



BRITISH WOMEN PILOT'S ASSOCIATION CHALLENGE TROPHY 2009

Janet Chanides

Every year the trophy is awarded for a 2 hour flight on a particular theme. This year's theme was "Places of Worship" and, having won it last year, I was thrilled to receive it again in 2009. You send in a flight plan, write out a general aim showing how you will cover the theme, have it verified, wait for a suitable day and off you go. You are allowed one stop during the flight and to take along a fellow passenger. I roped in my husband for this task, so that he could act as photographer and record aspects of the flight.

I'd planned a route that took me over the Fens and those great Cathedrals of Peterborough and Ely as well as overflying en route the Temples of Stowe, the Buddhist Peace Pagoda at Milton Keynes, Woburn Abbey, Anglesey Abbey near Cambridge, the Priory at Canons Ashby as well as the Churches of Buckingham, Keyston and Middleton Cheney. (The latter all have nice tall spires easily visible from the air!)

I flew, my husband snapped away and we tried not to come to blows as to what we were actually looking at. I had learnt from past experience that when I say "it's over there" we may not actually be looking at the same thing. The time constraint means that you have no time to fly around in circles in order to establish that it is in fact Ely Cathedral that you are both looking at, or indeed no time to get that perfect shot before the church spire or whatever disappears under your wing.

It was a fairly murky day and the sun was low in the sky when we did the flight. My landings were not good, one when we stopped for lunch at Peterborough, and a disastrous one on return to Turweston when turning from cranked finals my vision into the sun was entirely black - I really couldn't see a thing! Despite this I, and I hope, my husband, enjoyed the flight.

Having completed the flight you write it up in the form of a log book and send it off along with your evidence, photos, landing fees, log book entry etc. It is all good fun, takes you to new places and gives a purpose to your flying. So, all you Ladies out there - you should do it too. Rise to the challenge. I wonder what next year's theme will be?

See more photographs from Janet's challenge flight on our airfield gallery.