

Now... Spread your Wings

It was a busy afternoon at Marshfield International. Holidaymakers jetting off to the sun? No, Saturday 21 April was the occasion of the Strut's Spread Your Wings seminar. Nine pilots of various levels of experience, but mostly fliers of club aircraft, came together to learn about the PFA, our aircraft and our environment. The session started at the Catherine Wheel in Marshfield;

Steve Neale, our coordinator, opened with an explanation for the high drop-out rate of new PPLs - cost, availability, restrictions on use - and then moved on to describe how aircraft operating under a PFA Permit to Fly, whether individually or group owned, could provide not only cost-effective flying but also new opportunities for enhancing the flying experience.

Geoff Roe expanded on the costs and concepts of group ownership, and then described how he had acquired a part-completed Jodel, on eBay, installed a Jabiru engine, finished the build, conducted the flight test programme - all 500 miles from home! The result - a zero-timed engine and airframe for £17000, excellent short-field performance and a payload almost the same as the empty weight.

Ron Perry explained the PFA Coaching Scheme, with the opportunities to get some refresher training in your own PFA aircraft or to expand your abilities with strip flying or differences training (eg tailwheel, VP prop). The Biennial instructional flight

requirement can also be undertaken on your PFA aircraft with a PFA Coach or Assistant Coach (eg Ron). He also challenged participants to spread their wings by flying abroad. A flight from the UK to France needs only a flight plan on departure and a customs airfield for arrival in France - how about Le Touquet for lunch?

After an excellent lunch the seminar moved to Garston Farm where a full flightline of some ten PFA aircraft were available for inspection and explanation, and all participants had at least one flight.

Congratulations to Steve, Geoff, Ron, Mary and Ian for their faultless organisation and presentations, and thanks to those pilots who provided the afternoon rides. Perhaps we'll see a few new faces at the Strut meetings, and we should strongly consider repeating the event in due course. Look out for a fuller write-up in Popular Flying soon.

Trevor Wilcock

