

Nov 2016

***Days get shorter, nights get longer! Members ask, 'Is the Chairman to blame'?***

***Could WLMAC beat Heathrow to additional runway? All the details!***



## ***Seven plus wheelbarrow loads of moss removed as Astro-turf reclaimed***

Barely a corner of our site was left untouched at the most recent work party. Out on the Astro-turf we've removed most of the grassy clumps and a large area in the centre is pretty much 'moss-free'. Back in the pits the edge of the main path has been tidied up and very nice it looks to. The inside of the front windows and door of the hut have now been colour matched to the outside and work has started on the roundels on the rear. Meanwhile, further afield, mesh has been added to the helipad to make it an all-weather attraction and to stop the bunnies digging it up.

**WLMAC's chain-gang. New members welcomed.**



With so much achieved we go into the winter in pretty good shape. For sure once spring arrives we'll need to get the tools out once more but barring some unforeseen calamity the 'chain gang' can have a few months off.



**Check out the hut. Not a single drip!**



**Tony Bloomfield-living, and working, on the edge.**



**Dave Orrells - between holidays**

## ***Bill Mercer's fleet finds many new homes***

I'm pleased to be able to report that following Bill's much unexpected death most of his planes, tools and associated equipment have found homes and hangers within WLMAC's membership. Whilst that's good news what's even better is that a number of the planes, some of which hadn't flown for many years, have already returned to flight.

The first to take to the skies, in the hands of Jason Scofield, was Bill's much-flown FMS P-51. Days later Mike Faul had his Parkzone Typhoon in the air. Fast forward just a few weeks and both the Camel biplane and the much larger Super Chipmunk felt the wind beneath their wings with Dave Orrells and John Smith on the sticks. If the nicer weather we're enjoying at the moment continues we could just reach double figures before the end of the year.



Top. Jason flying *much higher than normal*.

Middle. Camel's in the mist.

Right. What a difference a day or two makes. Just a couple of days after the Camel picture the skies cleared and this was John's reward.



## ***Flying site vandalised again and again***

As I'm sure many of you are already aware the combination lock on the front gate was smashed off a couple of weeks ago. In a second incident just a couple of days ago our camera spotted three suspects making off with one of our benches which had been loaded with the plastic sheet that had been covering our pile of top-soil and a small section of Astro-turf. Fearing that this was going to form the basis of a bonfire the police were informed. However following a site visit by me and Pete Williamson early Saturday morning we've decided to take no further action at this point. What we found was the missing bench had been used to block the road around 100m from the carpark. They'd also grabbed the metal bench from the helipad and used that as an additional barricade about 20m further down the track. The sheet and turf remain on the missing list and I suspect they now form part of a new woodland camp.

Pete and I have put both benches back but they are heavy and it's just possible that even shifting one to the side of the track may be beyond some of our less able bodied members. In effect that would have meant they couldn't have made it all the way to the hut and would have had to reverse over 100m before being able to turn around. Having watched the reversing skills, or lack thereof, of some of our members in the carpark that manoeuvre could have taken days.

Obviously, we'll be watching the camera and you lot need to be watching where you're going. Around this time last year I found an 18-inch long drill-bit laid in the track that had quite clearly been placed there to spike a tyre. And it wasn't that many years ago that the old, single-bar metal gate was swung across the track. In that instance Stuart Wilkinson's car was written off.

## ***WLMAC could get additional 'restricted use' runway***

I know it sounds unlikely but it's true. What we're considering is opening up the helipad to 3D foamies. But, if it happens, there will be some restrictions. For example, anyone using the pad will have to be confident in their ability to keep the plane inside the area cut by the tractor. Any infringements will be treated just as seriously as they are on the main field.

At this point in time not even test flights have been carried out. Once they have, and assuming they've been successful, then we still need to establish a flight-line and look at any restrictions we may need to make regarding size and weight of models along with pilot competency and times. As you can see this is some way from being a 'done deal' so until further notice the helipad remains off-limits to everything that isn't an electric helicopter.



## ***At the field***

As many at the field already know, because I have told them, scale helicopters are way cooler than scale fixed wing. Well flown scale helicopters are so cool in fact that it's just possible they could slow global warming. With that cleared up I make no apologies for using yet another large picture of Chairman Mat's Bell 429. On a scale of one to ten, I'd give it ninety-seven. By way of a comparison even the very best scale plane at our field would struggle to get an eight.



I've been lucky enough to fly it on a number of occasions and, as long you respect its size (1.5m rotor disc) and weight (around 7kg) as well as fearing the cost of even a moderately heavy arrival (£800 and counting), then for the most part it's a big pussycat. However, if you're overly aggressive on the throttle then you'd better be on your A game as far as the rudder's concerned. And if you descend too quickly through its own rotor wash then no amount of throttle or rudder's gonna stop it burying itself in the dirt. Worth the financial risk? Absolutely, fear concentrates the mind.

## ***Chuck glider evening***

WLMAC's recent, and annual, chuck glider building and flying comp has to be one of the most popular club nights. No mid-airs I'm aware of this time but there were plenty of instances of planes flying into competitors and spectators. Perhaps we should add a prize next year for the best homemade head protection? Just a thought. Congratulations this time around to Chairman Matt who won longest flight with Stephen Emanuel a close second.



## ***Looking ahead***

You've also got indoor flying to look forward to at Vyners School with dates being; 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.

Check out the WLMAC website, events section, for more info and updates.