



## FIRE ALERT: PHIL TO THE RESCUE

**Returning to Stapleford from a trip to Bembridge, club member Phil Hynes spotted a serious fire raging unattended in a house near Brands Hatch, he immediately alerted Farnborough Radar, giving the precise location, enabling the Fire Service to be called. Phil tells his story:**

"It was a beautiful day and a flight to Bembridge, Isle of Wight, was a belated birthday treat for my Mum, as well as some enjoyable hour-building for me. On our return journey we were approaching Brands Hatch at 2,000ft when I noticed a house on fire. The smoke was almost reaching the plane.



FIRESPOTTER PHIL HYNES

"I couldn't see any emergency services in the vicinity, so called up Farnborough Radar to report the fire. My nav training enabled me to give them a precise location. As I approached the Queen Elizabeth Bridge, Farnborough called me back to tell me the Fire Brigade was in attendance, and it looked like an arson attack on a derelict building.

"To my amazement a story about a private pilot alerting the fire brigade featured in the local media. So, I called to identify myself as that pilot. I am proud of myself for having reported the fire, and more particularly for being able to give a precise location to aid the emergency services. I was using old fashioned navigation methods - visual observation and reference to VORS, not a GPS or SkyDemon."

After working in finance and banking, Phil decided to switch careers. Inspired by his old school friend, Chris Monksfield (a Stapleford alumnus, former instructor and now executive jet Captain), and another pilot friend, he took up flying four years ago, training at Stapleford with Sue Royse.

Phil got his PPL in 2015 and he is now half way through his ATPL ground school on the Bristol distance learning programme. "I am having to do a job of work to pay for my training. So, I am doing it in bite size pieces."

But he is regularly back at Stapleford hour-building in club aircraft – PA 28s and C152s in preparation for his CPL training.

### PPL THEORY EXAMS

**In the first of his articles on the PPL Theoretical Knowledge Exams, Tony Glover, examiner for PPL, CPL and Flight Instructor, describes the rules for completing the necessary exams. In his second article in the next issue of Take Off, he will offer some practical advice on studying for and taking the exams:**

The basic requirement is that PPL applicants must demonstrate their theoretical knowledge by passing examinations in nine subjects. A pass mark of at least 75% is required. These exams must be passed in a period of 18 months. A pass in all the exams is then valid for a further two years.

The nine exam papers must, however, be passed within six "sittings". A "sitting" being a period of ten consecutive days during which a student may sit one or more subjects but only one attempt at a subject is allowed in one sitting.

Failure to pass all papers within six sittings or the 18-month period will result in having to re-take the complete set of exam papers. I suggest therefore reserving the sixth sitting just in case a re-take arises from the fifth sitting.

So now we have nine subjects and five sittings, which means a student should plan to take two or more subjects in each 10-day period.

There is no limit on the amount of time allowed between sittings, so there is plenty of time to study. More on this in my next article.

## HIGHLAND FLING

**Stapleford's farthest-flung fly-out to the Shetlands is described by Stapleford PPLs, Adam Knee and Mike Birbeck. Adam flew with his father, Paul, and instructor Mo Hakim. Mike flew with fly-outs organiser James Lee.**

**Adam Knee got his PPL in 2016 and is considering taking up flying professionally, and meanwhile getting his night rating and his IR. He writes:**

Early morning on August 26, two PA-28s, G-SACO and G-CFMX, departed runway 21L for a three-day adventure to Scotland. We followed the coast via Hull, Whitby and Newcastle, then cut across the north of England towards our first stop in Kirkbride.

The weather was clear giving great views from between 3 - 5,000 feet. The landing at Kirkbride was straightforward and a nice ending to a warm-up flight of just under four hours. After refuelling we continued north west into Scotland to our second stop on the west coast at Plockton.

The day's last leg was a highlight, flying through the Great Glen. An awesome experience with the valley sides reaching above us and houses alongside as we flew straight down the Glen at a height of 1,000 feet above the waves. Past Ben Nevis and across Loch Ness we headed towards Inverness and to our overnight landing stop at Easter Airfield on the east coast.



HEADING UP THE GREAT GLEN. PHOTO: JAMES LEE

Our second day was the most complicated and challenging as we flew north across the Shetland Isles over large expanses of water. The scenery below us was outstanding taking in John O'Groats and numerous islands, wind farms and oyster beds all seen in perfect weather.

We flew out to Out Stack (most northerly point of UK), circled round, then turned back down the west coast and landed at Kirkwall for a short break. Our final long flight of the day took us out towards Cape Wrath on the northwest coast, then back down south east towards Easter. The approach to runway 24 at Easter was testing as we had to avoid three small cottages on short final.

We left early on third day due to weather and headed south-east before cutting across to the west coast,

landing for fuel at Blackpool before heading down the Welsh coast past Caernarfon and Aberystwyth. Our final leg crossed the Brecon Beacons in beautiful weather skirting London before returning to Stapleford.

Logging over 20 hours of flight time over the three days was a great confidence boost - an experience I won't forget. Looking forward to our next trip. Fly-outs have been a fantastic way to gain experience.

**Mike Birbeck has been flying for more than 20 years, and was on the look-out for new adventures and to broaden his flying experience. He writes:**

Earlier this year, after almost two years of being in the non-flying doldrums, I finally took some time out and started noticing the invitations to join Stapleford's regular summer fly-outs again. Thus, I joined the La Rochelle and Guernsey fly-out which was huge fun. When James Lee suggested another weekend flight to Scotland, I jumped at the chance.

After some frenetic flight planning, I began to settle down and relish the thought of the flying ahead. The skies were clear, the company good. Soon we were south of Carlisle and then eventually the strip at Kirkbride appeared, where the fuel bowser was manned and waiting for us. We then headed on up the Scottish west coast towards Plockton, threading our way between the clouds, staying VFR as the beauty of the area became obvious. Scottish Information was helpful, although intermittent between the high ground on the islands.

James briefed me on the landing at Plockton which has a short runway and so it was, with my tendency to want to hold off in the flare dismissed by James, who noted: "such niceties work at Heathrow but not at Plockton". After G-SACO's crew had tested their mettle on the short runway we set off up the Great Glen taking in the Lochs and bimbed our way to Easter on the Black Isle, where we touched down on as nicely mowed strip of grass as a pilot could hope to land on.

The airfield owner, Dave Munro, was on hand to meet us. He packed us all into his sheep pen trailer behind his Land Rover and drove us to our accommodation, much to our amusement, the contempt of nearby grazing sheep and the bemusement of the other guests at the hotel. After one or two beers and a lot of banter, we retired to our quarters and a well-earned sleep.

The following day we dropped by Inverness for fuel and then set up the east coast of Scotland, climbing up to around 7000 feet en route to the islands, and thence to Shetland. We had hoped to land at Tingwall in Shetland, but it was Sunday, the airfield was closed so, undeterred, we flew up to the northernmost tip of the island.

Our last day of flying dawned, gusty and grey. We had hoped to cut across the country to the Lake District and to Caernarfon for fuel but a lowering cloud base and a

stiff character-forming headwind called for a more circuitous route. After an early stop at Blackpool we bimbed down past Liverpool then headed on down through West Wales past Cardiff Airport (where I had learned to fly) across the bridge via Swindon where soon after we spotted our friends in G-SACO again.



LAND TRANSPORTATION FOR SCOTLAND FLY-OUTERS: LEFT TO RIGHT:  
MO HAKIM, ADAM KNEE, JAMES LEE, PAUL KNEE, MIKE BIRBECK

Eventually Stapleford appeared in the heat haze and the familiar uphill cant of runway 21 brought the adventure to a happy ending - me with a big smile on my face and some proper hours in my log, with new friends and with huge gratitude to James and Mo who had organised the trip and provided us with their expertise.

My advice is to go along on the next trip. You will have fun, learn a lot and more specifically, be enthused to do it all again.

Stapleford's fly-outs continued through the autumn. The 2018 programme will be announced in the next issue of *Take Off*. If you like to sign up for fly-outs contact: [flyoutssfc@gmail.com](mailto:flyoutssfc@gmail.com). Big thanks to organisers Steve Evans and James Lee for providing us all with some great flying experiences during 2017..

## SOUTHEND SQUAWK

Southend Air Traffic Control has introduced a "listening" squawk, using the code 5050 while pilots are monitoring Southend Radar on 130.775.

Southend ATC reminds pilots that a listening squawk does NOT allow them to enter controlled airspace, nor does it mean a pilot is receiving an ATC service. A listening squawk enables an air traffic controller to alert a pilot if their aircraft looks likely to infringe.

Pilots are urged to check which listening squawks and frequencies they will need before their next flight:

- Turn on your transponder and select the listening squawk, using ALT (mode C)
- Tune in to the radio frequency without transmitting
- Listen out for your callsign or position.

Air traffic control will know that you are listening out and can call you on the frequency if you are getting too close to controlled airspace. Pilots are reminded to change the transponder code back to 7000 when leaving the area or changing frequency.

More information on listening squawks can be found on the Airspace Safety Initiative website: <http://airspace-safety.com/listen>

## FROM THE RIGHT-HAND SEAT

**Roy Copperwaite explains the differences between the Touch-and-go and the Go-around:**

Confusion seems to reign over these two procedures. The touch-and-go is simple. Land the aircraft (on the main wheels) and after waiting for the nosewheel to touch down with full back stick, retract the flaps all at once: apply full power, set carb heat cold and off you go.

Most people seem to want to lightly touch the wheels on the runway and not complete the landing, thinking they will run out of runway. This only results in a poor landing as the pilot is thinking too far ahead. If you think you do not have enough runway available, then either go around or stop! Taxi back and start again..

The go-around also may arise from an unstable approach caused by the pilot or weather conditions. The procedure must be carried out as follows:

1. Apply full power and set carb heat cold
2. Select a straight and level or shallow climbing attitude then raise the third stage of flap
3. Raise the pitch attitude to just above the horizon, check the airspeed (Vx or better). Make sure of a positive rate of climb and raise the second stage of flap
4. Repeat step 3 for the last stage of flap, climb away to the righthand side of the runway and call "Going Around"

Remember the aircraft will not climb or show very little climb rate with three stages of flap.



THE LATEST GROUP OF ATPL THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE STUDENTS:  
BACK ROW LEFT TO RIGHT: THOMAS SHELDICK, RHYS POWER, BRAD SHORT,  
SIMON COLLINS, MARK LENNARD, CHARLES TAYLOR, NICHOLAS LAI.  
FRONT ROW: JAKE MEERS, ANNETT NOVAK, FARZANA PANCHBHAYA,  
DAVID MARKER, IAN CHO. PHOTO: ADRIAN OLIVER

## ARE YOU A NIGHT OWL?

**Instructor Shaun Eason encourages pilots to enjoy the experience of night flying:**



It's a bit of a misnomer to think that as autumn and winter descend upon us flying opportunities are reduced. Winter flying conditions can reveal excellent visibility and calmer winds.

However, the days are shorter and the nights longer. The solution? A night rating.

Official night is defined as 30 minutes after sunset and 30 minutes before sunrise for aviators. This means that unless you have a night rating, you need to be on the ground 30 minutes before official sunset. You should also not fly until after 30 minutes from sunrise. It's a bit of a nuisance if you are planning a day's flying. Darkness doesn't suddenly happen, it gradually occurs. During this period flying can be great, with calm conditions and great vis. Unless you have a night rating, flying during this period is not legal.

A night rating takes five hours minimum. At least three hours of this must be with an instructor. Solo time requires five take-offs and fullstop landings. There is also the requirement of a cross country navigation of at least 50 km with an instructor.

During the course you will experience how flying at night is different from daytime flying, hence why it became mandatory for budding ATPL's. There is more emphasis on safety and airmanship and my experience is that everyone who has completed the rating has found the course has enhanced their ability as a pilot and given them more flexibility in their flying.

Night flying is great fun. The views of the area are fantastic and the sense of achievement from landing an aircraft at night is very satisfying.

Courses at Stapleford last from November to the end of March and can be booked via reception.

Please note that Stapleford club rules require:

- all student local flights, except circuits to terminate at least one hour before sunset
- all student cross country flights to terminate at least two hours before sunset
- flights by pilots without a night rating to terminate before sunset

**Editor's note:** PPL's with a Night Rating are reminded that when carrying passengers at night, one out of three take-offs and landings within the preceding 90 days must have been made at night to meet currency requirements.

## SUCCESS STORIES

Congratulations to all students who have flown their first solo and to those who have recently achieved their PPL. Wishing them all the best for their future flying.

**First Solo:** Dominic Cheah, Francesca Creed, Ian Groves, Simba Gurara, Peonie Ho, Harris Leung, Jesslyn Lai, Mike Mahoney, Carl Miller, Shehzad Torabally, Jack Webb, and Chris Yeung.

**Skills Test:** Peter Clarke, Conrad Collinson, Antonio Ferreira, Andrew Hill, Steven Jenkinson, Saddagat Khan, Nicholas Lai, Raiyan Mubeen, Inshall Mughal, George Newton, Hamza Shaikh, Jamie Speller, Isabelle Stead, Jason Taylor and George Vezirtoglou.



PEONIE HO - FIRST SOLO

## SEASONAL GREETINGS FROM THE MANAGEMENT AND STAFF AT STAPLEFORD FLIGHT CENTRE. WISHING YOU CLEAR SKIES AND HAPPY LANDINGS IN 2018

Don't forget Stapleford has a great range of Christmas gifts available for the pilot and the wannabe pilot in your life. There is something for aviation enthusiasts of all ages

For a hands-on experience how about a trial lesson (from £83 for 30 minutes)? It was a trial lesson that got so many of us hooked on flying. For the more adventurous what about aerobatics (from £135 for 20 minutes)?

Scenic flights over London (£215 for up to four people or £89 per person) or flights over Essex (£240 for an hour for up to three people) are also on offer. There is also an opportunity to try your hand at flying a business jet in the cockpit simulator (£69 for 30 minutes).

A range of flying accessories is available from Gerran Aviation at the airfield. And don't forget that irresistible Pilot Bear, Stapleford Ted (£9.49).

For further details go to: [www.flyingpresents.co.uk](http://www.flyingpresents.co.uk)

**TAKE OFF** is edited by Sue Rose ([suerose.pr@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:suerose.pr@hotmail.co.uk)) and designed by John Pasche.  
Please do send us your stories, your photos and your ideas.

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