



REGIONAL EVENTS



Europe: Grumman and Friends

by: Jon Faulkner, International Director



Over the last weekend of August, Drew Tarmey and I flew from the UK to participate in GOPA member, Kathrin Kaiser's "Grumman and

Friends" weekend at Bonn-Hangelar airfield in Germany. This is the 4th year the event has run and it succeeds in attracting a good attendance of aircraft, most from Germany but also Switzerland and the UK too.

Our flight consisted of two legs, firstly to Le Touquet on the north coast of France to clear customs, then south and east through Belgium on to Bonn. The weather enroute was generally kind although the French coast offered some moments of rather marginal VFR and thunderstorms were in the local area as we arrived at our final destination. With the aircraft safely secured, we joined a number of other pilots for food and a drink or two, briefly huddling for shelter as the rain passed. Pleased to report that the remainder of the weekend enjoyed fine weather!

Bonn-Hangelar airfield is to the south-west of Cologne and close to the controlled airspace surrounding the neighbouring commercial airport. It is one of the oldest airfields in Germany with the first flight occurring in 1909 and one of the remaining hangars constructed in 1917. It is home to both a large number of powered aircraft and helicopters as well as busy gliding operations that all seem to integrate well. The operators did very well to cope with the increased movements in a low key but professional manner, even with non-German speakers like myself!

Saturday saw a fly-past by a DC3 against glorious blue skies before a group fly-out to local airfield, Koblenz, for lunch at their airside restaurant. More Grumman aircraft and owners joined us during the day, totalling just short of 30 airframes by mid-afternoon as we arrived back at Bonn. During the evening, those



staying enjoyed live music provided by a local band of EASA employees (how appropriate!), more food and beer as well as a raffle. Prizes ranged from fuel vouchers to oil, both aircraft and olive varieties, T-shirts, books and assorted Grumman spares. Full marks to Kathrin for assembling such an array of items and most people came away with something.

Sunday was departure day for most with people saying their farewells soon after breakfast. Our return flight was a simple repeat of the outbound although

we did seem to cause concern with Borderforce who claimed only to have received part of our details for entry back into the UK, but a number of texts and calls seemed to resolve this satisfactorily.

Kathrin, I take my hat off to you for the effort you put into organising and hope you'll be willing to do the same in 2024. I look forward to attending again and would encourage Region 7 members, both from the UK and near continent, to come along and enjoy the fun, flying and friendship.

