

October 2023



# 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), David Brown (Deputy Chair & Facilities), Mik Horne (Treasurer), Alan McNeal (WX station, R/T, Waypoint editor), Richard Flagg (webmaster), Sean Simington (social events booking), Julian Campbell, Nigel Hall., Paul Jackson, Maurice Edwards.

## Editorial

An Autumnal greeting to you all! It seems not five minutes ago we were enjoying an 'Indian Summer' (after a pretty indifferent actual summer) and here we are in October, with autumnal wind & rain but adopting a positive attitude, I am sure there will be lots of good flying days to come.

Not much to report on the airfield right now. All is well, which is more than can be said for the recently closed Rougham and now Shipdham Airfield, which is to close very shortly (November) for good.

## Shipdham Airfield



Shipdham has a long history, going back to the second world war. RAF Shipdham was the first US heavy bomber base in Norfolk and was also the continuous host to Consolidated B-24 Liberators longer than any other Eighth Air Force combat airfield in Britain - from October 1942 to late 1945. It was constructed 1941-42 and was assigned USAAF designation Station 115.

From 13 September 1943 though 13 June 1945, Shipdham served as headquarters for the 14th Combat Bombardment Wing, 2d Air Division, VIII Bomber Command (later Eighth Air Force). It was a standard design, with T2-type hangars and a domestic site dispersed to the south east. Improvements were carried out to increase the number of hard standings for aircraft, and more accommodation was built.

It was briefly home to the 319th Bomb Group, before the 44th Bomb Group and its B-24 Liberators moved in. Although detached twice to North Africa, this unit operated from the airfield from November 1942 to the end of the war. In 1946-1947, the airfield was used as a transit camp for German prisoners of war.

The airfield then reverted to ownership by the farm on which it was built in the 1960s. Until now it has operated as a General Aviation airfield, and had a small museum dedicated to the 44<sup>th</sup> and the xxx young Americans who lost their lives flying and fighting from there.



Our own Adrian Hall-Carpenter flew from there for many years and was very involved with the running of the airfield during the 1980s. I was also a regular visitor by air during the 1990s and played a small hand in running the airfield on Adrian's behalf in the early 2000s. Since then, a small team headed by Mike Artherton & Barry Cator have run the airfield, which brings me to the reasons it is closing. Not housing, or industrial development or solar farms or any other fanciful rumours I have picked up from the ether!

The facts - and this comes from the 'horse's mouth' are that the main players are getting older and don't want to commit to a new lease and that to expand the farm on which the airfield sits, factoring in new requirements & legislation that will govern the way dairy farms have to be run, the airfield is simply in the way of that expansion, so all parties have agreed that it is time to move on. Mike and those who fly his PA28 Warrior are going to Beccles where I am sure they will fit in well.

## Meetings

There was no Committee meeting in September - so no minutes! The next one will be on 4<sup>th</sup> October - see below...

## Club Meetings

Our last barbecue meeting of the year was earlier this month, so for the autumn & winter we will be holding our monthly socials and committee meetings at our favourite pubs. The next one will be on 4<sup>th</sup> October at The Old Ram on the A140 nearby. We have all had an email to that effect from our events organiser, Sean Simington, so by the time you get this issue of Waypoint you should have confirmed to Sean whether you are coming and what your main course menu choice will be!

## Watchout - The Navy's 'ere!

Not with F35Bs - although they could cope with our runway I guess, but a rather nice balloon G-OFAA which according to Richard Flagg was 'up from Yeovil'. I presume that to be HMS Yeovilton? Anyway, it's jolly nice to have the Royal Navy around....hmmm, I wonder what damage an F35 would do to Bobs immaculate runway? Best not think about that!



## The French are coming!

Not en-masse like 1066 but in the form of two Gallic aircraft - one almost immediately and one 'in-a-while'. Let me explain:

First of all, our intrepid pilot and aircraft builder Chris Barnes who has already graced Priory Farm with two of his creations - Groppo Trail G-CLCO and the very pretty Chilterns G-DWCB, is well on the way to another home-built creation - a Marcel Jurca Sirocco. A 'what' I hear some of you ask? It's an interesting story:

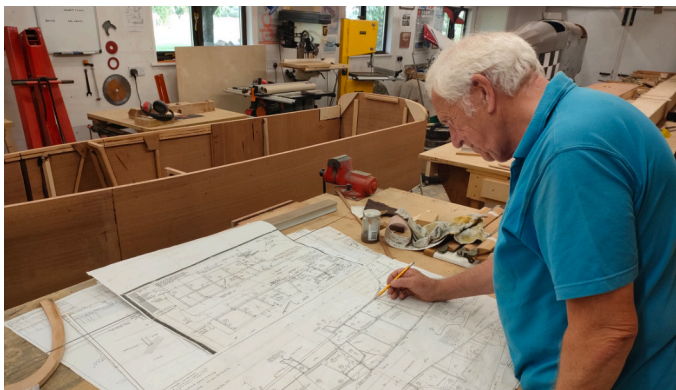
Born in Romania, Jurca was impressed by the PZL fighters which often flew over him. He learned to fly in a Grunau 9 primary glider while studying engineering. Having joined the Royal Romanian Air Force in 1940, he flew the Henschel Hs 129 in 1943-1944. He moved to France in 1948. After a period as a volunteer flying instructor on the Stampe SV.4, he worked in industry, including 15 years as a commercial director, and retired in 1983. He was naturalised French in 1965 and died in 2001.

His aircraft designs are prolific. I will not go into those here, but for those who wish to look further, the Marcel Jurca Aircraft website is [marcel-jurca.com](http://marcel-jurca.com)

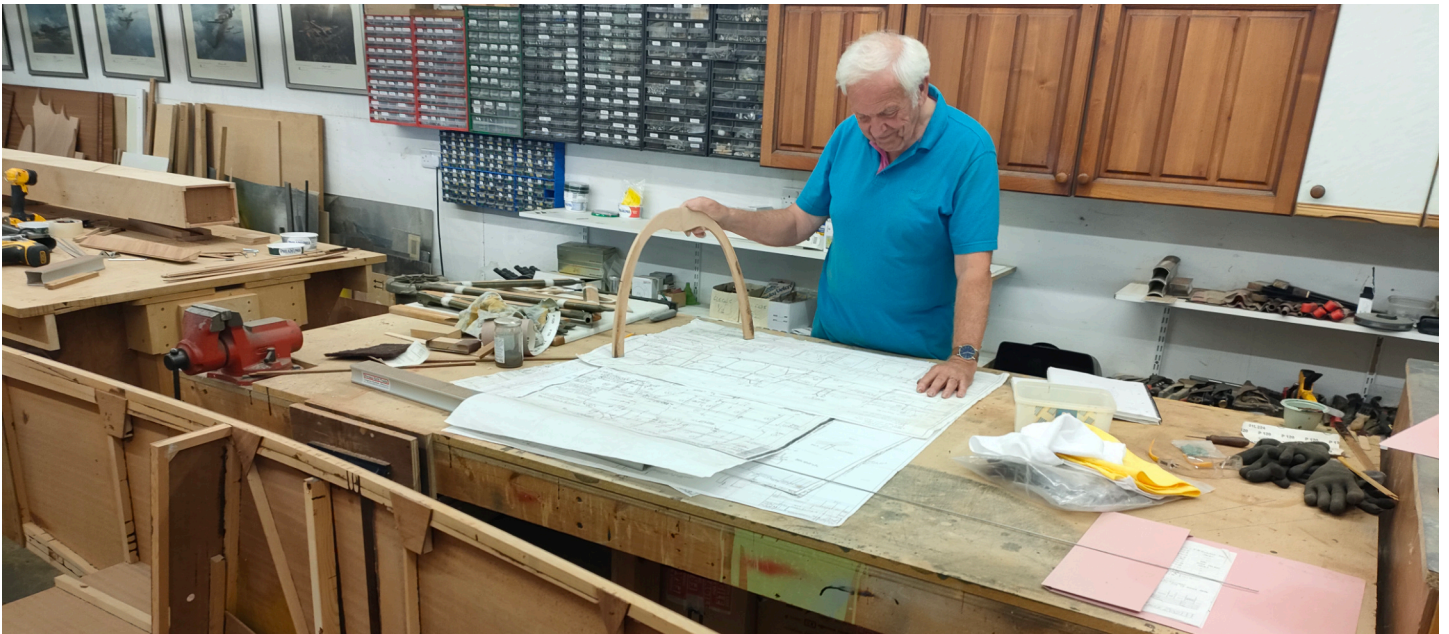
Chris is building is the Jurca Sirocco - a wood construction, tandem two-seat type with retractable undercarriage. Here's what it looks like:-



And here is Chris with his part-built version...



It is a plans-built aircraft, not a kit. That beefy main spar has to take the retractable landing gear, but the wing ribs are a bit different and very light. You need a fairly large workshop to build an aircraft like this one - fortunately Chris has such a facility.



A wing before skinning with plywood showing its simple but strong design. So, what engine & propeller will Chris fit to this racy aircraft? "Oh that's some way down the line, so I haven't decided yet". We will wait with bated breath to see this beast at PF sometime in the future.

I mentioned another Gallic aircraft recently to grace our hangars? This one is a Morane- Saulner Rallye Minerva 220. For those who are not familiar with the type it is also known as a Socata Rallye Minerva. It has the larger of the two Rallye airframes, a Franklin 6 cylinder 220hp engine, a variable pitch constant speed propeller and fairly comprehensive avionics fit including a Garmin 430 GPS. The new owner of this beast is our own Adrian Hall-Carpenter, so he's replaced his Jodel & Auster with something rather different this time - one might even say 'meatier'!. GL is a lovely low-time aircraft.



## A Great Adventure

I probably should say 'another great adventure' as the participants in this one have history of ranging far & wide in aircraft that some might say were not created for long- distance travel. I refer to our intrepid aviators Simon Stoodley and Matt Howe.

The aircraft - a Skyranger Swift 912S G-CETO and a Quikr Flexwing G-DGAV.



Where did these two head off to? I kid you not:-

Holland. Denmark. Sweden. Norway. Finland. Poland. Germany. Belgium. France and back to the UK! The trip took two weeks.

As you will expect this is quite a long story, so I will serialise the story over two issues of Waypoint. Simon has provided me with a trip 'diary' with photos & route diagrams together with pictures from Matt, so apart from a few comments of mine along the way, here is 'part one' of Simon's NORDKAPP diary....

### Day 1.

*On Saturday 10th June 2023, Matt and I set off for our epic trip to the top of the world - well to the very top of Europe - The North Cape (NORD KAPP)*

*With our flight plans and Gendecs filed, we set off at 08.00 UTC heading across the North Sea for the Island of Texel NL. We had a non eventful flight at a nominal height of 6,500'. When we crossed the FIR, We were as expected passed over to Amsterdam info. and instructed not above 5000'. With that we flew direct to Texel, landing in time for the no show of Customs people. Which would prove to be a problem later in the trip. We took on fuel here and had a cracking lunch in the restaurant.*



*Having eaten and viewed a little eye candy, we set off routing along the Fresian Islands to Germany landing at Husum-Schwesing in a howling cross-wind that picked up from nowhere.*

Refuelled. Checked the weather and then headed towards Denmark. Where our first error was made. Landing at the Wrong Airfield on the Wrong Island, But Hey ho. The owner was happy to take our money.

The airfield was Endelave DK. Set up tents and got the stoves out for our first of two week's nosh up.

## Day 2.

We packed away everything and then headed for Sweden. where we landed at Hoganas. where we took on more fuel, and had lunch at the aero club, We met up with another English Pilot in a PA32 who we had met on a previous trip in Slovenia back in 2019. He gave us some valuable advice about flying through Lithuania and Poland on our return.

We set off and headed towards Stockholm Not realising how much water and forest covers Sweden. We eventually landed at Stockholm Ska Edeby for fuel and the night.

We decided to have a night in Stockholm city so a hotel in the centre was booked for two nights, deciding to have a day off from flying.



## Day 3.

Stockholm!

## Day 4.

Checked out of the hotel. caught a bus to the airfield, 10 miles out and then headed north stopping at Mohed for more fuel. then on to Alvsbyn. Just south of the Arctic Circle where Matt had booked us into a B+B for the night.



## Day 5.

On having breakfast, We were speaking with the Landlady who expressed her love for motor cars etc. and said we were welcome to look at her old prestige car in her garage.



So off we trudged through the long grass of her garden to this out building where she revealed this Mint condition Porche 944 in white. - Like a prat, I showed too much interest in getting it started!.

I said to her in jest, "Got anymore jobs you want doing?" -Well yes she replied. A VW camper that hasn't been started for a few years. So me and Matt set our hands to get it started for her.



All was good, As we had worked hard all day, She said we could stay for another night FOC and she would cook us dinner - Result !

### **Day 6.**

The further north we went as expected, It was harder to find fuel.

We set off and head towards Kiruna. bearing in mind, we had not really PPR'D anywhere in Sweden. We get to Kiruna to find they were closed, On speaking again with Sweden Control, Kiruna would be opening in 10 minutes for a scheduled inbound flight, we orbited for a while then called for Landing info and subsequently given clearance to land.



We parked up on the apron as requested, and were advised that we could purchase fuel but the aero club would not be able to attend to us until 17.30, Which was bit of a bind as the time was only 13.00

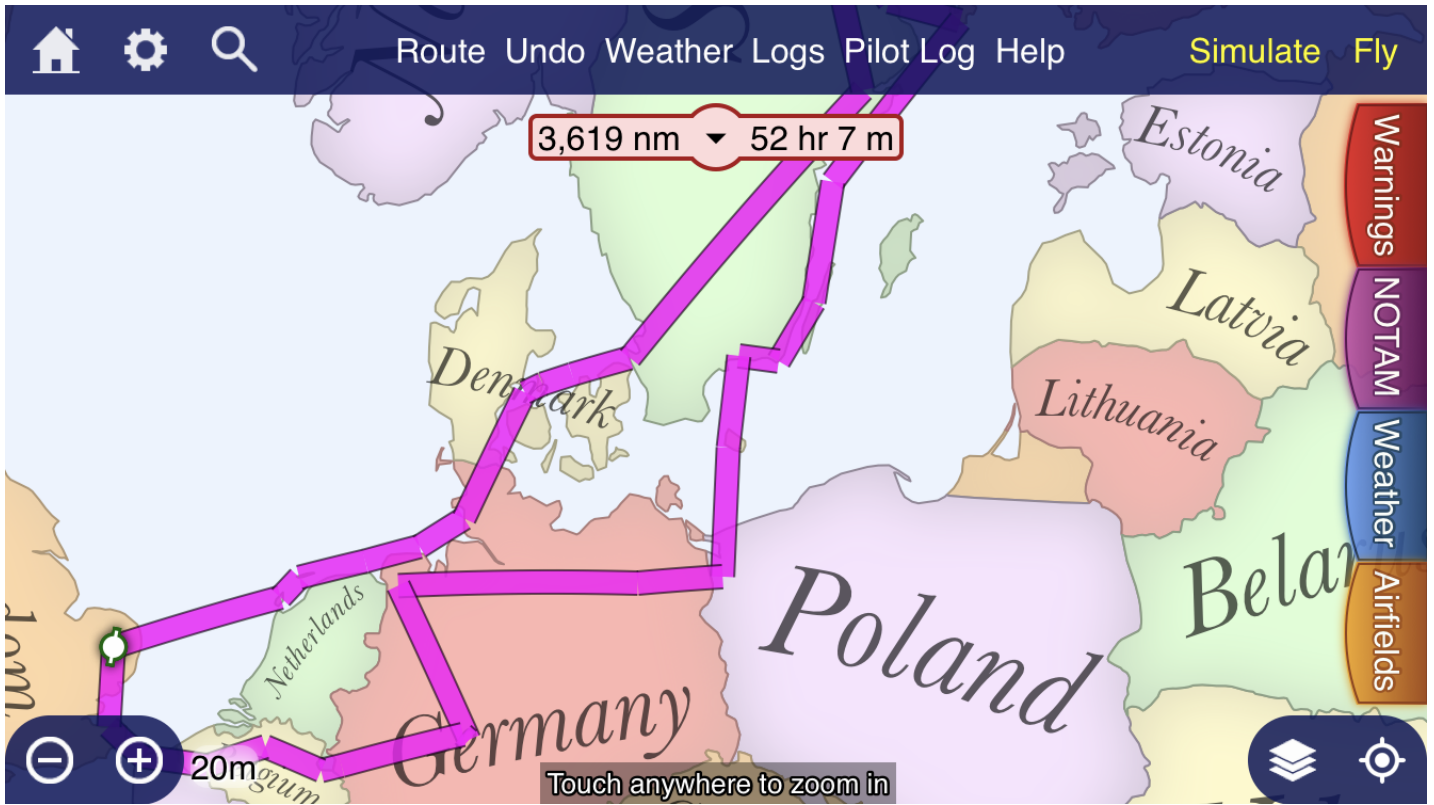
We try various different airfields in Norway to no avail. Apart from Hasvik in Norway. We decided to wait for fuel and stop the night at Kiruna where we got another hotel for the night.

Over dinner we checked the weather for the following day, and it looked fair to go. The Airport was to be opening at 06.30 for an hour for a scheduled flight so we could depart then,

We booked the taxi for 05.30 pick up. Flight plans filed!

### **Day 7.**

We had wheels up at 07.00 heading to the North Western corner of Finland and into Norway over a lot of snow covered ground and it to Northern Norway.



(This gives an idea of the routing. Ed.)



We had previously asked for fuel availability at Hasvik (Norway). where we were told there is a fuel station just down the road.

The weather was good with sun, but we noticed the ambient temp was very low as we had trouble keeping warmth in the engine on approach.

On landing at Hasvik, We were greeted by the lovely airport workers. really laid back. We had tea and cake. We were given one of the Airport trucks to go and get fuel with.

We decided as the weather was due to worsen by early evening, We would fly from there to the North Cape, and then back to Hasvik in one flight and then refuel again then decided where to stay.....?

**Next stop - North Cape and back down through Europe in next months exciting episode from our intrepid pair of aviators! (Ed).**