

# SHOREHAM AIRPORT NEWS

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## AT LAST!

At Last  
The railway underpass at the airport southern access is being repaired. For years this has been a problem every

time there was heavy rain, the drainage system which was provided was not up to the job. The last period of heavy rain brought things to a head



because the water rose so high that cars could not pass through. If this had been the only problem the airport may have coped reasonably well but coupled with the problems on the A27, staff were finding that a relatively short journey was taking up to several hours. Add to this the loss of customers to airport businesses and something had to be done. (It may also be a factor

that the Airport Manager lives on the south side of the airport!) It appears that the system relied upon the water draining into the nearby stream through a tide valve. This did not always work and so allowed water to run back into the underpass at certain times of high stream levels. The new system is a pumped system from a

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# Request Taxi for Little Staughton

by  
**Richard Vincent**



Little Staughton lies about 6 miles NE of Bedford and is a former wartime airfield. One runway still remains and the field is the home of Colton Aviation, a sizeable GA maintenance organisation. Having an asphalt runway makes Little Staughton a good winter destination, with most grass strips being closed for the winter this year.

Our route took us via MAY and Tonbridge, over the Dartford Crossing to LAM and then to BPK. Tracking to

the NE corner of Baldock we kept Stevenage on our left to stay clear of the Luton CTR. There was no difficulty spotting Little Staughton with its' 1700m asphalt runway. I was slightly surprised to get a response on the A/G frequency and it turned out that there were two other based aircraft flying in the local area. Apparently the farmer is only paid rent for half the runway, which accounts for the very displaced threshold but that still leaves a generous 900m available. The grass taxiway

referred to in flight guides used to get very muddy in winter and has recently been replaced by a rather narrow strip of concrete. This joins the runway near the midpoint, just opposite the displaced threshold, so this is the point to aim for when landing on 25. A tall radio tower sits stubbornly on the centreline about half a mile from the runway and must either be flown over or around.

After landing we followed the new taxiway, noting a drop each side of up to one foot in places, so it is worthwhile taking care. We were surprised by the amount of activity at the airfield - there must have been at least 25 aircraft

parked around the place plus more in the hangars. We parked on a strip of grass pointed at by an inviting sign proclaiming "Aircraft Parking". This turned out to be a mistake as full power was required in order to keep the aircraft moving on the boggy grass and it was obvious that once stopped the aircraft would have to be man-handled back on to the taxiway. A C152 seems to have very little power to spare in these situations.

After some difficulty finding anyone willing to take our £5 landing fee we set off for the local pub where we had a light lunch and watched an aggressive game of traditional ten-pin bowling played with a "cheese".

On departure we flew over the old RAE Bedford airfield and found the cars that covered most of the site a few weeks before had gone. The glorious weather was forecast to last until the evening but in the event we arrived back at Shoreham having diverted through the Cuckmere gap to route low level along the coast below a 1000 foot cloud base. Coastal airfields do sometimes have their advantages.

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from page 1 sump into which all the water will drain and with automatic pump switching we should never again see the bridge flooded! One of the problems created in undertaking the work is that the Fire Service cannot access the southern side of the airport in the event of an emergency. In

order to accommodate this, the new RIV (Rapid Intervention Vehicle) is positioned at the southern side of the underpass during operational hours. This vehicle is a "one shot" fire appliance delivering 900 litres of pre-mixed foam in one minute. This vehicle will pass under

the railway but to allow more headroom the road is being lowered on each side of the bridge. This was one of the reasons for buying the new fire appliances; previously only one of the others could get under the railway! The work, whilst on railtrack land, is being undertaken at

the expense of the airport but obviously with the permission of railtrack. The cost will be approximately £2,500 which includes laying electricity to the site. S. M. Tidy Construction Ltd. is the contractor and it is expected that the work will be completed by 2nd February 2001.

## WHO'S WHO IN ATC?



This month Antony Baduns is in the spotlight. Antony joined Dan Air as an accounts clerk on leaving school but soon wanted a job more flying related. He was selected by the CAA for an

Air Traffic Control cadetship and took up a residential course at Bournemouth. He then went as Assistant Controller at Gatwick where he spent some 18 months before moving to Air Traffic

Control once again at Bournemouth. Before his appointment at Shoreham he spent time at Goodwood and Redhill and it was at Redhill where he witnessed a near disaster. He saw a small child running toward a taxiing aeroplane in which the child's father had just completed his first lesson. Fortunately an accident was avoided but it is a timely reminder of the safety aspects contained in an article on safety elsewhere in this edition. He has been involved in Air Traffic Control now for 12 years and he says that if he

spent the rest of his working life at Shoreham he wouldn't mind. "It is a very friendly unit and is generally busy enough to be satisfying" he said. However a job abroad would be of interest should the opportunity ever arise. Antony said that Air Traffic is open for pilots to visit" to see what goes on up here" but obviously this would only apply in less busy periods. However it is worth giving Air Traffic a call from the Briefing Room telephone if you feel that you would like to see what they get up to at first hand.

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## This Months Aeroplane



### **Piper Lance II**

Most of the Piper Aircraft models derive from the highly successful and adaptable aircraft of all time - the Cherokee. The Lance is no exception it is a combination of the Cherokee Six fuselage, the Arrow nose and the Seneca landing gear. The T-tail with the all moving stabilator is also incorporated in later

models. Piper produced an enormous variety of aircraft and may be this was the reason the company went into bankruptcy in the early 1990's and once again the Lance is no exception, there were three variations, the original Lance, Lance II and turbocharged Lance III. Details of the aeroplane are for the original Lance first produced in 1979.

#### **Dimensions:**

Length: 27ft 7ins (8.4m)  
Wingspan: 32ft 9ins (10m)  
Height: 9ft 0ins (2.7m)

#### **Performance:**

Maximum speed: 190mph (306km)  
Range: 864nm (1601km)

#### **Powerplant:**

1 x Lycoming Piston engine  
Thrust: 300hp (224kW)

## SAFETY ON THE AIRPORT

A recently established Airport Safety Committee has just given guidance on several safety issues. These are published in this edition in an effort to help safety on the airport. An official document will be sent to all aircraft owners and operators on the airport in due course.

### **Aircraft Refueling (Fixed and Rotary wing)**

Aircraft operators and especially pilots are reminded of the need to approach and park into wind when refueling. This is not only for aircraft safety but to alleviate splash-backs onto the operator during filling operations. Excessive use of power should not be used in the area of the refueling apron as this tends to move light items such as refueling steps and creates additional wind chill to refuelers in cold conditions. We need to remember that the pump operator during busy periods could be out on the

pumps for long periods of time. Whilst on the subject of refueling one other aspect,



**Airport refueling apron**

which has been witnessed recently although not discussed at the meeting, is that after filling up some aircraft are undertaking power checks near to the refueling area. This is a practice that should not take place for obvious reasons. Another item discussed pertinent to the refueling of aircraft was that aircraft tend to queue in front of the fire sta-

tion blocking fire appliance access. This is obviously not good practice and should be

brought to everyone's attention to keep this area clear at all times.

### **High Visibility Jackets**

The committee discussed the use of high visibility jackets/tabards airside of the field and decided that the requirement to wear such items of clothing will come into force shortly. Lightweight jackets/tabards are not expensive and it

would be good practice for all aircraft/pilots to carry these items of safety clothing. The final point under discussion, again relevant to airside safety, was that of family members gathering round aircraft in which a family member is taking a "trial flight" or first lesson. It is important that all family members remain in the public areas of the airport unless escorted specifically by a member of the appropriate club wearing a high perspicuity jacket.

These points are all areas of good practice and common sense and as such should be welcomed by all who use the airport. It is intended to invite representatives of organizations to attend future meetings but if any safety issue arises which it is felt needs discussion please contact the airport Administration Department in the first instance.

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