

November 2022



# WAYPOINT INT

Newsletter of Priory Farm Aviators  
[www.flypfa.co.uk](http://www.flypfa.co.uk)



## Committee Members

John Fielding (chair), Bob Sage (airfield owner), Mik Horne (Treasurer), Alan McNeal (WX station, R/T, Waypoint editor)  
Paul Jackson, David Brown, Richard Flagg (webmaster), Steve Foreman, Sue Foreman



It's November already. The temperature is dropping, there is more cloud & rain about, the days are getting shorter... Wait I hear you say... you're making us depressed! Sorry! Autumn is indeed here, but I'm sure there are plenty of good flying days ahead and as we know, crisp bright winter days can be good for flying.... dense air, lots of lift, the wings work better, the engine breathes better so let's look forward to some good flying over the next few months.

Our webcam and our online weather app Weatherlink Live has been offline for a few days due to thunderstorm damage to telephone lines in the area. It should be operating again soon.



This month's member profile is a conversation between two aviation friends of nearly 40 years - Adrian Hall-Carpenter and me. See below....

New-ish member Paul Archer has just bought himself a little classic - a Typsy Nipper - another unusual & interesting aeroplane for PF. We look forward to seeing it buzzing around the skies of south Norfolk.



## COMMITTEE MATTERS

You will remember John Fielding's recent appeal for PFA members to volunteer for the committee - especially as Steve & Sue Foreman have had to stand down for personal reasons. Well, a number of you stepped up and offered to serve, which is very good as it lessens the load on existing members - John Fielding in particular and it allows us to allocate extra duties. Here is how the new committee looks:-

John Fielding - chair, Mik Horn - Treasurer, Bob Sage - airfield owner & membership, Richard Flagg - webmaster, Alan McNeal - WX system & Waypoint editor, Paul Jackson, David Brown\* - facilities and four new committee members - Paul Archer, Julian Campbell, Nigel Hall & Sean Simington.  
Thanks for stepping up guys.

\* David Brown - the owner of G-SWAB (now flying - yippee) has agreed to oversee the condition and serviceability of the clubhouse & toilet block as 'facilities manager'. Many thanks David for taking on the key role. Note that this does not mean David has to repair everything himself - just keep an eye of condition and report back to the committee on what needs to be done so that jobs can be allocated and funds provided as required.

On that topic, we now have an over-sink water heater tap you can actually turn without having the strength of Samson. It took a while but eventually I tracked down the correct part!

## OCTOBER COMMITTEE MEETING

Held at The Old Ram on October 5<sup>th</sup> 2022

Present:

Alan McNeal, Bob Sage, David Brown, John Fielding, Paul Jackson, Richard Flagg

Apologies:

Mik Horn

Minutes:

1. Club hut liability insurance. John is trying to find liability insurance for the club hut and toilet block.
2. Sue and Steve Foreman are standing down as committee members from the end of the year. They kindly offered to continue to liaise with the Gamekeeper in Old Buck where we will be having the PFA Christmas dinner.
3. Accounts report. ***As of this month Treasurer's Reports will no longer appear in Waypoint. The reason for this change is that Waypoints can now be found & downloaded from the PFA website, so are in the 'public domain' Financial reports will be made available to paid-up members on request. Contact either John Fielding or Mik Horne should you wish to view this information.***
4. Waypoint. Alan is going to provide an edited version of the excellent Priory Farm circuit article he wrote for the latest edition of Waypoint. Richard has agreed to upload this to the PFA website.
5. Membership. Bob gave John and Alan a list of past members who had not paid their subs. John agreed to send a reminder to them.
6. Chairman's role. John expressed his concern that the amount of time he's giving to the club is mounting. The committee agreed that his role should be to organise and monitor the required jobs rather than taking them on himself. It was agreed that we needed more committee members and ones who were prepared to take on roles, for example: an 'events officer' who would organise, book and manage the monthly meeting venues, fly-outs, fly-ins and barbecues. John said he'd write something for the Waypoint and would also circulate this via Mailchimp.
7. Facilities Officer. David suggested and volunteered for the role. This will help maintain and monitor safety within the PFA's areas of responsibility: the club hut and toilets.
8. Water heater. Alan said he'd sourced the right parts and would shortly be fixing the faulty tap on the club hut's water heater.
9. Possible fly-out. Clive James has kindly been organising a club fly out to Thorpe Abbots. Richard and Bob expressed their concern at the state of the runway.
10. AOB. The next meeting will be at the Wreningham Bird in Hand on 2nd November.

John Fielding, 7.10.22

## MEMBER PROFILE



This month's PFA member profile is a 'conversation' with Adrian Hall-Carpenter, owner of Auster J1N G-AHHH and many more aircraft over 40 odd years of aviating – far too many to list, but we will revisit a few of his flying adventures and mention a few of the more interesting aircraft he has owned. Adrian has also been a personal friend of mine for most of that time.

AM

So, Adrian, right from the beginning, how did you get into flying?

AHC

I always wanted to fly – as far back as I can remember. Like many other boys I built model aircraft – nothing sophisticated, gliders, Airfix kits and so on. The RAF was the goal, the Battle of Britain, the Dambusters and all their other legendary exploits – the stuff of heroes. The snag was, my maths wasn't even close to the mark. The RAF were red hot on you having maths & a science subject at A level, so the dream was unfulfilled.

AM

So what did you do instead?

AHC

I ended up in the car business, but I always had this thing about flying.

AM

What did you do in the car trade?

AHC

I wanted to be a car salesman but no one would take me on without any experience. Eventually an enlightened sales manager at Norwich Motor Company took me on trial as a car cleaner with the assurance that if I could prove that I could sell he would make me a salesman. The Brown Coat lasted a month! But I learned a lot about selling cars and even made a training film on how to clean cars 25 years later with a certain video producer!

18 months later I landed my dream job selling Rolls-Royce and Bentley.

AM

Was that in Norfolk?

AHC

No, that was in Edinburgh. Eventually in 1980 I landed a job as Area Manager for BMW GB. Everything north of Morecambe was mine, including Scotland and Northern Ireland so with that freedom of movement I could learn to fly anywhere in that part of the country so I had trial lessons at lots of different flying schools. Some were good but others were appalling. Being tall, sitting in a Cessna 150 wasn't conducive to the learning process so that ruled out quite a few schools because as you know many of them had Cessnas. Eventually I found Newcastle Aero Club which had Piper PA28-140s. They seemed very professional and their CFI was a nice bloke and I'm a Geordie too, so off we went!

AM

What was Newcastle Airport like back then?



AHC

It was very good because you were mixing it with 737s – international stuff and full air traffic control so the radio never held any fear for me. And lots of crosswind landings. After about 10 hours, the Cherokee that I was learning on [G-ATON] came up for sale and I rather liked it so I made them an offer they couldn't refuse! I think it was about four and a half grand so I became an aircraft owner and carried on training in my own aeroplane.

AM

What happened next?

AHC

I was transferred down here to East Anglia so I having qualified as a PPL I flew my Cherokee 140 from Swanton Morley and then Shipdham. After a couple of years I sold the Piper at a profit and went about as far away from a 'spam can' as you can get and bought a Stampe.



*(For those who are not familiar, the Stampe is a Belgian biplane rather similar to a Tiger Moth, with a Renault engine. ED).* Looking back it was probably a foolhardy choice buying a vintage aircraft with a fully castoring tailwheel, but if you don't give challenging things a go you'll never do anything! I proceeded to ground loop my way around the country, without much damage but I had a lot of fun. I once ground-looped it in front of everyone at the PFA Rally Cranfield! That's when I learned what my feet were for!

I eventually got the hang of it. About that time I got the job at BMW of National Used Car Manager which entailed another move down to Reading so I was fairly near the BMW HQ in Bracknell.

AM

...and that was where we met in 1985!

AHC

Yes – I remember you came to buy Cherokee parts from an aircraft I was breaking. We went on to become friends and work colleagues after I invited you to bid on a BMW corporate video.

AM

An auspicious moment in both our lives! *(For the readers' benefit, back in those days I was a corporate video producer/director. ED).*

AM

Remember the BMW Aeronautical Society?

AHC

Yeah, that was good. Paul Layzell MD of BMW GB and being a pilot himself set up the Society. You'll remember talks from the Red Arrows, the guy from Rolls-Royce who had worked on the Merlin engine programme during the War.

Most spectacular of all, our flights with Nick Grace in his Spitfire out of Bruntingthorpe. Fantastic memory! Of course, years later I talked Paul into buying Old Buckenham Airfield after it had fallen into disuse when the crop-spraying outfit that used it went elsewhere. I'm not sure that he's ever forgiven me for that!!



AM

Yep, the Spitfire flight is ingrained in my memory as well. Wasn't that about the time you started buying and selling aircraft? How did that happen.

AHC

Well, when I made a small profit on my Cherokee I realised there was money to be made. As we all know flying is a costly business, so if you can make a bit of cash here and there to help with the costs, why not? Also it was fun to own and fly lots of different types.

AM

Indeed! About that time you moved from Berkshire to Norfolk and for quite a while flew from Shipdham as I remember. Lots of aircraft went through your hands during that time Cessnas, Pipers, Rallyes, Austers, a Maule and many others. I even remember a Cassut racer! What aeroplanes hold the strongest memories?

AHC

Oh, a difficult question. Probably the Pilatus P3 military trainer Paul and I bought from the Swiss Air Force and the almost new Yak 52 I had for some years.

AM

How did you come by the Pilatus P3?

AHC

Oh, Paul found an ad saying they were selling them off with a ridiculous reserve price of about two grand or something. You had to be there in person and if you got one it had to be paid for in cash. We thought 'why not – give it a go' so I went over to the sale in Switzerland. I had 15k cash in a briefcase with me so I was praying for them to go for less than that.



Library picture courtesy of Pilatus Owners Group - not Adrian's aircraft

It turned out they were going for just over 20k so I was 5 grand short! I asked the auctioneer to stop the auction and "could I have a word?" I said I wanted an aircraft but I only had £15k in cash with me, so would he accept a cheque for the balance, from Barclays Bank in Dereham? They went into a little huddle and came back to say "yes, that will be fine" (I wonder if today's British economic state that would happen now? ED.) So I got one! A bit later, a chap taps me on the shoulder. "Are you from

the Air Force?" I asked. "No, I'm from the bank. Come with me." He then asked "Would you like the aircraft delivered to the UK?" "How much will that cost" "Not much" said he and so a while later while I was abroad on business when I got a call from star engineer Mike Simms to say "there's a Pilatus P3 sitting at Norwich Airport waiting for you. Do you want me to go and fetch it?" I never did get a bill for the delivery.

AM

It's a fairly serious military aircraft. Did you get any training on it?

AHC

No, I just did what those wonderful girls from the ATA did in the War. I read the POH thoroughly and got on with it! It was a single engine aircraft – albeit a complex one so what could go wrong? Anyway it was beautifully built and a beautiful thing to fly. If a little underpowered.

It had an internal winder to open & close the canopy. I used to pretend to press a button and surreptitiously wind the handle so people thought it was electric or hydraulic like a jet fighter!

It's in America now, with a larger engine.

AM

What about the Yak 52?



AHC

Ah, that was the real highlight in my aircraft ownership. Like the Pilatus it was a military aircraft and strongly made. The previous owner was a CAA engineer who flew it in carpet slippers so he didn't scratch the paint on the cockpit floor! It only had a couple of hundred hours from new when I bought it. I probably enjoyed the challenge of flying the '52 as much as any of the many aircraft I've owned, but in the end I got a bit fed up with all the 'fore-play' you had to go through before you could go flying.

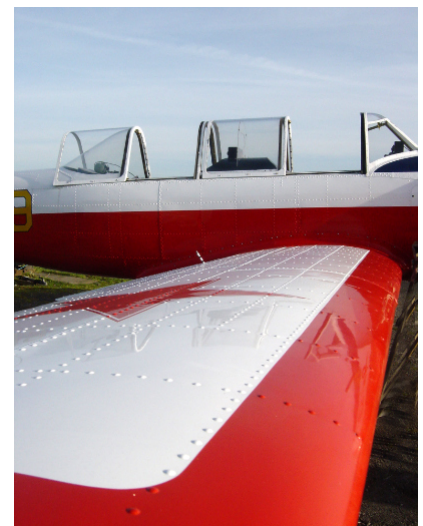
AM

Such as?

AHC

Oh, having to open the manifold drain valve for the lower cylinders, then pull the prop through several compressions to avoid hydraulic locking in the lower cylinders. Then there was the compressed air tank you needed to drain with the so-called 'snot valve' to drain the condensation from the compressed air tank which operated the brakes, flaps and landing gear – that had to be full, or you had to charge it from a compressed air source. However careful you were you always ended up covered in oil.

On top of all that, it burned a litre of fuel a minute and the instrument readings were all in Russian! You really needed a crew chief and a small army of leading aircraftsmen to prepare the aircraft for flight – which was how it was designed to operate in an air force environment.



AM

Let's turn to an aeroplane at the other end of the spectrum – your Super Cub G-BLLN. I have fond memories of flying around most of the British coastline in that with you. Do you also have those fond memories?

AHC

Of course, that was a great trip. As I remember the plan was to head to the north of Scotland in the hope of seeing the Northern Lights! I still haven't seen them so it's on my bucket list. It would have been about 1995. Very basic instruments plus a Skymap of yours I think? We set off – a bit overweight if I remember, up the east coast into very hazy conditions. A fog bank got in the way, so we diverted to Humberside.



AHC Flight planning at Carlisle 1995

AM

Yeah and I had to call them for VDF bearings to get to it as the weather was too mucky to find it visually!

AHC

Yes. Then we headed for Edinburgh where they routed us over Arthur's Seat with about a hundred foot clearance...

AM

...and we landed on the wrong runway, but got away with it, as their their ATC and radar controller wasn't paying attention and didn't notice until we asked for runway vacating!

AHC

Ah, happy days! I still remember the gal in the Flying Club wearing what seemed to me to be a St Trinians outfit....

AM

Yes quite. But we never did get to see the rest of Scotland did we? .

AHC

No, weather routed us down the west coast, giving us a great view of the Forth Bridges on departure we headed for Carlisle and a wonderful leg over the Lake District and down to Caernarfon.



AM

Stunning scenery as I remember?

AHC

Yep – wonderful scenery, but I can remember thinking when we were over the lakes that if the engine quit there was nowhere to go except water or steep hillsides! It was a great trip right round the coast of Wales, North Devon, Cornwall, South Devon, landing at Compton Abbas is a 20 mph cross-wind and back up to Shipdham after an unforgettable ten days and 24 hours of flying. I did another long trip in a Piper Cub from the south of France, helping get Martin Shaw's L4 Cub back here, but that's another story!

AM

Go on – give us the highlights of that adventure...



AHC

Well, I found a very nice L4 Cub for Martin that was based in France. He asked me to help him fly the Cub back from the Pyrenees to Norfolk so we set off with his brother Jem in a Bentley acting as ground crew and transport at all the places we had to stop. It took us 3 different attempts to get back to the UK, all due to weather. The bit that sticks in my mind is creeping into Dieppe just before dark, running on fumes as the wing tank refused to feed the main tank. The Guys there were fantastic, hangingar the aircraft, helping find accommodation etc.

Dieppe has a lovely harbour full of fishing boats, with fabulous fish restaurants all round the edge. Heaven. The problem was that Martin & Jem are vegetarian, so wouldn't even consider them!! I tried to see if any of the restaurants had a veggie menu and had more than one proprietor respond with disdain 'Vegetarian? Paah!!'

AM

Talking about Old Buckenham, I have a vivid memory of another high performance aeroplane I flew in with you from there – the Italian Falco! Tell me about your brief ownership of that aircraft.



AHC

Do you know – I had always wanted to own a Falco as I thought they looked fantastic and performed really well. However when I eventually got one I realised the shortcomings: tiny little wheels not really suitable for grass strips and it took most of Old Buck's runway to get off the ground....



...I never actually met the designer, Stelio Frati, but I guess he must have been short in stature, as I had to assume a Quasimodo pose when flying it. Worst of all it had the most vicious stall of any aircraft I've flown. It was as if the Almighty had got hold of the left wing and hurled it earthward. Quite frightening, I moved it on fairly quickly.

AM

I remember that characteristic well when we did a test flight together. Alarming! Ok, over the years you have owned countless aircraft, some of which I will illustrate with the article but let's jump to the present day here at Priory Farm – specifically about the Auster J1N you're flying right now. How did you come by it?

AHC

I bought it during the first Covid lock-down. I couldn't go to see it so I did something I always advise people not to do – I bought it sight unseen! Fortunately I got away with it, as it's a lovely aeroplane.



AHC

After 40 years of aviating I finally realised that 98% of my flying is 'pottering about' so what better aeroplane than a nice Auster? 'HH is 75 years old and it's a great honour to be the custodian of a vintage aeroplane. It seems to like being at Priory Farm, and I feel the same way.

AM

Fascinating flying life Adrian. On behalf of all the PFA members - many thanks. Adrian has indeed had a long aviation history and has owned and flown far more aircraft than most people. Here are just a few more for your delectation & delight.....



That's it for this month. I hope you enjoyed it.

Alan McNeal, ED.