

The next club meeting will be

At some, presently indeterminate, date in the future!

For the foreseeable future, due to the present Covid-19 emergency, all Club meetings remain postponed or cancelled.

We all know the reasons which have been published at length and whether or not you agree with them we have no option at present but to comply with the National guidance.

Hopefully the news will be better next month.

Meanwhile...

The planning application for the new flying field is progressing. There have been a few inevitable objections mainly from the environmental lobby but we believe nothing too serious. Hopefully we have answered them and we will see how things are in about a month. Fingers crossed.



Looking further forward...

Following on from the successes of last Winter's indoor flying sessions we have made tentative bookings for this coming Winter. Put the following dates in the diary now - it will make you feel better after all the crossing out you have had to do recently.

3rd October 2020	31st October	28th November	19th December	
9th January 2021	6th February	6th March	27th March	17th April

All events will be in the sports hall of Handy Cross Leisure Centre from 6.00 - 8.00 pm unless notified otherwise nearer the event.

And looking back... with thanks to Stuart Coyle

The year was probably 1959 and I was one of twenty or so enthusiastic aero modellers who would congregate at weekends, in all weathers, on a patch of land known as Old Oak Common (part of Wormwood Scrubs in West London). Control line was the order of the times with f/f thrown in when weather conditions permitted. For most of us young teens, C/L combat was our penchant. One could knock up a model in a few evenings, strap it to your back, with a saddle bag of fuel and crash kits, then cycle off for hours of excitement. The more flyers in the circle, the more entertaining it would become. Saturation point would be achieved when more time was spent untangling lines than flying (about 5 or 6 in a circle). The attrition rate on models was enormous. "Last man standing" was ever a proud boast.

Eventually we collect up our models, most having been reduced to a nylon bag of balsa scraps with an Ollie at one end. But its summer, loads of daylight left, can't go home yet.

Ah! les pieces de resistance. Out come the "Ebenezers". A few trimming flights (trimmed for the most erratic flight) and we are ready for a mass fly-off. Old Warden is tame stuff compared to what went on in those times. Spectators far enough away could safely enjoy the ensuing debacle; for those of us in it, it was a case of keep your head down and keep moving. It was hilarious, even to those with wing wounds and prop chops.

Now comes a good yarn. It was at the end of one such melee when all Ebenezers had crashed out of the sky, that one over-fuelled specimen was still performing its tricks, and alarmingly, gaining altitude. Yup, it was mine. With each stunt it was getting ever closer to a row of tall elm trees that bounded the north wall of HMP Wormwood Scrubs. Somehow, dear Ebby managed to fly between the top branches and simultaneously ran out of fuel. The glide path of these models is at best described as a 45 degree dive, and although heading in the direction of the prison, it was very unlikely to sustain much damage on contact with the wall. It's going over! No, it's not! Yes, it is! No, it can't!!

With bated breath, we all watched anxiously. At such a distance it was hard to judge which side of the wall it was descending upon. Suddenly from within the prison yard came a great big cheer. Spoons and tin mugs being rattled on bars (so it seemed). OMG. Ebby had landed.

Fifteen minutes later, a very sheepish teenager was seen skulking up to those massive oak doors, daring to knock on them with trembling knuckles.

What was I to say? "Mister, can I have my model back please?" That wouldn't cut it somehow, I thought. Just then a speakeasy door opened, and a grinning prison officer said "Is this yours Son?" as he passed through an undamaged Ebenezer. "Try not to do it again".

Was this the first drone over a prison wall? No R/C involved, m'lud. The defence rests.



An Ebenezer

Thanks Stuart - wonderful memories. If anyone else would like to confess to similar bygone errors of judgement, or perhaps even stitch up an old friend, then the Editor would be very keen to hear from you.

So who remembers the Ebenezers? Nothing to do with a character in a Dickens novel, these were very simple bi-planes about 20in span and powered by almost any small i/c engine. Originally designed by Bert Striegler in 1954 and published in the April 1958 Aero Modeller as a free plan (actually printed on a normal page at 1/3rd scale) you could knock one up from a couple of sheets of balsa and a few scraps of other material in an evening.



The wings were flat plate with masses of dihedral and the upper wing being swept back. Decoration was whatever your wild imagination led to. Small diesels were the power plants of choice but the small Cox glows were also popular. Ebenezers eventually came in all shapes many being renamed to reflect their design. There is an old page at <http://www.ctie.monash.edu.au/hargrave/ebenezer.html> with lots of pictures and you can download the original plan from there. The forum at

<https://www.modelflying.co.uk/forums/postings.asp?th=8991>

has more photos. There is a video of the above Dastardly and Muttley version at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1cJhqL1_Uk&t=5s. How about an Ebby for a mass winter build project?

Modelling Bursary - Mike Winston

Many of you will remember Basel Hammond, who first came to our Flackwell field aged 6 or so, with his father who was flying models at that time. As soon as he was allowed to try the controls it was clear that he had a natural aptitude and passed his A test aged 8. He continued to develop his flying skill with a particular interest in aerobatics and in 2018 we encouraged each other to take our B tests. Several other club members were also ready for a BMFA test so the club staged a BMFA test day at Towersey with some visiting examiners. Fortunately we both passed along with seven others (see full report in the April 2018 Newsletter).



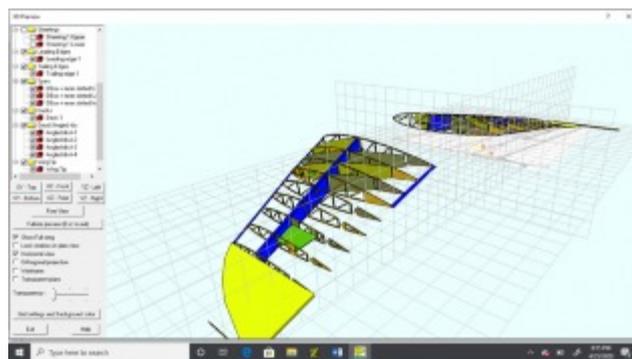
As well as flying, Basel also creates aviation artwork which he has displayed occasionally at club meetings. Recently Basel contacted me again and asked if we would support his application for a bursary available to young people to pursue their interest in aviation. Naturally we were only too pleased to support him and his application was submitted. I will let Basel explain what happened next:

“Two weeks back I received the email with dread that will either contain the words ‘congratulations’ or ‘unfortunately’. It was the former. I had won a bursary to expand on this wonderful hobby of model flying. It’s been perhaps 13 years or so since my father introduced me to the hobby, and I promise it has not left me. Having your father as a flyer too, I will be honest, gave me someone to try to ‘beat’ instead of learn from. I’ll let you decide if I accomplished that!

Time has gone on and after my return to petrol flying with the Katana a few years back, I began to think of the possibility of flying or even building larger aircraft. ‘Basel, dream on’ I’d tell myself and I’d go back to aerobatics.

But then I heard that the Royal Aero Club Trust offered bursaries for young model flyers to either upgrade equipment or complete some form of training. The building thought came back to mind. I had a reason to apply. But another thought dawned; what if I used the money to purchase advanced model aircraft design software? That way I could have a model built for much, much less. Not only that, but it would stay with me for life. With what I have been awarded, the challenge awaiting me is to produce something from the software. I’ve got inspiration from other scratch builders using the same thing so I have the confidence.

Here are a pair of Hunter wings I modelled with software called DevWing – it’s designed purely for producing model aircraft wings and I have to say, very easy to use. You could be from nothing to this within half an hour. It has a counterpart software named Devfus for fuselages – I’m still getting used to this. Note that these are trial versions but they actually let you do quite a lot; the full versions won’t give you much more than what’s seen here – just a few other options and the all important export to a CNC router.



Now it’s just about having the confidence to come up with an efficient and practical design that I know I can build. A glider will probably be the best starting option and going for a large wingspan isn’t a problem. I’ve also considered an EDF Hawker Hunter – though even one made of foam will need a 6-8S battery pack. I would really want to produce something scale. Whatever it is, I will keep everyone updated with the progress, and perhaps there will be a new shape above the skies of our new field.



Onwards and upwards

This year I start my final year of sixth form. Afterwards university is hoped for, my primary choice is a degree in aeronautical, aerospace or mechanical engineering. After that I’d like to join either the RAF or RN as a pilot and we’ll see what happens from there. Aeromodelling will give me a tremendous boost in confidence towards this and I’m thankful to have this hobby. I’ve also found that it gave me an advantage flying full size aircraft... it almost feels natural – they generally fly the same way. But for the meanwhile, I’d like to inspire others my age to get into the hobby to save it becoming a minority interest.

We all wish Basel well in his new adventure and look forward to the day we can all be flying together again.

Mike

A bit of fun from YouTube

Jetmen and an Airbus A380 flying together. And they complain about drones! This has got to be in a James Bond film soon. https://youtu.be/_Vpvkl6ezyc .

Because of the pestilence the live Shuttleworth display was replaced with a virtual one. See the trailer at <https://www.shuttleworth.org/events/seasonpremiere-onlineairshow/> where there are details and links to the full "Display".



Oddments

Did you manage to catch the Red Arrows VE75 flypast over Downley on 8th May? Apparently it was known about but not well publicised. Very good view from my garden where by chance my daughter had a camera to hand.

Watch the latest Microaces update on video <https://youtu.be/-PANtnTxib4>

Committee Members for 2020

Office	Name
Acting Chairman	Ian Thompson
Treasurer	Malcolm Connell
Secretary	Peter Burnham
Membership Secretary	Mike Winston
Newsletter Editor & Web Site	Malcolm Connell
BMFA Liaison	Mitch Mabbutt
Field Rep	Neil Rice

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My thanks to those members who have contributed to this and other Newsletters recently.
Have you got something that you could contribute?

Meetings and Events in 2020

Date	Day	Event	Location
		Umm...!	

There are no events in the near future.