

## IFFR BENELUX PRESENT A MULTIPLE EUROPEAN FLY-INS 2023



WOW, 2023 was a busy year in IFFR !

Meanwhile 2024 is looking around the corner and it looks that it will be a promising year aswell !

Looking back at the year 2023, I would like to thank all our members for participating in many events over the past year. We kicked off with our traditional meeting in Zwartberg on March 26th with the "Spring in the Air". In May we organized a meeting for the "Flight to end Polio".

We were able to raise money to support the action with a successful flight around the world in a single engine plane. Unfortunately Peter and John didn't make it to Zwartberg due to engine problems but we had a great meeting and a lot of fun.

Some weeks later (June 23rd – 25th) we organized our meeting in Seppe/Breda. It was again a successful meeting with participants from many sections. In August, we joined friends in Helsinki at the Nordic meeting. September was very busy, since there were four different international meetings during this month where IFFR Benelux was present at IFFR UK meeting in Rochester.

IFFR Benelux was also present in 2023 at various local Rotary meetings : we celebrated 100 years of Rotary in Belgium at the Ostend and Brussels meeting and our section was also present at the district meeting of District 2140 in Zolder.

I am already looking forward to 2024.

In July 2024, the International post convention fly-away will be held in Europe and I am proud to announce that our section is participating in this event.

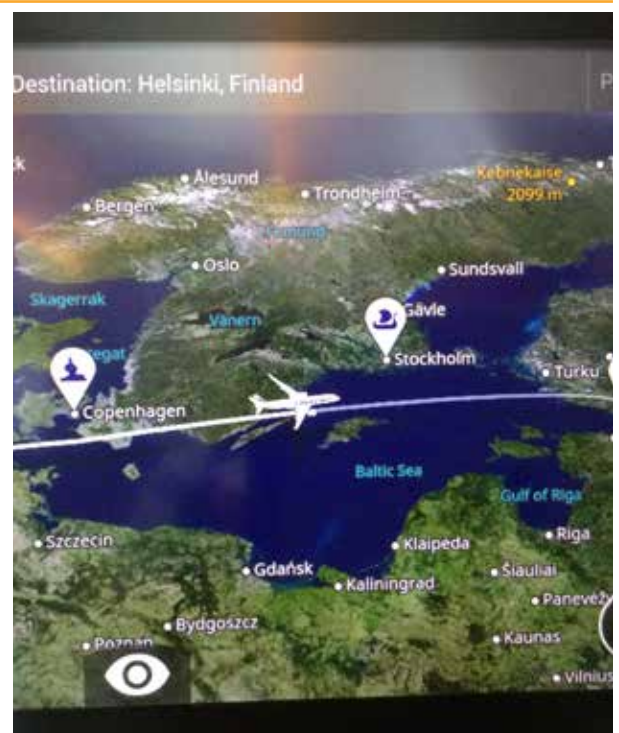
Please note that our traditional kick off will be held on April 1st (this is no April fool but it is on Eastermonday : ) ).

I wish you and your family a prosperous 2024 in good health and I hope to meet you at the various meetings in 2024.

Happy landings !

## IFFR Benelux was represented at multiple IFFR Fly-ins all over Europe

Benelux IFFR Members and Fly-In's throughout Europe...it is one of the objectives of our board members to represent our section during most of the fly-ins, organised in Europe. As IFFR Benelux is always the first to kick-off the European fly-in season, you can find a brief report on the Breda fly-in. Also we were present in Lübeck, Helsinki and Rochester. And as Kris, our president already



# Flash-back

## IFFR FLY IN Breda, Netherlands 23-25 june 2023

Huub van Heur, Past-President IFFR Benelux

It is an unwritten rule that fly-ins organised by IFFR Benelux are alternately held in Belgium and the Netherlands. Even Luxembourg is not forgotten. In 2007, thanks to our board member Egide, who passed away too soon, we had an excellently organised fly in in Luxembourg. But this year it was in the Netherlands again. Maurice Tax with his wife Hijlien and assistance from



Huub organised an excellent fly in at Seppe.

Around noon, we welcomed the IFFR flyers from England, Scotland, Norway, Belgium and the Netherlands on a sun-drenched Friday. Here, a sumptuous lunch was enjoyed in the Cockpit, after which we were given an excellent tour by the Flying Museum volunteers courtesy of Jan, Nathalie's partner. The restored Messerschmitt ME-109G-5 in particular made a big impression. Apart from oldtimers like the Piper Cub, Saab, Chipmunk, Tiger Moth etc ... there were also various types of aircraft engines on display, among other things, with aviation-related objects.



Around 3pm, we checked in at Hotel Keyser (no relation to our chairman) in Breda. After this, under the guidance and explanation of Maurice Tax – our treasurer – we took a walk through Breda, the city where he was a student at the Royal Military Academy (KMA) at the time and therefore obviously knew it well, especially the pubs. The evening dinner was enjoyed at Humphreys. It was cosy and the weather cooperated

### DID YOU KNOW THAT...

Did you know that IFFR Benelux is the last European section to have the Galadiner during the fly-in weekend where the men are dressed in tuxedo and ladies are wearing the most beautiful galadresses?

A question for you? Should we hold on to that tradition or do we drop it like all other sections? Let us know ...as the board needs to take a decision for next year fly-in.

**Did you know that a new tradition is been introduced by Maurice Tax?** Since 2 years now and from now on, every Galadiner will end with the same song: Country Roads by John Denver.. in the version of Maurice :)

Curious about this years Galadiner? Below you find a picture but there are some great videos on our website which you can find in the article regarding this years Fly-In in Breda.



*Read more online*

[www.iffribenelux.online/flashback](http://www.iffribenelux.online/flashback)

## IFFR Fly-In Lübeck, Germany July 2023

**Text:** George Ritchie, World President

**Pictures:** Maurice Tax, IFFR Benelux Treasurer

The German & Austrian section held its annual fly in weekend in the north German city of Lübeck, a delightfully pretty and bustling city that was known as "Queen of the Hanseatic League" for 500 years. It has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1987.

A great gathering with members from the Benelux, Scandinavian, Swiss and UK sections joining our German hosts -over 40 of us in total. From the UK, Tony and Rosi Flinn (the only UK participants to fly into Luebeck Blankensee airport themselves) probably took the prize for the longest journey, coming from Sandtoft, Lincolnshire (EGCF) via Midden Zeeland (EHMZ) with a total flying time of about 6 hours for the 600 miles.

The weekend began with a gathering at Lübeck Blankensee airport (EDHL) on Friday 7 July and an excellent barbecue lunch. The airport having had an eventful history including as a base for the Berlin Airlift.

*Read more online*

[www.iffribenelux.online/flashback](http://www.iffribenelux.online/flashback)



## IFFR Fly-In Helsinki, Finland 3-6 August 2023

**Ingrid Witvrouw, Secretary IFFR Benelux**

**SURPRISING MIX OF ARCHITECTURE, CULTURE AND NATURE: THAT'S HELSINKI**

From 3 to 6 August, IFFR Benelux was present with a nice delegation during IFFR Scandinavia's annual Fly-In. This year, Helsinki was on the programme.

What could we expect? The Finnish capital and also the country itself are a great unknown to many of us.

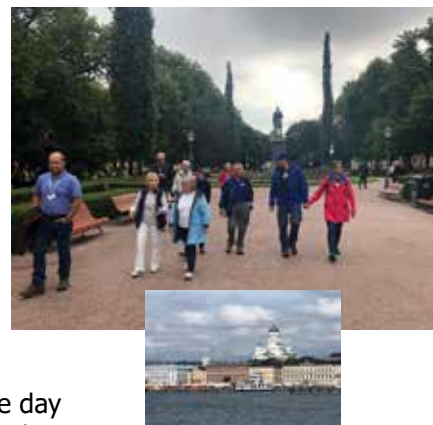
Unjustly so because the city has a character all its own and exudes a quiet cosmopolitan atmosphere. That the Russian border is only about 150 km away is hardly noticeable in the oldest part of the city.

Helsinki is some 2,400 km from Brussels and Amsterdam. Unstable weather conditions also meant that most participants refrained

from flying themselves but opted for a safe commercial flight. Of the IFFR Benelux participants, only Tony and Edith De Bruyn flew their Marchetti to Helsinki, with 1 stopover in Roskilde, Denmark.

Arriving in Helsinki, the first impression was somewhat bleak. Driving through the city's suburbs, you immediately felt that you were in a northern capital with residential blocks and straight-on straight streets. Very sleek, austere and, yes, somewhat boring. But the closer you get to the old city centre, the greener the city becomes. And the sea is everywhere present.

On Friday, the programme was rather limited: a reception at Nummula airport, about an hour's drive from Helsinki city centre where we were offered lunch and received by the airport director. As quite a few participants had already arrived the day before, Erik & Lotta had arranged transport to the airport. Quite an experience as apparently some drivers had some trouble finding their way. After returning to the hotel and checking in, there was some free time before we headed to the restaurant on foot through the pouring rain. The day ended in the hotel bar to socialise with all the participants from UK, Switzerland, Germany and Scandinavia.



*Read more online*

[www.iffribenelux.online/flashback](http://www.iffribenelux.online/flashback)

## IFFR Fly-In Rochester, UK

George Ritchie, World-President IFFR  
Pictures by Ingrid Witvrouwen

A Quintessential British Weekend – the UK Section meeting at Rochester, Kent.

The last full weekend of September and another great weekend of IFFR fellowship. This time we gathered at the IFFR UK section weekend meeting which brought the European season of week-end fly ins to its end. Over 30 of us, including members from Andorra, Belgium (represented by Tony & Edith De Bruyn, Han & Gieneke Klinkspoor and Dirk, Ingrid & Mia Witvrouwen) and Norway, came together in Rochester, Kent, for a Quintessentially British weekend.

Blessed with fine weather, those flying in to Rochester from the UK had great views over London en-route before landing on the grass hilltop airfield. We adjourned to the Bridgewood Manor Hotel – our base for the weekend, for lunch. Suitably refreshed we took the short coach ride to visit Leeds Castle, built on islands in a lake formed by the River Len to the east of the village of Leeds (not to be mistaken for its better known northern namesake, Leeds, Yorkshire). A castle has existed on the site since 857. In the 13th century, it came into the hands of King Edward I, for whom it became a favourite residence; in the 16th century, Henry VIII used it as a dwelling for his first wife, Catherine of Aragon. The present castle dates mostly from the early 19th century. Its last private owner, Olive, Lady Baillie, left the castle in trust to open it to the public. After a tour of the house, there was time to explore the grounds, have an ice-cream, and for the more foolhardy to explore (better described as “get lost in”) the maze.

Then it was back on the coach to the quaint village of Lenham for dinner at “The Wishful Thinker” country pub. Described as a “sleepover foodie pub” we enjoyed that most British of Friday night meals – fish & chips, with Kent brewed ales or the option of English wines!



*Read more online*

[www.iffibenelux.online/flashback](http://www.iffibenelux.online/flashback)

## HAVING CHRISTMAS LUNCH WITH IFFR UK AT THE ROYAL AIR FORCE CLUB LONDON.

Huub van Heur, Past-President IFFR Benelux

Members of the IFFR (world wide) had an invitation of IFFR UK for the Christmas Lunch on Wednesday December 13th 2023, traditionally held at the RAF club hotel, situated at 128 Picadilly in London.

Kris De Keyser, our president, Maurice Tax, Huub van Heur, had travelled with partners to participate.



Traditionally John Davy invite us for a dinner at Tuesday december 12e in the library room, the day before. On Wednesday December 13 th we were welcomed at 1 p.m. LT by Feroz Wadia, the chairman IFFR UK and George Ritchie the World president.

After the lunch we had a speaker – Thomas Fink from Nurnberg – IFFR member of Germany/Austria, holder of the high altitude ballooning record at 8876 meters since 1990. Members of IFFR Europa were coming, as mentioned the Benelux section, the Nordic section , the German – Austria section and many members of the UK section. In total there was a party of 50 people present.

# New IFFR friends in 2023

## Jos Vander Sloten



My fascination about airplanes started as a child, when I once got a model plastic aircraft as a birthday gift. I bought some others, but the desire to build an airplane that was really able to fly was growing. So, at the age of 14, my uncle bought me a control line airplane and that was the start of an adventure that took me along designing and building my own control line airplanes and then moving into radio controlled airplanes when I was at the age of 18. The famous Taxi (Graupner design) was my first radio controlled airplane and I joined the club of Demerlandse Modelvliegers in Bete-kom, Flanders. In this club, I met the late Gust Witvrouw, a member of the vast Rotary family and the father of Dirk and Ingrid Witvrouwen.

Also at the age of 18, I started engineering studies at the KU Leuven and I was able to combine these studies with design-ing, building and flying radio controlled model aircraft. One

of my designs even made it to the cover of the French language Modèle Magazine.

I enjoyed aerobatics and have been flying amongst other the iconic Curare plane and the Wayfarer (model kit from the Belgian company Svensson). But the development of my professional career as a researcher and later as a professor at KU Leuven – and the development of my private life becoming father and recently becoming grandfather – caused some restrictions in the time I could spend on model airplanes.

Currently I am flying an Acromaster and a Parkmaster (both from the Multiplex company) which are high end and nice to fly electric planes. Electric planes are now truly state of the art and allow for a full flight experience. It was nice to discover recently the existence of the IFFR during the District Conference of District 2140 in June 2023 where I finished my term as DRFC. I look forward to the exchange of experiences amongst Rotarians who enjoy flying, whether it being life or remote.

Jos Vander Sloten  
RC Leuven (BE)

## Other new IFFR Friends who joined our section in 2023

Daan Meuwis

Maxim Dockx

Philip (Flup) Verhaegen

Yves Lannoy

Marco Van Gael

Have you discovered the blog of IFFR International, managed by our World President George Ritchie yet? Just have a look at [www.flyingrotarians.org](http://www.flyingrotarians.org).

### IMPORTANT:

Please read carefully all the newsletters from IFFR All Members: all information about next year's Rotary Post Convention FlyAway through Europe will be communicated via this email address.



GEORGE & CAROLINE RITCHIE

# Flight to end polio

On 5 May 2023, Peter Teahen and John Ockenfels prepared for their trip around the world with the aim of getting polio out of the world. Their goal was to visit some 25 countries with their 1977 Cessna 210M (single-engine). Due to technical problems and also unfavourable weather conditions, the crossing of the Atlantic proved to be not so obvious. As a result, they arrived much too late in Scotland, forcing the events organised by IFFR Nordics and IFFR Benelux to improvise. This certainly succeeded thanks to an interesting ZOOM meeting at both events. Thanks to these actions, both sections were still able to make a nice contribution to this good cause.

IFFR Benelux organised this event on 17 May at EBZW Zwartberg, in cooperation with Limburgse Vleugels. Despite the physical absence of Peter & John, it turned out to be a pleasant afternoon during which all participants were given an exclusive tour of the airport, followed by a summer barbecue. The auction of some cool prizes, including some baptismal flights offered by our chairman and past-president, a bottle of exclusive gin and many more nice things also yielded a nice profit.

On 23th of May, Peter and John managed to reach 'the continent' from Scotland with a cargo in Seppe, the Netherlands. Even though this was not an IFFR event, it is still worth mentioning. Read the report on our website (in Dutch only). Would you like to read the entire Flight to End polio travelogue again You can do so via their website by our world president George Ritchie: <https://flyingrotarians.org/around-the-world-flight-to-end-polio-safely-home-successful-mission/>



## IFFR Benelux was present at the Rotary District Conference 2140 in Heusden-Zolder, Belgium

One of Rotary International's strategic objectives is to attract new members. Continued growth as a fellowship is also what Kris, as the new president of IFFR Benelux, is striving for with his team. So a delegation of the board went to Heusden to introduce IFFR Benelux to all Rotarians present at this event.

Again we got questions like: Oh I didn't know you existed, what do you do exactly? What do you do exactly? Can I become a member? On the 16th of September IFFR Benelux was present during the celebration of 100 year RC Oostende. Place to be: the famous casino.

Last but not least, IFFR Benelux was asked by Rotary Belux to be present at the House of Friendship and the Rotary village during the formal celebration of 100 years of Rotary in Belgium. This event was a joint organisation of the 4 Belgian Rotary districts. IFFR Benelux's stand was honoured with a short visit by PRIP Holger Knaack, who was very interested in our activities.



# 2024 - FlyAway

## THE EUROPEAN QUICKSTEP

Following the success of the 2022 Waltz around Texas and the 2023 Tango Round the Outback, we are pleased to introduce you to the "2024 European Quickstep". With no real opportunities for GA flying in Singapore, we are instead bringing our IFFR "Post Convention" Flyaway to Europe.

**We will start our European Quickstep tour on Friday 5 July in Copenhagen, Denmark. Over the next 9 days we will take you from Scandinavia, through Germany and the Netherlands to Brussels, Belgium where our flyaway will end in spectacular style at our final night Gala dinner on the evening of Saturday 13 July, with departures on Sunday 14 July (unless you choose to stay longer and explore more).**

This adventure is organised as a collaboration between the Nordic, German/Austrian and Benelux Sections to showcase the best that Northern Europe has to offer. New for 2024, the first weekend at the start of the Quickstep will also be the Nordic Section's annual fly in meeting, and the last weekend will be the Benelux Section's annual fly in meeting...

*Read more online*  
[www.iffribenelux.online](http://www.iffribenelux.online)

## IFFR BENELUX

### VACANCY - BOARD MEMBER IFFR BENELUX

A board position within IFFR Benelux has recently become available. As a result, we are looking for a motivated member to join the board.

As a board member, you will play a role in shaping the direction of the fellowship and contribute to the development and implementation of activities that further the objectives of IFFR Benelux. You will work with other board members to create a vibrant community for our members with a passion for flying.

Especially the chairman (Kris De Keyser), Maurice Tax (Treasurer) and secretary (Ingrid Witvrouw) are currently very busy (professionally) and would like to lighten these tasks in consultation with you. Meetings will be held at least twice a year either via team/zoom or physically at an airfield to be designated. The duration of the appointment is at least 3 years. Reappointment by unanimous vote of the board.

#### **How to apply:**

Send your interest and CV to Kris, our chairman, before the end of January 2024. Mention in your letter your commitment to IFFR and your vision on how you would like to strengthen the fellowship. Selected candidates will be invited for an interview.

We look forward to hearing from motivated IFFR member who want to contribute to the growth and prosperity of IFFR Benelux.

If you have any questions please send an email to [president@iffribenelux.online](mailto:president@iffribenelux.online) or [info@iffribenelux.online](mailto:info@iffribenelux.online).

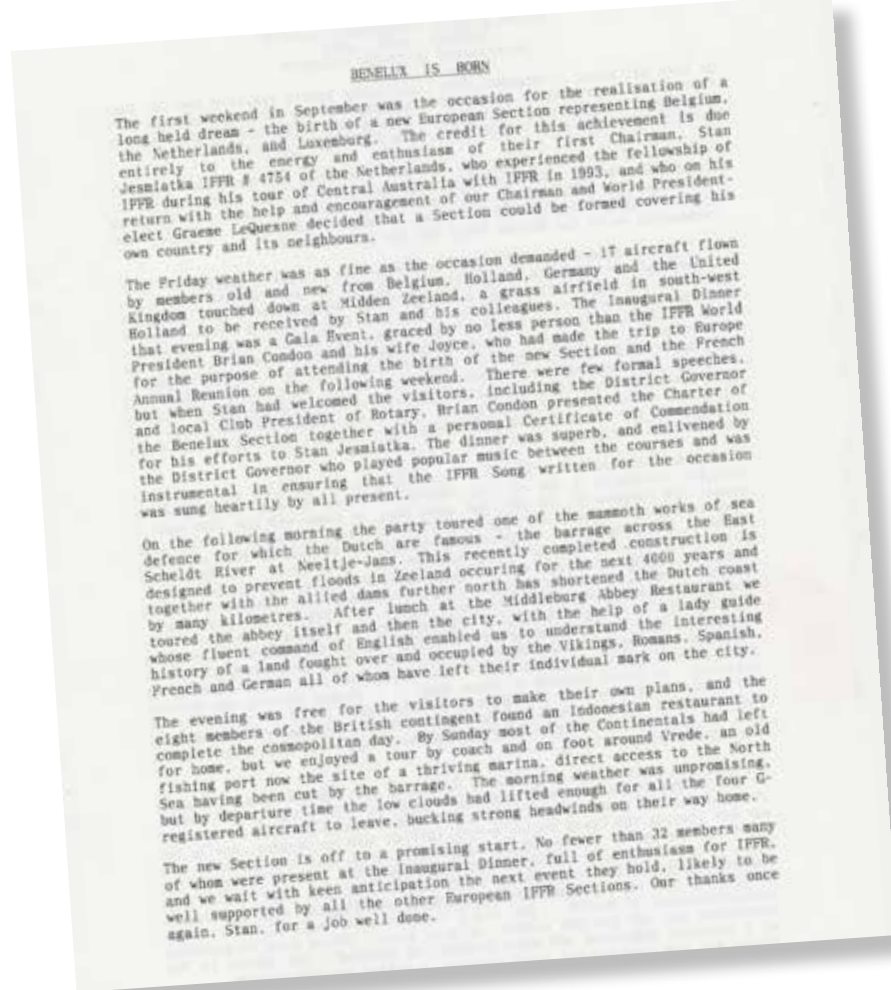
# Did you know that in 1995 IFFR Benelux was 'born'



This summer our president Kris and treasurer Maurice got this email of Feroz Wadia. In attachment of the email message you can find below, we received some pictures of reports. A big thank you for sharing this material with us.

Dear Kris and Maurice,  
I just came across a couple of IFFR stories which mention the Dutch Section (?) in the last paragraph of the Dresden story and so the first meeting which must have been in 1994.

My logbook shows that I flew from Edinburgh to Bourges on 9th September 1994 but it mentions the meeting being at Midden Zeeland.



## AGENDA IFFR BENELUX 2024

1 april Spring es in 't Air - EBZW Zwartberg  
5- 14 July FlyAway 'The European Quickstep'  
Dates of IFFR Europe Fly-In's : check [iffr.org](http://iffr.org)

### COLOFON

International Fellowship of Flying Rotarians section Benelux

### Contact

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### Board

- ▶ Kris De Keyser, President
- ▶ Huub van Heur, Past president
- ▶ Maurice Tax, Treasurer
- ▶ Ingrid Witvrouwen, Secretary
- ▶ ?

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