

BASH NEWS



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Dave Leddy supervises refuelling at Calais after his first cross channel trip



The Bash group is pleased to announce a new Basher. It transpires that sadly Stuart Douglas did not achieve his ambition to gain a pilot's license and has sold his share to ex Basher John Wrayton. Theoretically the Bashers should decide if new members are suitable, before they join the group, and in future, I am sure we would all prefer that, but John comes with the personal recommendations of Gwyn, and the money has changed hands anyway, so welcome John. It will be nice to meet a new Basher at the meeting on **Wednesday 10th March at 7.30 ish at Popham.**

The compass has been swung, and it now seems very accurate. We even have a nice new deviation card, and what with the newfound consistency of both the DI and compass there really is no excuse now for getting lost. The cigarette lighter socket has been tested and it powers a GPS 90 really well. The strobes too are showing their worth in the murky winter weather. It is nice to know that even if you can't see

the bandits, they can see you. The ADF seems to be rather intermittent, but the limited range of NDBs might be the problem. For instance, the India whisky has a promulgated range (according to Pooley's) of 15 miles, but also suffers from 2 lots of coastal effect when approached from the land. IW, EAS and CP have all been tracked. It is interesting to note that Mike Whisky does not have a promulgated range, and can't even be idented, is it still there?

A Basher recently rang Garmin to enquire whether any of these millennium bug things affected his GPS. "None of our GPS's are affected, and will all roll over just fine" stated an official, rather huffily. So who is it who will have the problem?

December was said to be the wettest December on record, and December is the wettest month of the year! Taxiing at Popham is a slow and painstaking task. Even Ian found that he had to get out and push on a few occasions. The trick discovered by Dave Esp is to taxi very slowly, and if Bash won't steer, stop, apply the brake and start again.

Dick has been very accommodating, in keeping the field open, "you can go, but don't keep coming back!" we were told. It can't be much fun starting up the fuel bowser in the cold weather either. Thanks guys for keeping us flying and of course we are all looking forward to the refurbished ClubHouse, for which thanks are due to Mrs Church.

Meanwhile Yvonne is looking after the Bash Booking Book. Don't worry Ben the dog is really quite cuddly once you get to know him. It's the getting to know him, which is the tricky bit. In case you didn't know, the phone number of Wiltshire Aircraft Maintenance is 01256 398372.

What with the runway being so wet, I'm going to tell them they can go, but not to come back until later this afternoon

"How's about a group trip to Alderney" said Dave, "How are we going to get 12 people in Bash and enough fuel to fly to Alderney with adequate reserves?" replied Steve. "We could hire all of the aircraft we can lay our hands on" said Dave, "We could divvy up the costs between us so we all pay the same". And so it was agreed that that's the proposal for the next group meeting.



I should tell them they can go, but not to come back until it warms up a bit...like some time in June.

A rumour was heard at the hanger doors recently. It is said that Dave Leddy and Dave Skerchly, both of whom are closet aeromodellers, are plotting to build an aeroplane. At present a Thorpe Tiger built from plans seems to be the preferred project, since it is a well proven all metal design. As for a completion date, don't hold your breath, they have been at it for 3 months and haven't even bought the plans yet!

TRIPS OUT

Dave Leddy wisely chose the shortest channel crossing from Dover to Calais for his first cross channel trip in February. When getting the life jackets from Doug's draw, Doug asked why he was taking them; "don't you trust me to maintain your engine then?" said he, there really is no reply to that is there. Dave was surprised to discover that most of the route to Calais was familiar to him, since he had learnt to fly at Redhill. Dover is almost visible from Sevenoaks, and if all else fails you can follow the M20, or better still follow the Eurostar. Having flown through a snow shower, Dave was heard to say that he felt "a real Jack the Lad now", but still didn't relish the experience!

Steve Roberts at
Halfpenny Green



The need to stay away all day has prompted only a few trips out, and even Steve Roberts has had to keep horizons a little closer to home. An attempt to get to Blackpool in January was thwarted by bad weather to the north and a timely stopover in Halfpenny Green was called for. I wonder if the official pronunciation is Half Penny or Ha'pny, or is Bash News just showing its age?



The hold at Shoreham

a short walk away. Built in 1700, it is the only windmill on the Island. It still has all the original wooden machinery and is now owned by the National Trust.

The vast majority of Battle of Britain airfields are no longer operational. The sector airfields such as Kenly, Biggin Hill, Hawkinge, West Malling, Tangmere, North Weald and Duxford, were all in the front line in 1940. From these airfields the few would sprint to their Spitfires or more likely Hurricanes and climb to do battle with the Luftwaffe over the hop fields of Kent. Dave Esp visited 2 of these fields, which are open to GA aircraft.



Biggin Hill is perhaps the most famous, and to most of us, trudging East to Calais, it is but an inconvenience squeezed as it is between the London and Gatwick zones. "Biggin on the bump" as it was supposedly called by "the few", claims, rather grandly, to be "London Biggin Hill", and shows no signs of its illustrious past. The huge runway is a relic not of Spitfires but of Hunters and Lightnings, it does however, have an ILS.

Leaving Biggin the Bashers were cleared onto the runway right in front of a Cessna 150, much to Dave's consternation. They then headed North, to North Weald, being told (in effect) to "bugger off" by Thames Radar, they skirted round "the bridge" in uncontrolled airspace with IFR traffic just above them in class A airspace, spooky!



Bash being refuelled from a 1938 3 wheeled bowser

North Weald is only 20 minutes from Biggin, and from accounts read in Reach for the Sky, the Bashers had imagined it being much further.

The GA terminal is a Battle of Britain vintage nissen hut, complete with camouflage paint scheme and a sandbagged machine gun enclosure outside the main entrance. Despite appearances they welcome visitors! With a reasonable landing fee and affordable Bacon Sandwich, you could almost get absorbed in the 1940s atmosphere. It was fun though, to see BASH refuelled from a genuine 3 wheeled 1938 vintage fuel bowser.

So when you next feel up to flying a stressful couple of hours low level in lots of busy airspace, the Battle of Britain tour is to be recommended.

Confessions of a Zone Intrusion by "Buster" Skerchly

As you know I try to plan my routes carefully, and as I have become more confident in my visual navigation, I resolved to be a little more confident in my route selection. Despite this I accidentally flew into the Luton CTR in the area of Dunstable Downs. Of course Bash was squawking 7000 with mode C so ATC new exactly where I was, but even so this did not endear me to Garry Woodley the Luton Zone controller, and I was duly reported. So how did a normally careful Basher get himself busted? The direct track from HEN NDB (yes the ADF worked perfectly!) to Bourn went through the corner of the Luton zone. I *believed* that at 2500ft it went under the zone and I thought that this would be a perfectly acceptable thing to do. Unfortunately I misread the map!

1. I had read the line "LUTON CTR D SFC-3500" as "A 3500+LUTON CTR"
2. I had read the edge of Airway Bravo 3 as the edge of the LUTON CTR, this being reinforced by the label LUTON CTR D SFC-3500 LTMA A 3500+ which is very clear, and missed that it should have been a dotted line.
3. I had interpreted the dotted line above Dunstable downs as a solid line being broken by labels such as "M1", "intense gliding" and "cables".

When I entered controlled airspace, ATC broadcast a warning, while I was on frequency waiting to call them. The broadcast did not fully register with me because my visual navigation and the GPS were reinforcing my own opinion that I was only a little bit off track, and therefore it wasn't me. This effect I have since found, is called confirmation bias, and delayed my reaction to ATC's call. I could have routed further to the north west at a cost of only a few minutes and the gain of a much more relaxing flight. Don't tell anyone but in future I will continue to avoid crowded or controlled airspace by a wide margin, and reserve the difficult bits for when it is really essential!

129.8 Shared with Bourn

The curiosity of Bash News was aroused by a call for "finals runway 19" while we were tuned in to Popham. Now there is no runway 19 at Popham, so I imagined Pat doing his nut, but Steve pointed out that it was actually a call at Bourn, which shares our A/G frequency. "Where's Bourn" I asked "somewhere in Cambridgeshire I think" replied Steve.

So one Saturday, Bash News set off to Bourn to find out just who these strangers were. Bourn is in fact about 8 miles West of Cambridge and only about 4 miles from little Gransden. The airfield has a tarmac runway and taxiways, what luxury. With a little control tower, and hanger nestling in a clump of trees, it must be an idyllic place in the summer.



Bash at Bourn in Cambridgeshire

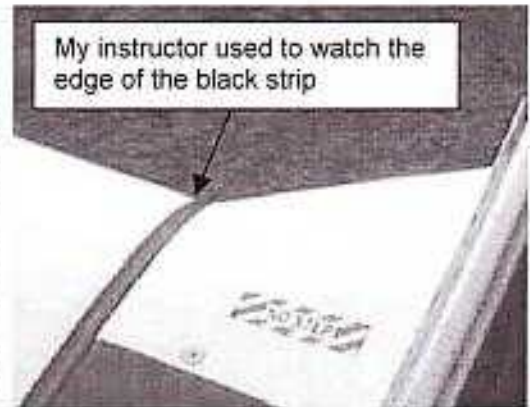
While Bash News was there, there were the usual bunch of Spam Cans and a couple of Piper Cubs, but no formal refreshments, although a cup of coffee was rustled up for a thirsty Basher. If this airfield had been in Hampshire it would have been heaving!

ICE COOL

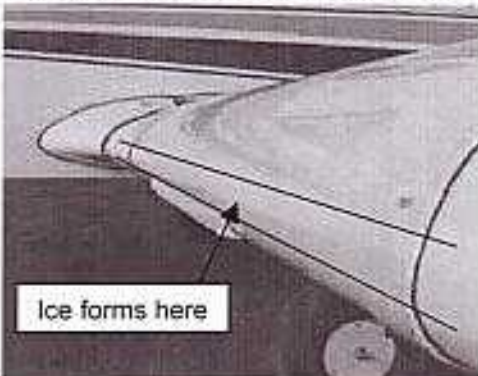
We all know that icing is dangerous, and no doubt we all do indeed avoid icing conditions, but Bash News had always been uncertain what to look for, should they ever be caught out in such conditions.

The pictures of airframe ice we are shown during our training, are of the huge lumps of rime ice, which have accumulated on airliners and bombers, no-one could miss those, but what does ice look like, and where should one look when it just starts to form on Bash.

On this particular day the freezing level was at 2000ft and we were in beautiful CAVOK at FL55. Ahead was a line of clouds about 2 miles wide sitting happily in a band of orographic lift, smack in the middle of controlled airspace. As we got closer we realised that we would need to descend or go through it, we duly requested a descent to 4000ft. On this day however the difference between the standard pressure at flight levels and the QNH was substantial, and so on the clearance from FL55 to 4000ft we only descended some 1000ft, and we were now positioned to fly through the bottom of the clouds. What the hell, the cloud was only a couple of miles wide, indeed we could see the edge of the shadows on the far side. We told Traffic that we were entering IMC, switched on the pitot heater, pulled the carb heat and plunged into the cloud.



After a minute or so (although it seemed like half an hour) things settled down. I remembered my instructor's words, "look at the black plastic strip on the wing root", I glanced out at the strip and there just on the leading edge, a tiny bit of frost had formed. "The screens' icing up" said the passenger, with just a hint of tension in his voice, and then in a flash we were back into CAVOK. We told air traffic we were back in VMC and had picked up some ice and were cleared for an immediate decent. So what ice had Bash picked up in a mere 2 minutes?



The first was on the windscreen, initially condensation had formed on the inside, and then frost had formed on the outside. In more serious icing Gwyn says that the screen will ice up (or white out) almost instantly. Secondly the wings had accumulated a 1-inch wide strip of frost right along the leading edge, just above the stall strip and right by the stall wamer. So consistent was it that it looked as though it had been drawn on with a brush and ruler. The problem is that Bash is white and so is the frost, and perhaps that is why it is difficult to spot. As we descended it was interesting to note that the ice did not clear until we dropped below the freezing level, and then it was gone, just as fast as it had formed.

So if you should fly into ice be ready to get out of the cloud quickly. It will form in a flash, and Bash is not cleared for any icing at all. ***If the cloud base is below the Minimum Safety Altitude then you might just have a real problem.....Oh, and whatever happened to the OAT gauge?***

KEEPING BASH CLEAN

We don't want to fall into the trap of owning a pristine aeroplane which never flies, so without wishing to seem a humbug, here are some tricks to help keep Bash clean.

First tip is that the long handled squeegee and sponge (with a drop of water from the Bash Bucket) can be used to clean the mud off the underside of the wing and the walkways without the mud getting on your clothes. It is much easier to get the mud off when it is wet, and much more pleasant for the next Basher to fly. A trick to reduce the amount of mud in the interior is to taxi away from the muddy Bash Patch before doing checks and loading passengers. A good wheeze is to do the checks on the concrete apron while waiting for fuel, then as soon as Bash is filled, load the passengers and taxi away. I don't think you would get away with that on a Sunny Summer Sunday though! The grass outside the club house is also much less muddy than the Bash Patch, so if all else fails it is better to load passengers there. Shoes with heavily profiled soles, such as trainers, seem to pick up more mud than shoes with flat soles. Mud on the shoes dries under the searing heat of the Bash Heater (good isn't it?) and falls off onto the cockpit floor.

SEND US YOUR MUG SHOTS

Don't forget Bash News can scan your photos, and with digital processing the worst happy snap can be turned into something presentable. All contributions to this Aviators Fanzine gratefully received.