



THE STAMPE CLUB

## STAMPE CLUB NEWSLETTER

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Autumn 2015

### TALK ABOUT THE WEATHER!

Like farmers, the weather for pilots is never quite right. This year was no exception. Overall, the weather in northwest Europe has, to date, been a year of contrasts. June was unseasonably cool, wet and very windy. Not good for vintage biplanes. Whereas the beginning of July was very warm with record temperatures. That did not last. It was then cooler and changeable, particularly during the school holidays, with rain at frequent intervals.

By contrast, southern Europe was basking (or rather sweltering) with some of the hottest temperatures ever recorded. Why? Well quite simply the position of the jet stream. It was stuck in the 'wrong' place!

Unfortunately, the prospects for this winter do not seem very encouraging. The forecast for northwest Europe is for a long, hard winter. Club members in the southern hemisphere will, of course, be anticipating a different scenario.

What's the forecast for the UK's Met Office?



A threatening sky!

### INTRODUCTION

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STAMPE CLUB

To enjoy Stampe aircraft by promoting safe flying, upkeep, preservation and restoration, as well as to provide a forum for discussion, exchange of ideas and information and to act as a focus between Stampe Club members and international organisations responsible for licensing and flight safety etc.

### MEMBERSHIP

The Stampe Club is open to anyone of any nationality who owns or flies a Stampe or is simply just interested in the aircraft for its own sake as well as those engaged in offering services for the upkeep of Stampes. In other words, the Stampe Club should include a wide range of membership, but all with the objective of preserving the type.

The Stampe Club has members in some twelve different countries within Australasia, Europe, the Far East and North America. Consequently, whilst the Stampe Club is presently based in the UK, the content of this Newsletter is intended to serve an international readership.

Contact: Angus Buchanan - [secretary@stampeclub.org](mailto:secretary@stampeclub.org)

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## NEWSLETTER

Whilst the Newsletter is sent to the majority of Club members by email, hard copy versions are also sent to many members. It is simply a matter of choice.

Contact: [editor@stampeclub.org](mailto:editor@stampeclub.org)

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Whilst all subscriptions should now be paid, please make a note of the Stampe Club's banking details.

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## THE STAMPE CLUB'S WEBSITE

The overwhelming objective of the Stampe Club website has been to build something that is a real asset to members. Whilst the opening pages are available for anyone, we have created a login for members - which gives access to the 'real secrets' within... A Library of Technical Information, a Bazaar where you can advertise or request parts from members, an Events Schedule and an Ops Board.

These are beginning to be 'populated', but will work best if you join in and upload any information to which you have access. The Club's objective is that this central resource becomes 'the place' to find what you require. Getting good and reliable information is the biggest challenge (and will become more so) - please share what you have for the mutual benefit of other Stampe owners.

Contact: Angus Buchanan - [secretary@stampeclub.org](mailto:secretary@stampeclub.org)

## EVENTS

### WHEN AND WHERE?

If you know of any Fly-Ins who would welcome Stampes (and who would not) why not send a note around to the other members? In any case, please take some photographs to show other Club members where you have been!

Contact: [editor@stampeclub.org](mailto:editor@stampeclub.org)

## REPORTS

### ANTWERP FLY-IN, BELGIUM

**Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th May 2015**

This well attended event always proves to be a 'winner'. This year was no exception!

Read about the intrepid UK Club members who made the trip to Antwerp as described by Angus Buchanan.

### GOODWOOD FESTIVAL OF SPEED, UK

**25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

Ventana, the specialist foundry company based deep in the southwest of France, displayed their skills with a new Renault PO3 crankcase alongside the Editor's Stampe!



An inquisitive look at a Renault engine at the Goodwood Festival of Speed. Photo: Courtesy Laurent Stuck

### SCHAFFEN DIEST, BELGIUM

**Saturday 15th to Sunday 16th August 2015**

Once again the weather got in the way of the planned visit by a small 'gaggle' of UK Club members. Next year!

However, whilst the Saturday was not good, the Sunday was much better. In fact Guy Valvekens reports a total of 124 arrivals over the weekend. As Guy says 'Not bad for that sort of weather!'





Lycoming engine Stampe with a great reg at Schaffen Diest  
Photo: courtesy of David Booster

## BITS, PARTS AND PLANES

### SPARES FOR SALE?

If you have any spare bits and pieces, no matter how big or small, you may wish to make them available to other Stampe Club members via the Stampe Club website.

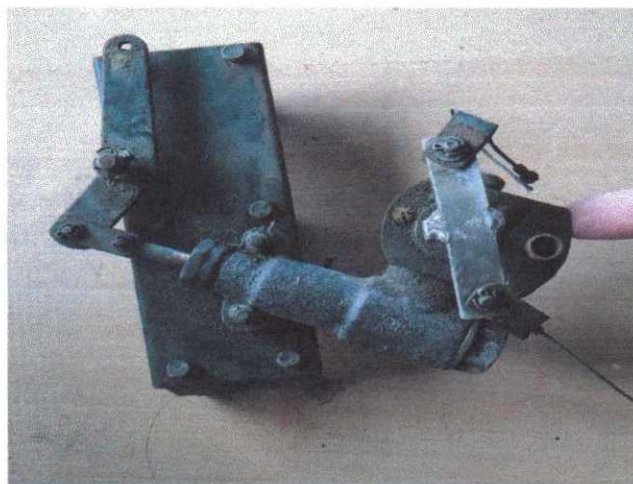
To expedite matters, details of any bits, parts and spares can be posted directly on the website. Club members should then make direct contact with the vendor to transact the deal. Please note that, whilst the Stampe Club wishes to promote more inter-action between members, the Club does not wish to act as a broker and/or be involved in any negotiations financial or otherwise. Caveat Emptor always applies.

Contact: [www.stampeclub.org](http://www.stampeclub.org) or if you have difficulties [technical@stampeclub.org](mailto:technical@stampeclub.org)

### GYPSY MAJOR INVERTED FUEL CONTROLLER FOR SALE – PRICE £200

Those who run with a Gypsy major engine may be interested to obtain an inverted fuel system control unit. Last used on a Jungmann.

Contact: Mark Jefferies: [yak@yak.uk.com](mailto:yak@yak.uk.com)



An inverted fuel controller  
Photo: Courtesy of Mark Jefferies

## GENERAL INTEREST

### BONE DOMES?

The well publicised crash landing earlier this year involving the well known and experienced pilot, Harrison Ford, is bound to open up the debate again about the safety aspects of flying, particularly the need for personal protection equipment such as bone domes.

### THANK GOODNESS FOR AN OPEN COCKPIT!

The tragic stories about the fatal effects of 'aerotoxic syndrome' makes for serious reading for commercial pilots. No danger to those flying Stampes!

### PRE-FLIGHT INSPECTIONS

**Michael Jones offers a piece of history (apparently written, following a 'difficult' flight, by the famous UK Stampeist Brian Lecomber), which originally featured in the Stampe Club 'rag' in the 1970's. It is still noteworthy today!**

"So I'm aviating hither and thither in the Stampe the other day (not one of the Redhill [EGKR] Stampes, another one) and I find myself commencing to think that the engine sounds a bit flat. So I amble back to the airfield, throttle back – and sure enough, it stops. So I land (which seems to be a judicious move in the circumstances) only to fire it up again on the ground. I taxi in with the aeroplane sounding like a gate banging in a high wind and me thinking harsh thoughts about the quality of the spark plugs you get nowadays.

Only the trouble was not the spark plugs. It turns out to be the top carburettor bracket which had fractured clean through with the inlet manifold also badly cracked. This left the carb and manifold wiggling about like a loose tooth with consequent detrimental effects on the fuel/air mixture reaching the engine room. So I do the gentlemanly thing and fly into a hysterical gibbering rage, then scream for Geoff Masterton.(1) Finally I sit down and think about it a bit.

What I think is that (a) some of those fractures do not look completely new, (b) the flight I have just carried out was relatively gentle (only a few aerobatics), so that I can't see any particular reason why the carburettor should suddenly decide to fall off when it did, and (c) a couple of flights back I was out practising 'Lomcovaks'(2) which might well have put a bit of strain on things. So the chances are that the



cracks and things did not suddenly develop in the last ten minutes, but had been brewing up for some time. This raises the interesting question of why the hell didn't I spot them on at least one pre-flight inspection?



Mother, mother, what have I done! This Stampe was repatriated into France in 1956 and started a civilian career as F-BEPY. It is still flying today.

Photo: Courtesy of Regis Jouhaud

Now, understand that I take my flying seriously. When I do a pre-flight inspection, I don't just count the wings and climb in, I do an inspection. I pull things and poke things and wiggle things, and in particular I stare suspiciously at things which are known to be prone to breakage. Or, at least, that's what I think I do. How sure can one be of one's own pre-flight inspection? If it's your own aeroplane and few other people fly it, you really have no kind of check on your own checking ability – until one day something falls off and you're left sitting there wondering why. You may think you do a thorough pre-flight – but if it's a totally familiar aeroplane and you're not expecting to find anything wrong with it, maybe it's possible to look with the eyes in gear but the brain still in park; maybe it's possible to look, but just not bloody well see.

If the manifold and bracket were cracked before I took off (which isn't proven), one conclusion is obviously that I'm a bloody fool and I need to sharpen up on the pre-flights before I absentmindedly try to leave the ground in an aircraft which is missing something really important, like maybe the wings.

That's one conclusion – but there is another one too, perhaps, which particularly applies if you're flying an aircraft which nobody else flies very much. That is to have somebody else to pre-flight it for you every now and then; get another pair of eyes on the job, on the grounds that although two people can both make mistakes, the odds are mathematically against both of them making the same mistake. Engineers do this with their duplicate inspection system, so why shouldn't pilots do the same?

Exit one slightly wiser pilot, bellowing for somebody else!"

(1) Geoff Masterton was a well-known UK Aero Engineer with a great knowledge of Stamps. He sadly died some years ago.

(2) Lomcovaks are severe freestyle aerobic manoeuvres which impose high stresses on the aircraft, particularly the engine bearers, crankshaft and propeller. These days it is agreed by most Aero Engineers (licensed or otherwise) that they should only be performed in aeroplanes built for high stress aerobatics and not vintage biplanes.

## WHAT'S THE FORECAST FOR THE UK'S MET OFFICE?

The UK's Met Office may be put up for sale as part of the 'ruthless' spending cuts on behalf of its owners, the Ministry of Defence.

A recent paper by the Royal Meteorology Society (based on the Met Office's own data) concluded that there have been 'no significant trends' in the 'intensity of rainfall' over the 84 years since records began.

Other research by former Met Office employees indicate that the weather patterns over the past eighteen years have been astonishingly consistent. Apparently, despite some 'fluctuations', the overall trend has been remarkably flat irrespective of the UK's Met Office's forecast for a 'barbeque summer'!





## TECHNICAL

### NEW RENAULT ENGINES!

**Club member, Laurent Stuck, reports that work is progressing well on manufacture of a new Renault engine.**

To date, a magnesium 4PO5 upper casing has been successfully cast and is presently being machined with improved cylinder head assemblies for better oil lightness and heat transfer. Apparently, welding the rocker boxes also helps with this as well.



Welded rocker box  
Photo: Courtesy of Laurent Stuck

Interestingly, the crankshaft will be subject to a nitration test. If successful this will provide a case-hardened surface which may allow the use of modern bearings thereby improving the engine life. The stuff of dreams. Watch this space!

## MEMBER NEWS

### UK STAMPES GO TO ANTWERP

**Angus Buchanan provides a wonderful description of an 'international' flight in a Stampe this year to the Antwerp Fly-In.**

Aircraft are designed to travel great distances in a straight line. Adventures by Stampe therefore fit with this notion and, notwithstanding weather, technical challenges and discomfort, we should take on international travel – because it is meant to be!

Danny Cabooter valiantly invites us all year upon year to the Stampe event in Antwerp. It is not a difficult trip from Headcorn, with just one fuel stop, but I have been beaten on two occasions by weather, once having to turn back at Dover on seeing, well, nothing on reaching the coast.

This year the previous plans were dusted off once again and circulated to an ambitious gang of six aircraft that were ready to make a pilgrimage to the cradle of Stampdom. Sad to tell, various challenges thinned our number to two: G-SVIV with Jo Keighley and Chris Jesson aboard and my aircraft G-AWEF. Chris had been invited to display during the Sunday airshow – very satisfactory that an import was required for this task!

A trip across the channel is a remarkably easy thing to do. There is some paperwork before departure, but only pleasure from thereon in. We flew on a single flight plan in formation and, with 20 knots up our tail, intended to make the journey in one hop – not as ambitious as you might imagine. This time the coast was clear and we made France in the clearest May weather. Puffy clouds as we entered French airspace felt like summer had arrived, but the puffs merged and we descended through a hole – which closed – and suddenly overcast was too familiar abeam Kortrijk. This spot had been on the cards anyway if the tailwind had not been sufficient to send us all the way so, with some gesticulating from aircraft to aircraft, the diversion was agreed.

On the ground we found a DIY registration and fuel arrangement, a café, another Stampe pilot temporarily halted on the Antwerp mission and a pause of an hour or so before we gained a favourable weather report ahead. Now three aircraft, we set off for the 40 minutes to our destination, to be hustled onto the ground before the airport shut to allow the Belgian airforce display team a practice in their SIAI Marchettis.

As a Stampe owner you expect to be the 'only one in the village' wherever you go. We are few and far between. So, to taxi into a Stampe sea outside a museum dedicated to our aircraft and the team that designed and built them, was quite an experience. Inevitably, likeminded souls are always going to enjoy each other's company. Having lost an hour between countries and being later than planned, we



A traffic jam of Stampes at the Antwerp Fly-In back in May.  
Photo: Courtesy of Angus Buchanan.



immediately joined the hangar party – food, drink, music, tales of restoration, ‘my other aircraft’s a....’ and that pilot stuff that leaves all others completely cold. The speeches were generously multi-lingual celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> Stampe Fly-In and, strikingly, reflected the considerable enthusiasm that the city has for this event, their museum, and the aircraft themselves. I’ve never felt so welcome.

Day two of the event, Sunday, requires a customary formation of Stampes across the city, which launches the airshow. As members of our own formation team, participation was on the cards and we briefed alongside a dozen other pilots. Hand signals should be an international language..... but I’d not realised, when you fly with the same team all the time, how much you rely on familiarity and the comfort of having been with the same crew time and time again. No amount of gesticulating can communicate with an improperly positioned aircraft three places away from you in a formation of 14. However, we weren’t aiming for prizes for the smallest diamond possible and 14 aircraft returned safely to the ground.



**Fathers' Sons! The sons of Club members Danny Cabooter and Regis Jouhaud share a flight at the Antwerp Fly-In.**  
Photo: Courtesy of Regis Jouhaud

This event is truly Stampe heaven. Nowhere else will such a concentration of our machines gather. Nowhere else can you see so many newly restored and also elegantly lived-in Stampes in one place. Bravo to Danny and his considerable team for maintaining the impetus of the celebration year upon year. Long may it continue.

The heat continued for our journey back, this time with an intended stop at Kortrijk, the same relaxed service on the ground (and a fuel bill that has only just arrived two months later)!

In a year in which we remember both wars you cannot help but be moved by war graves on the route, a track directly over the Menin Gate and the Battle of Britain memorial above the white cliffs on our return.

So, great distances in a Stampe are wholly viable. A first for me was to take off in one country, watch a second country disappear under us, and land in a third! Properly international!

## KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY

Club member, Barb Baron reports that she is thinking of giving her Stampe (N14SV) to her FedEx pilot son David who lives in Michigan. Lucky old David!

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