

From the Pits.

The Newsletter of the Weston Model Flying Club

www.weston-model-flying-club.org

January 2004

Editorial

So, once again it's the start of a new year. Last year was one of exceptional progress for the club. There were several improvements to the flying field, with the new bridge, the container and the grass being cut regularly. We moved the club nights to a new home at the Ashcombe.



There were also significant improvements in safety with the universal adoption of model restraints and the procedure for flying on the same frequency. The safety rules have been overhauled and a new membership pack produced.

All in all the club is looking more organised and professional than ever while retaining the informal and friendly atmosphere which is what attracts most of us.

Many thanks to all those people who have helped and supported the club in one way or another, and we look forward to another successful year in 2004.

AGM

The AGM took place at the Ashcombe on Nov 6th. The new committee was elected and the full list is given on a subsequent page. **Ron Bebe** is the Social Secretary, assisted by **John Dale**. **Paul Lathall** takes up the post of Membership Secretary. Two new safety officers have been appointed, **Pat Teakle** and **Roger Moore**.

Following a close vote, members decided on a slight increase in the club fees of £3 for adults and £2 for OAPs. An equally close vote decided to bring the club's definition of junior members into line with that of the BMFA, namely up to the age of 18.

The 2004 Club Fees were therefore set as:

Membership Type	Club	BMFA	Total
Full members:	£40	£23	£63
OAPs:	£19	£23	£42
Juniors (below 18 years)	£0	£13	£13

As it had not been possible to raise enough money to buy the field from within the club membership, a finance sub-committee was set up to look into alternative funding sources.

A raffle was held with a new Acro-Wot kit as the main prize, which was won by **Bernard Sutton**.

Flying Site Improvements

Particular thanks this month go to **Ivan Steerment** and **John Dale**. Ivan must have been reading my article last issue about people who land in trees, and has prepared himself by donating a ladder to the club for recovery of any such misfortunes! It's kept in the container; see the following article for a list of key holders. On a more serious note, please remember that although the ladder is now owned by the club, you use it at your own risk and the club accepts no liability for any injury caused by its use.

John has donated a picnic table which will be very much appreciated in the summer. I gather it's in the form of a kit rather than an ARTS (Almost Ready To Sit on) so no doubt a working party with a very large tube of cyano will be needed to put it together...

The container has been on site for a while, but still needs painting and landscaping (bushes planted around). We're currently awaiting details from the planning office, but when that is received another working party will be required to paint and plant!

Grass Cutting

By now most of you will have seen the container in the corner of the field. This is the new home for the club mower, so no more groans about not being able to cut the grass.

There are at present ten key holders and I am reliably informed they will be only too pleased to let any club member cut the grass, so just see one of the members listed below for access.

Pat Teakle	Alan Meaney	Ian Armstrong	Roger Moore	Ron Bebe
Mike Pope	Steve O'Brien	Mike Brumby	Paul Lathall	Kevin Aldridge

My thanks to all who have previously and those who continue to cut the grass.

Mike Pope

Membership Pack

Starting this year, everyone who joins or re-joins the club will be issued with a comprehensive membership pack which includes:

- The revised club rules
- The flying field protocol
- A contact list for club officials
- A copy of the Safety Audit Check List
- A map of the flying site
- The list of club night events for this year
- Chairman's introduction

Thanks to **Alan Meaney** and **Paul Lathall** for their hard work in putting this together.

2004 Committee

Title	Name	Phone	Email Address
President	Pat Teakle	07973 951812	n/a
Chairman	Mike Pope	01934 516869	n/a
Vice Chairman	Kevin Aldridge	01934 853159	kevin.aldridge@talk21.com
Hon. Secretary	Ian Armstrong	01275 392995	iarmstrong@cix.co.uk
Hon. Treasurer	Steve O'Brien	01934 877047	sjo@globalnet.co.uk
Membership Secretary	Paul Lathall	07977 412615	plathall@hotmail.com
Social Chairman	Ron Bebe	01934 838131	ron@rbebe.freeserve.co.uk
Social Assistant	John Dale	07968 455810	jdtowers@msn.com
Safety Officer	Paul Lathall	07977 412615	plathall@hotmail.com
Safety Officer	Alan Meaney	01934 813957	alanmeaney@f2s.com
Safety Officer	Terry Davis	07973 332735	terry.davis@dsl.pipex.com
Safety Officer	Mike Adams	01934 516237	n/a
Safety Officer	Pat Teakle	07973 951812	n/a
Safety Officer	Roger Moore	01934 627400	n/a
Club Examiner	Terry Davis	07973 332735	terry.davis@dsl.pipex.com
Club Examiner	Paul Lathall	07977 412615	plathall@hotmail.com
Club Examiner	Mike Adams	01934 516237	n/a

Casualties

Helicopters have not featured in the Casualties spot before, but the rise in their popularity in the club recently has led to the inevitable increase in 'incidents'. **Kevin Aldridge** has the honour of being the first helicopter pilot to appear in here as he tried for 'just one more lift off' but put in the wrong aileron...

On the same subject, I won't name the person who spent a considerable sum of money on a model helicopter, with all its precision components, and then held the battery on with a single rubber band which broke in flight, leaving the machine moving in a straight line into the hedge...



Lottery

In a rather optimistic attempt to acquire money for the field purchase, the club now buys a weekly Lottery ticket. If you're watching the draw with eager anticipation, the numbers (Saturday draw only) are 6, 16, 28, 35, 47 and 48.



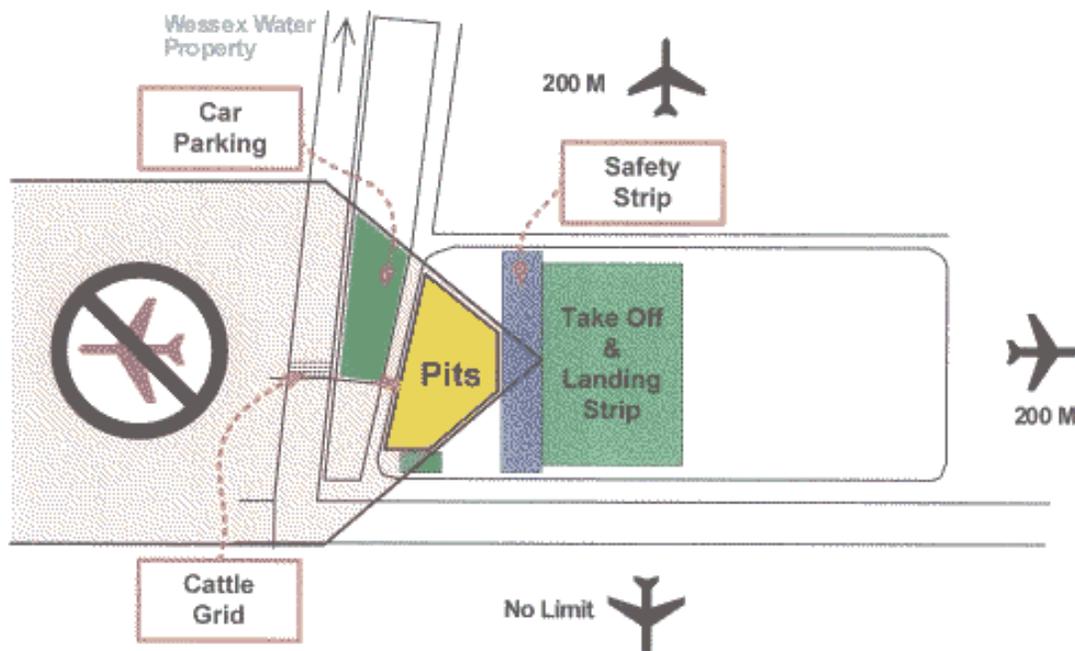
BMFA

After my warnings in the previous newsletters about the impending crisis in the BMFA Western Area (secretary & treasurer both standing down and no volunteers to replace them), it was all resolved at the last minute at the AGM. **Martin Surrey**, the previous secretary, is now taking over the treasurer's role, and **Nial Ball** of the Frome Model Flying Club is the new secretary. Hence the committee is complete, apart from the post of PRO which has been vacant for the last 3 years. It's disappointing though, that even at the AGM, only eight clubs were represented from the 37 or so in the Western area.

New Safety Rules

The AGM last November saw a review of the safety rules. Two new improvements were proposed by the safety officers and approved by the members present.

1. That any model can be checked against a safety audit check list (a sample is included in the membership pack). This is not intended to penalise anyone but to improve the quality of our models and provide evidence of due diligence by the club in the event of any insurance claim. Please read the new rules 8d & 8e in your membership pack.
2. The flying layout at the field is revised to make the area over and behind the pits permanently out of bounds, see the plan below. Flying over the pits and cars has, of course, always been forbidden, but unfortunately not always observed, so it has now been necessary to extend the no-go area all the way back so that no flying is allowed behind the pits at all. This means that if the wind is straight down the field then cross-wind landings may be required. If you can't do cross-wind landings or take-offs then don't fly!



Little and Large



No, I'm not referring to Terry & Paul themselves... but to their respective models. **Terry Davis's** Fuji-64 petrol-engine powered Titan, at 8ft span and 20lbs weight is probably the largest model flown at Wick, while **Paul Lathall's** electric pylon racer is barely larger than the Titan's propeller. Despite its diminutive size, Paul's racer, powered by a brushless electric motor on 8 cells, is possibly the fastest thing around and probably the quietest, crossing the field in seconds with little more than a whisper.

Club Meetings

It's been rather a long time now since we had any events at the club meetings, apart from the slide show in December. This year all that will change, as **John Dale** has organised something for every club night of the year. John started the ball rolling himself at the January meeting with an entertaining talk on flying from water. Incidentally one of the problems he described is that of finding a suitable site nearby, so if you know of a large stretch of water where flying would be possible and practical, please let him know.

The remaining events are shown below. Hopefully there is something which will appeal to everyone, so please come along and give your support, especially for the two evenings when we have guest speakers. The "Bring and Buy" in February is a chance to ~~get rid of your old rubbish~~ find a good home for those treasured items that don't quite fit in with your current plans...

Date	Title	Subject
5th February	"Bring and buy"	New year's clearout
4th March	"From the ground up"	How to of helicopters
1st April	"Getting to A then B"	Guest speaker on BMFA Examinations
6th May	"TBA"	But it will be good
3rd June	"Meeting @ the field"	Field Maintenance Night
1st July	"Meeting @ the field"	BMFA "A" & "B" Exam Night
5th August	"Meeting @ the field"	Bring all your models for a club photo shoot
2nd September	"Film Night"	Don't Miss it!
7th October	"Newton's third law"	Guest speaker on Jets
4th November	A.G.M.	Your club matters
2nd December	"Bring & buy"	Pre Christmas clearout

To Fly a Plane

How many of us model flyers have wanted to fly the real thing? Well from conversations with other club members quite a lot, and if you are one of them then read my full-size flying story before you have a go.

I have always wanted to fly but unfortunately was born without wings; nevertheless by the age of about ten I had become friendly with a free flight flyer who could tease a vintage model around our local Rugby pitch with amazing control. I on the other hand had to be content with thirty seconds of engine run and a mile hike. This lasted a few years and with my paper round money I invested in a MacGregor two channel, this was promptly installed into a free flight model called Frankenstein and flew the classic unaided learners flight. You know the one, a good hand launch with the DC Merlin at full chat, some height gained, all was well until I tried a turn (I think this was the only time I touched the controls) and there it was with a sudden loss of height and an unscheduled landing in the top of a tree.

This about finished my flying for a number of years, with other things in life getting in the way; woman, work and children.

I was thirty-eight when my wife said to me “you should get yourself a hobby, all you do these days is work” and that I did, it was time to fly again and for my fortieth birthday I had a gift of a flight in a low wing single engine job at Bristol Airport.

I don't want to sound ungrateful as the flight was fine with good weather, nice views and a good drive but with an altimeter, sorry did I make that sound a bit dull with no wind rushing past your face, the thrill of a loop followed closely by a barrel roll and into a stall turn. Well maybe it was a bit, and maybe I happened to mention this a couple of times. And guess what? Another present this time for Christmas; an aerobatic flight in a Stampe Sv4c.



As with all good things it had to wait a bit, the weather in January, February and March not being too good, the summer full of holidays and model flying, and then you have November the perfect month. The month before the gift voucher runs out of time.

Let me give you a tip here; if you are lucky enough to have friends that give a present like this, take it in the summer.

The day arrived and my mate Steve suggested he drove me to Gloucester Airport, as maybe I would not be feeling too good after the flight.

We met the crew at Tiger Airways who gave us a friendly welcome and being a bit early had to wait for the previous flight to land. The little Stampe came down the runway and my turn was getting closer, good.

Tizi Hodson the chief instructor came over and introduced herself, kitted me out with a leather jacket and flying hat etc. and we were off to the plane. Pre-Flight checks complete and chocks away, a turn towards the runway, a radio check with the tower, the all clear, full throttle and up to 64 miles an hour and we're off. Tizi took the plane up to about 100 feet and the controls were then mine, this was more like real flying, (I'm back to the wind in your hair and the noise of the engine stuff).

We headed off over the river Severn climbing to a couple of thousand feet before Tizi regained the controls for the aerobatic routine, all the time telling me what she was doing through the intercom, it was fun and with the maximum of three "G" all rather enjoyable. After the manoeuvres it was time to retake the controls and fly back to the airfield, Tizi only taking the controls for landing.



There you have it, I recommend it to any of you model flyers as it gives you a real feel for what the plane is doing.

If you would like more info on this or other flights give the staff at Tiger Airways a call on 01452 854141.

Happy Flying

Mike Pope

Seen at the Field



This pretty Stearman biplane was built from the Kyosho kit by **Trevor Hoskins**. Power is an ASP 4-stroke from Just Engines. It's 50" span, but despite the smallish size it flies very well and looks the part in the air.

Spot the Difference

Some of you may remember my first Acro-Wot. I first flew it shortly after I joined the club in 1999, and had over 250 flights with it before its untimely demise last year.

After that I flew a Cap232 which I've also described in these pages, but I always had a soft spot for the Acro-Wot so eventually I got round to building another. It's powered by the same Irvine 53 which survived the crash of the original.

As you can see my imagination is rather limited in terms of colour schemes, so the familiar blue, orange & yellow will be seen in the skies again (hopefully for at least as long as the original!).

There are in fact 3 visible differences between the two models. Can you spot them?



Club Helicopter Trainer

The club has had a fixed-wing trainer for some years, but with the recent increase in popularity of helicopter flying, members at the AGM approved the purchase of a helicopter trainer too. The model is the very popular Raptor with JR radio, and there are two transmitters with a buddy lead. See **Alan Meaney** for more details.

Flying League 2004

The fun-fly competitions will be held again this year in the same way as last. There will be 6 events from April to September, on the first Sunday following the club meeting. Hence the dates are provisionally as follows:

April 4 May 9 June 6 July 4 August 8 September 5

Once again, the best 3 scores will count, so you don't have to complete all 6 events to have a chance. Give it a go!

Pity the Hapless Instructor

Have you ever thought that club instructors were a useless lot? (Take that man's name!) Despite all you've been advised about not going it alone, but to wait for an instructor, you still return home with a rekitted model!

Well just look at it from the Instructor's point of view.

You give him a model to fly; you didn't tell him that there is just a little warp in the wings, or one wing half is twice the weight of the other. Oh, and the wheels are binding a bit and the servo output to the elevator is not central because you didn't have a strong enough pair of pliers and the wire just happened to be ½" too long - but it'll be alright, no-one will notice! Centre of gravity? There wasn't one of those in the box, but you did do a wonderful job of that last repair and stretched the covering beautifully across the gaps.

You eagerly thrust the transmitter into the hands of the Instructor and watch excitedly as in those first few seconds of flight he tries to unravel all the craftily skilled faults and attempts to trim the wayward model.

Once back under control and trimmed, it's time for you to have a go – now you can test the mettle of the instructor. First there are some ground rules that all would-be pilots have to agree to:

- don't tell the Instructor when you've become disoriented – he should know that instinctively
- don't tell the Instructor that you are about to push down on the elevator when only 10 ft above the ground – if he's any good he will have lightning fast reactions
- don't tell the Instructor, when the model is nearly out of sight, that the next turn is going to be away from you – his eyesight can stretch round the curvature of the earth
- always strive to time the above action for when the fuel is about to run out
- don't tell the Instructor that you intend to do a roll just before flaring out
- it is imperative that when all is going smoothly, you tread on the buddy lead and pull it out of the transmitter
- on a bright day always aim for the centre of the Sun
- if there is more than one model in the air, divert your attention to one of the others and try and fly it – don't tell the Instructor though that you're doing this
- when asked to add a bit of left aileron trim, start fiddling with the throttle trim
- the trim levers are beautifully crafted objects and when they need adjusting you should gaze lovingly at them for at least ten seconds

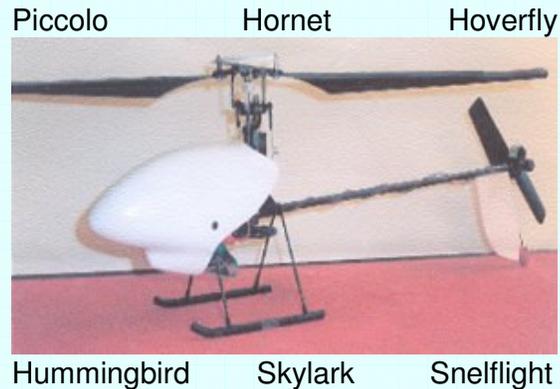
- the Instructor will hand over control to you with about half throttle, but this is no fun, try and ensure that, with each turn, you advance the throttle 1 click until once more the model is screaming round the skies
- when landing, it is best to imagine that another runway lies at 45 degrees to one the Instructor thinks you will use and turn sharply onto it – try and leave this manoeuvre to the very last second
- never blame yourself - the reasons a model doesn't respond as expected are always due to either wind, model design, the BMFA, fuel, faulty buddy lead, full moon, the price of fish or you thought the Instructor had control, it has nothing to do with what you may have done
- when the flight is nearly over, put the Instructor at ease by suddenly advancing the throttle and aiming straight at the pits

Remember all of these points, as it is your duty to pass them on secretly to the next tyro. Our Instructors will thwart your best efforts at kamikaze intentions 99% of the time, but despite what you may think, they are not infallible and, on that one hundredth occasion, you will win!!

(From 'The Wycombe Flyer', newsletter of the High Wycombe & District MAC, used with permission)

Indoor Flying

Electric Helicopter Only



Friday 6th & 20th February
7.30 - 10.30

With refreshments £2.50

The United Reform Church Hall
Boulevard Weston Super Mare

You must have BMFA insurance
You must have a frequency peg for the peg board
You must have a frequency pennant on your transmitter
Maximum of 4 models flying - this may be changed on the night
On flying safety the organisers' decisions are final

Trial meetings to test popularity

See **John Dale** for further details

Tips

It's surprising how much dirt your transmitter aerial can pick up, and all that dirt & grease can degrade the signal. It's good practice to clean the aerial regularly by wiping with methylated spirits.

Sunset Times for 2004

As you all know, flying at Wick must stop 15 mins before Sunset on any day (or 1745 on Sat & 1545 on Sun, if earlier). Here are the sunset times for this year. They are also posted on the notice board at the field.

All times are GMT except between 0100 on the last Sunday in March and 0100 on the last Sunday in October when the times are BST (1 hour in advance of GMT).

JANUARY		FEBRUARY		MARCH	
3	1616	7	1712	6	1802
10	1625	14	1724	13	1814
17	1635	21	1737	20	1825
24	1647	28	1749	27	1837
31	1659				
APRIL		MAY		JUNE	
3	1949	1	2035	5	2123
10	2000	8	2046	12	2128
17	2012	15	2057	19	2132
24	2024	22	2107	26	2132
		29	2116		
JULY		AUGUST		SEPTEMBER	
3	2130	7	2048	4	1951
10	2126	14	2035	11	1935
17	2120	21	2021	18	1919
24	2111	28	2006	25	1903
31	2100				
OCTOBER		NOVEMBER		DECEMBER	
2	1847	6	1636	4	1605
9	1831	13	1625	11	1604
16	1816	20	1617	18	1605
23	1802	27	1610	25	1608
30	1748				

Flying over the Cars

Now I did tell you last time not to fly over the cars, so come on and own up, who was this???



Events

Forthcoming events this year:

Thursday 5 th Feb 2004 8pm	Club meeting at the Ashcombe Bring & Buy
Thursday 4 th Mar 2004 8pm	Club meeting at the Ashcombe Talk on Helicopters
Thursday 1 st Apr 2004 8pm	Club meeting at the Ashcombe Guest speaker on BMFA exams
Thursday 6 th May 2004 8pm	Club meeting at the Ashcombe
Sat 22 nd & Sun 23 rd May 2004	Sandown Model Symposium

Club Meeting Venue



Email

If you currently get this newsletter by post and you would prefer to get it by email, let me know at the address below. Email recipients get their copy earlier and in full colour!

All club meetings from now on will be at the **Ashcombe** pub in Ashcombe Road WSM.

How to contact the Editor

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Thanks to **Steve O'Brien & Paul Lathall** for printing and distribution.

The Newsletter is issued (with luck!) 4 times a year, at the end of January, April, July and October. Any contributions should be sent to the editor by the middle of that month.