

AeroPost

Do let us know your thoughts on AeroModeller and aeromodelling in general. We're happy to receive post to the Doolittle Media office address, or emails to editor@aeromodeller.com – all are read although you may not get a reply. Featured letters may be edited.
Regards, Andrew Boddington

LOCKDOWN SALVE

Mr Boddington

I greatly appreciate your magazine, especially during this period when I have been repeatedly told to self-isolate! I have tackled boredom by purchasing on eBay a kit for the Japanese seaplane 'Shrike Commander'. At 5ft wingspan it is far too big for me as I have nowhere to fly it, but it was the only kit I could find which looked interesting enough. After some two months I can report it nearly complete, only the covering & painting remaining.

It has been a curious experience mix - the rather old Japanese blueprint plan has so much crammed into it that it is indecipherable in places and there are a number of parts missing from the kit. At the same time, the balsa blocks are precision cut and fit beautifully together. Well, it matters not that I have had to guess how to fit some bits together because I left out all the radio control gear and the two 5cc engines & fuel tanks. I cleared out all my workshop stuff with

accumulated model gear a couple of years ago as I am having to face up to not being mobile enough to fly anything. But building this kit on my desktop has been interestingly challenging and well worthwhile as "lockdown medicine"!

So, back to reading the current issue of AeroModeller. Many thanks to you and your team for sparking me off again! I'll have to hang this model from the ceiling eventually - wife permitting!

Regards

Frank Lukey - an old geezer.
Penistone, near Sheffield

Hi Frank,

What a great story. I'm glad to hear you have kept yourself challenged over the last year with a flying model, even if you don't fly it. Keep on building - perhaps there is something smaller that would be suitable to fly locally to you?
All the best, Andrew



Frank Lukey has found that building a larger model is just what he needed during lockdown.



July 1961 AeroModeller Nats report had this photo of George Copeman with his speed model.



Northwick Park club continues despite a reduction in flying space over the years.
www.northwickparkflyingclub.co.uk

NORTHWICK PARK CONTINUES

Following the March article from Roger Cooper about Northwick Park in the 40's-50's it was great to hear from the present club Chairman Sean Mendis. He pointed me at their website which has other history of the club from which the following is an extract. www.northwickparkflyingclub.co.uk

There is recorded knowledge of Model Flying in Northwick Park since the mid-1950s, and well before that full-size primary gliders were flown there too (see Horizons: The history of the Air Cadets by HR Kidd).

In the fifties, flying was largely based around control-line models, and you can read about it in Peter Scott's reminiscences from a link on the club site. Peter and George Copeman

were early members of the Model Flying club and pictures of them at the Nationals appear in the AeroModeller of July 1961. Peter was also attracted to gliders and when a very young Sean Bannister appeared at the field one day, it was Peter who introduced him to the sport. Sean was incredibly inventive and competitive and went on to design his own gliders, and subsequently became world champion in RC gliding with his beautiful Algeba.

Even in the sixties, around the time when the northern part of the park was ring-fenced for the new NHS Hospital, there were complaints about the noise from the residents of Norval Road, on our southern boundary. All engines, big and small, were 2-strokes at

the time and some of these complaints were probably justified. Permitted flying times were drastically cut to two hours on Wednesday and four hours on Saturday.

A few years after, Brent Council began to issue permits to flyers of IC engine aircraft. Fees were levied and Park Wardens would sometimes visit in a policing capacity to enforce the rules. Individual flyers still continued to come to Northwick Park, and we were introduced to the sport in 1985 when "Hungarian Joe" taught us how to fly our first RC trainer, a Precedent Hiboy. Often bare-bodied, save for a pair of blue military-surplus shorts and sandals, he had a great white mane, and a shock of white hair that made him look like Methuselah, perhaps even older. Latterly, to increase flying time, he took to glider flying and flew as often as the weather permitted. I shall always remember his solitary glider, suspended, satellite-like in geo-stationary orbit, in the skies above Northwick Park.

Another charming character was Victor Sassoon. Often, he would arrive at dawn, before the wind had picked up, and commenced test flying his free-flight rubber-powered aeroplanes. It was a weekend in late 2016 that Victor spent his last days in Northwick Park hospital; a fitting place if ever there was one, as it overlooked our flying field.

After the launch of our website by Rajan Mendis three years ago, there has been a gradual flow of newcomers to our club, though membership is nothing like what it used to be; current membership stands at 20. Most members fly fixed wing aircraft and one of the latest exciting activities is air-to-air photography.

Best Regards, Sean Mendis