



happy
New Year
2022

*"Surely this has
to be a better year !"*

Dear Fellow Firebirds Club Members

Another year begins with dreams for a year of wonderful things and especially one with less concern over this annoying virus! I know we all said it at the beginning of last year but surely it must all start to get better soon! Anyway as always we mustn't be negative and be positive for the future.

For me, when things get tough, I often look back at the past for some positive inspiration...

.. So during a quiet moment I looked back through some old newsletters on the Firebirds web-site and found many interesting reads, I even found a piece that I had written long ago, not long after I joined the Firebirds. I remember at that time the previous newsletter editor Geoff Scott was always looking for something to fill it, so I thought I would help out.

There are entries and newsletters going right back to 2014 on the web-site so well worth a read when you get your quiet moment.

I have included the piece that I wrote later in the newsletter and also a copy of an even earlier newsletter sent to me by Russell.

Due to the usual lack of anything exciting going on during the winter months and with the permission of the committee, it is my intention to skip the February Newsletter this year, so even more reason to have a look at the old Newsletters on the web-site!

Anyway on with the January 2022 Newsletter.

Chris

*** DON'T FORGET YOUR CAA REGISTRATION AND ATTACH YOUR ID STICKER TO EACH MODEL ***



AGM

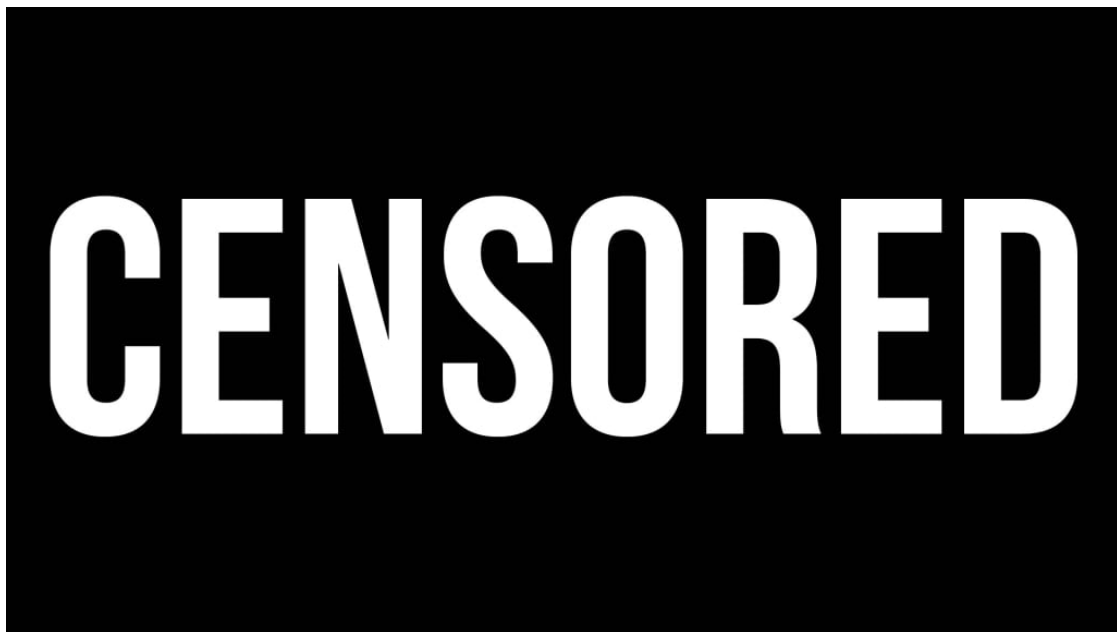
Wednesday the 15th December saw the first AGM for a few years, sneakily squeezed in before the Christmas party.

Dave Hoppé retired from his post for health reasons. All other committee members re-stood, member Paul Brown was voted on to the committee as Flying Site Representative Pete Clark is now formally Vice Chairman.

The duties of Social Representative will be shared amongst the committee.

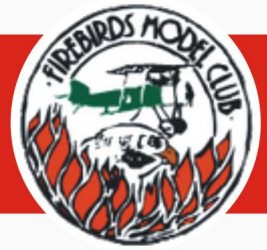
Christmas Party

For political reasons we have destroyed any photographs and video of the Christmas party due to the fact that these could be used against us in future investigations NO COVID RULES WERE BROKEN.



Needless to say, if we had of had a party (which we may not have) there would have been loads of food, drink, chatting and the following lucky people might have won prizes in the Christmas draw ...

404 Russell: Ruckus, 136 Lee: £90 (in lieu of Hurricane that got stuck in the post), 430 Lee: Volantex glider, 426 Russell: Choc + wine, 71 Allan H: Mustang (chosen in his absence), 411 Pat: 4 Servos, (chosen in his absence), 425 Rajon: Charger (chosen in his absence), 65 Geoff: 4 Servos, 179 Kev: 2 wines, 3 Rob C: Milk Tray, 466 Steve: Glues, 454 Steve: Iron, 6 Rob: Glues + hacker + pen, 48 – (drawn again at request of winner), 538 Rob F: Spectrum RX, 200 Keith W: 4 Servos



THIS YEARS FEES

Club fees for 2022 were agreed at the AGM / Christmas party and are now due.

Adult club membership fee for 2022 is £75. The BMFA fee is £40 so the Total payable for most members is £115. If you are a country BMFA member you will just pay the £75 to the club.

NOTE: The above excludes the CAA licencing charges, which like last year the club recommends members do directly with the CAA, and remember your 2022 renewal could be very soon for many.

Paying your membership.

OPTION 1.

Find a committee members letterbox and drop it in.

OPTION 2. By post –

Send a cheque to

Firebirds Model club
c/o 6 Maytree Close
Locksheath
Southampton
SO31 6NQ

OPTION 3. By Bank transfer

Account name: WARWICK KA (he's our membership secretary)

Sort code: 55-70-05

Account number: 75528037

***IMPORTANT *** Use a reference: Your Initial Your Surname and FB (for Firebirds)

Example: K Warwick FB

NOTICE

You must have paid your fees to be able to fly after the 1st January.



Members form a working party

Our temporary winter flying area has been a great success, but was a little bit uneven under-foot so, led by our Lee Fryer several members including our new Site Representative Paul Brown set about doing some ground-works. Lee brought along a wacker plate and together with a shovel, fork and a bit of muscle, the area is now much flatter.

Thank you Guys !!



Testament to blow-moulded fuselages.

The Volantex 747-8 Trainstar Ascent has a fuselage that is blow-moulded from a tough, rugged, and flexible plastic with plywood formers and can take a lot of punishment and will bend and flex before breaking. See image below, after such an impact a Balsa model would be in the bin, the model below was back in the air the very next day. You may have also seen a Phoenix 2000 glider or two down the field these models use the same blown-plastic manufacturing technique and I know they are robust because I have landed mine heavily several times (Ed.) The Trainstar is highly recommended as a first model if you are new to model flying.





The Bucking Bronco by Rob Cope

Following the excellent article about “centre-of-gravity” (balance point) in October’s new letter, I thought I’d relay a mixed experience I have had with a second-hand aircraft.

A few years ago, I saw advertised for £85, a spitfire of unknown type, but 72” span, 57” long, on a well-known 4 letter auction web site. It was a “buy now, buyer collect” so I went for it. I was fully aware that the petrol, to collect it from Burton-on-Trent, would be another £65 and was prepared for this. It was still a bargain.

It has a monocoque fibreglass fuselage and built-up wing. The only down-side, I thought, was a fixed undercarriage – with what looked like trolley wheels on very short legs. After the adventure of navigating to and visiting the owner, I found he had given it a fresh coat of paint shortly after acquiring it at a bring-and-buy locally.



The Assessment

Even with no known flight history, the airframe looked magnificent. It had an ASP 108 2-stroke with a huge 2-blade prop and was well worth it. I made my way back home with my new plane and anticipated finding a 4 stroke for it at some later time to improve the sound in the air.

I replaced the stocky short undercarriage legs with piano-wire – better sprung and more of a scale length and added fake legs around the wire – made of child’s toy cricket stumps. I also purchased some scale-sized Dubro wheels to remove the “sack truck” look.

I checked all the servos over and ran the engine. It runs well. I replaced the aileron servos as they seemed a bit fragile. I checked the balance and it was about 1/3 chord, which I had remembered was about right. The spar is not visible, so I did not have much to go on at the time. I had not asked anyone’s advice about this – not even Roger! All was good for trying it in the air.

Flying

I flew it at Poplars Farm. It took off with massive power and immediately I knew something was amiss as it had a tendency to swoop up and down as it climbed out. ‘It’ll be fine as I can throttle-back’ I thought. Not so. Under lighter power, it was even more of a devil to fly. It kept bailing-out to left and right and continued its swooping up and down. It was as much as I could do to keep it in the air at all. I somehow managed to navigate it round for a landing approach and coaxed it gradually down, still swooping as it descended. It ran a bit long and used the long grass slightly beyond the strip (towards the old trailer that was stored there) as an arrester hook! Ooops!



There was surprisingly little damage. The twin-pipe exhaust manifold was a bit distorted. The wing was a little dented where the fake legs had struck it, but the airframe and engine were in one piece. I had got off lightly.

Researching this afterwards, I found out that the famous elliptical wing has a very critical centre of lift – at exactly the $\frac{1}{4}$ chord point. The neutral point is very near this position. Therefore, the balance for the plane should have been at nearer $\frac{1}{4}$ chord, not $\frac{1}{3}$ chord.

Adjustments

Again, on the 4-letter site, I was so fortunate to eventually find a second hand OS 1.20 FS surplus III pumped engine. At £250 this was too good to miss and I was lucky enough to get the buy-it-now again. It turns out the vendor was a reputable show flier who changed engine most years, so I got a well-treated fairly new one. Perfect! I bought a pair of more-scale 3 blade props (heavier than 2.) After learning how to plumb the pumped engine, all was good. I added an on-board glow battery as far forward as possible too and purchased a device that would turn it on below a certain throttle position.

This is the one plane I have, that you always switch on with the throttle stick at FULL.

Even with this heavier engine, it was still not enough to shift the weight forward. In order to balance the airframe, with its short Mk V style nose, I was still going to have to add considerable nose-weight. At/near the front of the cowl, this came out at a truly massive 20 oz. I could not think of where to place the astonishing number of weights needed. As the cowl and fuselage are one-piece, access is restricted and mounting points at a premium.

Eventually I decided I must either fill the spinner with lead, or find some way of making a lead necklace for the engine inside the cowl. The spinner idea seemed fraught with problems, balance issues and even danger. I plumped for the necklace approach. I half-filled a "Smith Kendon" boiled sweets tin with some very dry sandpit sand, thoroughly mixed with a moderate amount of 3-in-1 oil. Into this I pressed a masking tape reel and a PTFE tape reel so that I had a mould sufficiently large and deep. I weighed out the required amount of lead and heated it (careful to keep everything dry or lead can spit) and cast the massive weight. It came out at 95 mm outside diameter with a 40 mm diameter hole, 10 mm thick.

My daughters had some hot chocolate cups with pink plastic lids – with a hole through which an electric motor mixer had protruded. After delicate enquiries I repurposed one of these lids into a holder for the lead necklace. It was a perfect fit and allowed me to fit many screws – through the cowl front lip, through the pink lid and into the lead. This many screws should hold the weight, at least for a while. Once installed, the machine balanced just aft of $\frac{1}{4}$ chord and has flown very nicely ever since.

Lessons

With the Spitfire (well, at least this one) the neutral point is very near this $\frac{1}{4}$ chord position. Therefore, the balance for the plane should have been roughly $\frac{1}{4}$ chord, not $\frac{1}{3}$ chord. At 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (or



400 mm in Euros) chord, this is a full 1/12 chord different – or about 1 ¼” (33 mm) further forward – quite a considerable distance.

On the other hand, my two metre Phoenix 2000 glider seems to have a wing that has maximum thickness at around the half-chord point (and the spar is located there) and it is still behaving in nose-heavy ways even though the balance point is almost at 1/2 chord – far aft of where one might expect.

When buying a second hand plane – or even flying one after a break, with no documentation, please do your research before assuming it will balance at 1/3 chord like any other.

Russell's Christmas Prezzie and Christmas Draw Prize...

Not expecting to win the first prize in the Club draw I had asked my wife to buy me the Double Trouble for Christmas but also liked the Balsa wood Ruckus too, it was a difficult decision to make..

Now having bought an awful lot of draw tickets and a lot of luck, I own both! So now having unboxed them here is my first thoughts and a couple of pictures. I will try and remember to take some photos as I complete both builds.

The Maxthrust Ruckus was well packaged, with no ironing of the covering required, top quality build IC or electric.. but electric or IC?



The double trouble yet again we'll packaged, good build and good quality covering looks like the hardware is good too let's see how the assembly goes.

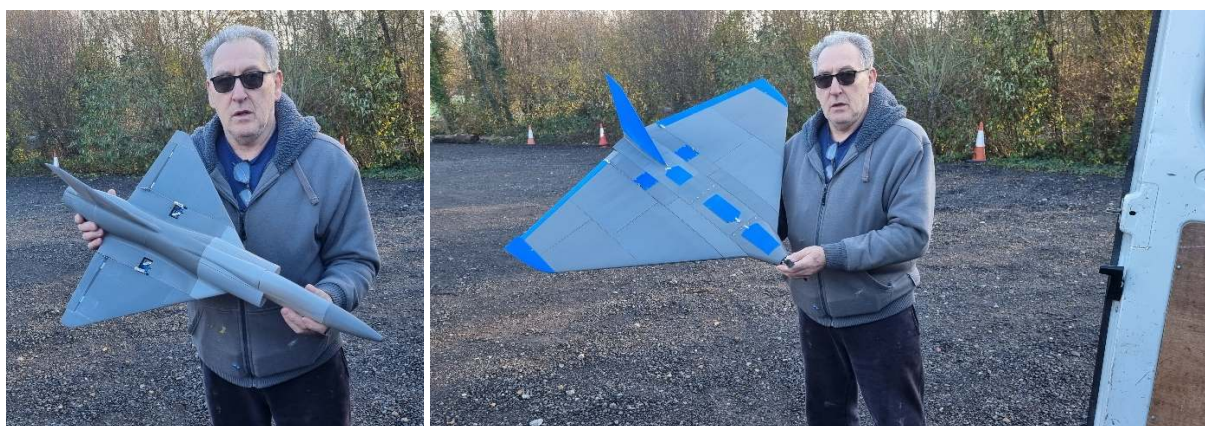




Pete Clark's been 3D printing again.

Pete has been 3D printing again and as these ones are much lighter than previous models that he has created they have a much greater chance of being successful in flight. Although 3D printing is time consuming these model probably only cost around £30 in raw materials (plastic filament) so these can make very good value airframes, with the benefit that any broken parts can be easily re-printed.

Can't wait to see them flying (Ed.)



Pete has also been refurbishing a model he made earlier, this model a Saab Viggen has a 70mm ducted fan and is made entirely of foam board, at first the colour scheme looks a bit weird until you see a full size one with its camouflage colours. I am not sure if Pete's style is cubism or modernism though.



While on the subject of home-made models.... *Found on the internet.*

It reminds me a bit if the windmill that Pat Parsons documented building after he moved up North (not telling us at first what it was going to be). Hopefully Pat still reads our Newsletters ?

Hey Pat, If you do, get in touch and let us know how you are doing.





Step back in-time

Once in a while we all need to be taken back a bit. So this month there are THREE 'Step-back in time' moments....

1. My First Year (6 months) with the Firebirds.... By Chris Fisher (FIRST PUBLISHED IN 2016)

My first real experience of the model world was when Russell dragged me along to Sandown race course where there was a yearly Model show complete with a flying display, these Sandown shows stopped some 10 years ago, so that shows how long ago it really was. We went year after year to these shows including increasingly longer journeys to places like Hop farm in Kent and most recently Weston Park just North of Birmingham.

At the first few shows I just watched while Russell made purchases and talked about ailerons, glow fuel and dihedral (I didn't have a clue what dihedral was), I just kept him company and bought burgers, hotdogs and a drink or two. Eventually I did dip a toe in the water a bought a helicopter, it was a clever design by Snellflight and used an umbilical cord so you could learn indoors without the need for batteries or refuelling. I never mastered it and it went in a cupboard, that was probably 15 years ago, but don't worry I will keep the story short!

As a spectator I watched the hobby evolve and change, but most important for me I saw the introduction of Li-Po battery technology, brushless motors and affordable 2.4Ghz transmitters I had always been afraid of those messy oily IC engines, those easily damaged shiny aerials and the time involved in building an aeroplane from a plan and a pile of Balsa wood and tissue.



Everything came together for me in 2015 when I bought an electric CUB plane complete with brushless motor, prop and fitted servos in the 'bring and buy' sale at that Weston park Model Show I mentioned. Then a quick look around the trade tents and I bought me a New Spektrum Dx6i transmitter and receiver.

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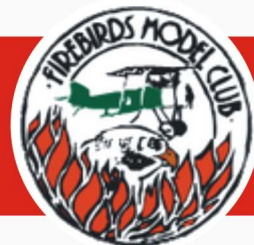
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March 1993 Kindly mention AERO MODELLER when replying to advertisements 15



So, I was all ready to go and all for under £200, even better news, by joining Firebirds half way through the year even that was half price so everything was just perfect. Well almost....

Having paid my membership and working out how to negotiate the various warehouse locations at HobbyKing.com to get some extra batteries, I was charged up and ready to go and as I had spent many hours practising on my Clearview simulator at home, I expected that I would be solo within a few weeks! ... Surely it couldn't be that difficult!

So there I am, my pretty, bright yellow Piper Cub is prepared and ready, Russell is going to check her first to see how she flies, remember I bought this at a Bring & Buy sale, just added the receiver and the battery... No history, no log book, no manual.... No C of G information!

I was now a fully paid up member of a flying club with a transmitter and loads of batteries but with no C of G information, the Cub never completed it's maiden flight and stalled on take-off resulting in a crumpled pile of balsa.

My fixed wing model flying experience didn't get off to a very good start!

At this point I realised why being part of a good flying club is so important, several people I didn't know came up to me and told me not to worry, it was one of those things, it is part of the sport... it may even be fixable!! Really genuine people who had had similar experiences and could offer genuine good advice based on their experience. 'You mustn't' give up' they said. The decision was quickly made to shelve the Cub, in preference for a slightly more suitable trainer, something I could purchase and fly relatively quickly, I had the club membership and now wanted to use it.

I read many reviews and watched loads of YouTube videos of various trainers and ultimately decided to purchase a Century UK MaxThrust Riot, principally as it would fly on the same batteries I had bought for the Cub.



I bought it Mail order and It arrived in just a few days unbelievably easy to assemble: Join the 2 halves of the wings, fit the tail parts and undercarriage and 'et voila' a ready to fly airplane easy to fly and completely unbreakable....

But, I feel another lesson in hard knocks coming.

So all is going well, I am now flying regularly on a buddy lead with my instructor Russell, although I am starting to realise that this flying 'lark' is not as easy as I thought it would be.



When I am at the flying site and I see model military jets (EDFs) flying past at unbelievable speeds and aerobatic planes flying knife edge just feet from the ground, I realise how much I still have to master.

The most difficult thing I found whilst mastering this 'flying thing' has been over- correcting, which is then made worse when incorrectly over-correcting the 'wrong way' and then adding a bit more because the aeroplane still isn't correcting...

RUSSELL... You have control!!!

I don't know if it is a regular experience, but the other issue I had was concentration, first flight of the day pretty good, second flight much better, third flight of the day and I start making mistakes and feel less in control, fourth flight of the day RUSSELL... You have control!!! This effect also comes into play after a longer flight, things feel good for the first few minutes, but as the flight comes towards its end it can be a welcome feeling to be back on the ground.

What I hadn't mentioned previously was that my daughter was already a junior member of the club (although due to college and work she only flew once during 2015), so I had visited the flying field on previous occasions so sort of knew how things worked. One important thing, I never quite worked out who was allowed to sit in the deckchairs, were they just for committee members or only the older members. Perhaps was there a specific chair for the chairman? I didn't want to upset anybody and sit in their chair!

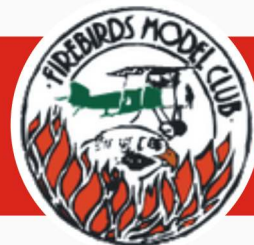


After a few visits I realised that actually all the members were pretty decent people and after just 2 months I actually sat in one of those chairs... or at least until Pat arrived!!

As I have got better it has been strangely difficult to accept the positive and generally complementary words of Russell my instructor as, although I had just taken off, done a figure of eight, a square box shape and then landed and it almost feels like you haven't just done it. Being on a buddy box makes you feel somehow that your instructor is still doing something although they didn't once take control.

So, as I say my flying was improving and my confidence growing, I would easily get this cracked by Christmas (I thought)... Perhaps I shouldn't have thought it... As, second flight of the day mid-flight I flew out towards the scout camp, and prepared to bank right for a landing approach, flying is starting to be fun (again thinking to myself)... then, just as I came back around bringing the nose towards the pits... nothing, nothing at all, absolutely no control !

RUSSELL... You have control !!!



RUSSELL... You have control!!! ...but he didn't either, he too had nothing.

This hobby could get expensive!



Yet again the members of the club came to my assistance, suggestions as to why and how I had suddenly lost my radio connection, theories included an underground mains cable, interference from the Car Racing boys or possibly a less than 'full range' receiver, now from experience perhaps the cheap deal on the 'Orange' receiver from Hobby King was simply 'too good to be true'.

During my first six months with the Firebirds I made an effort to get involved, attending the Hamble Club Meetings and during the summer the Barbeque at Rowhay Farm.

One meeting at Hamble was particularly good fun when several members brought their indoor helicopters and tried flying all at once. It always seems to be the same faces at these events, but I am told the club has many more members than it sometimes appears.

While mentioning the meetings it might be worth mentioning the clubs committee too, it is obvious to a newcomer of the hobby that running a flying club isn't all laughs. Apparently just 2 guys take responsibility for mowing the runway and paddock area, which needs doing twice a week in the summer. I guess there is also somebody at Firebirds Model Club who does the membership, the book keeping and the web-site, all for free.... Thank you guys for keeping the club going and giving me something different to do on a Sunday morning!

Anyway back to the story.... I managed to repair my Rage Riot I found something called Gorilla glue, expensive but certainly does what it says on the tin, I glued the tail back on and replaced the Prop, the motor and the all-important receiver with one that specifically said full range and had two antennae on extended cables so they could be diversely positioned and actually protruded through the airframe.. Never again am I going to risk my airframe for the sake of a few pounds extra on a receiver.

So my original plan was to have this hobby cracked by Christmas 2015, not a chance! Flying model aircraft is much tougher than I thought. There is so much to learn, the occasional repair to do and then there is the weather, too wet, too windy, too cold....

I guess I will have to bite the bullet and pay my next year's subscription, perhaps I will have it cracked by Christmas 2016!

Update...

So now it's 2022 - 5 Normal years and 2 Covid years later and yes, I admit, I can now fly but one thing that hasn't changed is getting something interesting for the Newsletter.. Send me your stories. [Ed.]



2. I am not the only one looking through old stuff

Russell dug this out over the Christmas holiday, I think Sharon had him tidying cupboards, he reminisces that the day was really good fun, but I don't think any of those scouts became members.

FIREBIRDS MODEL CLUB

FLY LINES

September 2009

Some of the Scouts who visited the Firebirds Club

See page 2 for full report

Don't forget the Club Meeting on the 17th September

There will be a talk by Eric Mooney who flew a Jumbo jet and lost all four engines



SCOUT VISIT TO POPLARS FARM

The Scout visits to our Poplars Farm flying site on Monday 24th and Tuesday 25th August were very successful. A total of 33 Scouts were introduced to our sport, with activities including flying demonstrations by club members, computer flight simulator training, and the chance to fly a model using the buddy-box system. The Scouts were also given an Aerojet glider to build, and these were tested in an informal flying competition. Prizes for the two 'best' models were also awarded. Ron Colmer, ably assisted by Emma, was 'Head Chef', serving burgers to club members, and crisps and soft drinks to the Scouts. The Committee would like to thank all those members who gave up their valuable time to help out, and/or loan models and equipment. A particular vote of thanks goes to Jim Fynan and Dave Hoppe for running the Aerojet and flight simulator activities respectively, and to Russell Lewis, Geoff Griffiths, Martin Rudgley, Paul Adams and Gaz Holland for being the buddy box training instructors. Pete Clark and Kevin Cross joined them in giving excellent flying demonstrations on both days. Terry Jacobson and John Potterton also played key roles, ensuring that the trainer models didn't run out of fuel and that high safety standards were maintained throughout. It's not that long ago that all we got from the Scout Camp was complaints. The feedback from the Scout Leaders is that all the Scouts thoroughly enjoyed their time with us, so hopefully they will be a lot more understanding in future. They also presented us with a donation of £50, which together with the £50 already received following the Beaver weekend last month, has more than covered the club's costs arising from these events



Before the onslaught



3. From - Aeromodeller magazine 1993

I [Ed.] had a read of an old magazine over Christmas it belonged to Tony Knight and had the original plans for a control line model that he had made in it, but what I always find interesting is the old adverts.

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PAW 2.49 R/C.....	£34.00
PAW 29.....	£40.00
PAW 35 R/C	£45.00
OS 20 FP R/C	£35.53
OS 35 FP R/C	£40.44
Irvine 20 R/C.....	£40.82
Irvine 40 R/C.....	£55.21
Super Tigre	£51.16

**THE MODEL SHOP
(Guernsey)
18 Fountain Street
Guernsey, C.I.**

**Many more Aero and
Marine. New Zealand orders
welcome. Send 50p P.O. for
lists. Duty free-Export only.
VAT Liabe UK customers.**

I had a look on the internet and there is still a model shop in Fountain street Guernsey (but now at number 34) alas Michaels Model shop is no longer there.





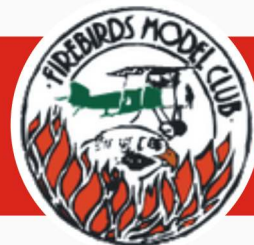
A Strange kind of humour



“Is that a gun in your pocket, or are you keeping your Batteries warm?”

Did you know that our Li-Po batteries perform less well when they are cold and should never be charged in zero or sub-zero temperatures (or above 50 degrees C if you are interested).

Perhaps now my attempt at a witty meme makes sense.



NEW Flying times : (from December 2021)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Quiet / Electric	Electric & I/C	Electric & I/C	Electric & I/C	Quiet / Electric	Electric & I/C until 2pm then Quiet / Electric until 4pm	Electric & I/C
10-00	10-00	10-00	10-00	10-00	10-00	10-00
20-00 or dusk NO NIGHT FLYING	16-00	16-00	16-00	20-00 or dusk NO NIGHT FLYING	16-00	13-00

Or put another way:

<i>Quiet / Electric – NOW everyday of the week</i>		
Monday	10-00	20-00 (or dusk) NO NIGHT FLYING
Tuesday	10-00	16-00
Wednesday	10-00	16-00
Thursday	10-00	16-00
Friday	10-00	20-00 (or dusk) NO NIGHT FLYING
Saturday	10-00	16-00
Sunday	10-00	13-00

<i>Electric & I/C – Five days a week</i>		
Monday	NO FLYING	
Tuesday	10-00	16-00
Wednesday	10-00	16-00
Thursday	10-00	16-00
Friday	NO FLYING	
Saturday	10-00	14-00
Sunday	10-00	13-00

'Bank Holiday' exceptions to the above.

Good Friday 10am - 1pm (electric and IC)

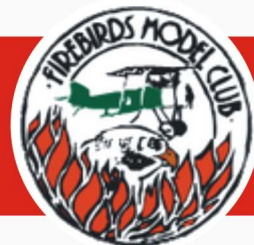
EASTER SUNDAY ... NO flying!!

ALL BANK Holiday Mondays - 10am - 1pm (electric and IC)

CHRISTMAS DAY... NO flying!!

Firebirds Model Club

News, Views & Information - January 2022



Poorly club member

Continuing thoughts and good wishes from the committee to all poorly members.

FUTURE CLUB NIGHTS - Advance notice

ALL ** Postponed ** due to Covid 19 restrictions.

Club Information

This section gives a summary of club services and contact details.

External Events

If you need more details on any particular event, then go to <https://bmfa.org/Contests-Events/Contest-and-Event-Calendar>.

Firebirds Model Club Committee

The following are the contact details for the Committee. Each has given permission for their phone number and email addresses to be included in this Newsletter.

Chairman	Russell Lewis	023 8056 1397	russell@pilot1.co.uk
Vice Chair	Peter Clark	07867 557964	psclark911@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Alan Shergold	07973 221915	alanshergold@hotmail.co.uk
Secretary	Rob Cope	07795 996549	copes02@ntlworld.com
Flying Site Rep.	Paul Brown	07730 202510	paulprb@gmail.com
Safety Officer	Geoff Griffiths	023 9265 5931	ggriffiths@hotmail.com
Membership Sec.	Keith Warwick	07887 486040	keithw11@hotmail.co.uk

Firebirds Constitution and Rules.

The Firebirds constitution and rules document can be found at the bottom of the 'about us' section on the web-site or by clicking the following link.

<http://firebirds.org.uk/onewebmedia/FIREBIRD%20CONSTITUTION%20%26%20RULES.pdf>.

Remember... Safe flying is no accident.