



BEDE-LING ABOUT...

This month we talk to Stan Dauncey, Bede BD4 owner, PCS Coach and LAA Inspector

W elcome Stan, could you tell us something about your career?

I've always been interested in mechanical things so I did an engineering apprenticeship with a company in Middlesbrough and worked for them for fifteen years. During that time I got the opportunity to travel all over the world, and my work included visiting aviation workshops, where I was able to advise on repairs in a machining capacity – for example, working for Rolls-Royce in Canada on the RB211 engine. I also installed equipment at Boeing in California and British Airways in Cardiff.

Eventually, in 1986, I set up my own company and installed the machines which modded the RB211 engine when it was changed so it'd run on gas and pump-gas from Alaska. I continue to service and repair machine tools on a worldwide basis and also carry out safety checks and electrical inspections for colleges.

What started your interest in aviation?

There wasn't an initial spark, I was just

(Above) Stan with his wife, Margaret, and rare taildragger Bede BD-4, which he rebuilt thirty years ago and still enjoys flying at home and abroad. (Photo: Stan Dauncey)

always fascinated with aircraft. I wanted to be involved with aviation from a young age and gained my PPL at the age of 22.

In what, where and when was your first flight?

My first-ever flight was in a Bolkow Monsun at Teesside Airport in 1976.

How did you hear about the LAA?

I heard about the LAA, which was then the PFA, when I bought my first plane, a Taylor Monoplane. I bought the Mono as an already flying aircraft from a colleague, but the engine was only a 1,700cc VW and

(Right) Way back when – Stan with his first aircraft, a Taylor Monoplane, which he still owns. (Photo: Stan Dauncey)

proved to be underpowered. I changed it to an 1,834cc engine with a CD carburettor and upgraded induction system, and just used it for local flying.

How long have you been a member?

It's forty-plus years now. I was on the National Council for 25 years, as the North East Strut rep, and recently became an LAA Inspector.

Do you think LAA members find building more difficult if they don't come from an engineering background?



MEET THE MEMBERS

In some ways it's a lot easier for them now, because today's kits are so advanced, and the internet allows such easy contact with suppliers and other builders. Undoubtedly though, the demise of our production industry means that many LAA members no longer have any engineering experience so the recent expansion of our courses is to be applauded. They certainly help new builders get off on the right foot. What has become more complex are the electronics – the modern touring aeroplane now has such an array of glass instrumentation and avionics.

Have you flown many types?

I've been fortunate and have about 1,400 hours on quite a wide range of types. Apart from the usual Cessnas and Pipers, and my first aircraft, the Monoplane, I've flown the Monsum, Bolkow 208, Tailwind, Long-EZ, Chipmunk, Zlin Z 42, Jet Provost, Fascination, Bulldog, Cub, Jodel, Taylorcraft, Luscombe, Pioneer and no doubt several others. Before you ask, they all have their idiosyncrasies, good and bad, but I've enjoyed flying them all!

What aircraft do you currently own?

I still have the Taylor Monoplane and a Bolkow 208, but neither are currently flying. My main aircraft is my Bede BD-4 taildragger, which I've owned for thirty years.

The Bede is a rarity, how's it been to own?

Every winter I carry out modifications and upgrades. Those have included a landing-gear upgrade, new cowlings, I refurbished the engine, electronic ignition, upgrades to the avionics and a complete rewire.

My wife and I have enjoyed the aircraft and like to visit fly-ins over the summer months. Over the years we've visited events in France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany. It's easier navigating to Europe these days, with GPS and a moving map. Our first trip to the RSA Rally was by map-reading but we evolved through VOR, then GPS, and finally to moving map.

What's been your best aviation moment?

My best moment was test flying my BD-4 after spending two years building it from a box of parts. I found the stability great but was disappointed with the performance, only achieving a 120kt cruise when I was expecting 150kt.

Do you have any aviation heroes?

I've always admired Eric 'Winkle' Brown for his achievements.

Have you had any worrying incidents while you were flying?

I was once on fire in the air, due to the starter motor jamming while taking-off from Bagby. That airfield's quite unique and you can take-off downhill in light winds and land uphill. So I took off downwind and realised it was on fire as I rotated. The strip was then only 500 metres-long, so I couldn't land back on, but I was able to switch off all the electrics. As I'd rewired the plane, I knew exactly how all the electrics worked and how to switch-off, isolate and re-route power. to facilitate a safe return to Bagby. I then repaired the aircraft and flew it back to Yearby.

You're also a LAA PCS instructor – what can this offer to benefit LAA members?

The Pilot Coaching Scheme helps keep members up to date with skills and gives them the opportunity to do type conversions and differences training. It also offers the chance to go with an instructor for the bi-annual flight review – all on their own aircraft, thus keeping the costs down.

Are there any aircraft you hanker after?

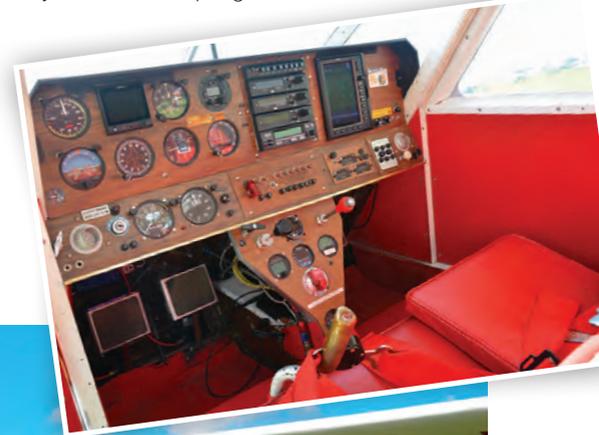
Yes, an F-4 Phantom or a Eurofighter!

Do you have any non-aviation interests?

I'm a scuba-diving Instructor. Initially, I dived in the UK, mainly around Scotland, where we'd search for wrecks, including aircraft. I've continued diving all over the world and found one of the best places is the Philippines where there are lots of sites with wrecks from WWII – the Americans found and sank the Japanese second fleet in the area. I'm also interested in small-bore rifle shooting.

Do you have any advice for fellow pilots?

Try to keep your avionics up to date and functioning correctly. ADS-B is advantageous – it certainly helps Air Traffic Control. To use ADS-B in an aircraft you also need some means of displaying the information, either a 'glass' cockpit, an iPad or similar. Of course, that still doesn't give you the full picture and you need to keep a good look out. ■



Stan's Bede at the LAA Rally – he's kept pace with technology, improving its avionics over the years. (Photos: Neil Wilson)

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