25(Saturday)** – AGM and Annual Dinner at The Arrow Mill, Alcester

## NOTE

Sqn members and guests are welcome to fly or drive to all events. Booking forms for each event on the programme will come out a month in advance.

## **OTHER EVENTS**

Easter and Summer RN Gliding Courses will be held at Lee on Solent, Yeovilton and Culdrose. Squadron members who can assist by taking students up in their own aircraft for a powered aircraft familiarisation and navigation exercise will be provided with fuel to cover those flights. Any support will be much appreciated. Gliding Course dates are shown below. Powered flying support will take place on 1 or 2 days of each course.

Yeovilton	12-18 Aug
Culdrose	5-19 Aug

### **NOTE**

Sqn members and guests are welcome to fly or drive to all events. Booking forms for each event on the programme will come out a month in advance.

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### **Quick dit on Vixen and T20:**

Sea Vixen is in one piece, with engines out and repair survey just about complete. Decision has not made at time of writing whether to repair or not. Gearbox is a challenge in that the two spares both have issues, but could be amalgamated into one by a major engineering firm. Engines are soon lifex and any repair would have to include engine overhaul, obviously providing a capable company can be found. Panel and frame damage should be relatively simple. It did appear on the static line at Yeovilton, looking lovely as ever.



Sea Fury T20 VX281 has completed airframe repairs and engine overhaul. Ground run programme has thrown up a few problems of a minor nature, but which kept it on the ground over Yeovilton air day. It is hoped to test fly by end of July.



Swordfish W5856 Pegasus engine has suffered a setback in that exhaust valves have been 'flaking' and require replacement with newly manufactured items. These won't be made until late summer, but it is hoped to fly her before seasons end. LS326 awaits an engine, held up by lack of pistons, being made by Cosworth and exhaust valves. It should fly by the start of the 2018 season.



Tailpiece .....

And the winner of the  
warm and fuzzy competition?

On the other hand .....

Who would we rather have responsible  
for our military?

