

May 2023



WAYP

Newsletter of Priory Farm Aviators
www.flypfa.co.uk



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Committee Members

John Fielding (chair), Bob Sage (airfield owner), Mik Horne (Treasurer),
Alan McNeal (WX station, R/T, Waypoint editor), Paul Jackson, David Brown (Facilities), Richard Flagg (webmaster),
Sean Simington (social events booking), Julian Campbell, Nigel Hall (Club insurance).

Hello again folks. I seem to have been saying "it's nearly Spring" for many weeks. Maybe it's just around the corner? Let's hope so as I'm sure you are all as fed up with the cold wet weather as I am.

News

Shock horror! Someone is leaving Priory Farm and the committee! It's nothing personal as recent member Paul Archer has moved back up North to Geordie-land. If you're not sure who I'm talking about, Paul owns the recently arrived and soon to depart Topsy Nipper. It's a shame for us because he's a splendid fellow and will be missed. They aircraft's still at PF so I expect we will see him again briefly when he flies it away. Hey-ho.

Tibenham Cafe

There's new cafe at Tibenham Airfield - 'The Cabin'. It's open on Wednesday, Thursday & Saturday for now but expects to open on other days soon. Go to the catering tab on the Norfolk Gliding Club website for more details www.norfolkgldingclub.com/catering. Linda Smith has eaten there and reports that it is good - so why not give it a try?

It will be good to have somewhere for lunch etc just around the corner.

Events past

The April 'Away' Meeting was at the 100th Bomb Group Memorial Museum this year. Around 20 members turned up for a very enjoyable evening there. Thorpe Abbots Airfield was home of the 100th Bomb Group during WW2 and members were treated to some films on the history of the museum and the 100th Bomb Group as well as a look around the Control Tower and other buildings that form part of the museum.



Further info about the museum can be found here:

<https://www.100bgmus.org.uk/>

Current events

By the time you read this, some of us will have been on....

April Fly-out

Saturday 29th April. We have been invited by PFA member Mike Westman to fly into Boughton South airfield for coffee and cake. Arriving at about 11.30 and departing at around 12.30 to fly to Fenland for lunch. (Discretionary donation landing fee at Boughton South.)

If the weather is unsuitable, we'll switch to Sunday.

Share-a-seat-day

Sunday 14th May. This is a chance to give a short flight to a PFA member who isn't lucky enough to have access to their own aircraft. It's an enjoyable club day and a lovely way to spread a little happiness.

BBQ

Also don't forget that it'll be the first PFA barbecue of the summer on Wednesday 3rd May.

Committee Meeting Minutes

There was no committee meeting last month so no minutes to report.

Precision Flying Article

I hope you enjoyed the article on Precision Flying last month . I apologise that there will be no part two of this article for the time being. Instead, a cautionary tale from some years back but every bit as relevant today.....



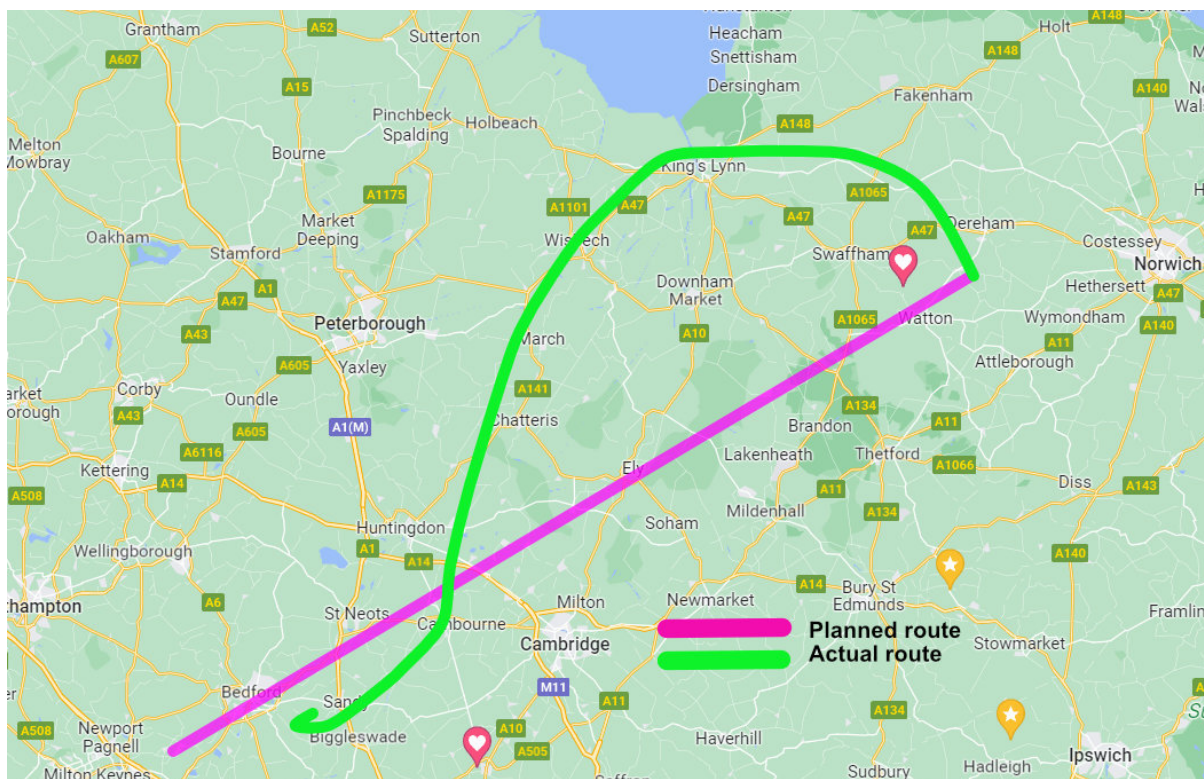
A pilot was in East Anglia spending a few days with friends, having flown up from the South of England. He was planning to fly back on what looked like a reasonable flying day with no serious weather to affect the flight – or so he thought. In those days online pilots' weather was basic. He looked at the Met Office Forms 214 & 215. These showed warm and cold fronts on the way, coming from West to East but nothing threatening – or so he thought.

The aircraft was a Cessna 150 Aerobat, with the Rolls Royce 130hp engine. The flight was essentially VFR using map & stopwatch with a little RNAV support in the form of the Navcom in the panel, using VOR radials to & from Cranfield VOR. There was no GPS available. Cessna 150 fuel gauges were notoriously vague with the needles waving up and down rather than be steady on an actual fuel level. This would be worrying for our pilot later in the day!

Having sufficient fuel for the flight – or so he thought, he took off in central Norfolk to fly a route he knew well, past Thetford, to the north of Mildenhall and Ely, then heading for Cranfield where he would turn slightly southwest, past RAF Benson, overhead Reading and on to the Hampshire airfield where he was based.

The pilot was moderately experienced with several hundred hours in various aircraft but with a basic PPL and no IMC or instrument rating.

Once airborne in sunshine and good visibility, the pilot made a snap decision to abandon the first part of his planned route and take a longer route – up past RAF Marham, Kings Lynn and the Wash, then down past Wisbech, Huntingdon, Bedford to rejoin his original route just east of Cranfield. This added about Forty minutes to the flight time, but he had all day so no problem – or so he thought!



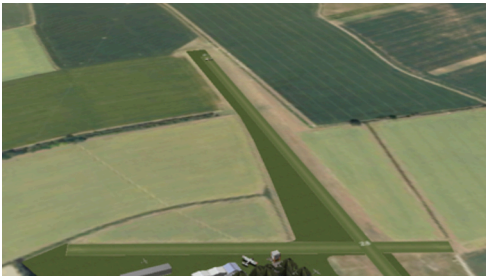
At first, all went beautifully and all was well in his world - or so he thought! Routing past Marham on his left, on to Kings Lynn and the Wash, Wisbech town, then over miles of fairly featureless Fens scenery until Huntingdon and Cambridge appeared. Passing between them with Grafton Water reservoir way off on the right, the weather ahead now looked a bit 'claggy', but probably OK – or so he thought!

Tuning into Cranfield Approach to ask them for an overhead transit he heard *“All stations – weather advisory. Cloud base over the airfield reduced to 900ft AGL!”* What?...that’s not good! Our intrepid aviator decided to press on as he could always drop into Cranfield. Within a couple of minutes, the sunny day he had enjoyed until now became distinctly grey with much reduced visibility. Then another call from Cranfield....*“All stations – weather alert – cloud base over the airfield now 600ft AGL!”* Yikes! That front was worse than forecast...or worse than his reading of the forecast maybe?



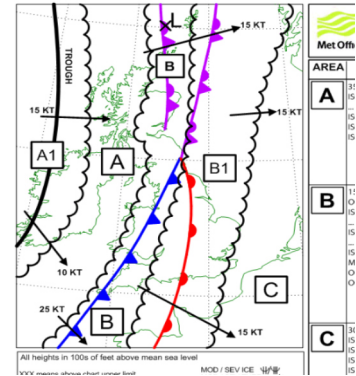
Suddenly, within seconds he was in IMC. He dropped the nose to get out of the cloud and very quickly considered his options which were few, except head back the way he came and look for a nearby airfield that was in clear weather.

In the middle of the turn to reverse his track he glanced out of the side window and saw...right beneath him....a grass airfield! Providence! He had no idea which one it was but beggars can't be choosers. In a flash he pulled the power, selected carb heat, dropped the flaps and spiralled down towards it before it disappeared! Lining up with the longest runway – into wind or downwind. The shaken pilot didn't care. He managed to put the aircraft down without mishap and a massive sense of relief that that he was on the ground and disbelief that this saviour of an airfield had appeared as if by magic!



Taxying in to the parking area with heart thumping, the airfield looked deserted, but as he walked towards the 'C' sign, a head popped round the door and said, "Where the **** did you appear from?". A brief explanation followed together with a welcome cup of tea.

The latest Forms 214 & 215 were consulted on the airfield computer. They showed the two fronts – the one now on top of the airfield and another, heading the same way but at some distance. The forecast was consulted several times over the next couple of hours by our intrepid aviator who finally decided that as the first front had now passed and there was a useful gap between the two it would be OK to take off and head for home or so he thought, after a real fright and what seemed like a divine deliverance! Note: NOT the actual Form 215, but similar to it!



This he did after thanking the airfield owner profusely, did a quick pre-flight check and prepared to depart. The amount of fuel shown in the tanks was a bit low but he decided it would be enough...or so he thought.

So, after a frightening experience all was well and he got home without any more dramas? Oh no! That was just Part One of the pilots 'worst day'.....it was to get even worse! Standby for Part 2 of this cautionary tale next month!

And Finally - don't forget our annual fly-in is coming up. Not 'Father's Day' this year as it will be earlier, on Sunday 11th June.

Help!

We can't run it without some help from the membership, so if you would like to join the happy band of people who make it a success every year - contact John Fielding, David Brown or me to volunteer and give some idea of what you would like to do. Mostly we just need many pairs of hands to get the airfield set up for the day, and many thanks in advance.

Priors Farm
Sunday, 11 June
FLY-IN
www.flyPFA.co.uk

★ **FREE camping Sat. night**

★ **Prize for the farthest-travelled aircraft**

N52° 27' 09.24" E 001° 07' 51.30"
 186 ft AMSL **Priors Micro 129.830**
 R/w 01/19, 600 m grass
100LL (cash/cheque)
 Remain clear of intensive gliding at Tibenham
 Contact*: Bob Sage 01379 677334 in advance
 07799 695144 on the day
 *First-time visitors MUST PPR

Hot & cold Food & drink
 07979 395655