

From the Pits

www.wmfclub.co.uk

October 2010



Editorial

It's AGM time again. This year there are a couple of slightly contentious issues around, of which more details in this newsletter, although I'm sure it will all be sorted amicably at the AGM. It would be nice to see a healthy attendance there, so please come along to add your views.

There's yet more progress in the clubhouse and field, it's very encouraging to see steady improvements like this, surely the signs of a healthy club.

Chairman's AGM Letter

Hi all

I hope you are all well and have enjoyed another year of great flying and comradeship with your fellow members, the field and parking are looking great as is the club house although there is still some work to do there, and behind the club house is the long awaited toilet. Another successful year which has only been achieved with commitment, hard work, effort and the members' subscriptions.

As you are all aware it is the AGM on Thursday 4th November and the procedure voted in at last year's AGM has already started with the proposals being issued at the October meeting. This seems to be working as it has given a month for bench debate at the field and should eliminate the heady rush of auctioneer type voting without proper time and thought. On the down side, if you were thinking of attending the AGM with a proposal you are too late to change any rules, but this does not mean it cannot be discussed in the "any other business" part of the proceedings.

This year has also seen a flurry of new members; it is always good to see new faces and ideas.

Mike Pope
(Chairman)

Examiners

Dave Beacham is now a new club examiner for Fixed Wing and Helicopters. So we now have three active examiners, **Mike Pope** and **Paul Lathall** being the others.

Club Meetings

The club AGM will be held on November 4th at 8.00pm in the Memorial Hall Congresbury. A number of rule changes have been proposed at the October meeting, and are to be voted on at the AGM. The club fees for the coming year will be set, and the committee is up for election.



The raffle will feature two attractive prizes this time. The first is this ducted fan model worth nearly £100, and the second is a proper builders kit, a Jodel (this kit has been part started and was donated by **Neville Brownlee**). There will also be a buffet as usual.



Woodspring Wings have invited well-known and prolific modellers **Tony Nijhuis** and **Colin Hammond** to give a talk at their club meeting at 8.00pm on Thursday 18th November at the Prince of Orange, Yatton. WMFC are helping with the expenses, hence all WMFC members are welcome to attend. They have no announced subject for their talk, but BIG models are their thing!!

Field Improvements

The fence has been taken down during the summer, but may be put back up at any time if there are livestock in the other part of the field. When it's up, note that one section near to the clubhouse end is movable to get through – you don't have to walk around the lane if you land on the other side!

The clubhouse interior is nearing completion; it has been lined with plasterboard and painted and lights are installed. We only await the kitchen units which hopefully should be here as you read this or shortly afterward, and then we will have a really first-class clubhouse. Thanks are due in particular to **Steve Kittridge** for masterminding the interior work and decoration.

We now have a Portaloo toilet behind the clubhouse, for the use of ladies and for when you're really desperate if you see what I mean. It's secured by a combination padlock, the number of which has been sent to all members on email, ask someone if you don't know it. And if you do use the toilet, you must of course clean it afterwards!

Safety

When starting your engine, always go round and stand behind your plane to remove the glow-plug, don't reach across the propeller to do it, as the propeller arc may not be visible, and even if your hand is clear, any loose clothing may still be caught. It doesn't take any longer to stand up and move round!

Membership Fees - An open letter to all club members

Dear Member

It's that time of year again when thoughts turn to Halloween, fireworks, Christmas preparations and of course the AGM. And as usual there is a proposal on the table to reduce the club membership fees. It's all too easy to be seduced by these proposals on AGM night, with the little time we have to discuss them, after all when put on the spot who wouldn't agree to reduce their outgoings in these difficult times?

I hope therefore you will forgive me for laying out my concerns with the proposal in advance of the meeting. You may or may not agree with my views & that's fine, I seek only to prompt some consideration of the wider impacts on the club.

To recap, or if you haven't seen it, the proposal as I understand it is to set the membership fee at £80 for all, no concessions, to include the BMFA fee.

£ Fees	This Year			Proposal for next year		
	Club	BMFA	Total	Club	BMFA*	Total
OAP	57	29	86	51	29	80
Adult	71	29	100	51	29	80
Junior	-	15	15	65	15	80

*please note 2011 BMFA fees have yet to be confirmed

Here are my concerns;

1. If we assume the 2011 membership composition will be similar in number & Adult/OAP mix to this year and that BMFA fees remain at current rates then the proposal will mean a reduction income to the club of approx £1000p.a.
We have not yet seen the Treasurer's report confirming operating costs for this year, but if we assume a similar position to that presented last year then the proposal will mean that our operating costs are just about covered but there will be no money available for future developments.
2. If BMFA fees are increased (which is likely) then fees to the Club will be correspondingly decreased – meaning a greater reduction than the £1000 estimated above.
3. Once reduced the club fee will be very hard to increase.
4. We should not confuse our regular annual income received through the membership fee with one-offs (such as the fantastic Woodspring result) that may create a surplus in any one year, but then disappear the next.
5. Because of (3) we should not use any such one-offs/surplus to adjust the fees – rather decide what to do with it in isolation – e.g. either a 'refund' to members or as we did with the Woodspring monies, elect to invest in the club.
6. The proposal means our junior members will pay the highest fee to the club – unacceptable in my book, unfair & sends out all the wrong messages

Personally I think the current fee of £71/57pa is fantastic value for the amenities provided. It has enabled us to significantly improve and develop the club over recent years - bigger field, better quality patch, a club house, new mower, refurbished car park, toilets etc - the site now offers one of the best, if not the best powered flying facility in the area. We can all be proud of that achievement. However there is still more we can do (e.g. replacing the bridge, club house fit-out etc) which won't be possible on a reduced fee.

For individual members the savings are small - Adults 38p per week, Concessions 11p per week!! However for the club the cumulative impact is significant and detrimental.

If you want to see the current facilities maintained and the continued development of the club for the future I hope you will conclude like me that reducing the club fee is the wrong thing to do.

Finally it occurs to me that going forward it would be better to avoid this angst every year by asking the Committee (or possibly the Trustees) to set the fees on our behalf, based on a recommendation from the Treasurer. That way we could be sure that our operational costs are covered & that the longer term interests of the club are preserved but balanced with the need to keep the fees at an affordable/reasonable level. It's too late to have the club rules reflect such a change for this year's AGM but if you agree I would ask you to support such a proposal when raised for discussion at a future club meeting.

Best Regards,

A concerned Club Member
(Name supplied)

Mobile Phones

AGM and Rules who needs them? I have heard that at the October meeting a proposal was put forward, and can you believe seconded, that at the AGM we vote on lifting the BMFA's strong recommendation not to use mobile phones in the pits and on the flight line.

Is this the thin end of the wedge? I think I should be allowed to taxi my plane through the pits to the flight line and spool up my heli in the pits, and that's after having four or five pints, driving to the field at seventy miles an hour, parking by the club house and leaving my radio on full so I can hear it over my unrestrained model when testing the un-muffled engine.

Come on guys we all know of rules we may not see the purpose of but -The Air Navigation Order is a legal framework, which covers all flying activity in the UK. That means if you break it you or possibly WMFC are liable to criminal prosecution. Model Flying is exempted from most of the ANO but articles 137 & 138 (relating to recklessness, negligence and safety) still apply. In 1996 the Civil Aviation Authority published CAP 658, which although not a legal document in itself, defines procedures that could be used to evidence 'safe practice' in the event of a prosecution under these ANO articles. The BMFA safety guidelines and recommendations are largely based on CAP 658. That's why it's important that we in WMFC, as an affiliated club to the BMFA, follow as many of the recommendations as possible in the BMFA Handbook – regardless of whether or not we believe them to be 'sensible'.

Remember the rules are for everyone's safety

Signed

Grumpy old man

(Name supplied)

Mobile Phones again

Just a few lines on the current discussion regarding mobile phones in the pit area. I believe this is not a good idea as radios which are switched on for setting up etc. could be interfered with due to an increase in radio noise which is an increasing problem with the wide variety of items in use. It's not just items on the same frequency that can cause problems but adjacent power, i.e. devices operating close to the transmitter can cause problems through radiation. Google "**BMFA and mobile phones**" this will give some idea of how seriously this is regarded by various clubs. I would like to draw your attention to BMFA safety Bulletin No.6, which I will add here, it is still listed on the web site (BMFA) and I believe it must be still valid. The Members Handbook 2010 i.e. the latest issue also indicates that there is a risk (see page 29).

I think it would be unwise to ignore the recommendations of the BMFA who have access to the various experts within that field; after all we are paying subscriptions to belong to that organisation and their expertise.

USE OF MOBILE TELEPHONES IN PROXIMITY TO ELECTRONICALLY PROGRAMMED TRANSMITTERS

The JRCUC has reported there may be a problem associated with operating mobile telephones in the close proximity of programmable transmitters causing the memories to be partly or fully erased. This problem has yet to be scientifically substantiated; however, it is generally known that RF radiation can disable or permanently damage some modern electronic devices.

Although the risk may be small, we believe it should be minimised by bringing it to the attention of members and clubs. Pending resolution, we recommend that mobile telephones are not switched on within 10 feet of any programmable transmitter. This may appear to be overkill, but better safe than sorry. Care should be taken during pre-flight checks to ensure that all controls are operating fully and in their correct sense and to ensure that the memory has not been affected by any undetected or unknown transmissions since the last flight.

John Lamb

The Mid-Wick Murders

It started with a car in the ditch and a shadow on the wall of the clubhouse. The car had been there for several days, but there was no-one inside it so we assumed that the owner was away and would arrange for its recovery sometime. Likewise the shadow, or was it a damp stain, on the clubhouse wall was never spoken of, for to do so would have implied that Steve may not have used the best paint, and the fact that it looked like the imprint of a spread-eagled dwarf was surely just a trick of the light.



All this innocence ended one day when I went along to fly and found the clubhouse surrounded by police tape and police cars. The person obviously in charge asked who I was and introduced himself as Inspector Amos Kopp from Wick-St-Lawrence CID. He was a tall wiry figure with a droopy moustache, wearing a trilby hat and raincoat, which was rather peculiar given that the rest of us were in T-shirts because of the summer heat. I asked what was going on. "One of your fellow club members" he replied, "was found walled up behind the plasterboard in your clubhouse. Nasty business. Name of Archibald Boddie, know him?" "No" I replied, setting up my Kadet. I had got as far as connecting the glow plug when the Inspector's words sank in. "Wait a minute" I said, walking over to him, "the plasterboard is only an inch or so from the wall, how could someone have been behind it?" "He'd been rolled flat" replied the Inspector. "Isn't that right George?" George, the pathologist, looked up from what I had taken to be a cardboard cut-out but now saw was the victim, squashed flat and looking rather like a large ginger-bread man with arms and legs splayed out. "And he's been mown" he added, "by a large grass mower. But that's not the cause of death. He was first beaten about the head with a sharp blunt object." "A sharp blunt object?" said the Inspector, "not a blunt sharp object then?" "No" said George. "Definitely a sharp-edged blunt object. Like, for instance, a model aircraft engine. Yes, that's it." His voice started to rise with excitement as he studied the wounds. "A model engine. A four-stroke. A Saito. The 125 with the gold tops. It's a great engine, I've got one myself. You can get them from Giant Con for only..." "Yes, yes" interrupted the Inspector. "I think we get the picture. So, he was Saito'd, rolled flat, mown, superglued to a sheet of plasterboard and then nailed to the wall of the clubhouse. I think we can call that a suspicious death."

By now a dozen or so members had turned up. The Inspector turned to us. "Let's look at the evidence then. Does your club have a roller?" "Yes" I said. "And a mower?" "Yes." "Who uses it?" All heads turned in one direction. "Don't look at me" said Roger. "I only mow where I'm told to." "Well then" said the Inspector. "Think carefully. Were you at any time told to mow one of your fellow club members, particularly one who probably resembled a large pancake dressed in a waistcoat and trousers?" Roger thought for a moment. "No" he said. "I think I would have remembered that." "Well then" said the Inspector. "Someone else must have used it." There was a shocked silence as everyone digested the implication. I mean, what had happened was not



very nice, but the club rules had just been reviewed, and there was definitely nothing there which forbade superglueing club members to the clubhouse walls, but someone using the mower without Roger's permission? That was seriously out of order.

"Now then" said the Inspector, "I suggest you all take some care. We wouldn't want this to happen again."

"We could remove the ignition key" said Ron, "that would stop them." "Chain it to the floor" said Dave. "How about a new padlock for the container?" added Pete.

"I was actually thinking more of your own safety rather than that of the mower" said the Inspector. "The killer could strike again, and we do know of homicides that don't involve the use of a ride-on mower. The murderer could well be one of you." There was another long silence as everyone looked at everyone else. Then we all took a step backwards and looked at each other again. He was right of course. We realised that this was serious and we all had to watch our backs. But we decided to protect the mower anyway. The vote for new padlocks was passed unanimously.

The following week was a tense time at the club. No-one wanted to fly alone; the first two people to arrive each day would sit in their cars glancing nervously at each other until more members arrived. Even then no-one would go into the clubhouse alone except Trish who made the tea, and then everyone watched, hoping she would actually come out again, especially those who hadn't brought flasks.

The grass hadn't been cut, which didn't help anyone's mood either. The mower was safe; it had been secured by removing the ignition key, drive belt, battery and front wheels. It was shackled to the floor by three separate chains, and the container was secured by a brand-new triple-action case-hardened armoured padlock well under the steel cover where no bolt-cutters could reach. Unfortunately the keys to it had been left inside the container, so any use of the mower awaited us borrowing an oxy-acetylene torch and cutting our way in. Roger was often to be seen sitting on a pile of mower tyres, dangling the drive belt from his fingers and looking forlornly at the container. Then at the end of the day there was a scramble to leave together as no-one wanted to be the last there.

The end came a week later when I was standing in the pits as the Inspector drove up. He walked slowly over and took a seat at the bench. "I just thought I'd let you know that we've cracked the case" he said. "It was an accident." "An accident..." I repeated slowly with obvious disbelief. "Yes" he said with a triumphant smile, "It's amazing what modern forensics can tell us. It seems your Mr. Boddie, a small nervous man, arrived to fly, but finding no-one else here tried to turn his car round, missed a gear and put it in the ditch. He climbed out of the car soaking wet and went into the clubhouse looking for a way to dry off. On entering he found one of the plasterboard panels had become detached. Trying to be helpful, he carried it outside, hence making the damp stain, and put it against the container. He then opened the container to look for nails. He had to back the mower out to make room, and left the engine running. To get up to the shelf he stood on the roller and just reached the nails at full stretch. Then the roller started to move, he flailed out and dislodged the Saito and a bottle of superglue someone had left on the shelf for safe-keeping. He fell back, the Saito hit him on the head and the glue landed on his chest. The roller rolled over him and hit the mower, knocking it into gear. The mower moved forward over Mr. Boddie, mowing him and crashed into the back of the container, causing the plasterboard to fall on top of him. When other members arrived, they found the panel lying on the ground with a bag of nails beside it and put it back in place in the clubhouse, not

realising that your clubmate was superglued to the other side. So that was that. Simple really.”

“That’s quite some accident” I said. “Makes putting your fingers in the propeller look like a scratch. Still it’s a relief that there isn’t really a homicidal maniac running around after all.” “Oh yes there is one of those” said the Inspector. “We’ve found three other people walled up around the village this week.” He sighed. “I suppose I’d better go and deal with that.” He looked wistfully around at the planes lining the pits. There was a long pause. “Err, would you like a turn on the club trainer?” I asked. His face brightened immediately. “Don’t mind if I do” he said, taking the transmitter and striding briskly out onto the patch.

BMFA Western Area Examiners Workshop

12TH September 2010

Have you ever thought about the work that the BMFA puts into the achievement schemes and how the standards for the A and B tests are kept at a constant standard across the country?

The answer is that all examiners are tested by an Area Chief Examiner, but this is only any good for the time you are tested. As time passes rules and technology change and this usually means items becoming more sophisticated and safety standards altering to match (did you ever think you would be programming your receiver to set the throttle to idle in the event of signal failure, or be using 2.4 GHz ten years ago), hence the need for a get together to discuss current thinking, rules and standards.

How is this achieved?

One way is to get as many examiners together from your area as you can, throw in **Peter Spurway** the BMFA Power Scheme Controller and our Area Secretary **John Harris** and have a fairly informal but structured day at a local flying field.

The day started at 10 o’clock by being met and welcomed to the club, where we were shown to the pits and at 10.30 the day began with an introduction and aims for the day.

The Aim- to maintain the Test Standards. This was followed by the safety briefing, including frequency control, no fly zones, and general club rules all of which will be needed later. Then followed the A test with one of the examiners acting as a candidate flying an A test and being tested by one of the other examiners as would be done normally. The difference is that the pilot had been briefed by the examiner to throw in some poorly executed manoeuvres. The rest of the examiners stood approx ten paces behind them and in pairs with a test sheet with a difference in that next to the note column there was an extra column for scoring out of ten producing a total score. When the test was finished and ground checks complete we went through the test and added our comments, this produced an interesting discussion on how the test had been perceived, the scoring element helped to judge the quality of the manoeuvre and produce an overall score. The vote was unanimous; the candidate had failed and better still the examiners were in all favour of this decision and pretty much all thinking alike.

With some hard graft done it was time for lunch so over to the clubhouse for tea/coffee and a great Barbie (many thanks to our hosts)

Back to the field for one of the unscheduled bonuses to the day, there was someone who wanted to take a Heli A and Peter Spurway not only took the test but explained it in detail. Although I am a plank flyer and a fixed wing examiner I can take a Heli A and I found the test very interesting and a good insight into the expected standards for both flying and ground procedure.

Next followed the B test (flown by **Adrian Mansell** with a pattern ship powered by a YS 170) with the same format as the A test above and more discussion, the day was not going well for the candidates with yet another failure.

The second unscheduled bonus for the day was an examiner (Adrian Mansell) who had been with us all day and was going to take a C test. This started with a briefing with the examiners John Harris and Peter Spurway discussing manoeuvres and the refuelling break as this machine had an 8 oz tank which the YS 170 would drink fuel very quickly, followed by the test completed with competence and accuracy and a well deserved pass. What an end to a friendly and informative day.

Would I go again? Yes. Would I change anything, yes – I think it would be good to encourage and get ready some candidates for the day rather than examiners flying the test, this might be easier said than done as the right candidate would need to be able to stand in front of more than one examiner without the nerves getting to him, and for safety he might need to use a buddy lead.

I also think it would be great to bring along the club instructors and those wishing to become instructors, That said, the day for me achieved its aims and many thanks to the BMFA and the Thornbury Club.

Mike Pope

Advert

Hi all,

Swap or sale OS 35FP as new condition, it has only had one tank of fuel through it; check the pictures it is lovely. It is boxed with full instructions and stickers. The only reason I want to swap or sell is, I had a Irvine 53 in a gremlin, and needed that 53 for another project, so I put this brand new OS 35fp engine in the gremlin, the engine works great but I had to add 6oz of lead to the nose to compensate the weight loss, I did not like this so I took it back out to get another Irvine 53 to go back into the gremlin. You will not be disappointed with this engine. Swap for irvine 53 or sell for £45

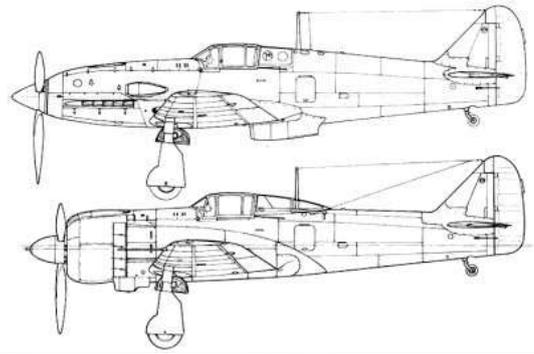
Please call **Ivan** on 01934 525990 or 07775 981677



From the Workshop

Ki-100

The wing for this is finished, so I've started on the fuselage. You may remember from previous issues that I cut all the parts for this 8 years ago but that I'm planning to change the design from the Ki-61 (top) to the Ki-100 (below), the main changes being the radial cowl and the flatter rear deck with new rear canopy.



The main floor which holds the front formers together had been cut from liteply which had warped badly over the years, so a new one was required; otherwise all the original formers were used. However the flatter rear deck meant that I had to modify the rear formers by putting inserts inside and then flattening the tops. Unfortunately something went slightly wrong with the measurements and the deck ended up too flat so I had to build them up again... Finally however it came together and the ply and hardwood stringers not only started to look like a fuselage but were remarkably straight and true as well!



The 3mm balsa sides were then glued to the ply and stringers as shown below. Not sure I've used enough clamps...



The Laser-80 has been mounted on the firewall and fits nicely such that the micro servo has a straight push to the throttle arm.

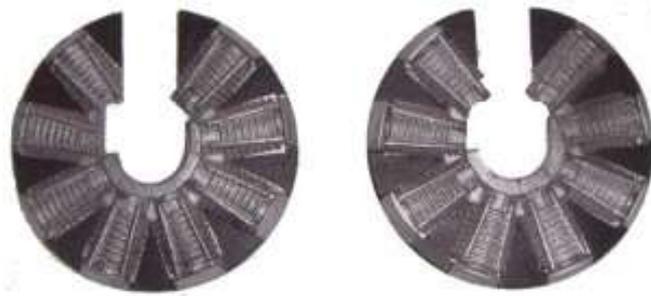
So the next major activity is making the cowl, something I've been putting off so far. More on that next time.



Beaufighter

Finally I've been trying to finish the Beaufighter. Yes I know I said it was finished some months ago, and so it was, except for a few loose ends. In particular I wasn't happy with the wiring. The BF has no fewer than 6 servos in the wing (2 aileron, 2 throttle, flaps and retract air valve). Even joining all the red and all the black wires together, it still requires 8 wires. Originally I had used a 9-pin audio plug and socket but I've never been happy that it would handle vibration. So I've ripped all that out and replaced it with Ashlok connectors (www.ashtekelectronics.com) which are similar to the normal Futaba etc. connectors but also have a locking tab and come in several widths up to 12-pin. I've used a 9-pin one here.

I also needed some way of restricting the airflow into the cowls to just around the cylinder, as the air outlet is rather small. Since I have a desktop CNC machine (of which more in future issues) I designed some simple half-cylinder shapes and cut them out of balsa, which were then stuck to a liteply disc and painted black and silver. The results are shown here, not greatly detailed but enough for a 1/10 scale model.



Seen at the Field

Dave Tremelling was first with what was supposed to be a trio of autogyros being built by club members. But so far Dave's version has proved rather tricky to handle – the photo below right is about the maximum altitude achieved so far! The most likely cause is too slow rotor speed at take-off.



Shown below is **Malcolm Bartle's** Kyosho FW190 on a low pass in the sunshine.



Events

Forthcoming events this year and next:

Date	Event
Thursday 4 th Nov 2010 8pm	Club meeting & AGM at the Memorial Hall
Thursday 18 th Nov 2010 8pm	Woodspring Wings club meeting with Tony Nihuis & Collin Hammond, at the Prince of Orange, Yatton
Thursday 2 nd Dec 2010 8pm	Club meeting at the Memorial Hall

Website

Don't forget that all previous issues of the newsletter since I started doing it (back in October 2001!) are available on the club website www.wmfclub.co.uk. I also try to keep the Gallery section reasonably current with photos taken when I'm at the field, and finally don't forget the For Sale section where you can add your own For Sale and Wanted adverts.

Club Meeting Venue



All club meetings apart from those in the summer months are normally at the **Memorial Hall**, High Street, Congresbury. If you're coming from Weston, turn right at the traffic lights, park in the pub car park immediately on your left, and the hall is just a few yards further along High St.

The summer meetings (June, July & August) are at the field at Wick St Lawrence.

How to contact the Editor

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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.