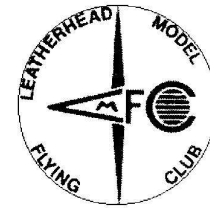


Leatherhead Model Flying Club



Having a few things to say but without enough content for a full-blown newsletter I decided to try a 'News Sheet'. News sheets will be limited to one sheet of A4 and will be used to keep club communication going in between newsletters. They will be black and white, without pictures so will be easy and inexpensive to produce. The content will also be published on the club web site. Let me know what you think about this initiative.

So what has been going on at your club over the past few months?

The winter has been fairly severe with no flooding but plenty of hard frosts, cold easterlies and the low winter sun which makes model flying a real challenge. The runways have been kept in excellent condition and the worm-cast count seems to be down on last year. Why, then do cars get stuck and why does Ted grow 2 inches? The river water temperature has been consistently very cold as those members who have exercised the club waders will confirm.

25 members and wives enjoyed an excellent and relaxed Christmas meal complete with crackers, funny hats and really corny jokes at Oxshott Village Sports Club. Everyone who was scheduled to come arrived on time even though several people had to make several passes along Steele's Lane to find the entrance. Ted thanked Ray Shivjee and Graham Bentley for organising this 'first' festive meal for the club.

The shed roof was re-covered with lots of help from lots of people. Very young, very tall people proved invaluable during this project! The shed is now watertight and we are considering putting up the rent for the resident great-tits. Thanks for donations of nails and felt and to Dave O'Brien for bringing the ladders.

Dave O'Brien won yet another scale trophy with his Camel at the South East Scale Association meeting – again, well done Dave.

Sebastian Ellis passed his A test in double quick time.

We are still not getting enough members filling in Incident Reports. The whole idea is that we all learn from everyone's experiences. For example, if someone experiences severe radio interference and fails to report this and then another member subsequently loses his model due to the interference this is not the kind of spirit we want to encourage. So, if you have an 'Incident' – report it.

In September I lost my 'Optima' and it took 2 months of hard graft before we eventually found it. See over for more details. And, yes, I did fill out an incident report!

According to the local press the travellers are to be moved on finally from their site at Randall's Road at the end of March so we will need to be extra vigilant about our site security over the next few weeks. We don't want a repeat of the invasion of 2004 and its nightmare aftermath.

Gordon Tarling, who supplies Hacker motors and all manner of things 'Electric' seems to have stopped trading. I talked to him before Christmas then ordered some bits since when he has been noticeable by his absence.

Addlestone Models under their new ownership and management seem to be remarkably well organised – that is, you can easily find things if they are in stock.

Despite several promptings the council failed to cut our grass during 2005. We shall endeavour to get an early cut this year so that we get rid of the tough bits which can damage models.

Mary Du Caurroy Duchess of Bedford, naturalist and adventurer, gained her private pilot's licence in 1935 aged 67. She failed the medical board in 1933 because she was profoundly deaf. She observed 'I was no less deaf and my brain no better for ageing at the time of my second test.'

This should inspire all our 'sixty-something' year old members as well as all those who have problems with their hearing.

My Optima motorised Glider 'flew away' on October 15th and was recovered on December 12.

After launch and whilst walking to the pilot line I stumbled and lost sight of the model. I shut off power, waggled the wings, alerted Ray and Rich who were also flying but there was nothing to be seen. Later Geoff said it seemed to him to have gone in vertically on a line to the left of the oak at the track gate.

Many man-hours of searching through very rough terrain yielded nothing. We searched three fields extensively, we looked around the poo-ponds, we asked at the dump, we asked at the house by the dump, we searched the horse fields beyond the dump, we got David to take several aerial shots which we examined minutely but, again, nothing.

After about 220 flights and 21 hours in the air – the model owed me nothing but I wanted the bits back!

8 weeks later on 12 December and with most of the foliage gone Graham and I attacked the last remaining thicket – this must be 30 by 100 feet of 6 ft high vegetation. A frontal assault with the hedge-trimmer lasted about 10 minutes – those brambles are awesome. So we switched to brainpower and walked round to the back of the thicket, inside the dump, peering in through the fence. And there it was - only about 6 feet from the fence and nestling in very thick undergrowth.

After examination the GRP fuselage was a write-off with a multiple fractures and holes. The wings were badly broken at the roots – although the shear bolts survived - and the whole structure was completely waterlogged. Having removed the livestock and their residues – snails, woodlice and several families of spiders – the Motor works, the ESC works, the RX works, the battery pack is fine and 2 out of the 4 servos are in excellent shape.

Again, my thanks to everyone who helped me with the recovery.

Ernest Harrison.

Dates for your diary.

This year's Bring a Model Night will be held at Eastwick Infant School on a Thursday 23rd February 2006 starting at 8pm. Kate Moss will not be welcome this year.

The AGM will be held at Eastwick Infant School on Thursday 30th March 2006 starting promptly at 8pm. There will be the usual opportunity to have your say on Club matters and a fabulous Raffle. Will trophy holders please polish and return their trophies to Ted in good time for this meeting.

At the AGM we will be discussing 'The Promotion of Welfare and Care of Children and Vulnerable Adults in Model Flying' Those of you who have read the report of the AGM of SMAE Ltd in the latest BMFA News will have seen that it is to be mandatory for BMFA affiliated clubs to have in place the "Child Protection Scheme" as a condition of validity of the Insurance for 2006. You will receive, with the notice of the LMFC AGM, a copy of the new Policy document that has been written by Geoff Bignold to cover our position. Geoff had guidance from BMFA in drawing this up, and has adapted it for our specific requirements. I would urge you to read it before the AGM, to be ready to comment on it and to give full support to the committee for its implementation.

Dates for indoor flying at the Leatherhead Leisure Centre are :-

Friday 17 February
Friday 17 March
Friday 21 April

for further details visit the club website at
<http://www.leatherheadmfc.org.uk/>
or ask Mick Saxton .