Vintage and Classic

www.vintageaircraftclub.org.uk Issue 44 Winter 2013

The Journal of the Vintage Aircraft Club

VAC Honorary President D.F.Ogilvy. OBE FRAeS				<u>Vintage & Classic</u>
VAC Committee				Winter 2013
<u>Chairman</u>	Steve Slater	01494-776831		<u>Contents</u>
		ss@kingpinmedia.co.uk	_	
Vice Chairman	Paul Loveday	01327-351556	Page	Title
Newsletter Editor &	e-mail	p.loveday@tiscali.co.uk	2	Who's Who
<u>Booking in</u>			3	Chairman's Notes
Secretary &	Sandy Fage	01327-858138	4	Members' notice
Treasurer	e-mail	sandyfage@aol.com		board
				New Members
<u>Membership</u>	John Broad e-mail	01869-324008	5	Cover pictures The Late Spring Fly-in
<u>Secretary</u> LAA Representative	e-mail	john.broad85@talktalk.net	5 7	Sunny Sackville
			8	The First Winter Ground
Flight Standards	Dave Norris	01525-261111		visits 2013
	e-mail	flying@davenorris.co.uk	10	The Genius of Wittman's
Press & Public	Alan Buckley	01908-503691		Tailwind
Relations	•	ing-aerobatics.freeserve.co.uk	12	Mew Gull Project
	e man dang ny		13	Too Cramped for comfort
<u>Turweston</u>	Graham Churchi		14	AGM and Gathering Bicester
<u>Liaison</u>	e-mail	via sandyfage@aol.com	15	Winter Warmers - Three
Ground Visits	Steve Slater	as above	15	Great Member Visits
<u>Co-ordinator</u>	Steve Slater		16	VAC Trophies
			18	All Hallows
Flying Events	To be allocated	for overall control by event	19	Airworthiness Alert
<u>Co-ordinator.</u>			20	Transcontinental Air Mail
<u>Webmaster</u>	Gary Loveday	07530-217783	22	Route
	,,		22 24	Flugwerft Schleissheim Bigfield Airstrip
VAC Sales	Abigail Reynolds	s 07776 136423	24 26	Gustav Weisskopf
Trophics Starrard	Dob Stobo	01002 001220	28 28	Book Review - The
Trophies Steward	Rob Stobo e-mail	01993-891226 robstobo@stonesfield.f9.co.uk		Monospar
	C mun		29	Fly - In Arrival
Type Club Liaison	Peter Wright			From the Hangar Troll
	wright@wpeter575.orangehome.co.uk		30	May Evening

The aim of the Vintage Aircraft Club is to provide a focal body for owners, pilots and enthusiasts of vintage and classic light aircraft by arranging fly-ins and other events for the benefit of its members.

The Vintage Aircraft Club is affiliated to the Light Aircraft Association and supports the General Aviation Awareness Council.

Vintage and Classic is the quarterly newsletter of the Vintage Aircraft Club and as such is a privately produced magazine. The views contained within its pages do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor or the Vintage Aircraft Club. The magazine is free to members, but £5.00 when purchased separately.

Chairman's Notes

A couple of very different recent events really showed the Vintage Aircraft Club at its very best. As autumn sunshine graced the Sackville Farm fly in and barbeque, we savoured the sight of a wonderful selection of aeroplanes and an equally diverse selection of members. It was, as one member commented, "just what we join the VAC for." Here's hoping you can join us for that keynote event, at which I am delighted that Alan Chalkley (aka John Beeswax if you read his excellent Over the Hedge column in the LAA magazine) will be our special guest. As Alan was one of the club's original founding committee members, I cannot think of a better guest of honour.



Then a few weeks later our first winter ground visit of the year took us to the Underwood's wood working workshop at Eaton Bray for a fascinating afternoon – and for those that wound up in the White Horse thereafter – a great evening too!

I am delighted to say that we are aiming for more of the same in the New Year. 2014 of course marks the 50th Anniversary of the Vintage Aircraft Club and I hope that we can celebrate in style. Our events of course will be at the core of that. Inside this issue of Vintage and Classic, you will find information on our Annual Dinner, which will be held in March at the Littlebury Hotel in Bicester, which has almost entered club tradition in its own right as a spiritual (and I don't mean their whisky!) home. You will notice too that there has been a subtle change to our early 2014 events calendar. Instead of the early season "Snowball" and "Valentines" flyins, we will instead be hosting social events – effectively pub meets, respectively in the Aviator at Sywell and the West London Aero Club at White Waltham.

Of course, both these locations are on airfields, therefore if weather conditions allow, many members may still opt to arrive by air. We will also hope to have some other interesting activities for those who arrive by road or air.

Our first official fly in of the season is therefore the Spring Fly In at Turweston on 23rd March and hopefully we can match the 2012 turnout when around 80 aircraft enjoyed the spring sunshine – rather than 2013 when unseasonable blizzards meant none!

We had until recently hoped that we would also celebrate our 50th Birthday with а summer fly in and commemoration event at Turweston. However a decision to use the area we have traditionally used for event aircraft parking for a crop of wheat has unfortunately meant that the airfield cannot accommodate expected numbers.

We are currently working though, on plans for a super birthday event at what I hope will be a very popular location elsewhere. Sadly I cannot yet let you into the secret, but rest assured, we are hoping that next summer we can celebrate our halfcentury with an event you will not want to miss!

Meanwhile we, as you will see from our AGM report, have had to make some fairly important decisions about our future relationship with the Light Aircraft Association. For many years we have been regarded as a member organisation or strut, running our events under their umbrella and with the benefit of their third party insurance cover.

Major constitutional changes within the LAA have meant our constitution and structure no longer meets their Member Club requirements. We, along with a number of vintage type clubs, have therefore elected therefore to relinguish this status. I hope that we will be able to maintain a positive relationship with the LAA as an Associate organisation. In addition we are working more closely with the other clubs to develop a type club alliance, offering a social umbrella and sharing mutual events. Here's to seeing plenty of new faces (and aeroplanes) at VAC events in the future!

HAPPY LANDINGS!

Steve

MEMBERS NOTICES

Book Offer

And rew Porter the author of the book Transatlantic Betrayal reviewed in this magazine has offered members and readers of the magazine the opportunity to purchase a signed copy for ± 14.00 including post and packing. If anyone would like to take advantage of the offer they can contact him through his strateghist.co.uk email address, payment can be made with cheque, postal order or debit card.

Role Changes

ollowing the Annual General Meeting there have been some changes of roles within the clubs' committee. These changes can be found on the inside cover of this issue.

Ground Visits

reparations are in hand for a series of visits to various aviation related places during 2014. These include The British Airways Heritage Centre, Croydon Airport, and RAF Halton. For full details and requirements please see page 15of this issue.

2014 Opening Events

Those attending the Snowball at Sywell are invited to meet up at the Aviator restaurant, and at the Valentine at White Waltham in the bar/restaurant. For those wishing to fly in normal landing fees will apply. As a result of a request from an airfield operator for our events we are extending the use of the pre-notification forms in order that the host airfield can assess catering needs.

<u>Wanted</u>

ans U. Gautschi of Switzerland is looking for a JAP J-99 engine, which is rebuildable. Does any member have any knowledge of such an item, if so please contact <u>www.aeroplaneworks.ch</u>

New Members.

We welcome the following new members to the Vintage Aircraft Club.

M. AubreyKingtonM. BarkerKirk LangleyG. KennerleyWrexhamP. MilnerRedhillRoy NerouStychburyAlan PalmerStratford-on-AvonNigel StokesBath

Front Cover :- Stinson 108-3 Voyager at the September Fly-in, Turweston

Rear Cover :- Fieseler Storch at the Sackville Farm Members BBQ - Paul Morton

The Late Spring Fly-In

As we all know the early events of the year were hit by the atrocious weather, the irony being that the Snowball Rally was cancelled because of too much of the white stuff. The other two events suffering in the same way.

Following discussion with David Owen and his highly efficient PA Tanya Coles we were able to hold 'The Late Spring Fly-In' at Turweston on Sunday 8th September. It was to turn out to be an exceptionally good event with a varied selection of over 40 aircraft attending. It also saw the opportunity to note the first visits to club events by some of our new members.





The Victa Airtourer is always a welcome sight and on this occasion we had three of the type visiting. The arrival of one was somewhat delayed as he had to retrieve his aeroplane from the back of its hangar and put them all back before leaving.

A late visitor on the day was the newly restored Stinson 108-3 Voyager of Matthew Colebrook. This splendid aircraft was the winner of the John Randall Trophy for best Vintage aircraft at the LAA Rally is the subject of our cover picture.

The first arrival of the day was at 08.40, and it was fitting that it was a VAC member. This was the 1933 DH.82A Tiger Moth of Jonathan Turnbull who was en-route to Belvoir Castle.

Various other arrivals included the Chairman in his now fully airworthy Tipsy Trainer, which enabled the pairing of this aircraft with the Tipsy Belfair of David Beale, something which does not happen very often.

The arrivals of Peter Johnson and his wife in his DH 87B Hornet Moth along with Mark Miller in his and Ron and Val Gammons in their DH.85 Leopard Moth gave another classic line-up.





Along with other clubs we have been finding it difficult to recruit young people to become involved in vintage aviation. I am pleased to relate that at this event we had two young people come forward to learn about marshalling and the aircraft. So we welcomed Harry England, Michael Miklos who both enjoyed their day and we should see them again soon.

All things taken into consideration the day was a great success and the club's thanks got to David and his staff for allowing the day to be arranged at

Another type making a welcome appearance at our events is the Great Lakes 2T-1A Sport Trainer of David Graham. This aircraft also the subject of fairly recent restoration was like the Stinson an example of excellent workmanship.

There were also a pair of RAF Trainer aircraft with a great number of years between the two, the much more recent SAL Bulldog of Robb Metcalfe from its base at Goodwood, and the Miles M.14A Hawk Trainer 3 of Peter Holloway from its base at Shuttleworth.





fairly short notice. There will hopefully be at least two VAC events at Turweston next year plus a joint event with the airfield which will help celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the club.

Report and Photographs

Paul Loveday

Many of you will be familiar with the Beagle Terrier of Trevor Jarvis. He has recently acquired a further vintage and classic type, a Taylor JT.2 Titch. This aircraft is based along with his Terrier at Hinton-in-the-Hedges. I did hear it referred to as the 'Custard Bomber' Usually these aircraft have a bubble canopy but as you can see the one fitted to this aircraft is different.



SUNNY SACKVILLE PACKS THEM IN

t probably isn't absolutely the biggest turnout that we have seen at Tim Wilkinson's lovely grass airfield near Bedford, but this year's Member's -Only Fly In and Barbeque was certainly one of the best attended in recent years. A quick check of the signing-on sheets shows more than 40 visiting aircraft and a quick headcount of the queue for the barbeque, the best part of 70 hungry guests. A big thank you to all, especially Tim and Angie Wilkinson, and Sam at Sackville Farm, for catering for the hungry hordes! The event is in so many ways the VAC at its very best. A grass strip, a friendly informal atmosphere, lots of time for 'chopsing' and admiring some lovely aeroplanes.



Another ever welcome arrival was Jez Cooke in Richard Seeley's Miles Whitney Straight G-AERV, creating an



Prime among them had to be the everimpressive Fieseler F-156 Storch, brought across from Old Warden by Peter Holloway and Jean Munn. The big German observation aircraft impressed both on the ground and in the air, as both Peter and Jean alternated scoffing beefburgers with giving one or two lucky VAC members the chance to get aloft in the beast.

John Broad was rewarded for his early start to help set up and man the signing-on with a passenger experience that seemed on occasion to come close to the hover. Meanwhile Peter ensured that Cathy Silk and Veronica Tanner, who had come in by road pending the return to flight of Tiger Moth G-AVPJ, were able to get airborne too. area of art-deco ambience with Tipsy Trainer G-AISA and the impressive "Gull Wing" Stinson, G-BUCH, flown in by Nigel Knighton from White Waltham. In addition both the UK's airworthy Stinson 108s were in attendance with Nigel Colebrook bringing G-STSN up from Popham and George Cormick arriving from Lee on Solent in G-WAGN. A surfeit of Stinsons indeed!

de Havilland types were well represented by Tiger Moths, including Jonathan Turnbull in G-ACDA, which in 1932 was the very first DH-82A to be built. Adding to de Havilland variety were DH87B Hornet Moths of Peter Johnson and Mark Miller, while Wendy Hinchcliffe and Chris Rees popped in from Winwick in Chris's ex-Portugese Air Force Chipmunk.

In addition there were Aeroncas, Austers, Beagle, Cessnas, Jodels, Pipers and Robins aplenty and after some low scud broke up in the morning sun, the later weather conditions were described by one departing pilot as "solid VFR". As Wallace might say. "A cracking day out Grommit!"

Steve Slater



The First of the Winter Season Ground Visits 2013

The first of the winter season ground visits took place on Saturday 2nd November, primarily to visit the vintage glider restoration workshop of Peter and David Underwood. The brief from our Chairman was to meet at Peter's house at 2pm for a 2:30pm start but after turning onto his road in a fairly remote Bedfordshire village I was confronted by a number of VAC members interrogating their GPS systems and the local populous as to the whereabouts of Number 68. We then continued towards the outskirts of the village as a small convoy until the number on the gate coincided with the brief, the correct location being confirmed by the presence - in the middle of the front lawn - of Arthur Mason's Tangerine Dream Machine; his beautiful bright orange Morgan.





By 2:30 most of those expected had already congregated in Peter's kitchen ready to take the autumnal stroll along the well-trodden path to the garden workshop. We were ushered into his Tardis-like building that was home to the bare skeletons of at least three vintage wooden gliders either awaiting, or currently receiving, restorative care and attention.

Peter and his son David guided us through the rebuild process of the 1935 Prototype Kirby Kite, which was the focus of their work at this time. original airframe had been The purchased mainly as a source for the many metal components, and apart from the odd bulkhead and wing component, the rest of the aircraft was built from scratch around them. Peter had just about completed the woodwork of the wings at the time of our visit, almost ready to be covered and clear doped. The fuselage had most of its plywood covering completed, pretty much a new build from the keel up. Because the finished airframe was not going to be painted but clear varnished, particular attention had to be taken with glue joints and the type of glue to be used in areas that would be visible after assembly; no dark glue joints, runs or filler on show here. Also, the areas inside the ply skin not accessible after completion all had to be varnished for protection prior to gluing in place. The nose cone will be a challenging task for the pair as there are numerous double curvature ply sections all coming together for gluing onto an original Kite nose block about the size of your fist.

Against the end wall of the workshop rested the open fuselage - if it can be called that - of another project, a Hawkridge Dagling, originally built by Hawkridge's of Dunstable in 1947. The uncovered wings of this and others had their temporary homes amongst the roof timbers of the workshop, waiting patiently to once more return to the beckoning sky. Looking around, it soon became obvious that this was more than just a restoration workshop, with many items of aeronautical memorabilia displayed on the walls, tucked away under workbenches or hiding at the back of shelves or inside cupboards.



We were treated to viewing such delights as the massive propeller from a Shorts Singapore, instruments from wartime Messerschmitts, wing ribs, one of which was complete with rib stitching and from a 1918-vintage Airco DH.10. There was part of a wing section from a Sunderland flying boat, a tube spar from a Fairey Swordfish, a propeller root and spinner section from a 1920's Gloster Grebe, the construction of which elicited a good deal of comment from our members. There was even a new-old-stock gas release lever from an R101 airship should you ever need one and, rather oddly, an all-over gas mask for a baby. A cautionary note here, when "searching online" for a picture of a Shorts Singapore as I did, expecting to be able to show those assembled some photos of the machine; shorts you will certainly get and the young lady might possibly have even been from Singapore - wouldn't have been allowed in the Raffles Long Bar in my day!

Also hanging on the workshop walls were various framed artefacts, including pieces of fabric cut as trophies from shot-down WW1 aircraft and others depicting the lozenge camouflage schemes of the day. Most of these items had been collected by David over the years, whether purchased at sales or discovered by him during digs at crash sites in the UK and abroad. On top of all this, David spends his working day as a Master Thatcher so his father does a lot of the restoration work.

Peter, now retired, has always had an interest in aeronautical engineering, flying and gliding; learning to fly on Tiger Moths at Luton at the age of nineteen. In 1943 he trained as an Aircraft Engineer at Aeronautical College in London but with the end of the War and most of the jobs going to the demobbed military personnel, he started a career-long association with the motor industry, initially working as a design engineer for the company that was to become ACDelco. Peter moved-on English to Racing Automobiles (ERA) as a design engineer until the early 'fifties before working for GM Vauxhall as a Design Draughtsman, gliding whenever he could at Bicester during the 1960's. Still with Vauxhall's he went on to run the High Speed Crash Sled Team at the Millbrook Proving Ground, before finally taking redundancy and early retirement.

Now with more time to spend on what he really enjoyed most, the father and son team began their first restoration project, a Grunau Baby III. Many other restorations and repairs have followed, including the woodwork of the stubwings from the Russavia Dragon Rapide damaged after a swing on takeoff at Duxford in 1987. David is already conscious of the fact that one day he will no longer be able to work under the signature of his father and this will be a sad day not only for him but also for the vintage gliding fraternity.

In keeping with the VAC theme, David also has a Luton Minor under restoration. Stored along with its VW engine in a glider box further up the garden, he works on this when he has a spare moment but is open to sensible and serious offers for the work he has completed to date. He also told us that other garden sheds contained not only more aircraft memorabilia but also several British motorcycles - what a busy man. Having exhausted the treasure trove that is Peter's back garden we set off for the short drive to the London Gliding Club (LGC) located at the foot of the Dunstable Downs.

The LGC was formed in 1930 using the lvinghoe Beacon as one of its first launch sites but moved to its present home at the foot of the Dunstable Downs shortly afterwards. In 1935 the Club's wooden hangars were replaced by a building designed by one of its members, the renowned architect Kit Nicholson. It was this art-deco style building that we had come to visit; the base of it built as hangarage for gliders and above it was the Clubhouse. Unfortunately for the by now windswept and thirsty group of VAC members, the bar was not yet open as the LGC had another event still in progress, so reverting to the prebriefed "Plan B", David led the convoy back to his village pub. The 18th Century white-painted White Horse Inn quickly took care of our needs, which were, in the main, warmth and liquid refreshment. We had left Peter Underwood back at his workshop but David continued to host us for the remainder of the afternoon so this was our opportunity to repay his hospitality. A perfect way to end a perfect afternoon and the first VAC winter ground visit of 2013.

Trevor Jarvis

The Genius of Wittman's Tailwind

S teve Wittman - racing ace from 1926 to 1984 - was never great with names. He told Tom Poberezny (founder of the then newly-formed EAA) that he called his new utility design "the Magic Carpet" because it was like having a permanent tailwind. "Now *there's* a better name, then:" came the response. "The Wittman Tailwind".

Designed in the early 1950s as a fast two-seater reputedly for his wife to carry the spares while he flew the racer with a cruising prop to race meetings, the Tailwind W8 - first designed for the Continental C80 eventually morphed into the W10 powered by engines that were bigger - much bigger - than the 100hp it started with. There are more than a few around powered by the Lycoming IO-360. These rocket-ships cruise around the 200mph mark, and with probably well over fourhundred completed world-wide the Tailwind must rank as one of the most successful and reliable types ever designed for amateur construction.

my hat off to anyone who can do both. (One builder in the USA is currently building his thirteenth!). to climb in a thermal or wave-bar. That's a great opportunity to keep on top of the navigation. The motor



G-ZIPY - Lycoming 0-235 -

I came to power flying after around forty years as a glider pilot. I thought I knew about flying, but ZIPY was a revelation. I had always believed you only went solo once, but when my instructor climbed out after my



Taking off from the hard at Spanhoe. Photo by Lars Kornstadt

Bear in mind that these are built from plans, starting with a pile of wood, steel tube, and aluminium sheet. With no pre-cut parts, prepunched sheets, or off-the-shelf components, it takes real dedication to build one from start to finish. That's why I bought G-ZIPY from its second owner. Mere mortals either build them or fly them. I take conversion flights and left me on my own, I confess I did ask myself if I really wanted to do this. It's not difficult, you understand, but compared to anything else I had flown, everything happened so fast. Flying cross-country in a sailplane, you might fly at more than a hundred knots from time to time, but it's usual to stop now and again gliders and Supermunks were a modest change of perspective, but at two-and-a-half miles a minute - or three, if you're going down-wind, ZIPY is something else. At that speed navigation needs prior planning and no little concentration, but what a great way to travel. A flapless approach with two on board required as part of the type conversion - needs something approaching 100mph on the clock. It seemed to impress the spectators: one of my tug-pilot friends couldn't help pointing out that an approach at that speed was faster than that of a Spitfire. Hmmm!

Thankfully, with two or three notches of flap it's only around ten mph faster than the Robin at roundout, and with practice, landing needn't take more than 350 yards or so.

A cruise speed of 150mph certainly gets you places fast, and the fuel consumption of around 30mpg compares favourably with any hot sports car.

My first solo cross-country was to the Isle of Man TT Races to meet the friends of my now distant youth. Straight from Husbands Bosworth to Caernarfon to fill up before the sea crossing, passing above the shattered rocky wastes of Snowdonia in a cloudless sky was a great start. Then climbing hard north-bound for the IoM, leaving the north coast of Anglesey at 8000 feet. I was only out of range of land for ten minutes, before the run into the still distant Magic Isle with 160mph on the clock. Very confidence-inspiring.

Coming home was rather different: Leaving the island you are over water more or less immediately. Sadly, I was also bucking a 25kt headwind bang on the nose, so gritted my teeth and settled down at 3000 feet to wait for the Welsh coast to hove into view, as it did eventually. In the Tailwind, you're covering the ground (or water) at more than 100mph whatever the wind. What a great way to travel.

The structure is a mixture of wood, welded steel tube, and fabric. The ply -skinned wood wings of traditional structure are, with their short span and all of 90 square feet, very stiff and strong. These have clearly emerged from the many years of Steve Wittman's racer development. The same wing you see on G-ZIPY can be seen in a 1959 photograph of Steve's W9L development model powered by a Lycoming 0-320 with VP prop giving a 190mph cruise. A new tail eventually turned the W9 into the W10, the fuselage designed to carry heavier engines, but still with those W8 wings.



0-320 powered Tailwind W10 *N6168X* cruising at close on 200mph. Photo by its builder, Jim Clement, flying another of the stream of Tailwinds coming from his workshop.

Tailwind designs. The demands from builders for bigger and faster versions led to the structure changing frequently in the first few years, while the constant aim of increasing the strength of key components to cope with steady increases in performance, while shaving ounces off the over-all weight, was a key driver. The main issues in the early years were the sizes and gauges of the tubes used to build the fuselage and carry the wings. Steve also experimented constantly with wingtips, and tested his designs by modifying just one wing and seeing how it affected the performance. By the 1980s just about all of these



Big engines in the same structure appropriately beefed up became a feature of the early years. This W9L was photographed flashing past at around 200mph for the benefit of an article in Science & Mechanics magazine Dec 1959

standard feature of the more powerful W10s, although the wing area remains the same as the W8. A short love-affair with a tricycle undercarriage was soon discarded, returning to the very simple tapered spring-steel affair arranged as a taildragger. That same undercarriage was later adopted by Vans for the RVs.

The Tailwind - with an active following world-wide, and both W8s and W10s still being built on at least three continents as I write - must count as one of the iconic home-built aircraft of all time. Anyone who doubts this claim might reflect on Red Hamilton's IO-310 powered W10 taking the Grand Champion Trophy at the Wenachee Air Races with a race average - flown two-up - of 231.94mph, blowing away the competition from RVs, Rutans and the like, powered by the same engine.

Steve Wittman's genius lives on.

Keith Nurcombe

Not surprisingly, Steve couldn't help constantly developing his original

issues had been resolved and the angular wing tips had become a

Mew Gull Reproduction Project.



hen I acquired the drawings and a few components for my Percival Mew Gull the major item included In the purchase was a Gipsy Queen 1 engine. At that point I knew little detail about DH engines other than there were various marks of inverted and earlier upright fours referred to as Majors and Six cylinder engines know as Queens or Sixes with more variants than I can hope to remember. Well luck was on my side as I could have easily have purchased a completely inappropriate engine but more importantly the engine changed my whole approach to the project from what was originally planned to be a visual facsimile to a reproduction that replicates as exactly as I could an E2H Percival Mew Gull.

But first a little bit of background to my thoughts and how I came to produce G-HEKL to replicate G-AEKL as it was raced in 1937. The first problem I faced, be it facsimile or reproduction was which Mew Gull and at what point in time. The E3H of Edgar Percival was quickly dismissed as a non-runner, despite being the most advanced, fastest and beautiful of the Mews, as very little detail existed as to what modifications Percival's did between it and the four production E2 machines. The changes like reducing wing span by 2ft, reputed changes to aerofoil section etc. would have required a ground up re-stressing exercise to satisfy the LAA. Francis Donaldson, chief Engineer at the LAA,

was happy to approve a second replica/reproduction Mew Gull (as he considers so little of G-AEXF was original) provided I could prove by drawings, measurements, photos, etc. that what I built were the same as XF or as per the originally Percival built. Thankfully I acquired copies of the Tom Storey, Brian Mann, Martin Barraclough major structural drawings as part of the project which were sufficient to build the basic airframe (nothing on the Mew is basic it is a very complex structure) and were taken from the various revarious subsequent re-builds to get things to fit as they should. At least the "basic" airframe was as per the originals and the airworthy G-AEXF and the details as per the original Percival E2Hs.

So what form to build? I certainly did not want to copy the Cape configuration, nor replicate G-AEXF in one of its various versions. The E 1 was ugly and the first early E2 build by Percivals G-ACND did not look quite right and anyway most of its life was spend with non DH engines fitted, but could have been a fall back option if my engine turned out to be junk. This left the two other E2(H) production aircraft build for the Schlessinger Cape race in 1936. Of G-AEKL was the first these, commercial product used by Percival to tweak the design and so I decided this had to be the one to replicate and capture the details from the period. Unfortunately the aircraft had a rather strange black and white colour scheme as entered for the Schlessinger race, as well as extra fuel tanks and I felt a little uneasy about replicating it as it was when



builds of G-AEXF, the Henshaw machine, and a wealth of sketches and photos used by Hawker Restorations in the building of the Mew Gull for Hendon. These in themselves were not sufficient to build a complete plane, as I later found out, and much re-work and adjustments to details had to be made as a result of much research into archive materials, unpicking of the Henshaw/Cross modifications and the changes introduced at Tom Campbell-Black was killed in it. So after much research and with a large number of photos and technical articles available from the period I opted to make the reproduction as near as I could to how it was when Charles Gardner won the 1937 Kings cup race, in which 3 Mew Gulls competed.

David Beale

To be continued in the next issue.

Too Cramped For Comfort

he definitive 1930s air racer, the Percival Mew Gull has been grabbing the headlines again in recent months, with the first flight of David Beale's spectacular reproduction of the 1937 Kings Cup-winning G-AEXL acquisition by and the the Shuttleworth Collection the of legendary Alex Henshaw London-Capetown record-breaking aircraft, G-AFXF.

David Beale is giving us some great insights into his project in this magazine and next. Meanwhile the latter aeroplane also has strong club connections. It was owned and (twice) rebuilt by Honorary Member Desmond Penrose - here's hoping we can get him to recount his experiences in a future magazine.

What is less well known is that our Club President, David Ogilvy is one of the few who flew G-AEXF before its various restorations, in its original specification, as Henshaw flew it to Capetown and back. Here's David's view:....

World War II came and all was quiet on the Mew Front. 'XF had been bought by a Frenchman and remained stored at Lyons throughout the heat of the hostilities. With peace and the re-awakening of sport flying, Hugh Scrope achieved a long-standing ambition to own and fly a Mew Gull: in 1950 he bought 'XF, which was given as much a check as was necessary prior to the ferry flight, and flew it home.

This was some feat, for he was a relatively inexperienced pilot with most of his time on Austers, but he was not daunted and it was during Hugh's ownership that I had my chance. He asked me if I would fly it around the area so he could see what his pride and joy looked like in the air. Clearly I had a duty to oblige!

We were at White Waltham, where the Mew and Dug Bianchi, who maintained it, were based. This was a fine familiarisation ground, for a large all-grass field with possible approaches in all directions removed many problems that might otherwise exist.

My immediate reaction (and David isn't huge -Ed) was that the cockpit was too small. The Mew's low-canopy configuration had no forward view, so Hugh Scrope offered to come with me as a wing-walker until I was well into the open field. The six-cylinder engine sounded slightly lumpy and caused a fair measure of airframe vibration; the hinged canopy in particular, shook and flexed during the ground roll. The throttle, however, was responsive and the small spade grip, though lower than I would choose (as on a Proctor) was wholly adequate to the task. Apart from its occupant the enormous P-type compass was the largest item in the cockpit.

The only unusual pre-takeoff action, other than to weave energetically to check that a clear path lay ahead, concerned the propeller control, which was a large lever on the righthand side of the cockpit, just below the panel. It offered just two stops, *fine* or *coarse*, with a blade difference of 11 degrees between the two settings. With fine selected, we were ready to go.

a 👗 marked swing 1 expected to the right, but probably overanticipated, as it has not stuck out as something to remember. 'XF unstuck, clean, at about 90 mph IAS and I think the climb figure was about 140. In this condition a constantly curved flight path seemed sensible, with eyes firmly glued in the direction of turn, I recollect quite clearly that the ailerons were initially disappointing, not only in lack of response but due to static friction, which no doubt could have been cured.

Once on the level at about 1,500 feet I tried the propeller control. I had been accustomed to fixed and variable pitch propellers, but this was my first taste of a two-pitch system. The lever was stiff, but went into its new home with a positive clunk, to the tune of a similarly abrupt drop of about 250 rpm – it worked.

I am convinced that 'XF was not at its very best at the time. Flat-out on the level I could not do better than 192 mph (indicated) and even at that speed the ailerons were not as lively or positive as I had expected. Perhaps I had spoiled myself in anticipation of really great things, but lowish cloud prevented a more thorough investigation.

The descent was interesting. With fine pitch and a trickle of power, the engine burbled and spat through its short stub exhausts. I selected a long, clear, ground path into wind, but as I began to line up for an approach, a taxying Tipsy B disappeared under my nose, so I threw everything away and tried again.

This time I was luckier. Hugh Scrope had advised me to retain 110 IAS on the way round the final turn, so I did just that. The tiny trailing edge flaps were not particularly effective, but I had plenty of airfield ahead so this was only a minor worry. I was advised to reduce to not less than 95 over the hedge, but I cannot confirm or deny a precise figure. What I can remember, though, is a the total lack of view for the last 100 yards and throughout the hold-off and landing run, The tailskid dug well into the ground and no doubt helped reduce any swinging tendency.

When I switched off after a walkerassisted taxy back to the West London Aero Club, I felt very content, but mildly dazed. I cannot imagine how anyone could have considered flying to Capetown and back in G-AEXF, but one short flight is unfair to use as a total yardstick. Clearly someone with plenty of experience on the type could provide a far more valuable assessment than I can muster, but to fly a Mew Gull in 1950, or at any other time, was a rare experience, and one that I shall never wholly forget. I was 21 at the time and the Mew made its mark!

David Ogilvy

AGM AND GATHERING. BICESTER.

nitial blustery winds and a series of weather fronts to the north, south and east of Bicester meant that the numbers of flying visitors were reduced at this year's AGM. However the prospect of a look around the renovation work in progress by the airfield's new owners, the excellent "Bicester Buffet" lunch (many thanks to Maria Mitchell and Windrushers Gliding Club), plus a steady improvement in conditions, meant that we were able to welcome a healthy turnout of around 30 members and a reasonable line up of aeroplanes, at what was once a traditionally lightly attended event.

I can (and did) report in summary that thanks to Sandy's continued diligence and VERY hard work, our finances remain healthy, despite the recent economic downturn having kept membership numbers lower than we'd like. You might remember that last year, largely due to the recession and a drop in flying activity right across aviation, we saw membership numbers fall by ten percent.

This year we have seen these numbers stabilise at 253 members and Sandy's careful control of expenditure has maintained our bank



I was determined that we get through the (albeit important) business of the AGM as promptly as possible and we duly elected and reelected our officials with all possible pace. Of note is that John Broad is taking over the role of membership secretary from Carol Loveday, who is standing down after almost a decade of hard work. A big thank you is due to Carol for all her efforts and I am sure we will still see her at events as Paul Loveday has agreed to stay on for another year as Vice-Chairman!

Unfortunately I rushed though the Agenda so fast that I forgot to allow Sandy Fage to present her full report on the accounts. Many apologies Sandy! balance at around the same levels as in 2011 and 2012. I hope next year we can celebrate the Club's 50th Anniversary by attracting more new members – perhaps you can help by recruiting new flying friends or by inviting them to our Anniversary Year events. Let's see whether we can celebrate that half century by adding 50 new members and getting our member numbers back past the 300 mark!

The other serious item was the discussion of our future relationship with the Light Aircraft Association, the LAA. For many years we have been regarded as a member organisation or strut, running our events under their umbrella and with

the benefit of their third party insurance cover.

As we discussed last year, major constitutional changes within the LAA mean that we have to review this position. If we wished to maintain Member Club status, we would have to fundamentally change our constitution, adopt a totally new set of club rules and abandon our Limited Company status.

As a result of the discussions at the AGM, I was given a clear mandate to inform the LAA that while we remain keen to maintain a positive relationship as an Associate Member, we are not prepared to change our constitution and structure to meet Member Club requirements. There was also a clear enthusiasm from our members for us to work with vintage type clubs such as Vintage Pipers, Aeroncas, Luscombes, Pietenpols and Austers to develop a type club alliance, offering a social umbrella and sharing mutual events. I am delighted that Peter Wright has agreed to join the VAC Committee, in a dedicated 'Clubs liaison' role to move this forward.

Business completed, we were delighted to welcome as our lunch guests, Charlie Morgan and Andrew Ferguson of airfield owners Bicester Heritage and their associated company, Historit Limited. Their passionate and well-informed briefing on the past history and future plan for Bicester Airfield left little doubt that the airfield is in sympathetic hands and was followed by a walk-though of the previously inaccessible 'technical site' where original 1930s hangars, workshops, even air raid shelters are being renovated after decades of neglect by the Ministry of Defence.

The tour eventually took us to the "Halifax Hangar", so named because in 1940, the prototype Handley Page bomber was secretly assembled there ahead of its first flight. The hangar is shortly to receive its first aircraft for long-term storage and is



already home to a number of very rare and valuable historic cars, stored and maintained on behalf of their owners by Historit Limited. A look under some of the dustsheets at a small proportion of the assembled exotica was another hint that Bicester, as well as the Vintage Aircraft Club, can look forward to an exciting 2014!

Steve Slater

WINTER WARMERS – THREE GREAT MEMBER VISITS!

A fter the clear success of our visit to the woodworking workshops (and much more) of Peter and David Underwood, we are delighted we are keeping things moving during the winter months with three more very special 'behind the scenes' visits. There will of necessity be limits on numbers for each visit, so first come, first served!

RAF HALTON. THURSDAY 19th DECEMBER

The Trenchard Museum at RAF Halton, near Aylesbury, Bucks is adjacent to the main parade ground of Halton Camp, contains a number of interesting aircraft and other artefacts, showing the history of Halton's role as a training base and of course the work of the "Halton Brats"; generations of apprentices who trained in the workshops.

Please note, unless you have special MoD contacts, flying into Halton airfield is not available. We will therefore meet at the station guardroom/main entrance at 10am for the visit to start at 10.30am, and subsequently will treat our host, curator Francis Handford, to lunch in a nearby hostelry!

As the camp remains an active RAF base, all those wishing to join us should send names, addresses and the details of the vehicle in which you intend to arrive to Steve Slater *(ss@kingpinmedia.co.uk or SMS to 07967 381884)* by Thursday 12th December please.

BRITISH AIRWAYS HERITAGE CENTRE, HEATHROW. WEDNESDAY 15TH JANUARY

The British Airways Heritage collection has existed since the formation of British Airways. It was formed to preserve the records and artefacts of its predecessor companies BOAC, BEA, BSAA and the pre-war Imperial Airways and British Airways Ltd Our visit on 15th January will give us a unique chance to look at the collection, which includes models, photographs, posters and uniforms. Our visit will commence at 11am and we will then be able to enjoy a late lunch in the cafeteria in the main hall of the giant headquarters building.

Once again, for security reasons, names will need to be provided in advance for passes to be prepared. If you are interested in attending, please contact Steve Slater by Wednesday 8th January at the very latest.

CROYDON AIRPORT. SUNDAY 2nd FEBRUARY.

With big thanks to Frankie Spray, our recent host at Wellesbourne, she has arranged that the Croydon Airport Society invite us to visit the stunning art-deco terminal and control tower, at London's former main airport. We will meet in the Booking Hall (you don't get those at airports any more) at 11 o'clock, with refreshments This issue of the Newsletter is my last opportunity to try and prompt a reaction from you, the member, to think back over the past years activities of the person(s) or group who impressed you sufficiently to be rewarded for their endeavours with one of the VAC awards. You will find a nomination form within this edition, which you should complete and this must be returned to me, the editor before the end of this year. The presentations will be made at the annual dinner in March 2014

To assist you with your thoughts, the following is a brief resume of the trophies histories.

Trophies and Potted <u>Histories</u>

George Davidson Cup

George Davidson was the treasurer of the original Vintage Aircraft Group in 1969.

Originally presented for consistently showing "superior qualities of airmanship at flying meetings". Now presented to the VAC pilot showing outstanding achievement in a vintage aeroplane.

Denis Fry Cup

Presented in 1965 by Dennis Fry, who was a member of the Vintage Aircraft GROUP - a predecessor of the VAC.

Was initially presented to the member who flew the longest distance in a vintage aircraft to a Vintage Aircraft Group flying meeting. This used to be calculated using a method of amassing points during the year. Points could be lost for taxying accident, poor airmanship, or arriving late to a Fly-in !

Now presented for outstanding and consistent airmanship.

VAC TROPHIES

Ernie Linguard Trophy (Cup)

Presented in 1980 by Mrs C. M. Lingard and D. F. Lingard following the death of Ernie Lingard in 1979. Because of his long standing connections with both the Vintage Aircraft Group and the VAC, this is awarded to the serving committee member showing particular service or contribution to the club.

John Blake Rosebowl

Presented in 1973 by John Blake, Hon Vice President of the VAC .

The award is to the person who has shown outstanding services to vintage aviation, in either ground or aerial activity and does not necessarily have to be a member of the VAC or a pilot.

Usually presented for a vintage aircraft restoration project of note.

John Edwards Trophy

(1/24 th scale model of Comper Swift G -ABUS)

Another trophy transferred from the original Vintage Aircraft Group having been commissioned in 1966 following the death of John Edwards in a flying accident in October 1965.

The terms of reference apply to both ground as well as aerial activity so the recipient need not be a pilot. Is now presented for noteworthy contribution to airfield organisation and safety.

Allen Clewley Trophy

(Avro Plaque)

Presented by Allen Clewley in 1985 and awarded to a person or group showing noteworthy and regular support of VAC activities.

VAC Group Trophy

Auster Control Stick)

Introduced in 1980 by the "VAC Flying Group which was formed to promote training and air touring.

Awarded to a private flying Group which owns / operates a vintage / near vintage aircraft and whose activities are judged by the committee to have contributed significantly to the cause of vintage aviation.

Graham England Trophy

(1/20th scale - 12 inch span model of Graham's Rollason Beta, G-AWHW (The Red Baron), hand crafted by Jo Jurd)

Originally presented by Jo Jurd in 1989 following the untimely death of his close friend, Flg/Off Graham J England - RAF. Graham England was a VAC member for the ten years prior to his death in a flying accident in December 1987. He was based at RAF Wattisham at the time flying Phantom aircraft but also flew his own Rollason Beta aircraft and was a totally aviation orientated person.

The award should be made to the, preferably young, i.e. under age 24, VAC member who, in the committees' judgement, has shown qualities such as determination, courage or dedication in the pursuance of any aviation related activity. This includes both flying and non-flying activities.

Tony Harold Memorial Trophy

(Framed painting of DH82 Tiger Moth)

Presented by Marilyn Harold in 1994 in memory of her late husband, Tony Harold - a past chairman of the VAC . Is awarded for Aero artistic or literary ability.

Mo Thompson Trophy

(A connecting Rod from a De Havilland Gipsy aero engine)

Presented in 1972 by Dr I. D. Hay and G. P. Layton following the death of M. O. Thompson. "Mo" Thompson had a particular enthusiasm for the Spot Landing Competition as it encourages the development of the skills required to achieve a successful forced landing consequent to an engine failure.

This is a very worthy reason to run the competition in 2002, all we need is a willing volunteer from you, the member!! I have the rules already set out and this could be combined with one of the picnics.

VAC Photography Shield

Commissioned by the VAC in 1986.

Presented for exceptional aviation related photography.

Well, it's now up to you out there to honour those in the aviation world who have been working hard in all our interests to enhance the vintage aircraft scene. These people are working to ensure that the next generations will be able to see and hear the early days of flight for as long as it is practical to keep the classic machines in the air. Let us recognise some of these people by nominating them for an award.

Desmond Penrose Trophy

(Silver Salver)

Presented by Desmond Penrose; VAC member and ex de Havilland test pilot.

To be awarded by the VAC Committee's decision for "Vintage Aeroplane of the year". Typical reasons are a unique feature such as the sole airworthy example or most original of a rare type. Could have noteworthy or newsworthy features, an unusual or interesting history, etc.

Rob Stobo Trophy Steward (2013)



VAC All Hallows event 27th October 2013

Wellesbourne Mountford

The wind moaning as it blasted through the buildings, giant spiders appearing in the corners of rooms to frighten visitors and a couple of witches adding to the brew made Halloween almost spookily real for the meeting at Wellesbourne Mountford.

There is always the problem when trying to organise an event at this time of the year that the weather might also misbehave as well as the spirits and this year proved no exception with very strong and gusty winds. This didn't deter some of the locals getting out there to do some circuits in more modern types but we did notice that the landing ground speed was very, very, slow. There were 20 members planning to fly in, but one look at the 'Met' forecast meant a drive.

With many thanks to Mike Littler and Frankie Spray for organising the Wellesbourne end, in conjunction with Veronica Tanner who managed to get permission to use the fine facilities of On Track Aviation including their appropriately named, in both contexts, Wellington Room.



As Abi Reynolds couldn't make it to Wellesbourne, the merchandise table was arranged by Cathy Silk and Veronica Tanner, and flanked by the new VAC pop up banners as you can see on the photograph. With the witches hats Cath and Vron certainly added to the Halloween spirit.

Around 20 people arrived by surface transport and with the teas & coffees set out by Veronica, all had a great time reminiscing about life and flying. The Restaurant was available for some excellent value meals with the team working really well to feed the masses.

Cathy also managed to get a couple of new members, so a warm welcome to Roy Nerou and Alan Palmer!

John Broad





AIRWORTHINESS ALERT

Jodel Aircraft Landing Lamp Cover Inspection

A recent incident, where the failure of a transparent landing lamp cover fitted to a Jodel D150 Mascaret led to pilot control difficulties, has emphasised the need to take into account differences in an alternative material's behavior when using it as an accepted substitute.

In the incident, a standard Plexiglas landing lamp cover was replaced with a locally manufactured Polycarbonate cover; this cover failed along its leading edge during a take-off shortly after fitting (see Fig. 1.).

The reason for this failure is not fully understood although, because the part had not been heat- formed, it didn't retain its shape around the leading edge after it failed.

Polycarbonate sheet of an identical thickness and equivalent transmissivity (to light) is accepted as an alternative to acrylic sheet (Plexiglas) for use in



Fig. 1. The landing lamp cover fitted to this Jodel D150 Mascaret returned to its unformed shape, effectively a flat sheet, after failing in flight; this failure led to control difficulties for the pilot.



Fig 2. This picture shows an example of stress induced crazing which can lead to a local crack and subsequent failure of the part; this leading edge crazing has been caused because the part hasn't been heat formed. Jodel owners should be mindful that, should this part eventually fail, its failure might generate unforeseen flight safety problems for the pilot.

transparent components (AC 23-27). However, differences in the material will affect the manufacturing techniques employed (when cutting, drilling or forming) and the subsequent maintenance of the part (for example, the choice of cleaners or polishing techniques).

The Light Aircraft Association has just issued an Airworthiness Information Leaflet (AIL) (LAA/MOD/235/002 issue 1) requiring checks to Landing Lamp Covers on all Jodel D150 Mascaret Aircraft, this AIL can be downloaded.

Whilst the above AIL is limited to the aircraft type affected, the use of wing mounted landing lamps is commonplace amongst many LAA types; this Airworthiness Alert seeks to emphasise the need for vigilance during the inspection checks and offers a reminder that failure of, at first sight unimportant components on any aircraft, can have serious negative consequences for flight safety.



Thanks to Jim Pierson of Wisconsin for this piece of aviation history. Flying the mail in the early days was not for the faint-hearted. From 1918 to 1927, forty pilots died in crashes. In 1934, a frustrated FDR assigned responsibility for flying the mail to the Army Air Corps which was poorly trained and equipped for the task. In 78 days of operation, there were 66 crashes and 12 pilots died.

The public outrage over what General Billy Mitchell called 'legalized murder" caused Congress to pass strict laws regulating civilian air carriers, established the Federal Aviation Commission (forerunner of the FAA) and provided funds for better training and equipment for the Army Air Corps including the first simulators for instrument training. Eventually, the Army Air Corps would purchase over 10,000 Link Trainers - some of which remained in use into the 50s.

This Really Exists:

Giant Concrete Arrows That Point Your Way Across America Every so often, usually in the vast deserts of the American Southwest, a hiker or a backpacker will run across something



puzzling: a large concrete arrow, as much as seventy feet in length, sitting in the middle of scrub-covered nowhere. What are these giant arrows? Some kind of surveying mark? Landing beacons for flying saucers? Earth's turn signals?





No, it's... The Transcontinental Air Mail Route .

United States opened its first coast-tocoast airmail delivery route, just 60 years after the Pony Express closed up shop. There were no good aviation charts in those days, so pilots had to eyeball their way across the country using landmarks. This meant that flying in bad weather was difficult, and night flying was just about impossible.

The Postal Service solved the problem with the world's first groundbased civilian navigation system: a series of lit beacons that would extend from New York to San Francisco . Every ten miles, pilots would pass a bright yellow concrete arrow. Each arrow would be surmounted by a 51-foot steel tower and lit by a millioncandlepower rotating beacon. (A generator shed at the tail of each arrow powered the beacon.)

Now mail could get from the Atlantic to the Pacific not in a matter of weeks, but in just 30 hours or so. Even the dumbest of air mail pilots, it seems, could follow a series of bright yellow arrows straight out of a Tex Avery cartoon. By 1924, just a year after Congress funded it, the line of giant concrete markers stretched from Rock Springs , Wyoming to Cleveland, Ohio. The next summer, it reached all the way to New York , and by 1929 it spanned the continent uninterrupted, the envy of postal systems worldwide. Radio and radar are, of course, infinitely less cool than a concrete Yellow Brick Road from sea to shining sea, but I think we all know how this story ends. New advances communication and navigation in technology made the big arrows obsolete, and the Commerce Department decommissioned the beacons in the 1940s. The steel towers were torn down and went to the war effort. But the hundreds of arrows remain. Their yellow paint is gone, their concrete cracks a little more with every winter frost, and no one crosses their path much, except for coyotes and tumbleweeds.

But they're still out there!





This was sent to me by a friend in the United States who thought I might find it interesting.

Unfortunately the original photographs and drawings are not available which is why the captioning is not perfect.

Flugwerft Schleissheim

September of this year saw me once again visiting southern Germany, and so whilst there I took the opportunity to re-visit the annex to the aeronautical section of the Deutsches Museum, Munich. The museum is to be found at Oberschleissheim and is situated on the site of an active airfield which was founded by the Royal Bavarian Air Force in 1912. restoration. As a result the restoration and various extensions have provided Germany with what is the home of a most extensive collection of aircraft.

Unlike the UK entry into museums in Europe is charged, the cost here being an extremely reasonable \notin 4.00, which is around £3.75. On entering the museum proper you find a large



The airfield itself has a varied and interesting history from its inception; its main function being that of training pilots, including its use as a training airfield for the fledgling Luftwaffe and amongst those trained there was one Adolf Galland. After the Second World War it was taken over and used by the United States Army as a base for its helicopters. As with all of these occupations at some point the base became surplus to requirements and the army left. At this time all of the buildings including those erected when the airfield was founded remained virtually intact.

Despite the effects of vandalism and the collapse of a major part of the building due to neglect and the severe winters and calls for the airfield to be turned over to other uses the decision was taken to rebuild. This decision made possible by the was the Deutsches intervention of Museum and the Bavarian Government who recognised the historical heritage of the site and who provided the finance for the display of various types of aircraft ranging from a pre World War One Otto Biplane through to a modern two seater of composite construction, a displayed as a cut-away exhibit to show the construction of the aircraft.

Walking through the rooms displaying memorabilia towards the more modern parts of the museum you will find various items depicting the history of the airfield. These take the form of early photographs, items of clothing etc as used by early pilots, and dioramas. There is also a weather station giving up to the minute forecasts.

On entering the modern extension to the museum you can either enter the main hall or ascend the stairs to the viewing gallery which looks down into the restoration area. Aircraft being worked on at this time were a MiG-23BN, a single seat glider, and an Indian Air Force Hindustani HF24 Marut Mk.1. The aircraft was designed to be supersonic but the appropriate engines were not available. In case you are wondering why this aircraft is in this museum, one of the people involved with its design and construction was a Kurt Tank, of Fw.190 fame. Leaving the gallery takes you into an elevated section around part of the main hall,



single seat homebuilt biplane. Some of the aircraft on display are still airworthy and are loaned to the museum especially from the latter part of the year. In addition a varied selection of gliders is displayed suspended from the roof including a superbly restored Horton Flying Wing. There is also a Stinson which is this dominated by a Douglas C-47 of the German Air Force, suspended from the roof. Looking down there is a CASA 2111B, a Spanish built Heinkel 111 the restoration of which is a tribute to the restorers art. One of the exhibits may well be familiar to some of you, this being the Zaukonig, this aircraft the second one to be built by



students at Braunschweig University to study slow flight, found its way to England following the end of the war with the serial VX190. It was flown by a number of eminent pilots whilst on the British Register, (G-ALUA) before being sold in Ireland (EI-AYU), and later returned to Germany and going on display in its original markings. As well as the C-47 there are a number of other types also displayed suspended from the roof, these being mainly gliders or motor gliders of various types. Amongst them can be found a very early Putzer two seat trainer which in time led to it being developed into the Eltzer B.

Rotary wings are not neglected with types such as the Sud Aviation Alouette 2, a Kamov Ka-26, Bell Huey and Sikorsky H-34G on display. There is also a simulator that can be attempted for a modest charge.

Modern jet types are also displayed including one of the prototype Eurofighter aircraft DA-1, as is a Boeing/EADS collaborative development aircraft designed to study the use of vectored thrust. Early projects for VTOL aircraft are the Dornier Do.31E which is a walk exhibit, and through although designed for military use there is a display model shown for passenger use in the colours of Eastern Airlines from the United States. The largest aircraft in the hall is the VFW 614 with its over wing Rolls Royce jet engines.

The German Air Force is well represented with their equipment ranging from the Lockheed T-33, the

Havilland types do overwinter here, some of which migrate to the UK in the summer to attend the Moth Rally.

Another unusual type on display is the Hisapano Aviacion H300 cn 01. This prototype of a Mach.2 interceptor for the Egyptian Air Force, developed initially in Germany and then Spain before being sold to the Egyptian Air Force is the last design worked on by Willy Messerschmitt. It first flew in 1964 powered by a Bristol 703 Orpheus engine, and despite three more prototypes being completed the



Lockheed F-104G Starfighter through to the modern day Tornado. The former East Germany or DDR is represented by the aircraft already mentioned and the MiG-21F, and on the civilian side by the Yakovlev Yak.50. programme was scrapped.

There is also a well stocked shop complete with a small coffee bar. The museum staff are extremely helpful in answering any questions, with most of them speaking English.



Vintage civil types are well represented ranging from the Fw. 44J Steiglitz, to a Cessna 195 through to a Waco biplane, the latter two being some of the airworthy types. Although not present at this time a number de

An excellent museum, with a large number of exhibits of various types to suit all tastes and which will please any enthusiast.

BIGFIELD AIRSTRIP, - Tim Orchard's Birthday Bash.

f you're into aviation you will almost certainly have heard of Westcott Airfield, formerly a WW2 Wellington base, later home to the highly-secretive Rocket Research Establishment, & now housing a NDB beacon, many small-business units, & recently, a whole OCEAN of solarlining the old main panels runway. Just over the hedge is a lesser-known private grass airstrip on the property of charismatic Tim Orchard, forming part of the nearby Manor (Rothschild) Waddesdon Estate, & adjacent to the village cricket-pitch. Again, aviation buffs may recognise this name as being prominent in all sorts of aviationrelated roles, - former Concorde pilot, Airfield Manager, Tecnam sales



Tiger Moth over Waddesdon Manor

land! I'd known Tim on & off over the years, but hadn't known that this was his residence.



Trish

On landing, tea was brought out in fine china teacups on a silver tray by his lovely partner Trish. A half-hour of chatting attracted a Cub, & a passing helicopter also to land, curious to see what that "thing" was on this quiet strip, where normally Tim's Chipmunk was the only aircraft occasionally seen. I departed "Bigfield" with one of those glowing feelings of a good evening's worthwhile flying, - & a standing invitation to attend any fly-in that he may be holding!

So, early July 2013 saw probably the biggest & best fly-in, (strictly invitation), Tim has ever had. Space limits visiting aircraft, but the accommodating cricket-club allows the border-fence to come down, so

rep, national coach / instructor on hot-air balloons & all manner of aircraft, & so on. Despite all this, Tim is a reserved, quiet type of guy, who pulls out all the stops for "an occasion"!

This particular occasion was a celebration of his 60th year of life! There HAS been a handful of low-key fly-ins over the years, - I've attended recent ones as a result of flying a photo-sortie over the Manor, - which culminated in a low beat-up over a cricket match, - & all of which seemed to endear myself & G-ADRA to Tim who was watching from his garden & frantically waved skyward at me, - which I took as a signal to



Arthur Mason and Sally



Parking around the cricket pitch

guns, on this hot, sunny day, - with a highly-energetic jazz-band, seeminglyunlimited food from an upmarket caterer, drinks, - ice-cream van, - not to mention the 35 aircraft of all types, (mostly vintage!); - Tim had thought of everything, - even got the weather right again! One has to mention the garden, - beds, borders, plants, shrubs worthy of Chelsea flower-show & the work of green-fingered Trisha. Tim mows the lawn, (on the ride-on mower!). Attending the loo involves walking past the pointy nose-end section of a Concorde, taking up quite a bit of space in this more-thanmodest conservatory! It's covered in presumably signatures, fellow Concorde pilots.

that the majority of aircraft are able to park around, (but not ON !) the pitch. Local villagers are free to wander around, many taking pictures, & those who stayed a while were lucky enough to witness the mass-launch of several hot-air balloons, a truly colourful sight as they drifted off slowly towards, & gently rising over, the Manor. I was lucky enough to observe most of this from G-ADRA whilst flying one of the female guests. Unfortunately, my camera went u/s, but that perfect calendar-moment is still in my mind; - the Manor on the tree-topped hill, the colourful balloons scattered just above, framed by my struts & bracing wires, & enhanced by Sally's naked shoulders, & long blonde hair swirling from the front cockpit!! Tim's private function was going great



Balloon launch



I have to thank Tim & Trish for all the invitations I've had to date, - the hospitality is outstanding, the guests are as colourful as the balloons, & on this special occasion you really excelled yourselves !! It's a lot of hard work, & I hope your birthday was as happy for you as it was for all the guests you made so welcome. MANY thanks!!

Report Arthur Mason

Photographs Tim Orchard

Frank & Marion from Bordeaux

Gustav Weisskopf

The claim to have been the first to succeed in the quest for powered flight has always been up until recently ascribed to the Wright Brothers. The date of their successful flight being December 17th 1903.

There have of course been other such claims from early aviators in various countries that allege they were first, having flown earlier.

One such claimant, also living in America is a Gustav Weisskopf (Born 1874, in Leuterhausen, Germany) an émigré from Germany who after spending several years at sea finally settled in the United States where he later adopted the name of Whitehead. Apparently he was always fascinated by flight from an early age and during his early years constructing numerous paper kites, these leading him, as with many early pioneers to study the flight of birds. These studies he carried on during his time at sea.

His interest in flight became well known and in 1894 he was approached by a member of The Aeronautical Club of Boston, one J B Millet who hired him to design, build, and fly sailplanes. One of his designs, inspired by the work of Otto Lilienthal, being capable of flying for short distances with him as the pilot. In 1897 he moved to New York where he continued to build, some under contract, various types of kite.

Over the following two years it is known that he continued to build sailplanes and also worked on the construction of engines. In 1899 he met a Louis Darvarich who assisted him in the construction of flying machines, one of which, а monoplane, with Darvarich as his companion, is reported to have flown in either April or May 1899 propelled by a small steam motor for a distance of about 1/2 mile and at an height of 20 -25ft. This flight taking place at Pittsburgh, and ending by crashing into a house. There are no other details of the flight but it is the subject of a number of sworn

affidavits made in 1934 by Darvarich and various other people, including a member of the local Fire Brigade who attended the crash.

In 1900 he moved to Bridgeport, Connecticut, where he carried on his work having been the recipient of a grant of \$300. He was assisted at this time by a Junius Harworth who stated that the steam engine which was in the machine that crashed in 1899 had been repaired and overhauled and was in perfect working order. No: 21, which was powered by steam, and had a 36ft wing span, for a distance described as a "whole half mile". The flight being the subject of a report in the Bridgeport Herald on 18th August 1901, the paper a weekly issue, and only published on a Sunday. There has been a great deal of investigation in the United States into this claim that he flew and it would appear that those who have delved into it are satisfied that it took place.



By this time Whitehead had earned a reputation of being an extremely competent mechanical engineer and on 14^{th} August 1901 it has been reported that he flew his monoplane

The explanation as to why this claim to being the first powered flight by man is as follows. There is a formal agreement between the heirs of the Wright Brothers and the Smithsonian Institute which has resulted in the



Smithsonian not being open to a formal and objective examination of the evidence. This in my own opinion could be considered as a means of manipulating history by failing to

The City of Leuterhausen has erected a memorial to Gustav Weisskopf in the centre of the city, surmounted by a model his machine. The museum has dedicated one floor of its building to



enquire into events to prove or refute any such claims.

A replica of his machine has been constructed and flown within the United States, a fact which has been pointed out is that the replica constructed of the Wright Flyer never did. The museum has produced a DVD which has film of this flight on it. him and his achievements complete with a replica of the machine and the method of propulsion. He is also commemorated in the State of Connecticut where the flight is the only one accepted as being that of man's first powered flight.

Gustav Whitehead became dissatisfied with flight as in his own words "All these flights are not much good, because they don't last long enough. We just cannot fly to any old place. Flight will only then become of importance when we can fly at any given time to any given place" The most obvious drawback to its development in this instance I would suggest being the use of steam as a method of propulsion. It was only the development of the petrol engine, and in later years the jet engine that made his observation become a reality.

Was he the first? I make no claim either way, but leave it you to make your own mind up, or pursue any further research as you wish.

In completing this article I gratefully acknowledge the assistance given to me by the museum at Leuterhausen and its staff. Should you be in that part of Germany the museum is well worth a visit, not just for the aviation content, but for its other many and varied exhibits.

Although, as it is run by volunteers you need to check the website for its opening times. My visit was on a Sunday when the hours were 2.00 - 4.00pm. Weekdays will have different times of opening.





Book Review THE MONOSPAR FROM TAILLESS GLIDERS TO VAST TRANSPORT: THE STORY OF GENERAL AIRCRAFT LTD OF HANWORTH.

> ARTHUR W.J.G. ORD-HUME Published by Stenlake Publishing

The British Aircraft Industry was at one time considered to be one of, if not the best in the world. Over a long period of time it saw the formation of a number of companies some of which lasted only a short time and others which remained until absorbed into larger companies either mutually or through aggressive take over or decimated by political interference.

The 1920s and 1930s was one of those periods which saw the rise and fall of many companies both here in the United Kingdom and Europe. One such company was Beardmore who on its staff had an extremely brilliant engineer, a Swiss national Helmuth John Stieger. Beardmore at this time had produced an all metal stressed skin aircraft, the Inflexible with a 157ft 6in cantilever wing.

Stieger believed that he could improve the design of aircraft wings which would result in a lighter structure with similar strength. His first wing the ST-1 was built as a test piece by Gloster Aircraft and was displayed at the Olympia Air Show of 1929. The name for the design being MONO-SPAR. Stieger with others then formed their first company with offices in London.

The second wing, ST-2 a full size version, also built by Gloster was fitted to a Fokker F.VII/A/3m, owned by the British Government and proved the principle of the design. The modified

aircraft being lighter than in its original form resulting in an increased available payload. Despite the success of the design the powers that were appeared to lose interest. It was decided that the way forward was to reform their own company in order to produce their own aircraft.

The first aircraft they produced the ST-3 was a small twin engine machine, the first also being built by Gloster at Hucclecote.

The company was re-named the General Aircraft Company, and it opened a small factory at Croydon, where it was to remain for a number of years.

In 1915 the airfield at Hanworth in Middlesex was set up and following the war suffered a series of misfortunes. Croydon was becoming London's airport and getting busier a fact that prompted GAL to move to Hanworth which allowed it to expand. At Hanworth the company started its work on developing a tricycle undercarriage which resulted in the first British aircraft with a nose wheel undercarriage.

The company also developed the first pressure cabin, the development of which is enjoyed by airline travellers all over the world.

The company went on to produce a number of designs including top secret

tailless aircraft a type not seen since Westland's designs from pre-war, which were displayed at the Radlett SBAC display in 1946. The work of this company progressed over the years and culminated in the design of a large four engine transport - the Beverley. The company finally being absorbed into Blackburn Aircraft.

This book by Arthur W.J.G. Ord-Hume from which I have focused on only small sections follows the fortunes of this company and not only its innovative designs but the part it played in our aviation history. Although aware of the glider production I for one did not realise that it was involved in work on the naval target tug version of the de Havilland Mosquito. For anyone with even the slightest interest in aviation history in Britain this book is a must.

The book has a superb series of photographs culled from a number of sources which illustrate the text to such a degree not found in other publications. It is subtitled as British Aviation History in Old Photographs but that belies the amount of information contained therein.

I would recommend that it goes to the top of your Christmas list and if unsuccessful in that regard, you make it a must buy for the future.

FLY-IN ARRIVAL

Over many years I have flown into numerous fly-ins and similar events where many aircraft are arriving at a single location, from all points of the compass, all wanting to land/join the circuit and all at around the same time. If I am honest it always worries if not scares me but perhaps I'm just "blessed" with a vivid imagination. On the other hand in my almost 50 years of flying I've heard about numerous mid-airs in the circuit or near vicinity of aerodromes. I also know that statistically those are the areas where most mid-airs do occur.

Not wanting to point fingers but to use it as a recent good example, on Sunday last (8 September 2013) I flew to Turweston for the VAC Fly-In arriving from the south. I came on frequency perhaps 10 minutes before my planned ETA and listened in. In the next five or so minutes I heard the many aircraft arriving requesting to join every which way - join crosswind, join downwind, join left base, join right base, join straight in to land. Many also wanted to use the grass runway, which is also a published taxiway; and, if you look at the plate the only taxiway to the 27 threshold. On top of that most pilots failed to listen in before transmitting and there were

numerous incidents of one transmission treading on another. So much so that the ATC man had to ask pilots to listen out before transmitting.

I stress once again that I am not pointing fingers but it does describe perfectly the issues and dangers of Fly-In Arrival.

However, there are ways that such chaos can easily be avoided and the inherent dangers mitigated. When I learnt to fly we were always told to join in the standard manner, through the overhead, and yes it was in the days of aerodrome signal squares and few radios. Nevertheless, even in today's world of radio, it still gives pilots an opportunity to look at the aerodrome from above. Orientate her or himself as to the runway in use and circuit pattern and to find out where all the other circuit traffic is a fit into the pattern accordingly and safely.

So why don't we all do overhead joins as standard? It uses more fuel and fuel is expensive. I can almost hear the response from my desk but what is a few litres even at today's prices - and remember in relative terms AVGAS was just as expensive in the 60's - against a mid-air and almost certain death.

I'm not saying that one should never fly a non-standard join, and I know that at some aerodromes they are not allowed but they should be reserved for those aerodromes and those days when there is little or no traffic and should never become the norm. We should always plan for a standard overhead join.

One other tip I've learnt over the years, when going to a fly-in plan to fly initially to an easily identifiable feature say five nms from the aerodrome and be prepared to hold there if it's busy. I planned to hold just south of Buckingham on Sunday's fly-in. Again a drop more fuel but often the safest option.

Enough of my pontificating, but may I suggest that the VAC sets the example and at future fly-ins we all fly standard overhead joins.

Many thanks to you all for a most enjoyable and pleasant visit to Turweston.

Robb Metcalfe

Intercept!

S hamelessly stolen from someone else who stole it, but this priceless piece of time warp history really happened on an August weekend!

Following the usual "aircraft four miles south of Winchester southbound, are you on frequency?" and the subsequent, "we have an unidentified aircraft in the zone", and the rerouting of some inbounds, on the Solent Approach frequency at lunchtime today, a slightly unusual outcome...

Also on frequency, the RN historic flight Sea Fury offers, "would you like me to intercept?" The controller was

From the Hangar Troll

somewhat taken aback and was noncommittal in her reply. Sure enough, a few minutes later we hear the slightly more amazing information, "It appears to be a Beaufighter or Mosquito". The controller is now thoroughly confused and asks for more information. "It's a high performance twin engine fighter", offers the Seafury. "Did you get a call sign?" asks the controller. "No but it's in camouflage with yellow spinners", advises the Sea Fury

Almost certainly the 3/4 scale French built Mosquito that was on its way to Sywell. Christmas is almost upon us once again and both Carol and I wish you all the very best for your celebrations, and for



a safe and prosperous New Year in 2014.

I also thank all those who have submitted the superb and very enjoyable articles published in the magazine throughout 2013. Everybody please consider putting pen to paper for 2014.

May Evening.

e were bumping gently along the grass track leading to the grass strip overlooked bv tidy Glastonbury Tor, David, my great flying buddy of many aerial adventures, his wife Carrie and myself. Oh, and the dog had come along too. I had circled his house some two hours ago, looking over my cockpit edge and behind the wide cream wing, seeking his acknowledging wave. I had turned lazily South toward the familiar field, a low grey hangar against the hedge, and an oak tree proudly in the field centre though allowing a generous strip width. The grubby windsock flapped unhelpfully so I had throttled back, slipped off a little excess height over the pig farm, over the low hedge, flared gently, flared a tad more and the Turbi had alighted with a slight bound, the tailskid gripped and we had slowed to tuck in beside the hangar.

Having eaten excellently, we were returning to the field for my homeward flight. Tractors still worked nearby sowing maize. The windsock no longer flapped at all but hung lifeless with the Turbi beyond, pretty as a picture, its green and cream scheme at ease in this softening light. The air felt cool now, thick and still, hinting of a calm, smooth flight ahead. I said fond farewells, shrugged on my flying jacket, buckled my helmet and wriggled down into the snug rear P1 seat some eight feet behind the nose.

'Contact'. David swung the propeller smartly and the Continental purred into life and quickly settled into a steady 600rpm tick-over. In twenty years of ownership it had rewarded my regular oil changes and minor maintenance with faultless behaviour. After a couple of minutes warming I gave a burst of power together with



full right rudder and stick forward to unload the tailskid and allow my turn toward the far hedge. I taxied to the North-Eastern threshold, weaving erratically to see ahead and seeking the very slight downhill direction for my windless take-off. With all checks done, another power-on-stick-forward -full rudder craftiness is required for the turn onto the strip and moments later we, aeroplane and I, are reunited in the three dimensions of flight, sensing heavy uplifting air under the wings and heart and engine bounding in unison.

In a wide gentle turn we climb modestly upwards, heading North East, and passing over so many familiar farms and personalities from my work here some forty years ago. Over Stoney Stratton I dip a wing in salute to a tiny stone-walled field which accommodated my safe forced landing in an Auster in what seems a lifetime ago. As the sun sinks behind us, the bare chalk of Westbury white horse shines a little performing as my Wiltshire homing beacon. The green of the distant Marlborough Downs turns purple and then charcoal in the fading light.

Over Devizes I throttle back, apply carb heat and guess-adjust my altimeter to a new home-strip QFE. Once overhead I make a thorough search for late dogwalkers on the grass and curve in on my dogleg course to avoid the village. A calm flight and a lifeless windsock warn me to achieve an accurate approach of 45 knots with a trickle of power in a dead-dusk landing.

I turn and taxy through the dandelion sprinkled grass and record flight times while idling the Continental at the hangar opening. Switches off, and a stillness descends broken only by the tick-tick of cooling cylinders and the high fluctuating joyous song of a skylark. This is a time I always savour, the satisfaction of a safely ended flight, the relaxation of the flying brain – for even a flight so undemanding deserves much concentration - and the moment to store the memories away for recall when flying days are gone.

Once the Turbi is stored and blanketed, an orange glow sits on the western horizon. This moment should not be missed. I pull a chair from the back of the hangar, retrieve the emergencies-only bottle of red wine from the tea cupboard and settle in the gloom to toast the day. Lights begin to come on in the village, a dog barks and there is the occasional croak of a partridge, the spire of distant Cherhill monument blurs and a memorable day slips away. I wonder what price I should pay for an evening such as this and raise another glass to my good fortune.

Rupert Hibberd and Druine D5 Turbi G -APBO. May 2013

TOTAL AVIATION OIL

All Grades from "Straight 80" to High Performance Multigrades From 1 litre bottles to 208 litre drums Approved by Continental and Lycoming Available from stock for immediate dispatch Free delivery to UK Mainland addresses Great prices - we buy in bulk so that you save ££££s

> Contact Pete Smoothy on 01 296 714 900 Airworld UK Ltd, Winslow www.airworlduk.com



Items for publication should be sent to the editor by letter, e-mail or on a CD or floppy disc. Photographs can be sent either on a CD (preferred) or by post for scanning. All photographs and articles are copyright of the originator and the Vintage Aircraft Club. The address to send items for publication is 16, Norton Crescent, Towcester, Northants, NN12 6DN Dates for the Diary 2014

FINE

Sat 18th January Snowball Meet- Sywell

Sat 15th February Valentines Meet - White Waltham

Sat 8th March Annual Dinner, Littlebury Hotel, Bicester

> Sun 23rd March Spring Rally - Turweston

Sat 12th April Daffodil Rally - Fenland

Sat 26th July VAC 50th Birthday Celebration

> August 3 - 4 Stoke Golding Stakeout

Fri Aug 29th - Sun Aug 31st LAA Rally Sywell

October Sackville. Members Only Event

> Sat 11th October VAC AGM

Sun 26th October All Hallows Fly In

The Vintage Aircraft Club Ltd (A Company Limited by Guarantee) Registered Address: Winter Hills Farm, Silverstone, Northants, NN12 8UG Registered in England No 2492432