



NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2003

Editor : Michael Sullivan

HERE TODAY, GONE TOMORROW

Fears that “travellers” were about to invade Harefield, brought on by the sudden appearance of a dozen horses depositing their dung all over our flying field, have retreated. At the time of going to press only a single horse was left, though that could change.

Flyers arrived one morning to find the horses grazing on our field, which was covered with horse dung. The “travellers” were encamped near the village of Harefield and there was good reason to fear that they had their eye on our field. Local police reported that they had found a small group of them breaking through wire fencing which gives access to the Harefield site at a point along the narrowest part of Springwell Lane. The landowners were persuaded to post notices declaring a deadline for the horses to be removed but they were ignored. The RSPCA took an interest, as did an organisation for the welfare of horses and the tenant of Stocker’s Farm, who was anxious that his own horses should not come into contact with the new arrivals, which were in poor condition. Such is the reputation of travellers who move their vehicles and caravans onto private property that some of the more valuable contents of our clubhouse were removed in anticipation of what could have been a disastrous break-in. But by the beginning of April all but one of the horses had disappeared and we live in hope that our Harefield site was being used only as convenient, free grazing. In fact by then, members had fallen into an efficient routine. A quick circuit of the field with shovel and wheelbarrow removed the horses’ overnight deposits and the horses themselves meekly complied with a polite request for them to move off the field and out of sight, into the rough.

We all hope that is the end of the story. But it is important for us all to be extra vigilant and extra careful about carefully locking up the clubhouse and the entrance gate. And please report any developments IMMEDIATELY to Leon Taylor or any other committee member. Their telephone numbers are on your membership card, which you should carry with you.



NO PHONE CALL – NO MODEL

Members **MUST NOT** venture on to Stocker’s Farm in search of a model without first telephoning the farm for permission to do so. Stocker’s Farm lies beyond the trees directly in front of the clubhouse (see the aerial map inside the clubhouse door). The farmer, Mr Richard Orr, is friendly enough. He does not object to retrieval of models but does not like to be taken by surprise by people appearing on his land without warning. He asks that he should first be contacted by telephone on 01923 773763 or mobile 0775 209 7093. These phone numbers will be posted inside the club house door. But if you don’t fly beyond that tree line anyway, which you should not, your model will not end up on Stocker’s Farm. Observe our flying boundaries, please.



LEFT: This powered hang glider appeared over our field on a sunny weekend in late March. Mike Pugh delayed take-off with his Corsair while the pilot took a good look at us, apparently thinking about dropping in for a cup of tea. But he thought better of it and buzzed off to the North.

The next meeting on the Thursday, 10th April will be a Table Top Bring and Buy Sale. So bring along any items you wish to sell and money for any goodies that will be there.

TENDERS ARE INVITED from anyone who fancies taking on the job of applying a new coat of paint to our clubhouse and container. Green, of course. Contact Treasurer Peter Nielsen on 01494 675716 or Leon Taylor on 01494 672004.



LEFT: Now this is a man who looks pleased with himself, as well he might. He who covers his model in transparent Solarfilm has nothing to hide. Terry Poole took 15 years to get round to building his Ben Buckle Super 60. Once a free flight design, it is ideal for electric power – in this case, a BR 400 with a 2.5 to 1 gear box. But it was not quite the pussycat you might think. Lacking one of those clever speed controllers which won't let you switch on when the throttle stick is set at full power, Terry's pride and joy leapt forward on the table at the field and bit him savagely. It cost him 24 stitches in a hand, which was gashed for its full length. That was last year. The pretty Super sixty will be back this season.

CANAL DWELLER RESCUE

Member Stewart Wilkinson has forged a warm relationship with one of the boat dwellers in the canal beyond our field, who rescued his downed model. Attempting to land his Jaguar Delta across the trees to the left of the clubhouse into a stiff breeze Stewart found himself the victim of the dreaded turbulence and lost control. His model disappeared below the treeline. The following day a note attached to our entrance gate announced that the Jaguar had been found. The boat dweller had seen it descend into the brush, rowed across the canal and retrieved it almost unmarked. An unusually happy ending – another of Stewart's models, which disappeared in that direction last year has not been seen since and Alan Butt has yet to locate his big Miles Magister, which also descended out of sight. The moral of those stories is, as always – don't cross that treeline unless the landing direction demands it and even then, you'd better have both the power and the height to get back to the field. And by the way, thought of putting your address and telephone number inside your models, the way we used to?

GO ON THEN – LAUGH AWAY

As expected, the evidence of the presence of a "big cat" at Harefield, published in last month's Newsletter, was greeted with a certain amount of sniffy scepticism. The rabbit hunters who saw it, however, report that fresh prints are still to be found there, along with rabbit bones, which have been licked, clean. Domestic cats have a sandpaper tongue. Big cats have a tongue like a wire brush. If you're on the Internet, look up "Big Cats" and treat yourself to an interesting read. After all, we're not talking about little green men here. We're already up to our necks in exotic wild life. Starting with grey squirrels, coypu and mink, monster catfish and flocks of green parrots!

A few years ago our field was so



ABOVE: This "weapon of mass destruction", was discovered in Iraq by the United Nations arms inspectors in the last days before Britain and the USA launched its invasion of Iraq. It was an unmanned, radio controlled aircraft of some 21 feet span. Fellow journalists were quick to point out to Newsletter's editor that it resembled "one of your models, Sully." Close inspection of the video revealed a strutted, high-wing push-pull machine. There was a horizontally opposed twin two stroke at the back (out of sight in this picture) and a single cylinder job at the front (inset). Perhaps a Xenoa? No mention of the radio gear but it was probably Futaba! Keep an eye open for it at the next Watford bring and buy. Clearer video of the British unmanned spy plane which came down on the end of its own parachute into the city of Nazra during the fighting revealed a neat little twin boom job of ten or twelve feet in span with a broad wing chord and a tractor propeller. The parachute popped out of its box at the rear of the pod fuselage when the engine stopped and it arrived undamaged. Members who are still having trouble with their landings might consider this trouble-free arrangement for getting their models down safely!



muddy after a long, wet winter that it could not be used until May. This year we have enjoyed many cloudless days already in what has been the warmest and driest March for years. The ground is drying out rapidly and the grass is in good condition, **though some rabbit-hole filling would not go amiss !**