



# The Old Bückers

**The story of how one man realised his dream of flying a vintage open-cockpit aeroplane in flying displays, part one: getting the aeroplane**

By Peter Gaskell

I first became interested in vintage open-cockpit flying after seeing the Chairman of my club, the Lancashire Aero Club, climbing out of a Stampe. He was wearing a flying suit covered in black smears of oil – and a grin all over his face. That was a long time ago. I remember too the envy I had as a student for the display pilots at the Manchester Barton Airshow. I had no

idea that I could fulfil a dream and fly a vintage open cockpit machine in major air displays. Here is the story of how I did.

I had a few close encounters with buying a Stampe but never quite made it. Owning vintage aeroplanes has always been expensive, particularly as regards maintenance. At this time the Stampe was Annex 1 on the CAA register and the Bücker Bu 131 Jungmann came under the remit of the PFA (later the LAA) as a Permit aircraft. This made the Bücker more expensive to purchase but maintenance costs were more acceptable. However, having no design support, the spares could be problematic.

In 2004 three of us – Andy, Chris and myself – set out to buy G-EMJA, a Bu 131 but in retrospect we were not *quite* keen enough and were pipped at the purchase. We looked at a few more aircraft but differing personal circumstances prevailed: with work, travel and home it was never right for the three of us together.

As it turned out, Andy was the first to appear with a Jungmann, in the form of Bu 131 G-BZJV (I would eventually buy G-CDJU and Chris more recently bought G-EMJA). Andy's machine was a relatively untouched ex-military example, still in the drab grey with cotton covering. 'Juliet Victor' needed general maintenance but proved, when well maintained by Andy, to be a reliable machine. Andy based the machine at Sleaf where I was aero-towing so we were soon flying together in 'JV and I was becoming more enthusiastic about owning a vintage machine.

I helped him with the maintenance. The wings were recovered and there was lots of TLC. The exhaust fumes, hot oil, and leather smells along with the nostalgic exhaust throb were quite enchanting.

## One for sale in Northern Ireland

I was working with Andy on an overseas project when I got a phone call from a buddy who said that there was a



The author, seated in the object of his dreams



Sold to the man with a big grin: in fact, Peter – seen here after his first flight in the aircraft – had decided he wanted the Jungmann within the first five minutes

Jungmann for sale in Northern Ireland. I spoke to the owners and was considering a visit over the next weekend when Andy said, “they don’t come up often so if you want it you’d better go tomorrow and take a five thousand pounds cash deposit with you, so you can be convincing if you want it!”

I made a couple of phone calls and was on Ryanair flight to Knock Airport the next day with £5,000 cash in a money belt. I was picked up by a six-foot Irishman at Knock and I remember thinking “how daft is this!” We drove from Knock to Sligo where the aeroplane was in a fully lit and insulated hangar. With overalls, torch and a screwdriver I set about an inspection, looking like I knew what I was doing because I’d already been everywhere on Andy’s machine.

“Tired” maintenance was obvious evidence of a group that had lost interest in the machine – lots of tatty work, wear and tear and signs of a recent engine work. Bills were produced to declare the engine had had a full top overhaul and new piston rings, as it had suffered lack of power. It started well, sounded fine and, from the ground run Ts and Ps, looked good. It was dark, I elected to take a beer

break, sleep on it and fly the following morning. In the event there was not much sleep.

The CFI from Sligo who was the nominated check pilot picked me up from my Hotel. With heavy rain and low scud it didn’t look likely that we would fly, but a later TAF was encouraging that there would be a break late morning. My return Ryanair flight was from Knock after lunch. We were almost timed out, but elected to fly the Bucker to Sligo to make the

### ***I elected to take a beer break, sleep on it and fly the following morning...***

connection. The weather cleared to a broken cloud base of about 2,000ft and VMC. We fuelled and were airborne at 10.25am. By 10.30am I decided that I was having the aeroplane!

Heading south over the Irish countryside, check pilot Dave arranged our transit over the radio with Knock. When I got cocky with the steep turns and rolls, Dave reminded me that we were in controlled airspace, under radar surveillance and, as they would have an opinion about my antics at Knock, I should concentrate on flying in one

direction. I heard my Ryanair flight on final just before we were cleared ‘right base’. I made the landing, carefully coached by Dave, and as we taxied past the Ryanair jet, I couldn’t resist a wave to the pilots.

We reported to Control, paid the fees and went through arrivals. I scratched a bill of sale on the back of the landing receipt, Dave signed for the owners, and I parted with the £5,000. I shook Dave’s hand and transited security in overalls and

leather flying jacket. It made for an interesting discussion when I was boarding, particularly when I told the boss on

the flight deck that I had just bought the aeroplane next to his.

I think the reality hit me some days later when I transferred the funds for an aeroplane still in Sligo. I thought about taking the wings off and hiring a removal van but Dave, who is a fearless type, said that if it was okay to get the aircraft serviced post overhaul, he would ferry it across the Irish Sea in December. I questioned the risk and danger of a single-engine trip over the Irish Sea in winter, and he assured me it would be okay as he “used to be a lifeboat man” – a





The preflight includes a close inspection of the Jungmann's stalky undercarriage



Tight timing or what? Peter's arrival at Knook Airport in the newly purchased Jungann coincided with that of his Ryanair flight home

Left: the aeroplane carries its authentic Spanish air force markings

Inset: splendid graphics – the Germans seem to have a monopoly with kind of thing in the 1930s, when the Jungmann was designed



response that still puzzles me, although it did reflect great confidence in the machine!

We arranged to meet at Caernarfon over the Christmas break, with me to fly the leg to Sleaf, but whilst on my drive to Caernarfon I got a call to say that 'JU had been over-fuelled and, because of the spill, the Sligo fire brigade had grounded the machine for several hours until the fuel had evaporated.

Juliet Uniform eventually arrived early in January 2010. I got a call from the Shropshire Aeroclub office to tell me that it

had been safely delivered and there was a restaurant bill for me. Dave returned to Sligo early evening in a chartered twin.

The following weekend I did an hour's upper air work check-out with Ant Brown, a buddy and instructor who is great with stick and rudder, unflustered, cool and dependable (some say expendable) in case of an extreme requirement. He quickly got bored in the front, asked to be let out and released me to my own destiny. I then started to learn about the Jungmann, both flying it and maintenance.

### Repairs and a setback with the engine

I asked around for an experienced LAA inspector who was familiar with the type and was introduced to Chris Turner from Brighton. I wanted a thorough inspection; Chris had built, and supervises the work on a number of Jungmanns and proved to be an excellent choice. He made a very thorough examination and gave me two lists, a mandatory item list and a 'desirables' list – things that should be fixed "if you want to make this into a good ➔



## Feature | The Old Bückers: Part One



example”. What you actually purchase when you buy a vintage aircraft is someone else’s maintenance. I started, under Chris’s expert supervision, to take the machine to its intended condition. The first job was undercarriage removal and inspection – it looked really tatty, having been chromed and subsequently rusted. The concern was the risk of embrittlement, so replacement legs were found (*for the same reason, you will not see chrome-plated wire wheels on historic racing cars – Ed*). The starboard oleo was found to be banana shaped, probably due to a ground loop, accounting for the need for heavy

push on the ground. I found a brand new one in Spain, the ‘last in the world’ – a phrase which affects the purchase price. New undercarriage springs were fitted, as the originals were of differing lengths and tired. The brakes were re-cabled. Tatty panels were repaired or replaced. We also did the mandatory inspections to the undercarriage and elevators.

Fuel piping was original, including the ‘flop tube’ (aerobatic fuel pick-up) which was fabric and had perished. It was all replaced, along with some Teflon oil pipes which had been fitted in Holland (although these were serviceable, we did



**Above left:** using Plastiguage (which spreads out in proportion to the clearance, when the caps are tightened down) to check the crankshaft bearings

**Below:** having been motored over on the test bench, the pristine rebuilt engine, its magnetos yet to be fitted, goes back into the airframe.



## **What you actually purchase when you buy a vintage aircraft is someone else's maintenance**



not like them). The tailwheel was removed, and its broken spring and tyre were replaced – further items from from the ‘last in the world’ stock. The tatty interior was tidied up; panels replaced and the aeroplane weighed. It was great to

complete this work and the aircraft was transformed in both appearance and handling.

There was one setback. Following a takeoff and sharp pull-up on a warming engine, I noticed a zero oil pressure as I

was about to leave the aerodrome area. Chris said that we should make an engine inspection, which he registered with the LAA. Under his supervision and Andy's expert motor racing engine rebuild skills, I became an apprentice.

Apart from a plumbing issue on the oil feed system, we found the engine to be in excellent order – all measured up to within the manufacturer's tolerance, and there was no scratching or scoring and no internal corrosion. The crankshaft was crack tested, traps and galleries cleaned and polished, and the bearing clearances were checked with Plastigauge on reassembly and recorded. The pistons were chemically cleaned, measured, weighed and inspected under a glass. Barrels and heads were taken to engine specialist Vintec for inspection and, fitted with new valve seats and guides, were

### **BUILT IN THE FRANCO ERA**

Built in 1954 for the Ejército del Aire (Spanish air force) my aircraft, serial no 1078 was originally registered E3B-379. On the 23rd of February 1981 she was retired from the air force and was registered EC-DKV with the REAL Aeroclub de Albacete or 'Bucker City'. Seen regularly at Castellon Aeroclub and Valencia until 1994. She was flown to Oostende on the 20 July 1994 for Frank Verstagh of World aerobatic Promotions and rebuilt to exacting Belgium CAA requirements. She was moved to the Netherlands and based at Teuge Airport. This is where 'JU' was operated until July 2005, then being sold and ferried to Ireland and subsequently operated out of Sligo, southern Ireland. She was purchased in December 2010 and flown across the Irish Sea in January 2011 to her new base at Sleaf, Shropshire.



## Feature | The Old Bückers: Part One



Los tres amigos: from the left, Chris's G-EMJA, Peter's G-CDJU and Andy's G-BZJV

pressure tested and returned. The fuel pump and oil pump were stripped and inspected, the oil pump was bench run for an hour.

There were several results from the strip and inspection: Andy declared the valve timing was incorrect, and this was put right; the plumbing for the oil feed and breather was returned to manufacturer's design; the engine breathing was impeded by a tortuous grating, which was sorted;

and, of course, new guides and seats were required. Under the guidance of Andy and the watchful eye of Chris, the rebuild was methodical and careful. All the internal parts were covered in a 'magic fairy' lubricant that Andy uses in racing engines that he said that I could not afford and, without the plugs, the reassembled unit was motored over on the bench.

Finally, installed in 'JU and fully primed with oil, we went for a start. First on two,

then on three, then on four the engine fired up, with all the smoke and noise befitting such a ceremony. After a sensible ground run and fast taxi, we shut down and changed the oil. It was clean, so we elected to go for a test flight.

Now for anyone who has not done this, it is quite an event. Stripping, inspecting and rebuilding an engine is one thing, sitting behind it for the first time and opening the throttle intent on aviating is quite another. Very focused, looking at fuel pressure and oil temperature/pressure for any excuse not to continue, all sounds good – so there's no excuse. Next thing, you are airborne and committed.

Climb to 1,000ft and fly a text-book circuit. A covers-off inspection on landing suggests all is okay so we are airborne again, this time with Andy shadowing in JV, orbiting in the overhead at 2,500ft.

It was on this flight that Andy started to fly in closer formation. We extended the string around the airfield until I had accumulated five hours, then changed the oil again (no debris other than a few bits of fluff, and all was judged to be fine).

### What about putting together a display?

We started flying formation takeoffs and cross-countries. I took on the transit navigation and radio and Andy edged in closer and closer. Over beer the idea of The Old Bückers Display Team was formed, as we thought it would give some new purpose and objective to our flying, and allow seek out some further enjoyment.

We were aware that our chosen path was full of obstacles. Quite apart from the legalities, the idea of teaching oneself formation display flying sounded a bit too much like trying teach-yourself surgery.

A friend from Sleaford put us in touch with Steve Hicks. Steve is a professional pilot and takes pleasure in flying the Stearman in formation as a display pilot, often with wing walkers. A few emails and a phone call later, we opted for some on-the-job tuition when Steve was next planning to visit friends at Sleaford.

### NOTES FOR DISPLAY FLYING

CAP 403 is a comprehensive document and only by reading it in full can you gain the full appreciation. Here are my essential notes:

- **Display line** For our speed of less than 100kt, 50m from the crowd for a formation flypast.
- **Display height** Away from an airfield this can be 200ft but at an airfield subject to the limitations on the authorisation, for the Old Bückers 100ft.
- **Overflight of spectators** Don't! However there is a sensible interpretation on this. If it's an unavoidable event, learn from it, and don't put all in danger by overstressing the airframe. (And be sure to tell Matthew Hill before anyone else does)
- **Weather Minima** We stall below 50kt so the cloud ceiling is 500ft and 3,000m visibility. (This sounds OK for a local display but the transit would need caution)
- **Pilot Competency/Display Competency Demonstration** This is basically the need for the issue of a DA (Display Authority) there is no minimal experience but as a guide 200hr including 100hr PIC. (And, expect to spend some time on a DAE's couch explaining the motivation)
- **Oral Examination** This is quite a comprehensive discussion about the aircraft limitations, personal motivation, and sequence logic in planning of manoeuvres and finally emergency planning for all events.
- **Air Law, Article 162** Very complicated set of conditions concerning permissions, authorisations and competence.
- **Rule 137/138** Must not recklessly endanger the aircraft nor negligent endangerment of persons or property – fundamentals which you already know.
- **Low flying** Rules 500ft rule, 1,000ft rule for congested area, land clear rule and flying over open air assemblies – again fundamentals which you already know. Permission for a flying display is exemption from the low flying rules.
- **Rules 259,265 & 268** These cover the meaning of aerial work and exemptions for flying displays. Basically direct display costs can be recovered: fuel, oil and transit fees, and you are able to claim a sensible contribution to overheads.
- **Limitations of the Pilot in Command** Actions to maintain the DA: recency; three sequences to be flown in the previous ninety days; and thirteen months' licence validity following full issue.

There is also a form for everything well laid out in CAP 403. It is also useful to find a copy of CAA 743 – *A Guide for Pilots*.



Haven't you forgotten something?  
Ground test running the Hirth engine of Andy's Jungmann

It started with some simple hints like avoiding the 'back-track taxi weave' by checking your buddy's twelve o'clock, agreed hand signals to keep down chatter and preparation, preparation, preparation. Steve managed to convince Andy that it is easier to fly closer than fly a few metres away: it requires concentration but the corrections are not so pronounced. Smooth power changes are essential for me as leader and I am to plan well ahead for the effects of wind to prevent abrupt turns, and develop a technique to give Andy a heads-up when tightening any manoeuvre.

We also learned about waiting positions and escape routes, that turning rejoins look slick and, importantly, the 'fast- and slow-lane' discipline for sequential landing.

Steve strapped in with Andy and we had a great training session, after which Steve put me in touch with Matthew Hill. Matthew is Principal Airshow Inspector for the CAA and will need no introduction to anyone involved with air displays. Matthew proved to be very helpful, asked me to send him our flying CVs and wanted to know roughly what we were planning to do. He told me to digest CAP 403 and contact Peter Davies as our nominated DAE (Display Authorisation Examiner). We would of course require a Display Authorisation.

The work on the machines eventually paid off. You can't be thinking about reliability issues other than unanticipated

emergencies. A high standard of maintenance is the entry point to display flying. With the machines prepared and the basics covered we started working on a sequence.

We began to work out over the local Moss, lined up at 1,000ft on a ditch and developed the sequence. It took a few attempts to decide what was not working and we modified it a few times. This was fine, but it was difficult to get a low-level perspective so we talked to Bob Pooler, our CFI at Sleep. I can't say enough about the positive encouragement we received

## **One needs to be a little crazy to want to display vintage machines down to 100ft**

from this guy. In quick time we had an airfield dispensation to operate for display practice within the aerodrome boundary. This made work-up and critique much easier. We settled for a formation takeoff, several teardrops and orbits, changing position, a break and opposing flypast, reform and formation sideslip along the permitted crowd line.

With all this in place, we elected to see Peter Davis, the DAE nominated by Matthew Hill, for an assessment. We drove to Ollerton and spent an hour on Pete's couch whilst he satisfied himself that we were doing what we were for the right reasons. There is a culture of safety first and quite important factor is an assessment of the individuals involved. I

guess some would think that one needs to be a little crazy to want to display vintage machines down to 100ft but you have to satisfy the CAA examiner/CAA that you have the right intentions, and are able to make good assessments and mature decisions.

We went through a number of practical safety points for the display with Pete: engine failure, loss of visual contact, various technical problems and weather minima. Having satisfied him, he agreed that we could have our flying assessment on our home field at Sleep. On 8

December 2012, in the dark early morning we met Peter at the aerodrome. We were

airborne at 0835, before any Sleep or Shawbury military traffic, and back on the ground at 0850.

Frankly Peter's comments could not have failed to encourage us more. 'This was by far one of the best initial issue formation DA that I have had the pleasure of witnessing in quite a few years,' he wrote. 'These pilots have practiced this routine thoroughly and that was quite evident from the accuracy and precision that it was flown. Such pilot skills are a delight to watch-Very well done indeed'. Well I guess that all the hard work had paid off. ■

*The Old Buckers story continues in the July edition of Pilot.*

# The Old Bückers <sup>Part 2</sup>



**The story of how one man realised his dream of flying a vintage open-cockpit aeroplane in flying displays, part two: breaking into the big airshow scene**

**Words** Peter Gaskell



**L**ast month I began the story of how I found my Bücker Jungmann and, with my flying partner Andy, got it ready for display flying. Now I'll bring events up to date.

Our first display was to be Welshpool in 2013, and we were asked if we would like to participate by the display director, Peter Sinclair – a charming man and the former RAF Community Relations Officer for Wales, looking after Swansea, Llandudno,

Rhyl and Welshpool. It was a great honour to open the show but, in fact, it cut down on our workload considerably and I'm sure Pete knew this.

We arrived in plenty of time to get ourselves organised, having made a recce the previous week. Welshpool is a stunning venue for an airshow – and especially interesting for pilots. It is set in a valley with 1,500ft sides, fifty-foot trees, and a narrow but long runway. The event went very well for us, the weather was





Missed you: the trick is not to collide, the art is making it look to your audience that you are going to!

perfect and the gate oversubscribed. We were next invited to attend the press day at RAF Cosford in March 2014. We saw this as a big opportunity to break into the major airshow circuit and arranged with Flt Lt Jon Price to put in some practice at Cosford beforehand. We were granted exclusive use of the airfield for just ten minutes. After the paperwork and briefing we returned to the aircraft to get going on our short practice display, only to find that my starboard tyre was flat.

Talk about being deflated! It was a disappointment for us but the support by the local RAF was great. We made

apologies, jumped in Andy's machine and flew back to Sleaf, returning by car three hours later with jacks, tools and a compressor. After we'd moved the aircraft to a safe position we found the puncture had been caused by a piece of wire (not picked up at Cosford) and replaced the inner tube. Beer tasted good that evening and we returned by car at dawn the next day, organised another practice. This went well, and we displayed as planned on the press day with a reasonable amount of panache. Afterwards we met the charity organisers. Their professionalism at that event gave us a valuable insight into the

preparations necessary for a large airshow. Our willingness to attend the press day eventually pitched us into the major airshow circuit. We seemed to make a good impression but the invitation to attend the main show was a little slow in coming. We knew that we were up to it, but it is a difficult call for an organiser of such a prestigious event to take a chance on newcomers. In fact, we were almost total amateurs when you count the experience of the average RAF display pilot.

We were next booked at Welshpool on 8 June, but we told Peter that we were hoping to transit to Cosford after our



display. The call eventually came that a foreign air force act had cancelled and we were in.

We had originally attended a pilots' briefing for the airshow launch day given by Jon Price. He delivered a very detailed explanation of the event, facilities, crowd

before 9.00am at Sleaf Airfield. We had a quick look at the Notam and weather but we knew what to expect! The Red Arrows were due in at Shawbury at 0930, our airborne time was 0915 for transit to Welshpool. There would be isolated Cb building throughout the day and heavy

during the roll-out all the way to down to fifteen knots to keep her steady. I called "rolling out safe in the slow lane", and Andy dropped on behind me with all the grace he could find, working hard on the rudder and tail wheel to keep straight. We taxied back and fuelled, ready for the tasks ahead.

We received the final briefing from the Welshpool air-show director, Pete, and relaxed, watching and waiting for the promised heavy squalls. We had already received the Operational Orders from RAF Cosford when we attended the full briefing and practice in March. We called Cosford Ops on the landline and got the latest update for the show – weather, holding patterns, confirmation of fuel states and times. Diversions, Helimed scramble procedure, etc, we had already committed to memory.

The Welshpool show opened with the Reds, polished as usual. How could we dare to share the same stage? We watched some really good performances, and in between there was time to catch up with some of the guys we had met on the circuit. Steve from the Breitling Wing-walkers formation team, who had given us coaching sessions in formation display flying, was not too happy with the crosswind. He elected to display but avoid a second landing for fuel, and head for home base to land with the luxury of grass →

## ***The show opened with the Reds... How could we dare to share the same stage?***

lines, speeds and display lines, escape routes and frequencies to be used. As we were to transit in from Welshpool we would miss the full briefing on the Sunday morning, so we would get a précis of it by telephone from Cosford Ops.

Three weeks before the show we received the RAF order book carrying all the detail, which was encyclopaedic. Immediately prior to the event we were issued with a cockpit brief, A3 in size, which proved to be a very useful document. That bound booklet will become a collector's item. In 22 pages there is an easy visual reference to frequencies/display lines/holds/arrivals/departures/diversions.

The day of our displays started early. We were preparing the Bückers for flight

showers. It was to be a test of all we had put together since achieving our DA: display Welshpool 1605; transit; display Cosford 1655; return to home base.

We were airborne from Sleaf at 9:15 and in relaxed formation for our transit to Welshpool, calling Shawbury for a basic service and an update on the Reds. Shawbury relayed to the Reds on VHF – no conflict – we then cleared to Welshpool Radio to land. The wind was gusting southerly at fifteen knots, which is a handful for a Bücker Jungmann, even on R23. She flew like she was on rails all the way down final to touchdown, but during the run out from 35 to 20 knots she became wayward in roll and direction.

Andy slipped line astern for spacing and I dropped on first, working the rudder



Formation takeoff: like other vintage taildraggers, the Jungmann is happier flying from grass and directly in to wind



in every direction – a good call for a biplane taildragger.

Finally, we were given our cue when the Vulcan called that it was running in to display. Time to strap in, start up, warm the engines and settle in the cockpit.

We maintained radio silence whilst the Vulcan had the frequency and as the marshal batted us to the hold, which is good display etiquette. Ts and Ps were good, the Vulcan called “complete”, and we were cleared to display. Final vital actions had been done in anticipation. I gave a look to the windsock, a nod to Andy, and called “Bücker’s commencing display”. We lifted off and as we made the first turn over the trees the turbulence started. We had practised many times in varying conditions and knew that although it was challenging it was within our established limits. I concentrated on flying a steady track pattern, maintaining crowd separation, adjusting for the wind, and keeping speed, turns and height predictable for Andy. Once we were committed I trusted him to maintain minimum separation, not damaging my paint. And he trusted me not to fly him into the ground. The bond is total trust, teamwork and practice, practice, practice.

Six minutes later we were climbing out after a formation sideslip, and exchanging pleasantries with Welshpool as we went to our ops frequency for a debrief prior to



calling “transit”. Andy called to say it was like flying in a tumble dryer. We had a laugh about that and then got on with business. Our machines were behaving so we were all good to continue. Cosford was a go.

was smooth and we had time to relax a little and look at what was ahead. At ten minutes to run I called Cosford Approach and we were cleared to join the VFR holding pattern to the north at 2,000ft. We entered the hold at 16.40 and had just

## ***The team's bond is total trust, teamwork and practice, practice, practice***

We went back to Shawbury for service to MATZ transit to Cosford, with busy skies between the two shows. At 2,000ft the air

fifteen minutes in orbit with a grandstand view of the smoke trails at Cosford. At 16.50 we were cleared on my request to

### **BÜCKER'S PRIZED**

The Bücker Bu-131 Jungmann was an immediate success, from the first flight of the prototype in April 1934, and it was quickly chosen to equip the Luftsportverband – the civil flying organisation that trained the nucleus of Nazi Germany's Luftwaffe.

Company founder Carl Bücker had been a pilot in the German navy during WWI. When the Versailles Treaty forbade the manufacture of aircraft in his native country, he decamped to Sweden and for ten years was the managing director of Svenska Aero AB, which produced Heinkel designs under licence before developing aircraft of its own.

When in 1932 the straightjacket of the Treaty was loosened, its lacing plucked at by many hands in a surge of nationalism, Bücker returned to Germany. He took with him Lars Anderssen, 'a quite extraordinarily talented young engineer,' in the opinion of past *Pilot* Editor and Bücker Jungmeister owner James Gilbert.

Bücker set up his own company in 1933, backed by an automotive coachbuilder that provided space to build aircraft in its own workshops. Bücker and Anderssen had their first design, the Jungmann (Young Man) ready to fly in just six months – and how it flew! 'It was immediately apparent to anyone who flew a Jungmann that it was highly, even unusually aerobatic,' wrote James Gilbert in *The Great Planes*.

The full potential was realised after Bücker Flugzeugbau moved to its own premises at Rangsdorf Aerodrome, where Carl's and Lars's idea of a 'super Jungmann' emerged in 1935 as the Bu-133 Jungmeister (Young Master), a single-seater that went into production with a 160hp Siemens Halske radial engine that churned out twice the power of the Jungmann's original 80hp Hirth four-cylinder inline unit.

While what the Jungmeister went on to achieve is of course another story (and one we told in *Pilot* as recently as January 2015), the Jungmann was up-engined to a 105hp Hirth and in 1936 became the Luftwaffe's standard basic trainer. It was built under licence by Dornier in Germany, CASA in Spain, Tatra in Czechoslovakia and, later, in Japan. The design survived the war as a type still very much fit for purpose and production continued at CASA until the early 1960s. The Jungmann was retained as the Spanish Air Force's primary basic trainer until 1968.

Amazingly, the type was returned to production for a short period in 1994 by Bücker Prado in Spain. The company used CASA jigs, constructing 21 aircraft under the designation BP 131. Such is the popularity of the sweet-handling Jungmann that there have been several projects to produce new-build airframes or 131 lookalikes in the years since, most recently in Poland. **Philip Whiteman**



had no need to dodge them. When I called Sleep air traffic a friendly voice from the tower gave us ten knots 'down the slot', which was a welcome relief after a challenging day. Although they normally close at 1700, the radio guys had stayed live for our return.

After our landing and taxi I watched the oil pressure relax at idle for about two minutes, as the oil was good and hot, and while I waited I privately collected my thoughts. After he had shut down, Andy had two bottles of beer out of our fridge and opened in quick time. It had been a great day.

We heard later that our display at Cosford had been considered graceful, and that we had missed the heavy rain, just! There was a reported crowd of 55,000 but we didn't see them. We were too busy!

### **Fifteen shows in a year**

We had a full season in 2014, fifteen shows in all. We did not advertise – a new booking seemed to follow each display. We appeared at Carfest, Oulton Park two days out of the three. Both appearances were weather challenged but only one was a no-go. For the Cholmondeley Pageant we did a recce in the Jungmann and then in a Cessna 172 the week before, and put the notional crowd line on a dead tree and a blooming pink Rhododendron. This was a new experience as we were without a significant line feature. We spent all week wondering if the rhodie would still be flowering for the event. It was!

We managed a few smaller events and town shows, and for the air ambulance at Tatenhill and later at Newark-on-Trent. These were great events, with a warm welcome from charity enthusiasts. The Newark show was blowy with thirty-knot gusts thirty degrees off the slot, and 35 knots at 2,000ft, making fuel management essential as we were pretty much on our limit. The event was near trees and the display was around the meandering river, which gave us weird lift and sink.

We have learned a lot from all this experience and we're looking forward to the rest of the 2015 season. ■

**Bringing the display down to minimum permitted altitude makes for a better spectacle – but exposes the aircraft to hazards, not the least being turbulence from any trees in the proximity**

descend to 1,000ft in preparation to run in on the 24 axis. Andy closed up and it was time to focus again on the sequence and precision. Cleared to Cosford display frequency by Approach, right on our slot time, we were given permission to run in, with the new information that they had closed the Tower windows as it had started raining. There was a squall to the South which was promising lively conditions.

a little late, but I suppose it depends where you are in the crowd. We completed the display and called "running out, display complete" as instructed, climbing on 210 heading. By then they were already into the next display and a Griffin helicopter was lifting! Cosford was right on the professional button.

We were ready to call Cosford Director but were relieved to hear that we could

## ***We heard later that our display at Cosford had been considered graceful...***

We descended to 300ft QFE on our run in to 24, and it was choppy again!

To be honest, it felt like we had done better in practice, but it is hard to gauge the crowd view. The crossover was maybe

continue with Shawbury to our home base at Sleep. Shawbury cleared us though the MATZ and kindly passed on to us which runway was in use at Sleep. There were one or two heavy squalls about but we

### **BOOK THE OLD BUCKERS!**

The team currently has bookings for:

**5 July: Manchester Airshow**

**31 July - 2 August: CarFest, Oulton Park**

**22 August: Bader Braves, Sleep Airfield**

**30 & 31 August: Gold Cup, Oulton Park**

**Contact: [www.oldbuckers.co.uk](http://www.oldbuckers.co.uk)**