

## CHIPMEET 2009

Following the new friendships formed at the Sywell Formation Training weekend meeting in September 2008, which was reported in the last DHC-1 Club magazine, a concerted effort was made to gather together as many UK participants for the flight to Zoersel over the days of May 21<sup>st</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>.

The three new to Chipmeet crews of Ken Kelso( G-BWMX or WG 407), Trish & Dennis Neville (G-ALWB) and Tony Clinch with Colin Terry(G-ULAS or WK 517)) expressed an early interest in participating and so acting as co-ordinator, G-ATHD with myself and Owen Cubitt plus Janice and Paul Doyle in G-APYG were added to the list. As Ken had no co-pilot, Guy Pearce accepted the back seat and with Guy being one of the Chipmeet instructors they departed on the Wednesday with everyone else having to leave on Thursday morning due to work commitments.

Although Zoersel is not a difficult place to get to in Belgium there are certain formalities which need to be complied with and it is worth while raising them here in order to help Chipmunk crews in their planning for future trips:-

- Filing of Crew details and aircraft, time of departure & arrival on General Declaration
- Filing of Flight Plans using new AFPEX system from home
- Notification to Customs as Calais is not a manned customs post
- Consideration of Schengian Area entry and exit –
- Fuel Drawback on return to UK

Consultation with the USAFE weather website on the days leading up to Chipmeet showed a very promising situation for the whole of the meeting and so 09.30 was the nominated time for engine start of G-ULAS & G-ATHD at Denham and of G-APYG & G-ALWB at Little Gransden. However, with some fifteen minutes to go phone calls were exchanged delaying the start up due to a vacuum pump problem on 'WB – this was resolved in time for the four aircraft to meet up in the Lea Valley around 10.20 and formate up for the trip to Calais. Arriving there for a stream landing an hour later we were surprised to see a Chipmunk and a Fox Moth waiting to depart which later turned out to be Ken Fraser in a borrowed WK 577 and his Fox Moth G-AOJH flown by Robert Millburn who would be instructing at Zoersel.

Calais is a convenient and pleasant place to route through when on route to Belgium but unfortunately no longer has a café so it is essential to bring a sandwich and a drink whilst taking a break having refuelled and waiting to pay landing fees. Turn round is usually around one hour and flight plans can be filed in advance from the UK or by visiting the control tower.

Formating up after take-off and then routing inland slightly to follow the motorway towards Belgium was carried out without problem and avoiding the Gravelines Nuclear Power Station on the coast we proceeded to the KOK VOR with Ostende Approach and then towards the NIK VOR passing Ursel on route. As they were very quiet at the time,

they requested a low pass which we were pleased to do before we changed frequency to Brussels and thence to Antwerp for an overhead passage of their airport at 2000ft. So we all arrived in good shape at Zoersel after two and a half hours of flying and following a short break, during which we unloaded the aircraft, refuelled and prepared for some formation flying with at least one sortie being flown before end of day was called.

For those who have yet to sample the delights of the Chipmeet atmosphere and the friendliness of Chipmunk owners and crews then all I can say is that you are really missing out on a great experience. The flying club at Zoersel, under the leadership of Pascal Kempnaers, is a first class venue with little or no restrictions and the organisation led by Edith and Tony de Bruyn and their team never fails to amaze me – they really go out of their way to make sure that everyone is catered for. Refuelling after each sortie is a team effort by all the pilots, which is slickly carried out, pushing aircraft back to the parking area to be readied for the next sortie whilst crews are briefed and debriefed. Such is the organisation that tea, coffee and soft drinks are available throughout the day from the bar and cooked lunch and an evening meal are included with the daily fee which each pilot pays for and this includes the transport to and from the local hotel about fifteen minutes away.

2009 was the most successful Chipmeet in recent years with four days of good weather which allowed for 124 hours of flying accomplished in 72 sorties by 13 Chipmunks\*. One or two new items were added to this years programme including a Diamond Nine Formation which flew behind Tony de Bruyn's Shorts Skyvan G-PIGY on the Friday evening. This aircraft provided a very able platform for photographers and included passes by an Aero Commander 692, two YAK's, a Piaggio 149 and a DA-42 as well as other Chipmunks and the aforementioned Fox Moth. The very fine photos achieved from this platform can be viewed on the [www.chipmeet.com](http://www.chipmeet.com) website. The large twelve ship formation also formed up late Saturday afternoon for the traditional flypast of Zoersel, then the Stampe Museum at Antwerp airport and returning to Zoersel for a formation change to a stream landing. This was ably led once again this year by Nicole in G-AOJR with Gerard on board keeping an eye on the stopwatch.

### **Participating Chipmunks & Crews**

### **Instructors**

G-BARS	1377	John Beattie & Hayden Price	Robert Miller
G-ALWB		Trish & Dennis Neville	Guy Pearce
G-ULAS	WK 517	Tony Clinch & Colin Terry	Conor Campbell
G-APYG		Janice & Paul Doyle	Andy Tomalin
G-ATHD	WP 971	Owen Cubitt & Rod Brown	Roger Milburn
G-BWMX	WG 407	Ken Kelso	"Rossi" Reuteeler-Staub
G-BCYM	WK 577	Ken & Alaister Fraser	
G-DHCC	WG 321	Tony & Thomas de Bruyn & Jan Possemiers	
G-AOJR		Nicole & Gee Caubergs	
G-BWTG	WB 671	Henk van Harselaar & Rob de Man & Bertie .van de Brunte	
G-BWVZ	WK 590	Didier Champion & Stefan Vancauteran	
G-BCPU		Mike Miller & Peter Waller	
G-HAPY	WP 803	Harold Preiskel	* from Peter de Graaf records
HB-COK	Cessna 170	Theo Staub & Rossi – camera ship	

Another new feature this year was the Formation Booking out board which was designed and made by Gerard(Gee) Caubergs – a photo of this is attached but what is not apparent is that it is a magnetic whiteboard and the photos and names are printed onto a magnetic strip. The result is a very tidy and presentable summary of what is going on in the various training areas and greatly added to the safety of the meeting.

Sunday morning saw the UK crews filing flight plans for the return trip via Calais and this was originally going to be a five ship formation which quickly grew into a seven ship. As the Fox Moth and Chipmunk of Ken Fraser were departing around the same time and also going via Calais to drop off passengers, a formation take-off and flypast of both Zoersel and Antwerp airport was arranged. As the Fox Moth is a bit slower than the Chipmunk, the original five ship formation of G-BWMX, G-APYG, G-ALWB, G-ATHD & G-HAPY forged on to Calais and arrived in echelon right for a run and break.

Having fuelled and oiled, Ken Kelso & Guy Pearce got smartly away and routing via Manston overhead they avoided the Southend airshow and went direct to Cambridge. The remaining four aircraft retraced their steps via Dover, Detling and Lambourne VOR's and then split - a run and break back at Denham drew to a conclusion a very enjoyable four days flying. The photos and comments on the Chipmeet website sum it all up but you have to have been there to experience the camaraderie – the nearest thing to a Squadron reunion is the best way of describing it !!

I only hope that we can provide an equally good Formation Training Weekend at Cambridge over September 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> with the Marshall's Aerospace airshow on the Sunday 20<sup>th</sup>. Please join us if you possibly can.

Rod Brown