



From the Editor:

As the end of the year approaches I thought that it would be a good time to reflect on how we have progressed during 2025. We have made some major changes this year starting with the move from Hangar 1 to join engineering at Hangar 6. It was sad to leave our little corner of the airfield which we had occupied since 1999. There are many happy memories of BBQs, club activity days, fireworks, student first solos, Type Ratings, PPL and CPL passes. This was indeed an end of an era but now it was a case of onward and upward.

Once we had made the move, it was evident that the new club room, office and training rooms at Hangar 6 proved to be a big hit. They are warm, clean and modern and purpose built for our requirements, so much better than the elderly porta cabins at Hangar 1. There has been a lot of work behind the scenes sorting out the new classrooms and office, whilst still running the Training School and looking after the students and customers. At last, we seem to be coming to the end of this phase and things are now settling down. I hope that you have noticed the new signs on the front and back of the hangar, these reflect our updated style and show that we are a fully integrated aviation company.

There have been several changes in our aircraft during 2025, at last G-LYRA has joined our other R44 G-SWNS. The commissioning of G-LYRA had been very problematical as she got stuck in no-mans-land between the French CAA and the UK CAA, it was so much easier when we were all part of EASA. For those of you who have flown our R22, G-NDIA, unfortunately she has got to the end of her life and needs a rebuild. We have decided not to rebuild her as our recently rebuilt R22, G-EERY will very soon take to the sky's. G-EERY will be joining G-UIDO our new R22 which we purchased from Austria. Thankfully both our G2s, G-LYZA and G-CKRK have been doing a sterling job throughout the year. I am confident that our fleet of six helicopters will give us the flexibility to continue and expand our operations going forward.

Now that 2025 and the move are almost over, we hope to do more club activities during 2026. Look out for further information as we go into the new year. All that remains is to wish you a very **Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all at EBG.**



Christmas is time to deliver Santa to Redhill Football Club – this year in a G2

Ken

If you have any interesting articles or news items, please email them to:
newsletter@ebghelicopters.co.uk

Expect the Unexpected – by Doug Johnson

As G-LYRA, the newest R44 in the EBG fleet, spluttered into life on a chilly Friday morning, Rick, Stanley and I chatted while I finished the pre-take off checks. Twenty minutes earlier, Bob had briefed the group taking part in a fly out to the Yew Tree Inn at Chalvington, ending with a line that now feels prophetic: “We all want to have a great trip but remember... always expect the unexpected.”

We were the lead helicopter, scheduled to depart ten minutes ahead of the small gaggle following in formation. Our job was to land first and guide the others in. Departure from Redhill was straightforward: a simple straight out from runway 18, then a left turn toward Godstone Station. No wind, bright sunshine, crisp late-morning air. It felt like one of those perfect, easy flights. What could possibly go wrong?

I’ve been a regular self-fly hire pilot for a couple of years, with over 160 hours and no real issues. Today was to be different.

As we passed Godstone, a beautiful layer of low cloud lay parallel to the South Downs. We headed south near Bough Beech, then towards Crowborough, with Deanland Airfield and the pub beyond. Crowborough slipped behind us and, approaching Deanland at 95 knots and 1,800 feet in a smooth cruise, the helicopter started to misbehave. I noticed a slight change in rotor speed and what felt like an “uncommanded” climb. A glance at the tachos sent my heart racing: both needles were running away, increasing rapidly.

In the few seconds it took to process this, I realised the governor was likely the culprit. I reduced throttle manually and switched the governor off, but the rotor RPM had already briefly red-lined. With the immediate crisis under control, my brain went into overdrive.

There was no instructor beside me now – just me and my training. Thankfully, I also had two other pilots onboard. Three brains were definitely better than one, and their calm input helped settle my nerves. With the helicopter stable and the instruments otherwise normal, we needed a plan. Continue to the pub and attempt a confined site landing? Try Deanland, where no one was answering the radio?

We agreed as a crew to turn back to Redhill, inform Farnborough LARS, and keep things simple. The sky was quiet, Rick updated the group via WhatsApp, and I spoke directly to Bob on frequency to confirm our intentions. We passed the gaggle heading the other way, gave them a wave, and continued home.

From governor-off training with Bob, I knew a run-on landing would minimise throttle and collective inputs. In previous practice I’d over-used the collective and triggered an aggressive engine response and yaw – exactly what I wanted to avoid. With light winds and an empty circuit, we could keep it low, slow and gentle, letting the ground come up to meet us in a controlled fashion.

We joined downwind at about 800 feet for areas 1–4 and slid to a stop parallel to the 06 taxiway. Shutdown complete, we reported in, intact but a little shaken, and waited for Daz and James to come and recover us. Relief all round – and, soon enough, smiles again. The training had done its job.

The big takeaway for me is this: it’s far too easy to mentally shelve emergency procedures until your annual proficiency check. Don’t. Revisit them regularly. While you’re flying, ask yourself: *If something happened now, what would I do?*

“Expect the unexpected.” I will. Every single time I fly.



Doug Surveys the outcome of a perfectly executed run-on landing

Fly Out to Old Warden – by Rick Godbolt

A group of us headed to Old Warden Airfield in August for a fly out and to visit the Shuttleworth Collection housed there. Routing from Redhill was via a south to north city transit so we headed out via Buckland then took a heading towards the Isle of Dogs with the QE2 bridge as a back-up plan in case city transit was not available.

All went well crossing the Thames and we headed up the Lee Valley, between Stanstead and Luton controlled airspaces and onwards towards Biggleswade. From there Old Warden is due east so easy to find.



We joined overhead and, as expected, there was no airfield Radio or Tower on duty in the morning, so we announced our intentions on the airfield frequency whilst keeping a good lookout and listen out for other aircraft. Joining the circuit from the overhead and landing at our discretion. One of the challenges of this airfield is that there are a large number of vintage aircraft kept here, any of which could be flying and many of which have no radio on board! Additionally, they don't use call-signs so our familiar Redhill XX calls had to be replaced with the aircraft registration – an additional workload activity for those of us used to our Redhill numbers!

“Established by the founder, Richard Ormonde Shuttleworth and now maintained and cared for by the Shuttleworth Trust, the Shuttleworth Collection is a treasure trove of airworthy vintage aircraft from 1909-1950, as well as historical agricultural and steam exhibits, veteran cars, classic motorcycles, bicycles, vintage buses and carriages.”



We had a great wander around the many exhibits, lunch in the café and then back to the aircraft to head home. By the afternoon the ATZ was active, so we spoke to the tower for airfield information. Remembering my training regarding aircraft call signs, I announced helicopter G-LYRA and was immediately confirmed as Golf Romeo Alpha as expected. However, by the time we lifted, there was another G-RA aircraft in the vicinity – what are the chances? There were only 4 active aircraft and two had the same last 2 letters. Can you remember what you do in this situation? Fortunately, I did....this is why I prefer Redhill 70.... there's only one of me!

Pilot Noticeboard – Bob Gorman CFI

Zone Busts

Nothing to report here since the last Newsletter so well done to all for managing to avoid CAS in EBG aircraft for over a year now.

Usual mantra - please keep checking and double checking your plans for Take 2 compliance and do go have a look at <https://airspace-safety.com/> it's still packed full of useful info.

Recent Accidents

I'm sure you are all aware of the 2 recent serious accidents involving R44s. Whilst neither were anything to do with EBG we should all take them as a reminder of how potentially dangerous flying a helicopter is and how important it is to be as safe as possible in everything we do.

- perhaps you have started to skip a full check?
- perhaps the oil is always 8 and the rotors look ok from the ground?
- perhaps you have just noticed the duals are in on a pax flight?
- perhaps you no longer check the wx the day before?
- perhaps you don't understand the term "man-weight" when planning a full aircraft?

whatever your failing is – and we ALL have them (the above is my own list)! - please try take on board the TEM mantra and anything of concern on any aspect of your flight please ask. Safety First.

R44 Starting

A favourite song of mine from the 70sand the beat goes on.... now comes to mind on this subject. LYRA is still problematic on start. This is a pain but it has given us another tool in our armoury for the problematic starter viz. if you observe that it starts and whenever you push the fuel in it immediately stops then don't push the fuel in! (*as its likely causing flooding*). Let it start, come off the starter button and wait. It should always run for 2-5 seconds with the fuel not in, so you should have time to listen to the running engine. With LYRA its running very lumpy and what's working now is to let it run like this for 3-5 seconds and then smoothly push in the fuel. Give it a go.

06/24 Crossing Circuits, Helistrip or FATO?

It's now the time of year when the fixed wing no longer use the grass runways and move on to the 06/24 runway – which is the taxiway to the south of A1-A4. This raises a couple of Safety Issues.

Firstly, when we are both on the east/west circuits their circuit crosses ours on climb-out and final. The Tower mitigates the risk by holding us on take-off, asking us to report at certain points in our circuit and giving conditional clearances to turn base. Make sure you know what a conditional clearance is and know what you will do if you can't see the subject of the condition. This is typically changing speed, orbit, or extend but your decision and ensure you report as requested.

Secondly, and this makes NO sense to me at all, when the wind is north south, we will be given the 18/36 with the fixed wing still on the 06/24. This sets up the potential for a helicopter and a fixed wing to be in an overlapping part of the circuit going in opposite directions. Think about it: 36H L Xwind = 24 R Dwind. To mitigate this risk there are always long delays when fixed wing are active and we are on 18/36.

There are new controllers and controllers undergoing training in the Tower which adds to the mix. Remember you are the Captain, and you are responsible so if you get any instructions that don't make sense then ask for clarification.

Whilst on the subject of radio it's worth noting that the Tower have been told to refer to a Helistrip as a FATO (Final Approach and Take Off Area). This is causing confusion as sadly most of you have forgotten your Air Law/Ops learning objectives and the Tower are not all on the same page. Long live the Helistrip is all I can say.

Fly Safe!

Bob

EBG Newsletter – December 2025

Congratulations to:



8th July: Lewis PPL(H) Pass



24th July: Chris C PPL(H) pass



9th August: Tom P – 1st Solo



29th August Tim G – CPL(H) Pass



5th September: Jim P PPL(H) pass



16th October: John C – CPL(H) pass

EBG Newsletter – December 2025

Congratulations contd:



1st November: Tom P Solo Cross
Country Qualifier



4th November: John C – Cabri G2 type rating



12th November Hugo H – 1st solo



21st November – John S – Solo Cross Country Qualifier



26th November: Jon A – PPL(H) Pass



13th December Vicky S – 1st solo