



**THE ROTATING BEACON**  
**The Bulletin of IFFR (UK) Limited**  
**THE UK SECTION OF THE**  
**FLYING ROTARIANS**

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**NEW YEAR - 2007**

From the Chairman

We have an excellent programme for 2007 and I would like to congratulate those who have agreed to organise events. It is often said that “Fellowships” are Rotary’s best kept secret. As I visit Clubs, I so often find Rotarians who are very interested in aviation but who are unaware of the IFFR.

I would like your help in trying to publicise our Flying Fellowship – can we double the membership? Please help by giving the enclosed recruitment leaflet to a like minded Rotarian – or better still wait whilst they fill it in. If you need more copies, please let me know.

Also, do you have a mailing system within your District which can be used? And we have tailored the programme so that there will be events attractive to those who do not hold pilots’ licences. As you know, Members are very welcome to attend by car.

Does your flying club have a notice board on which you could place a small card publicising the IFFR? If so, and you would be prepared to act as a local contact for visiting Rotarian pilots, please let me know.

I do look forward to seeing you at some of our forthcoming events. Even more so if you bring a new member to share our fellowship.

Rodney Spokes  
Chairman

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### ***REMINISCENCES***

Reaching the age of 80 is a landmark in anyone's life, a time to reflect and look back on what has been enjoyed. For me in the context of flying that covers half a lifetime.

It starts with learning to fly at Luton in the days before the jet traffic prevailed and when general aviation was welcomed. Not with any aspiration to "dance between the tumbling clouds" but as a frustrated motorist with a youngish family. Club aircraft are rarely available when you want them, so I soon joined a group of ex RAF pilots at Booker where I became acquainted with the PA28 and the joys of foreign touring.

Departure from a Customs airfield was mandatory, but Gatwick was available without needing a slot, and their General Aviation Centre provided all you needed. The RAeC Red Card for the aircraft meant no landing fees. Then off to national airfields such as Amsterdam, Brussels National, Barcelona, and Munich, all VFR with no problem.

The vagaries of the British weather persuaded me that an Instrument Rating was needed. Entitled to a month sabbatical from the firm I spent it at Oxford, on simulator and PA28-235. That really does climb with half fuel and only 2 up! Once acquired I found that the rating was of little use in a Cherokee – it iced up at airway levels in the winter and in the summer I spent hours on the ground waiting for a clearance while the students were doing circuits in the sunshine.

Invited to join Rotary, I discovered IFFR, and what a difference to life that made. Francis Willinger, the Chairman, put enough gentle pressure on Mary for her to convince me that I had sufficient experience to take part in the first European IFFR Mediterranean Rally in 1978. There I made European friends for a lifetime.

Sights that I shall never forget – flying in to Venice Lido in the early evening and seeing the setting sun throw shadows across St Mark's Square – dropping into Trondheim from over the Norwegian mountains just as the RAF had done during the War - landing free of charge at Stansted to see the Space Shuttle - Ayers Rock from above, and others too numerous to mention.

Experiences, some good some bad. Arriving at Mahon Airport, Minorca, after flying there with the family for our summer holiday in 1974 to find that Clarksons had gone bust and the place was seething with Britons unable to get home but our Cherokee was waiting. Weather diverting from Auxerre on the way to an IFFR meeting in Switzerland, diverting again from my alternate at Troyes, only to force land unhurt but with empty tanks among the sunflowers on the edge of Melun military airfield.

Old airfields, gone but not forgotten. Ipswich where I did my first cross-country, Lympne so handy for Customs on the way home from France, Ford in Sussex,

Weston-super-Mare now only fit for helicopters, Angers in France replaced by a new airfield miles outside the city, Oslo Fornebu and Meigs Field, Chicago both so conveniently sited on their city waterfront.

But all good things must come to an end, and my final flight home was from watching the solar eclipse at Dieppe before the medical examination that saw me finished as Pilot in Command. 1,350 hours total time, and I don't regret a minute of it.

*John D. Ritchie*

## IFFR – 2007 Programme

**Sunday 18 February 2007. Wolverhampton Halfpenny Green.** Fly in, lunch and visit to Halfpenny Green Vineyard (No samples for pilots or drivers!). Good road access. See details in this edition.

**Wednesday 14 March 2007** Visit to the de Havilland Aircraft and Heritage Centre incorporating **Mosquito Museum, Hatfield.** Fly in to Elstree. See details in this edition.

**Easter Sunday 8 April 2007.** Fly in to Bruntingthorpe to visit the "Vulcan to the Sky" project. Good road access via Junction 20 of M1. Contact [iffr@spokes.biz](mailto:iffr@spokes.biz) or 0116 270 4710.

**Sunday 6 May 2007.** Flying Day at **Old Warden – Shuttleworth.** Fly-in slots have been requested and a roped-off area in the Car Park for those arriving by road. See details in this edition.

**May 17-20 2007 German Section,** Berlin Fly-In, Museum and RR factory tours including the aviation department of the technical museum and the workshops. See [www.iffr.org](http://www.iffr.org).

**June 8-10 2007 Italy Section.** "Annual Fly-In", Albenga (LIMG). See [www.iffr.org](http://www.iffr.org). (Editor's Note – a lovely little airfield, closest one to France and well worth the trip down to the sun)

**June 21-30, 2007 Salt Lake City.** USA Post RI Convention Fly-About comprising a ten-day exploration of the Pacific Northwest of the USA.

**Friday-Sunday 20-22 July 2007 – UK Sections "Weekend of the Year".** Fly in to York/Elvington, Yorkshire Aviation Museum, York sightseeing and AGM. See details in this edition.

**Sunday 5 August 2007. Isle of Wight Fly In.** Further details in next edition.

**August 16-19, 2007. Scandinavian Section** Fly-In to Visby on the Island of Gotland. See [www.iffr.org](http://www.iffr.org).

**Sunday 2 September 2007** Provisional date. Further details in next edition.

**September 7-9, 2007** French Section Fly in to Bordeaux. See [www.iffr.org](http://www.iffr.org).

Programme subject to change and prior booking. Please check latest details on [www.iffr.org.uk](http://www.iffr.org.uk). Bookings to be made by IFFR members who may usually be accompanied by their guests. First time pilots to foreign meetings wishing for advice, information, or just the charts please contact the Chairman or Editor.

## OLD WARDEN May 6<sup>th</sup> 2007

A very popular IFFR event in the past has been a flying day at Old Warden. We will be returning there this year on May 6<sup>th</sup> to see, not only, aircraft from the Shuttleworth Collection perform in the Spring Air Display but, also, to visit the Swiss Garden. A combined ticket of £20 covers entry to both. In the past we have had a reserved section in the Pilots' Enclosure – unfortunately this facility no longer exists. However I have arranged with the organisers that they will give us a roped off area on the flight line if we have a sufficient numbers of cars booked in advance. Flyers will still be able to fly in - we have a number of reserved slots. Far be it for me to discourage flying but I would encourage those who might consider driving to do so – we will all benefit from the reserved area.

Both drivers and flyers should register in advance – the drivers and their passengers should also send their remittance so that spaces can be reserved. Flyers will pay on the day but need to contact "Sue" at Old Warden (Tel.01767 627927) in order to get one of the limited Fly in slots – these will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. When the flyers have been allocated a slot I would ask them to email details of their party to me ([clark@foldhead.plus.com](mailto:clark@foldhead.plus.com)). Those coming by car should complete the Application Form below and return it to me, with the appropriate remittance, no later than **March 24**. Regrettably I will not be able to process applications received after that date. Pilots should consult "Notes to Visiting Pilots" on the Shuttleworth Web Site ([www.shuttleworth.org](http://www.shuttleworth.org)).

***Those travelling by car***

Contact Name			
Contact Address			
Telephone			
email address			
<b>Nos. booking including driver</b>		£20 each	Total

Cheque enclosed payable to A Clark

**Return no later than 24 March 2007 to: Angus Clark  
Folds Head Close, Folds Head, Calver,  
Hope Valley, Derbyshire S32 3XJ**

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**UK Section informal fly in –Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2007**

## **Mosquito Museum, Hatfield**

A visit to the de Havilland Aircraft and Heritage Centre, incorporating the Mosquito Aircraft Museum. Elstree Airfield (PPR by phone – 675m hard runway) is a short drive away. There is a helicopter site closer. Private Group Tour, with Ploughmans Lunch and liquid refreshments available. Well worth the visit. Contact Graham Browning. Email [graham.browning@tesco.net](mailto:graham.browning@tesco.net) or phone 01980-622038. Phone John Ritchie 01462-684941 with ETA Elstree if you need a lift by car.

## **IFFR UK Section – “Weekend of the Year”**

**Friday 20 – Sunday 22 July 2007**

Our main event this year will be centred on the historic City of York and is being held in July when we can expect good weather.

There will be a traditional aviation flavour on Friday afternoon with a visit to the Yorkshire Air Museum. From that evening we are then based in the centre of York by the river Ouse at the Park Inn. On Saturday, attractions within walking distance includes the Castle Museum, Jorvik Viking Centre and National Railway Museum, with the option of top brand shopping.

**This will be popular event - so if you plan to attend, please book your hotel accommodation now.**

## Programme

### **Friday 20 July 2007**

From 1200 arrive at York/Elvington (EGYK) Runway 26/08 is 3018m. Current landing and parking fee is £12 which includes admission for the pilot to the Yorkshire Air Museum, with entry for passengers at £5. A light lunch will be included within the Registration fee (see below). (<http://www.yorkshireairmuseum.co.uk/>).

1600 - Coach will leave York/Elvington for the Park Inn (Formerly the Moat House/ Viking Hotel) which is situated right in the centre of York on the bank of the River Ouse.

1930 - Informal Carvery Dinner in the Park Inn Restaurant (to own account)

### **Saturday 21 July 2007**

Full English breakfast (included in accommodation rate)

1000 - Start with a guided walk of historic York followed by visits to a choice of York attractions including National Railways Museum, Castle Museum and Jorvik Viking

Centre (Guided tour and 'York Pass' giving admission to all major attractions, included in the Registration fee).

Lunch available at various local restaurants or in the Park Inn to own account.

1930 - Dinner in private room in the Park Inn. (Dinner with half bottle of wine per person included in Registration Fee).

**Sunday 22 July 2007**

Full English Breakfast (included in accommodation rate)

0930 - Annual General Meeting of IFFR (UK) Ltd in the Park Inn.

1200 - Coach departs for York/Elvington where lunch is available to own account.

Registration Fee is £85 per person which covers return coach transport between York/Elvington and the Park Inn as detailed, lunch on Friday and admission to Yorkshire Air Museum, guided tour and York Pass on Saturday, and Saturday Dinner in private room with half bottle of wine.

Please book hotel direct with the Park Inn York, North Street, York YO1 6JF as soon as possible quoting "IFFR". Telephone +44 (0)1904 459988, Fax: +44 (0)1904 641793, E-mail: [reservations.york@rezidorparkinn.com](mailto:reservations.york@rezidorparkinn.com). The total cost including twin room for **two** nights, full English breakfast, service and VAT at current rate in a twin room is £209 or £168 for single occupancy. Credit card details will be required at the time of booking.

Please complete the booking form below and return to Malcolm Hill, Canberra House, Beech Lane, Oldham, Lancashire OL4 4EP. Telephone 0145 787 3250. Fax 0161 628 5948. E-mail: [m.hill5@btopenworld.com](mailto:m.hill5@btopenworld.com)

	Last name	Badge name	Rotary Club*
Pilot/driver			
Passenger			
Passenger			
Passenger			
* if applicable, non Rotarian guest may accompany an IFFR member			
Flying/Driving to event (Delete as applicable)			
Arriving from	Aircraft registration	Aircraft model	Departing to
Address			
Postcode		Country	
Telephone	Fax	Mobile	E-mail
Emergency contact (not attending event)			
Name		Relationship	Telephone

I enclose a cheque for £85 per person made out to IFFR UK Ltd and confirm that I will undertake all necessary pre flight planning and fly within the requirements of my licence

Signature ..... Date.....

**Tour de France – par avion!**

John Bowden

After organising tours to Marrakech and Croatia in recent years, the French section took on the daunting task this year of organising a tour of France. Initially due to start in northern France, with stops in Brittany and the Dordogne, the tour was eventually foreshortened to commence in Carcassonne.

Ives Branson and I left Headcorn in the trusty Airedale for the long trip south the day before the tour started so that we could reach Carcassonne by lunchtime. We made our first stop for customs at Tours for a change, rather than the well worn path to Deauville. We were delighted to find a very modest landing fee and good service from the staff, though, in the time honoured way of French regional airports, the restaurant was closed even at lunchtime! After a brief wait for 4 Alpha Jets to join the taxiway in front of us we took off for Bergerac and our night stop. Dinner that night was memorable both for the regional specialities and the enormous quantities we were served.

Bergerac is now a Ryanair destination so we had to join a queue for the security scanner rather than the previous friendlier wander through the aero club. We even had to show our passports for our flight to Carcassonne, which otherwise passed without incident in good weather – a pleasure after the hour of heavy rain we had flown through the previous day over the Channel and Northern France. At Carcassonne we met up with Jean-Pierre Gabert in his little yellow biplane, Philippe Ocula from Belgium in his Jet Ranger, Heinz and Heidi Zollig of the Swiss section in their Mooney and various other French members flying all sorts from a Commander through to a Jodel.

Whilst in Carcassonne we were treated to a guided tour of the Medieval City as well as more of the excellent cuisine and local grape juice, which was to be a hallmark of the whole tour.

The next day we were due to fly to Cannes. Unfortunately our visit coincided with a meeting of the Mediterranean Coast Interior Ministers. As a result all VFR flights into Cannes were banned for security purposes. I seem to recall that the 9/11 flights were scheduled IFR rather than VFR light aircraft but we seem to have become the political footballs – the outward sign that something is being done. We did not suffer however as we flew to Fayence up in the hills behind Cannes – a grass airfield with very active gliding (and glider tugs which seem to have priority to all traffic in the opposing normal circuit!) and yet another excellent restaurant. We had the choice of flying there through the Languedoc and Provence, negotiating all the military restricted areas, or flying to Montpellier and then along the coastal route to St Tropez at 1000'. It didn't take long to decide what we were going to do and I can only say that if you haven't flown along that coast yet then you must! The scenery along the coast is wonderful – I'll ask Colin Walker to upload some photos onto the website.

After lunch we climbed aboard 3 Renault Espaces and drove to Saint Paul de Vence, up in the hills from Cannes. This is an historic and very picturesque hilltop village

and well worth the visit even if now firmly on the tourist trail – better to be there in May than August I expect.

We then descended into Cannes to stay at the hotel next to the airport and enjoy an excellent dinner in the well known Pierrot 1<sup>st</sup> restaurant near the seafront. For those interested in studying the rest of humanity there were some bohemian “lurvies” in the restaurant who had clearly arrived early from the UK for the film festival the next week.

The next day was Friday and our schedule was to fly to St Rambert d’Albon for lunch and a visit to the “Aero Retro” hangar. This is a wonderful collection of mostly WW2 aircraft used for flying displays. Inevitably there are a number in the course of renovation – an absolute treasure trove! After lunch at the airfield, where Feroz Wadia and his Bonanza had been waiting to join us, we flew on to Orleans St Denis de l’Hotel for the French section spring meeting. Whilst the weather was fine at each end the heavy rain over the hills to the west of the Rhone valley stripped rather a lot of paint off the leading edges of the wings. Nevertheless we all arrived safely in Orleans, where we were joined by Angus and Alisma Clark, Wilfried Lemmers from Belgium and more French members. We enjoyed more hospitality and visits to interesting buildings including l’Abbaye de St Benoit and the Cathedral where the plaques on the wall reminded us of the old alliance between the Scots and the French against the English. Happily the weekend proved it was all history!

The meeting ended with lunch at the go-karting circuit in front of the Cathedral laid out by the Rotary Club of Orleans Val de Loire – a fund raising activity clearly enjoyed by both the organisers and the participating public. It was then time for us to return to the airport and make tracks for home. A wonderful five days.

Many thanks to Jean-Pierre Gabert and his members for organising such a memorable tour.

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**UK Section informal fly in – Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2007  
Wolverhampton (better known as Halfpenny Green)**

Weather permitting, the first informal fly in of 2007 will take place at this former R.A.F. World War II airfield which is located in beautiful Staffordshire countryside. The airfield has three good tarmac runways and an AFIS service. There is a café in the tower building (still in use after 65 years) where we will meet for lunch. On landing inform the tower that you are a ‘flying Rotarian’ – it is hoped that we will have a designated parking area. Road access is good for those who prefer or are forced to drive (for ground based GPS users the airfield postcode is DY7 5DY). The plan is to meet up at about 12 noon. Currently, the landing fee for singles is £10 with reductions when fuel is uplifted. Visits to Halfpenny Green Vineyard, which is very close to the airfield, can be arranged. Please remember that the day light hours are short in February! Contact: David Morgan, e-mail [davidmorgan@aviators.net](mailto:davidmorgan@aviators.net) tel:

01384 342106 (office), 01562 883451 (home), mobile 07786 392393. If you intend to come please contact David so that he has some idea of numbers.

## PORTO VINTAGE!!!!

The Autumn Portuguese meeting was held in the heart of the wine growing area in Duoro Valley. As we thought the weather on the last weekend of September might be a bit risky for the long flight to Portugal we took the budget Ryanair route from Liverpool to Porto. A wise decision as it turned as a stationery low resulted in none of the fliers from France and Germany being able to make it, On Friday, after a night in Porto, we took the train to the weekend's venue at Vila Real. The track wended its way along the banks of the River Duoro – one of the truly great train journeys. If the first part of the journey to Regua was special then the route from Regua to Vila Real was spectacular. At Regua we boarded a small rail bus for the 45-minute climb past vineyards and villages that had not changed for centuries. It was almost unbelievable to hear, later, that the Portuguese Railways were proposing to close the line – have accountants no sense of heritage and culture? Arriving at Vila Real we met up with old Portuguese friends – Richard Goldschmidt and the organiser José Carlos Cardoso. Jane and Mike Pudney came from Stansted and then by bus, also joined us there. The other UK participants John and Patricia Bowden were to arrive later that evening.

In the afternoon we visited the Mateus Palace and Gardens – these had been the home of that iconic wine of the Seventies - Mateus Rosé. The palace and gardens were both very attractive – there was a hedge here of a size that I have never seen before – it had a permanent ladder in place to cut it. While there we had a 'team' photograph at the side of a water feature with the palace, as shown on the wine label, providing the background. A visit to the airfield confirmed that there would no IFFR arrivals that day - it would have been an interesting approach – drop short and you would be on the wrong side of a cliff. After a brief tour of the city we were honoured with a reception at the City Hall hosted by leading civic dignitaries. The evening concluded with a Gala Dinner with the Rotary Club of Vila Real. This was a very pleasant and relaxed affair – the hospitality flowed liberally!

Saturday was a full day in, what is, a UNESCO World Heritage site – the Duoro region. The extensive vineyards not only provide the grapes for the famous Port wine but also for the increasingly popular conventional Portuguese Wines. The morning started with a coach trip through the valleys and hills before coming to a stunning viewpoint. From a chapel built high on a promontory overlooking the Duoro Valley we looked down on a carpet of vineyards, vineyards and more vineyards. It was then on to our first wine tasting of the day down in the valley at the Caves Santa Marta. From there it was a short but extremely winding trip up the mountain to our lunch venue. This was a simple, but fascinating, Portuguese eating-place. Cooking was by traditional means - charcoal placed on the floor of the kitchen heating large pots.

After lunch we boarded a cruise boat at Regua for a trip up the River Duoro, through the Baguste Dam, to Pinhão. On our way back we visited the Quinta do Panascal vineyard. Unfortunately the workers were just leaving – so we

missed one of the old traditions – this is one of the few vineyards left where the grapes are still pressed by trampling. Our busy afternoon concluded with another civic reception this time at Regua. My short speech of thanks on behalf of the visitors was not helped by the wine and port that I sampled, in the course of duty, during the day. Nor was it by the facial expressions of two schoolboys in the back row – step forward Pudney and Bowden. I assured the Mayor that I, personally, would continue to do my best to support the local economy! Back at the hotel the weekend concluded with a relaxed dinner. José and his team from the Rotary Club of Vila Real are to be congratulated and putting on such a varied and interesting programme – the scenery certainly helped - but it was the organisation and the fellowship that made it.

Next day, while John and Patricia drove back to Porto, we, together with the Pudney's took the boat back to Porto. The views, as we sailed down the steep sided valley, were again unforgettable. An interesting feature was the Carrapatelo dam, which has the deepest navigable lock in Western Europe with a drop of 35 metres. On arriving in Porto the Pudney's made a quick dash to the airport – while for us it was two more nights in Old Porto – but that's another story.

## Angus Clark

### **Edinburgh to Capetown and most of the way Back**

#### **Part 1 Getting there**

We returned to Edinburgh a couple of days before Christmas, caught up on the piles of mail, got through Christmas and then began to relax. What a wonderful year it had been – flying-wise—with the flight to and from the States for the new engine and the Rotary meetings all over Europe.

Next year was going to be extremely boring by comparison. Then I saw Jim Thorpe's message in the PPLIR newsletter looking for a co-pilot for a trip to Cape Town. With a closing date for entries of 31<sup>st</sup> December I sent him a message and started looking to see if any Flying Rotarian would like to accompany me.

The organizer Hans Gutmann eventually put me in touch with Peter Antony from Vienna. He too was looking for someone to share the flying in his Turbo-Arrow. We met in Edinburgh in the middle of January, flew together and decided the Bonanza was more suitable as it would carry three and full fuel at a lower fuel burn.

Months of e-mails followed from Hans with no problems apart from the numerous visas that would be required. We planned to travel through twenty countries and cover 17,000 nautical miles. Some of the embassies want a passport for two to three weeks to issue a visa. I was refused a second passport as I could not provide a letter from my company to say that I needed one! Others had no problem producing such a letter. The next few months involved a number of trips to Embassies and visa agents in London between Flying Rotarian visits to Malta, Sicily, Italy and the Scandinavian Fly-around in June.

Finally it was departure time for Spain and Salzburg. Sea Haar (*thick mist*) held up our departure from Kirknewton till visibility was 5 km and Edinburgh allowed us to depart. Five and a half hours later the stormscope lit up and as it would be dark soon we landed at Limoges just as the heavens opened, power at the airport and hotel failed and we were treated to an hourlong thunder and lightning display. Nearby power lines were blown down and hail smashed plastic garden furniture. The aircraft escaped damage as some kind soul had turned it into wind and chocked all three wheels.

There were CBs all around the next morning so a trip into Limoges and a visit to the porcelain museum helped pass the time. It was 2 p.m. before the forecaster at the airport suggested that we go SW to Agen, then East to Toulouse, than South to Perpignan and Empuriabrava. The stormscope showed that we were skirting cells all the way. The next day we performed a 50 hour inspection as we have flown a long trip around Scandinavia and the next service would be over sixty flying hours later at Durban. We found an oil leak from a damaged push-rod seal but found that no one in Spain now carries spares as everything is delivered from either the U.K. or the States within a couple of days.

Fortunately we had friends coming down from Manchester Barton the next day so they brought the seals and helped clean and gap plugs, tighten exhaust brackets etc. before I departed for a five hour flight to Salzburg again dodging CBs most of the way. The trip to the States to install the tip tanks paid off again as fuel at Salzburg was over two Euros per litre but as our next stop was to be Dubrovnik at one euro we were able to decline fuel at Salzburg.

The next afternoon we taxied out in line to the Red Bull hangar for a press and photo-call followed by a briefing for the flight to Sitia, Crete. A 6 a.m. call for a 7a.m. departure with a circling climb to 4500 ft to clear the mist in the valley before heading through a pass and down a valley southwards towards Dubrovnik. Refuelling there was quick and the first three aircraft got away with Montenegro wanting 5 minute spacing and the majority of the rest lined up to depart in turn. Then we were all asked to return to parking as Montenegro reported congestion in their air-space! Thirty minutes later we all taxied out again but were asked to return as there will be a 1 to 2 hour delay. All this in 41 degrees Centigrade with pools of fuel forming under the overflows as we had all filled to maximum with cheap fuel ! An hour later as there has been no progress we all went back to flight planning and filed flight plans routing around Montenegro to Kerkira, Preveza, then past Athens to a sunset landing in Sitia. We re-fuelled from drums while the Red Bull girls kept us supplied with refreshments. The two Diesel aircraft were still waiting for fuel, having arrived three hours before us. Dinner was in a taverna in the harbour. A past midnight bedtime with a 5.15 a.m. call set the pattern for the days we had to fly !

After the fiasco in Dubrovnik with VFR flight plans some decided to file IFR. They ended up being delayed for over an hour as Athens was busy! They eventually were cleared to flight levels 210 and 130 while we remained VFR at 8500ft in the hope of being allowed to descend to see the pyramids. We were all routed away from Cairo and over El Alamein airport...a huge runway surrounded by absolutely nothing but sand. Then we heard that the VLA may run short of fuel and Jim reporting that his Bonanza had alternator re-setting problems so was going off the air to conserve battery power. And this was only day two. We heard Cairo routing the leading aircraft via KHG and realize that was going to add another 30 minutes to a 6 hour flight. Most kept quiet and routed as flight planned.

Large villages and towns suddenly appeared and the rock and sand turn green. There were villages every couple of miles amongst the greenery. Ninety-five percent of the population of Egypt live within 12 miles of the Nile. We had a hot and bumpy descent with vectoring over pretty dramatic mountains to the ILS for 02R at Luxor. The next day was supposed to be a rest day but was crammed with Nile cruises, visits to Temples and the Son et Lumiere show.

Another early start and we watched the sun rise at the airport. We departed southwards over sand dunes and a landscape scarred by rivers beds with not a bush or road to be seen for hours, not much sand, just mountains.....so much for a soft landing in sand if necessary. Then the Diamond Twin called to say they had shut down one engine and were returning to Luxor. We found that Aswan was closer and let him know. The controllers at Luxor said that as Aswan was a Military field they were negotiating for permission. The Austrians seem content to wait so one of the others called in for them. "PAN, PAN, PAN, OE-FPL has engine failure and is diverting to Aswan." We felt sorry for the two who had bought a brand new aircraft just for this trip and flown it for over 100 hours to run it in. Now on the second day of flying they had to return home. We later found that they had had three previous engine problems. They left the aircraft at Aswan for the factory pilot to collect and told Diamond that they did not want to see it again. Avoid the diesel engine till they get the accessories for it right.

Port Sudan is a Military field with one transport aircraft standing and no other movements that day. The Saratoga we are following blows a tyre on touchdown and blocks the runway. The controller says the airfield is closed and that we should all hold! Jim who had been having alternator problems decides to land on the 900 metres free behind the Saratoga while we landed on the 1000 metres from the other end. Fuel has been transported for us in drums. It took over four hours to refuel in over 42 degrees and

to negotiate the landing fees down from \$700 for the group to \$105. There was no water anywhere and the guards kept asking us for bottled water.

We were finally cleared to depart and had to climb through 8000 ft of sand haze till we broke out on top. The Archipelago was stunning with shallow waters & wonderful hues of blue but not a boat or road anywhere till we made another sunset landing at Djibouti. Fuel drums finally arrived one at a time. French Mirage jets started up next to us and seemed to be landing and taking off continuously over the three hours. Then Immigration wanted General Declarations and \$20 for each overnight visa. We finally got into a rattling bus to a lousy hotel full of French troops. To bed for midnight with an early departure next morning. Mobile phones did not work in Djibouti.

A 6a.m. departure by rickety bus with a bullet hole in the middle of the windscreen and a quick get away as CBs were forecast for later that day. We climbed slowly VFR to flight level 95 –the airway starts at level 155. The sand and rocks slowly turned to a beautiful lush green and we were asked to descend and remain below 8500 feet which put us in valleys and just below the hill tops. We orbited at 30 DME for 20 minutes as jets flew overhead on approach. We were finally cleared inbound to remain below 8500ft to Addis Abeba at 7600ft, a long low 30 mile final over beautiful cultivated countryside...mainly coffee bushes.

We were met by the Minister for Tourism and dozens of reporters. Hans was on TV that night. Refuelling from drums again took hours followed by a long wait for the Red Bull bus to the Addis Sheraton Hotel, surely the most luxurious hotel of the trip. Then a visit to see Lucy, a 3.2 million year old skeleton. Red Bull treated us to a traditional Ethiopian Dinner and Cabaret. To bed at midnight with a 5am call again.

In the air by 7.30 for a 5.5 hour flight, the first 150 miles over lovely green fields and deep ravines. These petered out and were followed by about another 150 miles of scrub, desert and rocky hills up-to 7500 feet. Cultivation began again with landing strips and cattle indicating we were in Kenya. Down through clouds to 6500 ft for a 6 mile final for runway 07 at Nairobi Wilson (altitude 5500ft). We taxied along the pot- holed taxiway to Customs who peered into the plane then another long taxi to the Aero Club of East Africa. The airfield was in poor shape. I remember it from the 1970s when there were nearly 500 aircraft operating out of there. The club is in good shape however and beers were on the house.

We waited till 4 pm for taxis to the new Stanley Hotel and were caught up in the rush hour traffic. This was the day we crossed the Equator and were surprised to find it covered in green houses...we wondered what grew best at the Equator? I spent a couple of hours speaking to Hans Gutmann who built a GlasAir in 1996 and flew it around the world. It had 17 hours range and carried 240 US gallons of fuel. He is now building another one and plans to be the first light aircraft to fly across China.

The next morning was spent on a city- tour of Nairobi in five mini-buses with open tops. No pictures were allowed of the Parliament building, ministries etc. Then an afternoon briefing for the next four flights and completion of flight plans. At 4 pm we headed back to the airport for re-fuelling. Peter bought a drum of Mogas for one US\$ a litre as opposed to \$2.44 for Avgas. The WT9 filled up first and we took the remainder as well as 50 litres of Avgas to top all four tanks as there would be no more fuel available till we got to Zanzibar. The diesel 182 had nose gear problems and exhaust gasket leaks but had spent only \$174 on fuel for the five-and-a-half hour flight from Addis. i.e \$32 or £17 per hour which would buy us 13 litres or 3.4 Imperial gallons of fuel in the UK. Then we heard that all our 48 flight plans had been rejected as they were not on Kenya Civil Authority forms ! And we were required to pay US\$34 each for the pleasure!

An 8 a.m. formation taxi out to Immigration, then a delay as they tried to call us all back but some were already in the air. Hans sorted it out after 30 minutes and were free to go again. A short flight with only the lower half of Mt Kilimanjaro visible below the cloud layer. Those who climbed above only saw a faint outline of the mountain. We landed at Mt. Kilimanjaro International, used the visa I had then went back to put the co-pilots seat back on its rails with the help of Guido Benz, a 20,000 hour pilot and instructor who runs a school of Mountain flying and glacier landing in Switzerland.

We drove towards Kili but the views got no better so stopped for an excellent lunch at River Tree Lodge. The view of Kili did not improve after lunch so we returned to the airport for a thirty minute flight to Lake Manyara Airport...once Tarmac but now dirt and gravel. This was to be our base for the next three nights. We parked, tied down and then the Chartered Twins started to arrive and threatened

to spray gravel over our aircraft as they turned to leave. We had to man-handle many of the aircraft onto the long grass...it was hard work pushing a Cessna 340 uphill in long grass!

Five safari Land Rovers took us to the Ngorongoro Farm house, a 500 acre coffee plantation set up by a German planter over a hundred years ago. We then received the good news that our fuel that had been transported from Maputo to Lilongwe had actually arrived there.

Another pre-dawn start for an hours transfer to our next hotel, the Ngorongoro Safari Lodge located at over 7000ft on the rim of the Crater. Then a bumpy, dusty down ride down to the crater floor at 2500 feet. The Crater walls make this a completely sealed eco-system. The Masai are allowed to graze cattle at the edges as they were moved out in 1974 to set up the Conservation Area. What a wonderful day ... we see Hyena, Zebra, Gnu, Ibis, Elephant, Gazelle, Wild Boar, Jackal, Hippo and numerous other creatures, but it is the Lion cubs beside the road that are a special treat. We finish the day with a visit to a Masai Boma or group of family houses – 87 people of an extended family with a kindergarten where the children showed us that they could count to 100 ! There is no light pollution here and the stars and Milky Way could not be brighter nor more well -defined.

The next morning it was another early start down from the Crater rim to Lake Manyara Lodge for a swim and then to the Game Reserve beside the. We made a short stop at the airport to check for damage and file the nicks out on the props. Then another afternoon of spotting game...good but not as dramatic as the Crater as there was much more vegetation in the Rift Valley.

Another opportunity to see Kilimanjaro on the way to Zanzibar. We flew low level to Arusha, the main town and airstrip at the base and then climbed as high as possible. The 340 was the only one to get to 21,000ft and get us pictures of the crater. The 182 climbed to 16,000 ft with the stall warner blaring as Guido was comfortable with flying at those altitudes in the Alps. The WT9 VLA got to 13,500 feet. We flew over barren landscape and then hills and greenery as we approached the coast. As usual the 182 was way down low above the treetops taking pictures. DarEsSalaam was the controlling authority but we got no response till 40 miles from Zanzibar and almost coasting out. With 15 miles to go sandbanks and islands appeared -- some with luxury hotels and then it was low over tin roofs and large Mosques to join the queue for fuel...Cheap at \$1.60 per litre on the BP card...all very civilized as compared to the US\$ notes everyone else had demanded till now.

We were taken to The Serena Inn, another of the Aga Khan's hotels. An excellent lunch watching Dhows sailing by a few feet way. Then the first afternoon nap, a sunset swim followed by Dinner and then back to reality with a briefing for the next few legs.

A rest day with a tour of the Stone Town, Slave Market, Anglican Cathedral, Portuguese Fort (1701) and the Wonder House built -- rebuilt by a Scottish Marine engineer in 1913. It was the first building to have a lift, Electricity and Running water and had been the target for the shortest war in history when it was shelled by the British Navy for 45 minutes in 1896.

A long flight the next day to Lilongwe, Malawi. First South to Lusaka and then across towards Harare to route down the Zambezi to Lake Nyere with its lovely islands and fishing boats. Dead trees trunks protruded from the water over a vast area. Drums of fuel had been delivered there from Harare but left somewhere other than at the airport. They were eventually tracked down and four hours later we had managed to squeeze the 2400 litres into the aircraft and the ferry tank that Hans was carrying. It was dark by the time we got to the hotel. Those not involved in re-fuelling had been on a city tour. They reported that the only new buildings were Government Ministries. The capital had originally been Blantyre and that would have been worth a visit. We left before daybreak so saw nothing of the city again.

Another long flight to Livingstone, Zambia. We had planned to land at Victoria Falls Airport in Zimbabwe and had booked a hotel nearby. At the last moment we were advised that aircraft had been broken into in Zimbabwe so decided to use Livingstone instead - a busy airport with British Airways, Zambia Airways, Executive jets from South Africa, and Helicopter and Tiger Moth flights. This landing in Zambia meant a long wait at the airport for Zambian visas at \$80 a head then another at the Zimbabwe border where each person was required to join a queue with their forms and US\$30 for a visa – except for those with British passports who had the privilege of paying Mugabe \$55. The Railway line ran beside the road and a train carrying sheets of copper pulled up and the driver joined our queue though not for a visa! A few yards further on we stopped again to pay for entry into the

Victoria Fall Park where the Hotel is situated. And next morning we paid for entry into the falls area itself !

We walked into the town, paid ten US Dollars for three Cokes and get 400,000 Zimbabwe dollars in change. The notes were issued on 1st June 2006 and are only valid till 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006. A cloth cap costs 2.5 million Dollars and a jacket 85 million. A trader offered us a large woodcarving and wanted a pair of old shoes in return. Foreigners must pay in foreign currency. The hotel restaurant offered a 50% discount for immediate payment in US dollars. The serial number of every note was recorded so it took quite a while to pay for anything. The hotel casino had a couple of locals playing the slot machines. They each exchanged three carrier bags full of bundles of notes for tokens. We ended the day with a sunset cruise on the Zambezi...the wildlife on the banks was stunning and we saw elephant, hippo, buffalo and crocodile in good numbers.

The next morning we paid three dollars to rent raincoats...the spray from the falls is widespread. In the rainy season it is not possible to see the falls because the quantity of water going over the falls covers the rocks at the top and spray reduces visibility to almost zero. Luckily the rains were over but we were still very glad we had the raincoats. Bungee jumping and white water rafting are big business and we saw a couple of rafts capsize. We were taken for a Masai Dinner....Crocodile tails, Antelope, warthog, etc all very good but South African wine at \$45 a bottle seemed a bit steep.

The next morning we went through the immigration process in reverse to have our passports stamped then finally departed over the falls and were asked to stay above 1500 feet as the sight-seeing helicopters fly low through the spray. We were reluctant to comply with that request as everyone wanted one last low look at the falls. We then routed to Kasane to remain out of Zimbabwe airspace rather than pay Mugabe transit fees then on to Maun in Botswana. A very civilized place with two Avgas pumps that both worked and had fuel at \$1.40 per litre paid with a BP card. Surprisingly no 10% vat as we were to be exporting the fuel to Namibia ! Was it because they have diamonds in the Kalahari desert and are a stable democracy with only 1.5 million of population. One of the few African countries it would be possible to live in quite comfortably.

We started before dawn and saw school kids walking to school at 6.30a.m. It was bitterly cold in open Land Rovers and we were not prepared for the three hour drive on dust roads. We stopped to see giraffes and have breakfast, then "Sally" refused to start. Twenty-five of us piled into two vehicles meant for sixteen. Hans used the satellite phone to call for a replacement vehicle and "Wallace" was despatched. Meanwhile we continued with some of us standing and others sitting on the lunch boxes. Hours later we heard that the replacement vehicle had rolled over and the mechanic taken to hospital.

We see enough elephant, giraffe, Impala, waterbuck, hippo, zebra and crocodiles to keep us all happy and chase monkeys which take food off our plates. We return after sunset, cold again and having covered over 200 miles on dusty dirt tracks. A long day but well worth it just for the pictures we were able to take.

We depart at 7.30 for a four-and-a-half hour flight over the Kalahari desert to Keetmanshoop, Namibia. There may be some cattle grazing and game to be shot but certainly very little water and no cultivation. We were back on UK time now and the countryside turned an amazingly rich brown and red with rocky parallel ridges running for as far as the eye could see. We saw large tablelands in the distance and a couple of aircraft diverted to explore. The VLA went off to visit friends at a game-farm.

Namibia felt like a German colony. Fuel was cheap and Germans ran the re-fuelling and the hotel. At mid-day it was 6 degrees but with 15 knots windchill it feels like freezing. There was nothing to do till dinner but watch "Rebus" and Edinburgh on TV. It was Swiss national day so after dinner the Swiss members of our group threw a party and taught us their national anthem whilst Hans was interviewed for the German language programme of Radio Namibia.

The first challenging flight. We had been informed before the trip that if the weather was unsuitable we would not be able to fly into Cape Town and that the decision would be taken only a couple of days before. The weather at Cape Town needed to be suitable not only to get us there but also to get out in time in order to keep to all the refuelling stops, hotel bookings and transport and tours organized...no pressure!

So we arrived at Keetmanshoop airport for a freezing 8 am departure but immigration did not arrive till nine. We were the first away and climbed above cloud at 6500 feet then as the cloud rose, up to 8500

with a 20 knot headwinds that became stronger. The twin and the turbo Saratogas went up to 10,500 and had 40 knots of headwind. They asked for IFR at level 120 but found roller-coaster mountain wave and couldn't hold altitude even at full power. Airspeed went from the stall to yellow line as they went up and down. We had planned to join them for an instrument arrival into Cape Town as we were unfamiliar with the VFR routing. We stayed between 8500 to 9500 and had an easier ride, then down to remain below cloud to 4500, 3000 and finally 2500 through the valleys to the coast. With Table Mountain and Robben Island in sight we turned inland and followed the twin into Cape Town International's Runway 22 with winds over 20 knots.

We drove past huge shanty towns on the way into the city and spend the evening at the Waterfront with its excellent restaurants and shopping malls. Peter Gibbs, South African VP of the Flying Rotarians came to see me and confirm that his Rotary Club would lay-on coffee, sandwiches and cakes at George Airfield and that his son who is a commercial pilot will organize re-fuelling and a weather briefing. He also informed us that our planned re-fuelling stop, Port Alfred, was closed due to flooding.

A full day tour of the Cape introduced us to gated-housing with private armed rapid-response vehicles waiting at street intersections. High crime rates amongst beautiful houses, vineyards and riding schools. There were very few native Africans in the Cape till the ANC invited people from the Eastern Cape with promises of housing and jobs. Twenty-nine thousand people per month flooded into the area till the population doubled to 5.5 million though the official figure is 3.8 million. The street corners and roundabouts had men in overalls sitting around and offering themselves as casual labour. We toured the Cape of Good Hope, the False Cape, Simons Town Naval Base-- home to the penguins and a vineyard. Another long day with long flights planned for the next day.

Probably the best days flying. First a low level departure over the centre of Cape Town to the Cape. It was wonderful to see Table Mountain looming over the city then the Cape and the False Cape all from 1500 ft. We then had to route inland around the test firing range which was active – flying low over beautiful farmland with large farmhouses. The controller then gave us vectors to the coast where he said we should see whales during the next 70 miles. He was right and we are all down to 500 feet and lower as we saw whale after whale, some with calves. Two hours later we landed at George, a busy airfield with frequent flights to all the major cities. We spent a couple of hours there and met local Rotarians. Then another low flight along the coast (the famous Garden Route) looking for more whales and counting shipwrecks. We made a slight diversion inland to look at waterlogged Port Alfred with over thirty training aircraft standing in pools of water.

Then four hours with a 25 knot tailwind along the rugged coast all below 1500 ft till abeam Durban International when the clearance was to “remain below 500 feet past the harbour entrance to join left downwind for Virginia” and watch out for wind shear. The runway parallels the sea and is only separated by a sandbank and bushes.

We were welcomed by Mary De Klerk, Precision Flying Champion and colleague of Hans and made honorary life members of the Aero Club with all drinks and food on the house for the duration of our stay in Durban ! We were introduced to a local speciality called a “Suitcase” – a measure of Jack Daniels in one hand and a similar measure of passion fruit in the other, mixed in the mouth before being downed. It is a late night with many suitcases being consumed. Then we were given the keys to five rental cars and asked to drive ourselves to the hotel. Just what you would expect at your local flying club !

We returned to the airport next morning for a photo-shoot and interviews for the Sunday papers and to supervise the 50 hour check on our aircraft. Aero-engine oil was in short supply and we have to take whatever they had managed to scrounge. Lunch was at an aquarium with tanks of sharks swimming around us followed by a harbour cruise on the huge catamaran “Incognito”. Durban has a very large and busy harbour with three dry docks and continuous activity.

A coach tour inland to the Midlands involved a long drive with lovely views of snow-capped mountains, farms, orchards, reservoirs and waterfalls. We finally stopped at a craft centre and had lunch at the Nottingham Road Brewery who produced a taster rack of four glasses of beer for each person. A Robinson helicopter flew in and landed on the lawn outside the restaurant.

They had not had rain for the last three years but things still look pretty impressive. Then it was home-wards past shanty towns and “One Thousand Hills” the homeland of the Zulu people. The wages for a days labour was 60 Rand (£5) but as it cost almost that for transportation into Durban and back, most workers slept in the shanty towns and only went home at the weekend.

After the new 1994 Constitutional changes shops are now allowed to open on Sundays and shopping malls have sprung up everywhere. We ended the tour with a drive along the seafront to appreciate the multi-million dollar homes.

We returned to an 8p.m. briefing as we had planned a 10 aircraft formation flight into Durban International to clear Immigration. We wanted to be into and out of there at dawn, just before the commercial traffic started up. Beverley Fogle, IFFR member who had flown with us from Salzburg was to leave us the next morning and head home to see her new grandson in the United States. So it was another late night of farewells.

***Feroz J. Wadia – Vice President IFFR***

**Part 2 – the Way Back from Cape Town will follow in the Spring Issue**