



Newsletter

of the
Microflights Flying School and Club
Finmere Aerodrome, Buckinghamshire

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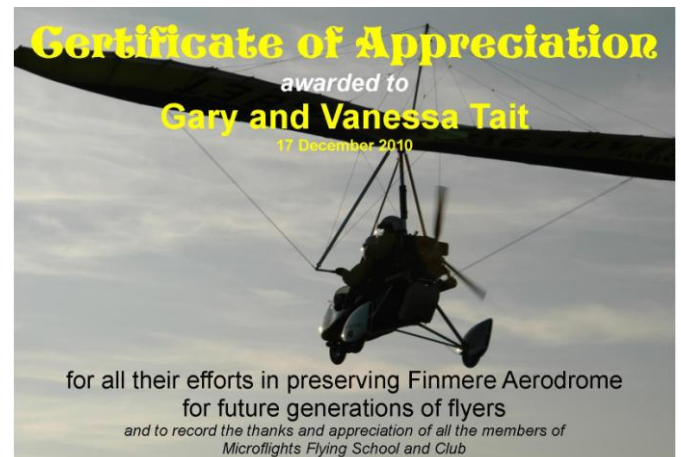
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Gary Tait 1945 – 2011



As you all know, **Gary** bravely fought pancreatic cancer, one of the most aggressive forms of the disease, for around eighteen months. In the last few months, it had taken its toll and he'd had several spells of hospitalisation, but he spent his last few weeks at home, surrounded by all the things he loved, eventually giving up the fight on 2nd September, surrounded by his family. Several of the club attended his funeral at Crownhill Crematorium on 9 September, bringing with us all the thoughts and good wishes from everyone else who couldn't be there. The funeral was packed with family, friends and fellow aviators, and Alan Trotter, one of Gary's lifelong friends and business associates, talked in very personal and humorous terms about his life. Having lain

pretty much derelict after its decommissioning by the RAF in 1947, Finmere was brought back into active aviation use by Bill and Prue Knapton in the early seventies, but after their passing it underwent a slow decline. **Gary** and **Vanessa** breathed new life into the airfield when they took over in October 2004 and it's thanks to their efforts and investment that Finmere is now very much "back on the map", with a repaired runway, new taxiways and hard standings, new secure fencing and new hangars and crew room area. In recognition of that massive commitment, it was a particular pleasure to present them with the club's Certificate of Appreciation at the end of last year:



To those who knew him, Gary was in every sense a larger than life character, and he continues to live on with every take-off and landing at Finmere, each one a part of a flying heritage which began in 1943 when the airfield's runways first rumbled under the wheels of bomber squadrons and their young flight crews. That legacy is never forgotten. Nor will Gary be. He's back on the flight deck at last.

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Welcome to New Students!

I'm delighted to say that **Chris Clarke** had his first front-seat lesson in wonderful conditions on 13 March and signed up for the course a few days later.



His second lesson on 11th April was also in perfect conditions, and he's now gone through the full pre-flight check under **Elliot's** expert guidance (apart from a minor delay when **Pete Banks** took him flying!). He did the take-off, and, apart from fast and slow level flying (Exercise 6), we flew over his mum's house in Bletchley and over to Woburn Abbey and the Safari Park. Unforgettable stuff. Chris, like many of Microflights' students, doesn't like to rush into things: his trial flight was five years ago! He's also, like **Ashley**, a diver, and now he's made the decision to get stuck into flying, he's determined to carve out some space in his otherwise crazy work schedule (recognise this story, others?).

Colin Akerman was not unfamiliar with microlights when he arrived at Finmere on 10 June, as he'd already done four hours on a Blade 582 at Sywell with Kevin Jones (now at Ultra Air in Leicester). Mind you, that was in 1995! So we'd arranged for him to have a trial flight in the back seat and then his first front-seat lesson on the same evening. We had a great time, with swoops into Croughton and Godington in between wing and throttle revision, and Colin came in a few days later for the "the chat" and signed up for the course. Being retired should in theory give him LOTS of free time, but it sounds like his life is busier than most! Nonetheless, he's managed to clock another six hours since June and is on climbing and descending turns. And yes, it's a ski suit, not an Ozee.....



And another youngster of the same fine vintage (he's even younger than **Colin!**) has just joined the growing student ranks, in the shape of **Chris Freeman** from Maids Moreton. Chris had a trial flight back in May and I think that "rekindled the spark", as he then had his first front-seat lesson on 12 August, signing up for the course just a few days later.



Chris has lived in the area for most of his life and already knows several of you from one of his past careers as a haulage contractor. And like most of us, Chris has always wanted to fly. Another link with Colin is that Chris took light aircraft lessons AND went solo more than thirty years ago at Sywell, but life (as it does) sort of got in the way until he discovered microlights. Good to have you with us, Colin and Chris!

Elliot's Eventful Day!

Elliot Cave had a very busy and eventful day on Sunday 3 July. We'd spent the morning practising Ex 16a engine failures (PFLs) away from base, and then we had a break for the thermals to do their thing while Elliot did some

maintenance work on MVOB, including a plug change.



After lunch he ran the engine to check all was well and we set off to do some intensive EFATO and EFIC engine failure drills on circuit 28/LH. Elliot carried out a nice quick EFATO drill from a simulated engine failure on climbout from 100 feet or so, then we resumed the circuit. Just as well we were both "in the zone" as far as engine failures were concerned, as at the far end of the downwind leg the engine made some very unpleasant noises and the power disappeared. I'm pleased to say that Elliot and I, working as a double act, put the machine successfully into the large field adjoining Glendale Farm. So as far as I know, only Elliot, I and Amy Johnson (it's true) have that entry in their log books. Thanks to Robert Floyd and Caroline at Glendale Farm (Robert lent us a plug spanner – Elliot will tell you the full story), the problem was fixed and we took off from the field and flew back to Finmere. After checking that all was well on the engine front (it was), we flew another 50 minutes of EFIC and EFATO and a whole series of *great* landings, and it was time for Elliot to "go it alone". It had all got suddenly busy with other aircraft by then, but **Pete Banks** and **Lewis** very thoughtfully adjusted their circuits to allow Elliot some elbow room, and he flew his First Solo.



He even used a powered approach! Since then he's racked up well over ten hours of solo flying, which is all that's required for the licence.

Paul Norton's First Solo!

Not to be outdone by the co-owner of MVOB, I'm delighted to say that **Paul Norton** went solo on Thursday 28 July, after two very good sessions of intensive EFATO and EFIC work in the circuit. I'm also pleased that his day wasn't QUITE as eventful as Elliot's had been, but that's no bad thing! WELL DONE, Paul - a marvellous, once in a lifetime achievement and the reward for all those many hours of bashing the circuit! To cap off a perfect day, he appeared live on air later that evening on Tony Livesey's chat programme on Radio 5 Live, in the piece asking if anyone had done anything exciting or memorable that day. Paul's First Solo story went down a storm with the studio crew!



Elliot's First Solo Cross Country!

Elliot certainly hasn't been standing still since his First Solo. He flew his First Solo Cross Country to White Waltham airfield on Tuesday 30 August. He'd never been there before, so this was very much an "in at the deep end" exercise, as White Waltham has some quite complicated circuit patterns and can be quite busy. As **Kevin** and I had a double lesson that day, I'd suggested that he plan the same route as one of his two Dual Cross Countries, with me in the back as ballast. So both Elliot and Kevin were able to compare their route planning with each other and with the PLOG which they called up from SkyDemon Light on the crew room PC. Apart from a minor discrepancy between knots and mph (oops), both routes were within a gnat's of each

other. We decided to do a proper overhead departure from Finmere and Kevin and I gave Elliot a ten-minute head start so he really was doing the route on his own. Both routes were flown extremely accurately and as Kevin and I joined overhead White Waltham in the Quasar we saw Elliot's yellow Alpha just joining the crosswind leg of the circuit below us. We had a chance to sample the delights of White Waltham's very good restaurant (£10.95 for fish and chips – you can tell it's West London!) and then ambled back to Finmere around mid-afternoon. WELL DONE, Elliot – another milestone logged!

Exam successes!

And **Elliot's** now passed FOUR of his five written exams too! He passed Air Law on 23 July, Navigation on 13 August and both Aeroplanes-General and HPL (Human Performance & Limitations) on 27 August. Only the Meteorology exam and one more Solo XC to go before his GST – there's no stopping this boy! And in case you're wondering who this is, it's Elliot wearing the full-face helmet he's converted with an integral Lynx intercom system. Very impressive electronic engineering, but it's like flying with Darth Vader....



Club Fly-Out to Leicester: Sunday 27 March

Well, our planned Fly-Out to White Waltham on 20 March went the way of most flying plans – too windy! As it happened, the fall-back date I'd picked (the following Sunday) wasn't any good for White Waltham, as they had a CAA event on that day, so I contacted Leicester instead and they were very happy to book us in, even offering us a landing fee discount to £10 (usually £12). So our Club Fly-Out to Leicester on **Sunday 27 March** was planned. Did the weather co-operate?

Well, yes and no. The wind was light, which was a big plus, but the high pressure ridge was causing very marginal visibility, so we had the usual series of "Shall we? Shan't we?" discussions from 9.00 am onwards as folk gathered to rig and check their machines. Leicester were giving us a higher cloudbase and better visibility than we had at Finmere, so **Ian** and I went up to have a look at conditions, followed by **Lewis** and **John G.** Certainly not brilliant, but I gave a cautious green light on the basis that to continue or not was very much each PIC's individual decision (which should always be the case on any Fly-Out). Unfortunately we lost **Nick West** and **Richard Llewellyn** early on, as Landmead Farm stayed clagged in all morning, so the boys were unable even to leave the deck. That left SEVEN aircraft with 14 POB to set off for Leicester:

AIRCRAFT	FRONT SEAT	BACK SEAT
Quasar 503	John Parrish	Shawn Fraser
Airborne XT912	Paul Walton	James McCafferty
Flash 2 Alpha	Elliot Cave	Gareth Logan
Skyranger	Pete Banks	Jane Banks
Quik	Simon Swift	Kevin Noakes
QuikR	Lewis White	Robert Wells
Blade 912	Ian Smart	Bob Mason

Paul Walton and **Elliot** were flying front seat in their respective aircraft with **Gareth** and me in the back seats as pukka Dual Cross-Country flights, building on what they'd learned during the recent Navigation Course. Their flight planning and route flying were first-class – just as well as we flew north into the murk! Visibility was legal, but not by any huge margin, and we were struggling to pick out Stowe at the start of our route. Consequently, three of our aircraft sensibly turned back to base, leaving four whose crew had obviously had magic mushrooms for breakfast to plod on into the gloom. I think all four tried different cruising altitudes on the way to see if they could improve the forward visibility, but it stayed pretty awful all the way there. Paul was bang on course as we crossed the A6 just south-east of Leicester, and we were high enough (cloud below us – with gaps!) to carry out a proper overhead join. The only problem was that we couldn't see either Leicester Aerodrome or Leicester itself. And then we shunted a few metres west and saw the runway markings right underneath us. It wasn't very busy (I wonder why...?), so as non-radio traffic we had no problem dropping deadside and joining the circuit, though Leicester has a new – very busy – helicopter pleasure flight company

there and they were all over the place. **Lewis** and **Robert** joined us an hour or so later, with a slight improvement in visibility, and the lunch was (as always) very pleasant. The afternoon flight back was almost as claggy as the morning had been, with the added bonus – not – of heading into sun. The good thing about that was that the sun reflected nicely off the lakes and reservoirs we were using as our waypoints – Saddington, Soulby, Naseby and Hollowell. Paul and I almost had a slightly closer encounter than we would have wished with a glider out of Husbands Bosworth, but the XT's Streak III wing is, I'm glad to say, very amenable to fairly high energy turns, so no harm done. I don't think he even saw us. So it would have been nice to have better visibility, but it was a good day's experience all round, with particular congratulations to Paul and Elliot for their navigation skills. And Paul won the Mars Bar which has been on offer for the last five years: yes, he FOUND Saddington microlight strip! I've flown over it dozens of times and never seen it, but Paul spotted a windsock and a grass strip, and there it was!

Club Fly-Out to Old Warden: Sunday 14 August

The weather scuppered all our plans for Club Fly-Outs between March and August, and holidays and domestic commitments conspired to mean that our planned **Club Fly-Out to Old Warden on Sunday 14 August** consisted of just ONE aircraft (G-MWVN) and TWO POB – **Pete B** and me! We had to fit the extra (underseat) tank in the Alpha, as the single rear tank doesn't hold enough fuel for the total journey. We had a great flight there and Old Warden was pretty much right on the nose as we left Chicksands behind. It was Pete's first experience of a pukka cross-country flight and he had to cope with the delight of an introduction to the Standard Overhead Join.



After one of Old Warden's famous lunches (I really should live there....), the return trip was, as always, bumpier, as the afternoon thermals had had time to kick in, but Pete's navigation was good and we were only slightly adrift of track by the time we passed Winslow. Small turnout, but a good day out!

Club Fly-Out to Popham: Sunday 25 September

And do keep an eye on your e-mails for more details of our NEXT Club Fly-Out on **Sunday 25 September**, when (weather permitting!) we're off to **Popham** airfield near Basingstoke.

Club Social: Friday 17 June

I'm afraid that, like Fly-Outs, Club Socials were a bit thin on the ground in the Spring. Sorry! However, a small (but perfectly formed) group came along to our Club Social on **Friday 17 June** at *The Wheatsheaf* in Maids Moreton. As we were relatively few in number, we simply ordered off the menu. And although the service by Gregor and Sue was as convivial and good-natured as always, I'm not sure everyone was bowled over by the quality of what was served. Nonetheless, a very pleasant evening in the company of friends – and we got the chance to present **Colin** with his Welcome Certificate. No long speeches either!



Club Social: Friday 16 September

And our next Club Social will be at a new venue, kindly suggested by **Chris Clarke**. It's at *The Bull & Butcher* in Akeley on **Friday 16 September**. The restaurant area looks just right and the home-cooked food comes highly recommended. Hopefully see you there!



Pete Brightmore's Alpha 582

It's always a milestone when new students buy their first machine. In **Pete Brightmore's** case, it was actually his THIRD microlight purchase when he bought his Alpha 582 G-MYIV back in March. Until recently, it's been kept in Pete's garage, only coming out when he's had a double lesson booked, when we were able to fly it from Shotteswell (as here):



That allowed us to check the aircraft out both on the ground and in the air, and the good news is that she flies beautifully! The 582 with its four-blade Warp Drive prop is very quiet and gives MYIV a very healthy takeoff distance and climb rate. Pete has fitted rear steering, training bars and a 65-litre tank, so this is now a serious touring machine! And the recent hangar moves created a space in the large (old) hangar, where MYIV is now hangared, with its wing in a bag.

Hangar Changes

You'll know by now that we've had a few hangar changes since the last issue. **Simon** is well on the way to completing his new Skyranger Nynja. Here it is just before the engine was fitted:



As the Nynja's wing span is quite a bit less than the Skyranger Classic, it will fit into the old (disused) hangar round by our car park. **Graham Spittlehouse's** Blade 582 G-JAIR ("Jane Air") is now ensconced in her new home in the Stable Barn, with the wing fully rigged and on a trolley. Stable Barn occupants have all squeezed up to allow that to happen, and fortunately no-one's wing needs to be moved out of the hangar when folk at the back need to get their machines out. As a consequence, and with Vanessa's kind permission, **Pete Brightmore's** Alpha 582 G-MYIV has moved into the "wing in a bag" space vacated by Graham in the large (old) hangar.

MWVN's new rev counter, VSI and tanks

Since the last Newsletter, I've treated my Alpha to a couple of new instruments. The VSI was always wildly optimistic (no Alpha I've flown in – not even Pete's – really climbs at 1500 fpm!), and the rev counter died the death a couple of months ago. As in the needle fell off.... So I made Skydrive and Airworld very happy and, thanks to **Ian**, both new instruments are now fitted and working.



Also MANY thanks to Ian for re-calibrating the Avelec fuel gauge on the Alpha after fitting the two tanks which came out of **Graham Spittlehouse's** G-JAIR (after he fitted the 65-

litre tank). It involved several hours of filling and emptying the two tanks and then (rather carefully) adding one litre of fuel at a time. The result is a perfectly-calibrated fuel gauge, which will be fine as long as Total or Putoline don't change the formula of their petrol and oil.

LP Aviation Rotax Servicing

Paul Norton, Rod Walker and I have very good reason to recommend **Pete Brightmore** to you, since he's done excellent and very reasonably-priced work on our cars. Pete is a motor mechanic by trade, with over twenty years' experience working for Volkswagen and other dealerships, and he is one half of LP Autos (the other half is wife Laura). He is also a racing two-stroke motorcycle engineer, so he's now just setting up **LP Aviation** to offer servicing of Rotax two-stroke and four-stroke engines at prices which WON'T take your breath away. He's already done a first-class 100-hour service and decoke on my Alpha



and on **Kevin's** 503 Quasar. Here's the finished top end:



Yes, you CAN almost see your reflection in the piston heads! Pete's prices are **£249** all-inclusive for a 503 100-hour service and decoke, **£339** for a 582 100-hour service and decoke (including coolant change), **£130** all-inclusive

for a 912 or 912S 100-hour service (including oil and filter change) and **£190** for a 912 or 912S 200-hour service (oil, oil filter and coolant change). Gearbox service prices are

£50 for the 503 and 582 ("A" and "B" type gearboxes) - or just **£30** for the "E" type (as on MVOB) - and **£190** for the more complicated 600-hour gearbox service required for the 912 and 912S. If you want to compare these prices with those of ConAir Sports, have a look on

www.conairsports.co.uk/2-stroke%20service%20prices.html and

www.conairsports.co.uk/4-stroke%20service%20prices.html.

Then contact Pete on 07775 301547 or peter.brightmore@sky.com! More news soon on the monthly maintenance packages that Pete can offer, which will spread maintenance and servicing costs evenly throughout the year, making budgeting a lot easier and giving you real peace of mind when you turn up to fly. And remember, he services cars too. You can contact Pete on **07775 301547** or at peter.brightmore@sky.com.....

Rotorsport Calidus

I think many of you have seen **Paul Chaplin's** wonderful Rotorsport Calidus gyroplane G-YROZ (get it?) "up close", and several of us have been lucky enough to have a flight in the back seat. What an amazing piece of machinery. Here's **Gareth** in the back seat getting ready for a flight in April:



And **Heidi** and **Findlay** trying it out for size in August:



A clean Stable Barn floor.....

A big, though very belated, THANK YOU to the "mystery sweeper" who swept all the leaves out of the Stable Barn at the end of March. It must have taken a good couple of hours, and is HUGELY appreciated by all of us. It's just this kind of generous act which distinguishes a "club" from a "a collection of individuals".



A clean runway....

And in the same month a squad of helpers armed with brooms spent several hours on the runway sweeping debris from the two centre sections. We split into two teams – the "10" section and the "28" section. I was at the far end with the elite One Zeroes, and it's only when you're standing at one end looking towards the far end that you realise just how long 700 metres actually is! Both squads slowly inched towards the centre, and we shifted an awful lot of loose grit and tarmac lumps off to the edges of the runway. By the time the One Zeroes had reached the centre, the Two Eights had gone off shift. Their argument was that they had achieved the same result as us but in a faster time. What can I say? **Mel** worked so tirelessly that he broke the rather flimsy Focus yard broom he'd borrowed! Seriously, though, a huge, chrome-plated



to ALL who came to help. Thanks to all the hard work, the runway has been a LOT less hazardous to our low, rear-mounted props since then, though we may need to convene another work detail to repeat the task in the autumn.

.....AND a clean caravan!

And in April **Gareth** and **Pete B** very kindly lent me a pressure washer and helped clean off all the green stuff that slowly covers the caravan over the winter months. I think the pressure spray was getting a bit close to Pete at this point!



THANK YOU, both. Very much appreciated!

P&M Wing Services

You're probably aware that we were able to send three of our wings to P&M in Rochdale for wing services in July. This process isn't a mandatory requirement, but I always recommend a wing service every two or three years as preventative maintenance. At £325 + VAT it's a very worthwhile piece of expenditure, since you know your wing has been completely dismantled by its manufacturer, checked for any wear or defects and repaired as necessary. Quite reassuring, as it's the bit that keeps you up in the air! We have an arrangement with P&M that if we can provide at least three wings at a time, they will collect them from Finmere and re-deliver them once the work has been carried out. This time we sent **Gareth's** school Blade 912 G-MAIN, **Ashley's** Blade 912 G-CCAW and **Bob's** Chaser S G-MVDP. They came back in August, ready for flight. We'll arrange another batch of wing services early next year.

G-MAIN

And whilst on the subject of servicing, you might be interested to know that, thanks to **Gareth's** eagle eyes, we've tracked down the cause of G-MAIN's persistent, niggling right turn and tendency to torque quite noticeably to the right on full power. Gareth and I had sort of acclimatised to the latter, which is a

result of the 80hp 912 trying to twist the trike in the opposite way to the propeller, but when I flew Brad Hope's Blade 912S with the larger 100hp engine recently, I noticed much less torque. Anyway, to cut a very long story rather shorter, Gareth had noticed that G-MAIN's propeller hub was off-centre, so he took some measurements and sent a series of photos to P&M. He then trailered G-MAIN's trike to Rochdale and Roger Patrick and his crew had a good look, pronouncing that, though the seat frame had moved a bit out of true, nothing was bent or deformed and that Gareth could adjust the thrust line mounts at the top of the engine (I didn't even know they *were* adjustable - dohhh). Anyway, that was done and I flew G-MAIN once the wing was back. Still a s*d to line up the hang strap and connector bracket when attaching the wing, still a bit of a right turn and still a smaller but noticeable torque/roll effect on climbout. Then Jim Cunliffe (ex-CEO of P&M) arrived the following week with Bob's Chaser wing and spent an hour or so going over the trike and engine mounts. He more or less solved the mystery on the spot, pointing out that all Blade 912 seat frames "migrate" in their clamps top and bottom, both in flight (as a result of engine torque) and on the ground when putting the wing on and off the trike. The top and bottom seat frame tubes had rotated about 20mm out of true, so he put them back in place and marked the tubes. He also found that the trike keel/pylon bolt and lower engine mount/pylon bolt weren't fully tight. After Jim had gone, Pete B clamped the top and bottom tubes with jubilee clips to prevent any skewing out of true and, hey presto, (a) when putting the wing on/off the trike, the hang bolt now slides through the connector bracket like the proverbial knife through butter, and (b) the wing shows no sign of torque. If anything, I'll need to take out the batten reflexing, as we now have just a hint of a left turn....!

Woburn Gift Fair 14 – 15 May

As part of a regular annual series of marketing shows, Microflights exhibited at the **Woburn Craft & Gift Fair** in the grounds of Woburn Abbey on the weekend of **14 – 15 May**. The weather was (as always) a bit iffy, so that kept visitor numbers pegged back a bit, and I wasn't convinced that the chainsaw sculpture competition which seemed to go on all day was such a great crowd draw! Nonetheless, it was a successful weekend in the sense that we didn't actually lose money, and I'm very grateful to **Robert** for his

invaluable help in manning the stand on the Sunday.



New NATS NOTAM Software – SkyDemon Light

I think most of you have by now downloaded the new (FREE!) **SkyDemon Light** navigation planning and NOTAMs site from www.skydemonlight.com. If you haven't tried it yet, you should! As far as I'm concerned, it's the best and easiest NOTAM site I've ever used, and once you've got the hang of entering a route (by entering airfield names or just clicking "Back to map" and clicking on the actual airfields), you can then click and drag your track lines to include as many non-airfield turn points as you like. Once you've entered the wind velocity from Form 214 and your airspeed, it'll give you your magnetic headings and flight time for each leg and scroll up any NOTAMs which might be relevant to your route.

Flying Club car window stickers

If you're not proudly displaying your club car sticker yet, you'll be delighted to hear that I have some left!



And although we're principally a microflight club which includes both flexwing and three-

axis, we welcome new members from all aviation types. **Paul Chaplin** has led the way as our first rotary member!

Leather Log Book and Licence Covers

I've been looking for ages for some good quality leather covers to protect your personal log books. The Transair and Pooleys versions aren't hugely satisfactory, but at last AFE have brought one out that's the correct size and really nice quality for the price in black, dark blue or burgundy:



If you'd like one, they're **£17** each (AFE price £16.99 + P&P). Great for birthday presents and special occasions.



AFE also produce rather nice leather covers for that highly-prized pilot's licence in black, dark blue or burgundy. They're **£15** (AFE price £14.99 + P&P):

Jerry cans and other bits....

Just a reminder that I carry stocks of jerry cans, prop covers, seat cushions and rear seat (solo) boxes if anyone needs them. Never knowingly undersold.....



P&M and Rotax parts and spares, Lynx, MicroAvionics etc

And similarly, if you're a club member and you need aircraft or engine parts and spares – or servicing - from P&M or Skydrive (Rotax) or helmets/headsets/radio gear from Lynx or MicroAvionics, or books/equipment from any of the main suppliers like Pooleys, AFE, FlightStore and Transair, or batteries, tyres, inner tubes, wheel bearings and so on, I can almost always supply them a bit cheaper than the price you'll pay if you go direct to the supplier.

Microflights Flying Jackets and Lightweight Flying Suits



I'm pleased to say that **Gareth** and **Pete B** were first off the blocks and claimed their £5 discount on the flying jackets and summer flying suits on the rack outside the crew room. There are still a variety of sizes left, and I was so impressed with the Pilot Jacket in bottle green which **Graham Spittlehouse** ordered that several more in the same colour in different sizes are on their way. So too are some more sizes S – L in the popular black MA1 Flying Jackets. So watch the rack for new additions! Prices as in the photo held for the time being.....

Written exams validity period

Just in case you've missed the news that was carried in a recent copy of *Microflight Flying*, the period of validity for our written exams has been extended from ONE YEAR to **TWO YEARS**. This makes taking exams roughly around first solo time a much more attractive proposition, since they're much less likely to "fall off the end" before you get your licence.

Annual Permit to Fly renewals

And in similar vein, the CAA has agreed that the Annual Permit to Fly can now be renewed up to TWO MONTHS in advance of its expiry date, rather than the previous ONE month. As before, once it's renewed it will run from the existing expiry, so you could have a Certificate of Validity which effectively runs for almost fourteen months. They've also made it easier for owners and check pilots by extending the interval between the inspection (done by **Ian**) and the check flight (done by me) from ONE month to TWO months. So put a note in your diary just ahead of two months before permit expiry so you can ask Ian to carry out the inspection well in advance.

Cold drinks

Your club membership fees (and the occasional £30 from glider pilots who can't read the "No Gliders" bit in Finmere's entry in the *VFR Flight Guide*!) provide the tea, coffee, milk, cakes and biscuits which help us through all those un-flyable days in the crew room. And they also provide the cold drinks which you'll find in the fridge over the summer months. They're there for you and friends and family who drop in to see us, so do help yourselves.



Spot the difference?

Just checking to see who gets this far into a Newsletter. There is something odd about this photo (no, it's not that the caravan is clean). Answers on a postcard, please. Well, okay, e-mail will do....



And finally....

Dixie and Monty say "Hello" from the crew room, where they were having a well-earned break – in between trying to blag Dreamies treats from **Mel**!

