

**Oct 2016**

## **Wot? Slave driver**

**Chairman Mat wants another work party! Will this lead to calls for his resignation? Unlikely.**

**Rain at both Saturday training sessions! Is the Chairman to blame?**



Editor- Tony 'the member's champion' Parrott

## **Astro-turf turns into Astro-moss. We must act now says chairman.**

With the out-field cut and Des doing a top job of keeping the grass in check our moss covered, weed infested Astro-turf had for some time not been everybody's first choice when picking a landing site. Fortunately, thanks largely to the efforts of Mike Faul normal service has been resumed. Almost singlehandedly he's managed to remove the majority of the grassy clumps that were tripping the planes up. There is, however, much more to do.

Some of you, I'm sure, will remember our last moss eradication work party. Probably for all the wrong reasons. For the benefit of those that weren't there the problem was that we'd attempted the operation during the dry season and the moss had set like concrete. What we're proposing this time around is an assault during the damper months. We know this going to be a whole lot easier as the moss is already softening up and quite easy to remove. If you'd like to have a pre-work party go then you'll find all the tools you need in the club hut. Mike and I did just that and found we could half fill a bin bag in around fifteen minutes.

The work party date for your dairies is Saturday 29 Oct and we're looking at a 10am start. Obviously the usual offer of free tuck at lunchtime applies and we're going to move the morning training session into the afternoon. Jobs include the aforementioned turf cleaning, a small amount of painting and the laying of some more of the grass protecting mesh.

## **Stuff to do**

Looking ahead to the 13 Oct we've the hugely popular 'Build a glider competition' club night at the Battle of Britain. The club will once more provide the balsa and ballast. You need to bring your own glue, tools, cutting board and first aid kit. This year first prize is a £15 Brentford Models voucher while the runner up gets a tenner. It's also highly likely that at this event some of the contents of recently deceased Bill Mercer's hanger/workshop will be up for sale. So bring some cash.

You've also got indoor flying to look forward to at Vyners School with dates being; 21<sup>st</sup> October, 18<sup>th</sup> November, 16<sup>th</sup> December, 20<sup>th</sup> January, 17<sup>th</sup> February and 17<sup>th</sup> March. All sessions run from 19.45- 21.45.

Even further ahead the AGM's set for the 8 Dec.

## ***Thanks for the invite***

Big thanks to Watford Wayfarers for inviting us to their recent club night which featured scale Guru John Greenfield. Sadly I couldn't make it but those that did thought he gave an excellent presentation. Just last weekend Peter Emmanuel got the chance to see John's massive, half-scale Klem at the North London Club's large model day. Pete reckoned it to be the star of the show.



***Big field+ big sky+ big model = big fun***

## ***Training days***

Starting a couple of weeks ago we've now run our first two designated Saturday training mornings. Thanks to rather poor, rather wet weather on both occasions the turnout wasn't the finest but there was some flying and these sessions are set to continue until at least the New Year. Normal club flying is most definitely not restricted whilst the training is underway. If fact we want to encourage it. Contact Mat or myself for details.

## **BMFA Scale Comp**

Yet another event I couldn't get to. So thanks very much to Frank DS for supplying the pics. By all accounts, a very enjoyable day. The sun shone, the bbq was fired up and we played host to around twenty-five spectators from our club along with around ten competitors.



## **Long term Project???**

I must admit I've a few kits that have been sitting gathering dust for a few years but that's a blink of an eye compared to Roy Lanning's Liberator. Bought during a trip to America for £300 back in 1997 this 90-inch span, Jack Stafford kit is only now nearing competition. And by near I mean before the end of the decade. Ultimately it's to be finished to replicate the very coastal command plane his father flew on. Which, incidentally, is credited with sinking U-boat 534 just days before the end of the war. Total build cost looks to run out to around £1500. Now, while that looks expensive, when you factor in time that actually comes out about sixty quid a year.

**No rush Roy**



## **Charge!**

Now this is a field charger! Built by Ian at Coolice, for Roger Darvel, this features a 2400w power supply, CellPro 8 charger, serial charge leads, bump-controller, 12 and 24-volt outlets, USB charger, multiple cooling fans and remote controlled, colour changing LEDs. Both Mat and I use Coolice power supplies but nothing on this scale.



## A sad ending



Unfortunately this month I have to report the deaths of club members Dave Clow and Bill Mercer. Despite both of us being members for a number of years I'm not sure Dave and I ever met but Bill was a good friend. In fact I was asked to speak at his funeral and shed some light on his modelling activities to friends and family who had little idea what he got up to both at the field and in the workshop. If you'd like to know just what I said then read on.



Bill Mercer

*When I first joined the local model flying club I thought Bill Mercer lived in the club hut. How else could he be there so often? As I got to know him I learnt that on the very odd occasions he wasn't at the field he led an ideal existence. He was happily married, had two daughters, was already a grandfather and would at a casual glance appear to have been completely normal. However, as we all know, appearances can be deceptive.*

*In the aeromodelling world individuals that are 'a bit different' blend right in and yet even amongst a club full of such people Bill stood out as being 'just a bit more different'. How so? I hear you ask. Well most modellers buy, build and fly. That was not the Bill Mercer way. Instead he took on the unloved, the unfinished and, his personal favourite, the massively crash damaged. Bought for pennies or, more often than not, gifted, Bill threw nothing away and as a result had a huge parts inventory which meant there was little he couldn't repair using stuff he already had in stock.*

*To the non-aeromodelling amongst you many of his projects were the equivalent of building a one thousand piece, s/h jigsaw puzzle after the original owner had lost, or badly damaged, around half of the bits and no longer has the box lid. You know, the bit with the picture on it. Tricky? Obviously but he thrived on the challenge and the greater the damage the greater his resolve to get the plane back in the air. And success was the norm.*

*In recent times, whilst still rebuilding at a feverish pace, I think it's fair to say that he wasn't flying anywhere near as much as he used to. Three flights were now regarded as a very busy day as he adopted more of a spectator role. However when he did pick up the radio his flying never looked rusty or ragged. He had smooth, flowing style which suited well the warbirds he flew. He fully*

*understood the size, shape and complexity of the various manoeuvres and the speed necessary to make them look realistic.*

*This all too infrequent hands-on attitude changed however with the purchase of a radio controlled, Baja Buggy. Bought for pennies, obviously, at a bring and buy sale it was truly horrible. It didn't run, it didn't steer, the body didn't fit and much of the radio gear was shot. Undeterred he retired to his workshop with the little bug and when he emerged some time later the initial results were truly unremarkable. Okay so it steered and the radio worked but the body still didn't fit and whilst the engine now ran on an occasional basis it also over heated.*

*Most people, assuming they'd been daft enough to buy it in the first place, would have by now kicked the buggy into the bushes. But then Bill was not most people. With patience bordering on obsession he then spent the next four or five weeks, both in his laboratory and at the field, fabricating and testing new components and various modifications. Ultimately he was rewarded with a vehicle that wasn't entirely useless. It ran, stopped, steered and finally had a shiny blue body on it. True it still wasn't the most reliable, it had a habit of quitting at the far end of the field, and he was haemorrhaging money on fuel. What's more, bearing in mind it rarely made it all the back to him, he'd probably walked more in the last two months than he had in the previous ten years, but he absolutely loved it. He had his mojo back.*

*For sure any normal person would have bought a brand new, much more reliable, electric version for a very similar amount of money. But being normal? I don't think Bill would have been comfortable with that.*

