

# SKYWRITINGS

November 2016



Newsletter of the *Kent Strut*

**Bit Early but ...  
Merry Christmas and a Happy New  
Year**



**Bagnoles 2016.** Gary Smith



Nigel Read - Editor

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*Last 2016 newsletter!  
Back next year*

**W**here is the perfect place in France to take your lady for the weekend? You don't want to spend all day travelling, waste money on long taxi rides or struggle to get a room but want somewhere that's pretty with lots of things to do and places to eat.

Well I have found just that place - Bagnoles D'Lorne in Normandy. A chance visit earlier in the year prompted

**November 24th Meeting**

**Pete Kynsey G-WATR Clipper Aviation**

**Cobtree Manor Golf Club, ME14 3AZ 20:00hrs**

[www.laakentstrut.org.uk](http://www.laakentstrut.org.uk)

me to return with “the head girl” for a three day vacation and by chance this fell over their 14<sup>th</sup> July French national bank holiday (Bastille Day).

Bagnoles is situated about 60nm south of Caen (Normandy beaches) and obviously at some point you will need to cross the water. It was hoped the Kent Struts “channel crossing” event (planned for earlier in 2016) would have given fellow pilots their first water crossing and Bagnoles would have been a brilliant first vacation. With any luck the documentation supplied at the time should provide the necessary information and this is still available on the LAA Kent Strut website.

The first leg was from Rochester to Caen, for immigration. The shortest channel crossing is from Dover to Cap Griz Nez (22nm or 15 minutes) then follow the coast south past Le Touquet, Dieppe, Deauville and then to Caen, but this is the long way around.

For those slightly braver there is a much more efficient route. Depart Rochester and head due south for Bexhill. Maintain your heading as you coast out and by routing direct to Le Harvre you avoid all of the restricted airspace in the channel. The distance over water has obviously increased but the French coast tapers in to meet you and its nothing like making the hop from the Isle of White to Cherbourg!

Caen is a good port of entry into France (and the Shengen area) as it has two runways at 90 degrees (good for cross wind landings), a grass runway (good if you have a tail wheeled aircraft) and all day immigration with 2 hours prior notice. The £8 landing fee is an added bonus.

Leaving Caen, route due south for a further 60nm and this will bring you to a large wooded area in the middle of which the 1600 metre long tarmac runway of Bagnoles is easily spotted. The clubhouse and facilities are very sparse considering the runways size but with nobody on the radio or taking landing fees you simply taxi to the visitors area, tie the plane down and start your walk into town.

The most direct route by foot is to walk off the western end of the runway and pick up the little path through the woods until you get to the main road, a 15 minute stroll. The remainder of the walk through the outskirts of town takes you past the original 18<sup>th</sup> century micro mansions and reminds me of the houses in “Lilliput lane”.

Back in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, the discovery of a natural warm spring in the town attracted visitors to “take the healing waters” and like most enterprises of this era the discovery was soon exploited. A lake was dug and top quality hotels and accommodation appeared on the banks, with profits from ventures financing the “stately homes” on the fringes.

The baths have remained popular and the “town hall” have continued to reinvest the profits so the town is in excellent condition and unbelievably well maintained.

We booked a room in Le Corbinier hotel with its lake side view and turreted entrance. The casino and the weaver’s house compliment the waters edge and if you are into horse racing the “champ du core” is but a few hundred metres further along. The “baths” were busy as it was a French “bank holiday” so we traced the path of the “Grande water Source” as it meandered down stream and discovered

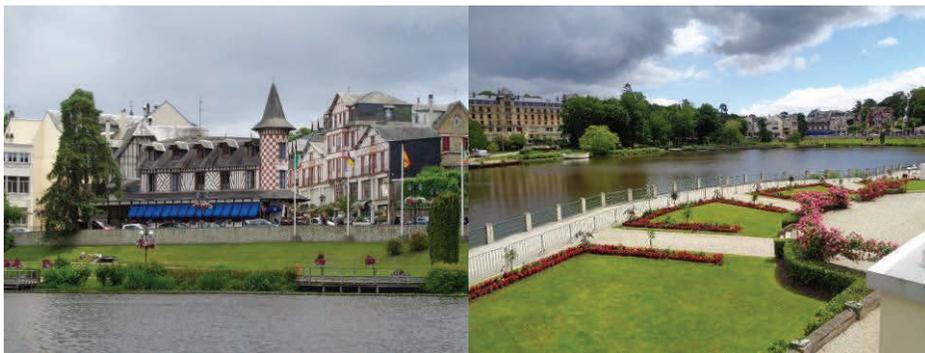
the town has another half, equally as pretty as the first. The chance discovery of a park led us past a massive chateau (now the town hall) and by late afternoon we were in need of a good sit down.

Preparations for the evening were well under way as we had dinner, at 11:00pm the street lights were dimmed, the music started and from the far side of the lake the firework display commenced. Local folk had come from far and wide, street vendors were selling their wares and the entertainers gave us a little piece of the “Rio carnival atmosphere”, you just had to be there. Friday morning dawned bright, by 8am the town had been swept from top to toe, all of the decorative flower baskets had been tendered and another glorious day was there in the offering. We managed to acquire a plan of the town which included a description of the “Lilliput Lane” houses on route back to the airfield. I gave Kate a running commentary as we decided which one of the mansions would best suite our needs and soon were back on the wooded path.

We did not expect to see anybody at the airfield, it being the morning after Bastille Day, and true to form it was deserted. The departure on runway 27 offered a magnificent view of Bagnole town and 30 minutes later we were back at Caen.

It’s always interesting to use proper airports (processing commercial flights) and a good tip is to take your pilot’s license, passport and flight plan when entering the public departure lounge for a coffee. The fun is now convincing security you need to get back “airside” because you “own” the airline, they should not be unnerved because you are wearing shorts and flip flops, and you parked your “kite” by the control tower. At this point, showing your documents usually diffuses the situation and they re-holster their weapons.

We had a brilliant short break in Bagnoles and I would thoroughly recommend people put this on their bucket list. Even if you are travelling up through France in the car it would still make a brilliant stopping off point, but be sure to book a room in advance as it’s a popular destination.



### November Meeting

Pete Kynsey will be talking about his amphibious float plane Husky and flying school (Clipper Aviation) based at Rochester.

## Project News - Paul Anderson

I thought it maybe of Interest that the LAA have finally approved my build for a Sopwith Triplane and I have a build number at long last - LAA 366 - 15426.

I had been talking to the LAA for over 2 years by email and not getting very far then I happened to be working near LAA HQ at Turweston and decided to drop in to see if I could move things along. Fiona in the LAA office was really helpful and I bumped in to Steve Slater our CEO. Half an hour later I had a confirmation of my registration, a build number and a promise of my build pack to come. So, now the hard work starts. If anyone fancies getting involved please get in touch via the build website [www.tiffendentriplanes.com](http://www.tiffendentriplanes.com).

I am going to need a LOT of help!



Some members of our Strut may know that I set up a small private airfield at Tiffenden in Kent where I live. It is midway between Headcorn and Lydd. This is where we will be building the Triplane.

*Steve Slater, CEO of the Light Aircraft Association with Paul Anderson after getting the news he can build his Triplane.*



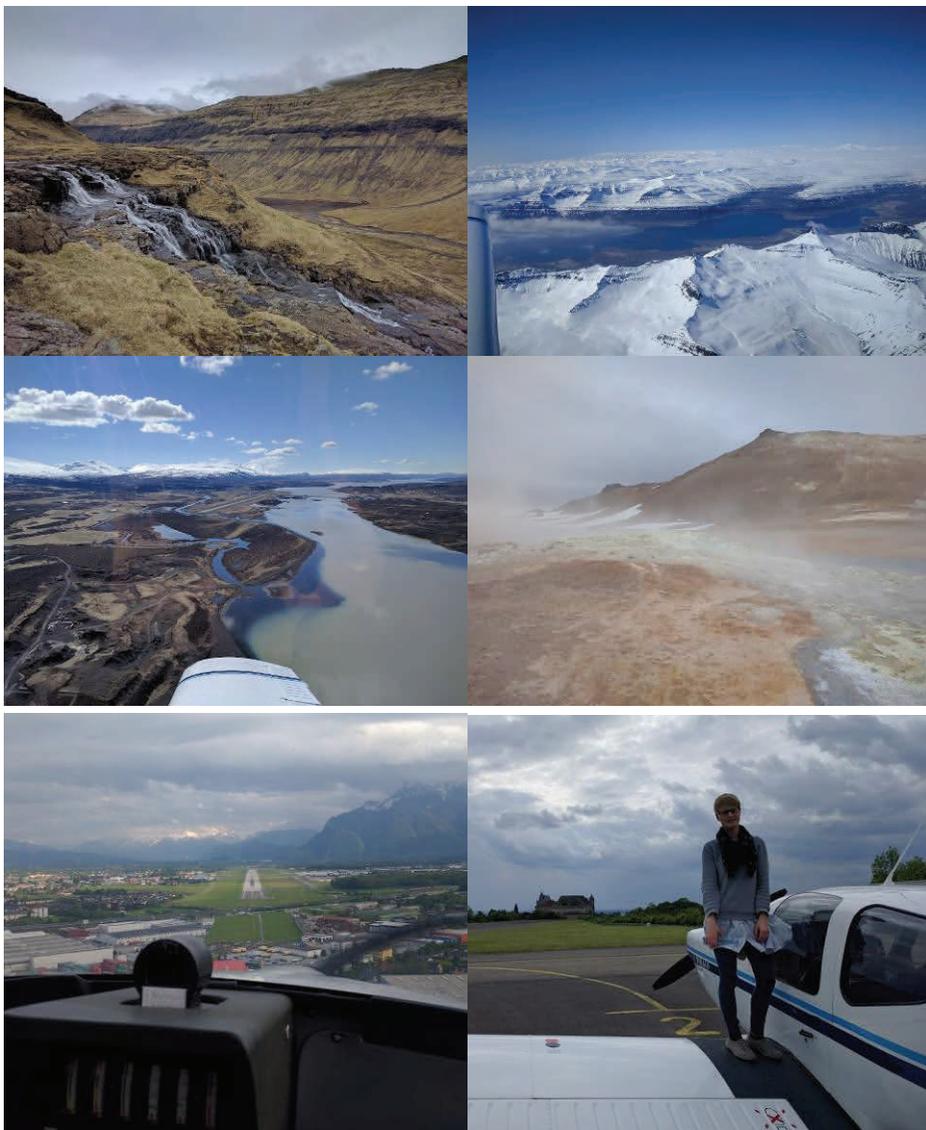
*The Tiffenden Airfield bicycle that welcomes pilots and has become the*

Tiffenden is on the half mil map and on Skydemon. We are PPR and that can be gained via the website [www.tiffendenairfield.weebly.com](http://www.tiffendenairfield.weebly.com). The website has loads of airfield information (Noise abatement) and a contact page for PPR - Mention if you are an LAA Kent Strut Member on the form. Weekends are usually best to fly in.



## October's Meeting— To Scotland and Beyond

Last month Emily and Johannes Woolard gave us an illustrated talk on a trip to Germany for a family wedding in their TB10 G-BMYC from Biggin Hill, except they went via Scotland, The Faeroes, Iceland, Norway... and Emily had just received her PPL. Johannes looked after the IMC stuff while Emily did the VFR flying. They had some stunning photographs, so for those of you who could not make it to the meeting here is a selection, which started with this months header on page 1.





Great Circle Mapper

www.gcmap.com

Egkb-egnc-egpo-ekvg-bieg-biar-ekag-enbr-encn-ekrk-edaz-edc

Map Distance Search Airport Info

Map



Map Style: Plain Light Blue Marble

Distances

From	To	Initial Heading	Magnetic Heading	Distance	Time
14 segment path:					
<a href="#">EGKB</a>	<a href="#">EGNC</a>	336° (NW)	336° (NW)	276 mi	2:19
<a href="#">EGNC</a>	<a href="#">EGPO</a>	331° (NW)	333° (NW)	264 mi	2:13
<a href="#">EGPO</a>	<a href="#">EKVG</a>	353° (N)	358° (N)	268 mi	2:16
<a href="#">EKVG</a>	<a href="#">BIEG</a>	319° (NW)	324° (NW)	312 mi	2:38
<a href="#">BIEG</a>	<a href="#">BIAR</a>	285° (W)	296° (NW)	109 mi	0:55
<a href="#">BIAR</a>	<a href="#">EKVG</a>	122° (SE)	135° (SE)	412 mi	3:29
<a href="#">EKVG</a>	<a href="#">ENBR</a>	101° (E)	107° (E)	435 mi	3:40
<a href="#">ENBR</a>	<a href="#">ENCN</a>	144° (SE)	143° (SE)	177 mi	1:29
<a href="#">ENCN</a>	<a href="#">EKRK</a>	138° (SE)	136° (SE)	237 mi	2:00
<a href="#">EKRK</a>	<a href="#">EDAZ</a>	169° (S)	166° (S)	237 mi	2:00
<a href="#">EDAZ</a>	<a href="#">EDQC</a>	216° (SW)	212° (SW)	164 mi	1:23
<a href="#">EDQC</a>	<a href="#">LOWS</a>	151° (SE)	148° (SE)	194 mi	1:38
<a href="#">LOWS</a>	<a href="#">EDVK</a>	328° (NW)	325° (NW)	298 mi	2:31
<a href="#">EDVK</a>	<a href="#">EGKB</a>	273° (W)	271° (W)	<u>404 mi</u>	3:25
				3,787 mi	31:57

Total: 3,787 mi 31:57  
Average: 271 mi

They had to reach Germany by the 20th May.

For Weather they used SIGWX, Autorouter, DFS, and local sites. Safety equipment was hired from SEMS AEROSAFE, raft, flares, signalling jackets, and immersion suits which they practiced getting into.

VFR was done by Skydemon.

Their TB10 has a 900 nm range.

Johannes and Emily are well into a RV14A build.

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**Dates for your Diary**

24th November Pete Kynsey's float plane school.

10th December Christmas Dinner at Newnham Court Inn. Details and payment to Peter Huxley

[www.solleysicecream.co.uk](http://www.solleysicecream.co.uk)*Whale spotted**Emily and Johannes Woolard*