

Leek & Moorland Model Gliding Association

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Dec 2009



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Important --

Would you send anything for publication in our newsletter to Ted Horton who is the new Editor. Please please keep sending in your Pictures, tip, articles, anecdotes, etc because without this help the club's newsletter will slowly die and that will be a real loss

Ted Horton
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Front Cover This is one out of my collection . I'm not sure who took it or what the model is (It could be a Slingsby T21 The picture was taken from the pool site looking toward the road leading to Thornecliffe. Note the Mermaid Pub on the left

Editorial

Those of you who were at the AGM will know that I've finally decided that it's time to hang my editor's boots up. I don't suppose it will be the last time you hear from me because, God willing, I shall still continue to contribute to its pages.

Over the years, I've tried to produce a newsletter that was both informative and reasonably light-hearted. Whether I succeeded or not, only you can judge. There have of course, been odd time when I've deliberately set out to be controversial; this was only in an attempt to stimulate a response from you lot of reluctant writers. In most cases, I failed miserably - Maybe I wasn't controversial enough.

I think most of you know my views on the need for a newsletter of some sort in a club like ours; after all I've harped on about in many times. However, for the benefit of our newer members and in the hope that it will encourage you to continue to support our new editor, I'll give it another airing.

With a membership, that covers such a large geographical area and with slope soarers requiring several sites depending on wind direction; we are lucky if we ever get to know more than a handful of our fellow members. Therefore, I have always believed it vital that some form of communication exists to link us all together; to give us some tangible evidence of belonging to a club other than a membership card. Members should also have some method of voicing their own thoughts and opinions throughout the year if they wish and not just at the AGM. I can't think of anything that fulfils this roll better than a newsletter or magazine.

Finally, I would like to say a big thanks to all those who made the effort to send something in for publication; particularly those of you who helped me out on more than one occasion.

There have been times when I've stared at the 20 plank pages of the next newsletter and not had a single thought in my head as to what to write about. Your letters ~ articles and photographs were often the seed corn that got me started and for that help, I was truly grateful –.

Ivan Bradbury



Like all famous and talented stars; I've developed this knack of presenting my best side to the camera.

An Unusual Liberator Crash

By Ivan Bradbury

Conflicting evidence

The old memory cells are strange animals . Something that happened only yesterday will already have been consigned to the memory trash bin never to see the light of day again; yet events that happened many years ago can be recalled at the drop of a hat. The big problem with long term memories however, according to psychoanalysts, is that they suffer from a wee bit of embellishment with repeat telling so that their accuracy is highly suspect. I suppose this is true with most anecdotes. Nevertheless, I do believe there are a few incidents that happen during a lifetime that are so remarkable in themselves that they leave an indelible mark on the gray cells that last unchanged for a lifetime. Like for instance when I was fourteen years old and saw a four engine



The B24 Liberator was produced in greater numbers than any other American combat aircraft of WW2 and still holds the record as the most produced U.S. military aircraft. It went through many modification during its life time

American Liberator Bomber fly so low that it flew straight into the top of a tree less than a hundred yards from where I was sitting. It eventually ended up crashing (two miles away) in the nearby village of Brown Edge.

On Tuesday 15th August 1944 I was sitting on a wooden slatted seat at the front of Knypersley's (pronounced Nypersley) cricket ground's pavilion. The match in progress was between Charles Hallowes XI and E.A.Martindale XI. It was in support of the local men and women in the Services.

I'd forgotten who the teams were but found this info by contacting a Mr Butler, who is one of the current officials at the club. Mr Butler kindly

sent me a copy of a program of the day along with other pictures

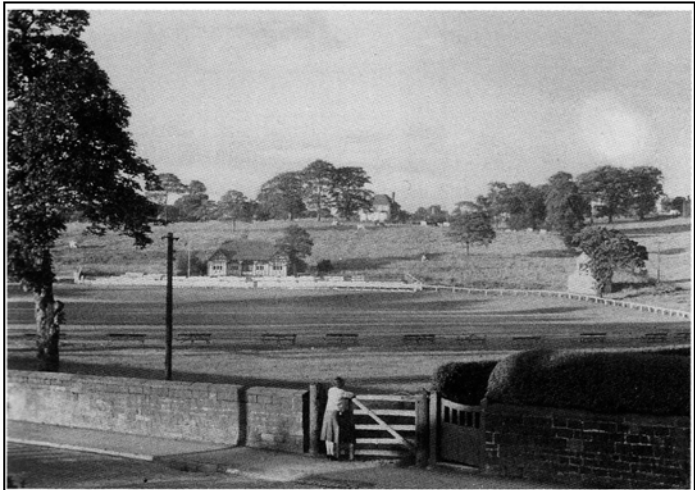
It had been almost four years since the outbreak of WW2 and the D-Day landings were a month old.

By this time, the sight of aircraft flying overhead was commonplace and spotting and naming

aircraft for lads of my age, had become the equivalent of today's train spotters. However, unlike today's aircraft, specks at the front of vapour trails, most WW2 aircraft flew quite low and were easily recognisable. Occasionally, a Spitfire, Hurricane or Mosquito would flash over the village at roof top height accompanied by waves and rousing cheerers from us youngsters

I don't know what the state of play was when I saw this Liberator fly over the cricket ground in a southerly direction.~ at a gestimated height of about 1000 feet ~ It would have passed off as the normal run-of-the-mill stuff if it wasn't for what happened a few minutes later.

A few minutes after the Liberator had passed I heard what I thought to be another aircraft but this one sounded much lower and louder. At first I couldn't see it, but suddenly a Liberator appeared to my right coming over the A527 at twice the height of the houses. (50/70 ft) It flew the length of the pitch before climbing slowly following the contours of the rising ground on my left quickly disappearing from sight over the top of the



A picture of Knypersly Cricket ground taken around the late 1930s early 40s The flight path of the Liberator was from the left to right. The tree it hit is just off shot on the right side of the picture where the ground starts to rise. Picture taken from the road side of the A527

Note the trees on the rising ground. (far side of the pitch) Most of these are no longer there today.

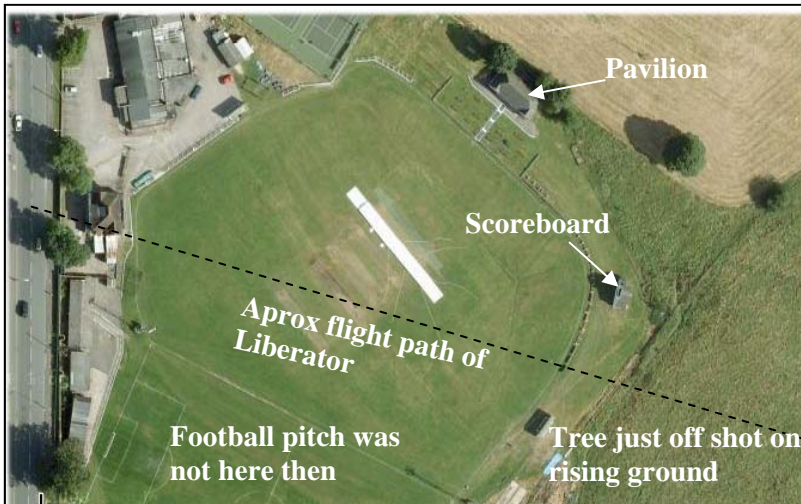
ridge. (It must have circled right round because it was still travelling in a southerly direction.)

A few minutes after the first pass, the Liberator appeared again at about the same place but this time it was even lower. As it passed the boundary fence it levelled out at about 20/30 ft and flew over the cricketers in the out field.. It was low enough to temporary stop play.

There was a change to the sound of the engines as it neared the left hand boundary which later I realised must have been an increase in engine revs. The nose of the plane came up slightly and just scraped through the leaves at very top of a tree but the wing and tail end of the plane slammed through the tree lower down sending down a shower of leaves and small branches. Black smoke started to come from one of the engines on the starboard wing as it climbed once more up and over the top of the rising ground.

Later that evening I heard that the Liberator had crashed in a field at Brown Edge (about two miles from Knypersley cricket ground.)

A couple of years ago, my wife bought me a book for a Christmas stocking filler called ‘ Peakland Air Crashes (the south) by Pat Cunningham’ It’s a book that gives details about aircraft crashes in and around the southern peak district, one of which was the ‘ Knypersley Liberator’ crash



Aircraft passed from left (over the A527) to right hitting the tree just off the picture Many of the trees on the rising ground have now been felled.

The author had done quite a deal of research into the archives of these crashes ~ a list of the crew and their names ~ whether they survived the crash ~ cause of the crash as far as could be ascertained etc. What shocked me when I first flicked through the pages of the book was the sheer number of aircraft that had crashed on non-operational flights (enemy not involved) just in the southern Peak District, 7 of them in the Roaches area, one of these was a German Junkers Ju.88] There were 74 crash sites listed in the book

Throughout the war, aircraft losses were a daily occurrence. Many of those that happened in this country happened during training sessions or as a result of poor weather; but the only ones the general public heard about at the time were those losses due to enemy action and these figures were probably massaged down somewhat in a game of propaganda to fool the enemy and to keep morale high on the home front. Because aircraft losses were so numerous, investigation into accidents were very primitive compared with today's black box technology and piece by piece reconstruction and scrutiny. Then it seemed to be mainly based on some officer taking statements from any surviving crew (which was rare) or eye witnesses.

After reading Pat Cunningham account of the Liberators crash, I wrote to him and gave him my version of events because they conflicted somewhat with the account given in his book. We exchanged several emails and he sent me the original draft report. The basic facts from this report had been covered in his book ~ it said :>

An American crew were sent to RAF Warton, east of Blackpool, then the American Base Air Depot Area No.2, (the near-equivalent to the RAF Maintenance Unit), to collect a newly-modified B24 (it had been modified to drop leaflets) and ferry it back to RAF Cheddington. , near Luton. Accompanying them for the ride was Corporal Grace Starkey, a Women's Air Corps nurse.

After takeoff the undercarriage refused to come up but the flight engineer overcame the problem and a course was set for RAF Cheddington. Gradually the pilot became aware of a certain unusual response in his aircraft. The control input was jerky, and excessive trim was needed to keep the machine on course. On occasions it seemed reluctant to answer corrections at all, and near Biddulph (just down the road from

Knypersley cricket ground) it suddenly performed a self-initiated circle to the left despite any contrary input he applied. At this he decided to return to Warton, only when he banked left the aircraft entered a dive which needed the co-pilot's aid to recover from.

Between them they managed to get the nose up but they still struck a tree, damaging the tailplane and the right-inner engine which cut, and burst into flames. Hastily applying the maximum power left available, and dropping a stage of flap, the pilot successfully lifted the machine over a looming ridge, but now found that neither his rudder nor his elevator would answer. The plane then commenced another left-hand turn, this time threatening to take them into woodland, so he banked right with aileron.

'The plane was going sideways,' he reported to the police next morning, 'and I could get no control over it. We hit the ground on our right wing; in doing so the plane turned around and skidded backwards. We came to a stop against a stone wall... The plane caught fire and was completely destroyed. All crew and passenger escaped with only minor injuries



Front cover of the programme from the match
 Note the price! For you young 'uns. That's less than one of today's pennies

In my letter to Mr Cunningham I said that I had thought about the incident many times over the years and in hindsight, after almost a lifetime of interest in aircraft and a spell in the RAF. I had come to the conclusion that the accident was most likely the result of a bit of grandstanding on the part of the crew/pilot that went wrong. (Don't forget the age of most aircrews at the time were between the high teens and the low twenties. Young men in this age groups are the high risk car drivers of today) . I told him that his book had triggered my thoughts about the crash again

and reading it made me question the accuracy of the crews account for the following reasons.

a) There was no mention of the first low pass over the cricket ground in the report.

b) The report said that it took both the pilot and co-pilot to regain control of the aircraft after it had gone into the dive, if this were true I would have thought the pilot would have tried to regain height as quickly as possible after such an inexplicable loss of height. However, on both passes, the plane came into view from my right flying straight and level. On the first pass, the Liberator maintained this course and height for the length of the pitch and then only slowly climbed up following the contours of the rising ground at the far end of the pitch. On the second pass (The one in which the Liberator hit the tree) the plane came in even lower and flew a level course over the pitch. On both passes, the plane seemed to have been flown accurately and under control. This hardly suggests that the pilot had encounter a sudden loss of control and was struggling to regain control and height.

c) The increase in revs just before the plane hit the tree suggests that the pilot didn't see the tree until the last minute or misjudged its distance and tried a last minute steep climb to get over it.

d) If the plane suddenly performed a self-initiated circle to the left as it flew over Biddulph despite any contrary input being applied, as the pilot said, I would have thought it odd that he would have risked deliberately banking further to the left to return to Warton before trying to sort the problem out.

e) The aircraft was flying south from Warton to RAF Cheddington. After completing the alleged left hand turn back towards Warton it should have been travelling in a northerly direction – yet when it flew over the cricket ground (at the bottom of the alleged dive) it was flying almost due south.

I suggested to Mr Cunningham in my emails that I thought the crews' story was a bit of a whitewash job to cover up what was probably a bit of grandstand flying that went wrong, or, the pilot may simply have been trying to impress the female nurse??

Mr Cunningham said that the term 'Whitewash' although very

descriptive, had never been used in an air crash inquiry as far as he knew.

Maybe I should have been a little more politically correct in my choice of words and said, "That in my opinion, the crew's report of the crash had been somewhat economical with the truth."

For Sale

- *2 Futaba 35meg. Receivers
- *Easy Pigeon electric Glider (airframe only)
- *Fledgling two channel glider with Servos and Battery
- *Electric powered glider with motor, gearbox, folding prop and ESC

Ring Rex on 01782 518814



Liberators were made in several converted car assembly plants in the USA.
By 1944 650 per month were being turned out at Ford's Willow Run Plant



Dave Read



Graham Gibbons with his PSS Hawk on the Roaches



‘Fly me to the moon and let me play among the stars’
Photograph sent in by Ken Buckley



Russ Booth is another one of our members who can remember the hit and miss days of flying with single channel radio gear



Jim Harrison joined the club in 1976 but was flying model aircraft long before that

I think we should send this picture to the Peak Parks and Natural England to show that this Buzzard like other birds couldn't give a Tinkers Cuss about model planes

Sent in By
Ken Buckley



Do You Just Belong

Sent in
by Eric Parr

Are you an active member
The kind that would be missed
Or are you just content
That your name is on the list.

Do you attend the functions
And mingle with the crowd
Or do you stay at home
And grumble long and loud.

Do you take an active part
To help the club along
Or are you satisfied to be
The kind that 'Just belong'

Do you ever come along
And information seek
Or leave the work to just a few
And talk about a 'Clique'

There's quite a programme
scheduled
That mean success if done
And it can be accomplished
With the help of 'Everyone'

So why not come along
And help with hand on heart
Don't be 'Just a Member'
But take an active part



Graham Gibbons U2 doing a knife edge turn on one of the good days in October



John Matthews has been flying on our slopes from the early 60s He was one of the original 12 members who started the club at the Weaver Hills in August 1973

Barry Gilman

I was saddened when I heard that Barry had died on the 1st November aged 83.

Barry, like me, had been hooked on anything that flew from his early teens.

I first met Barry quite a few years ago at Blackpool and Fylde Aero Club when a group of modellers from Leek and a few guys who worked with Barry at ICL Kidsgrove hired the airfield and the club's aircraft for a weeks gliding course.

Over the years I found that he was a font of knowledge particular on anything to do with gliders be it full size or models.

I saw more of him after he'd decided that he was getting a bit too long in the tooth for the riggers of full size flying and returned once more to the Leek hills.

From around 2002 until a couple of years ago Barry was a regular contributor to our newsletter. It was during this time that I came to appreciate his dry sense of humour, breadth of knowledge and his love of gliders

I'll let Barry have the last word because it sums up beautifully how he and all those who love slope soaring feel at the end of a good day on the hills.

(An extract from one of his many articles)

" There is something very special about soaring with a horseless aeroplane whether it be a model or at full size. Spending time with like-minded fellows in glorious hill-country, guiding these heavier than air devises to defy gravity and climb upwards in those invisible jets of air has a very spiritual quality. Anyone who has not yet descended from a hill site at the end of a good flying day feeling genuinely uplifted has that unique experience to come. Don't miss it!"



Barry was a real gentleman from the old school of modellers. I was privileged to have known him has a friend and I will miss him.

Ivan

Letters

Phil Clarke is a regular visitor the USA (his son lives there) A few months ago I told him the he could be the Club's equivalent to Alistair Cooke; Alistair was a BBC correspondent who broadcast a weekly spot on the radio called 'Letters from America' Wearing my editors cap, I said that the next time he visits his son I would expect his 'Letter from America' . He took me at my word and at the end of September I got this email.

A quick note to let you all know that, in spite of having to go 'all the way around the houses' to get here (i.e via Atlanta), I did eventually manage it though the journey seemed endless. Both good flights though - still a 767 to cross the pond with an MD88 for the internal flight.

Have already found 'Spackle' and 'Goop' here in the basement workshop so I might bring some back and try it on the 'Halfpipe' when I get round to building it. The Spacle looks identical to the lightweight filler we already have but I shall bring some anyway.

Believe your weather is good at present though the wind direction needs to change for us Derby lads. Have just had a quick peep at the Thorncliffe weather and it looks as though Friday will be your best day. Sorry I'm missing it at your end but I am not missing out really because the weather here is superb - clear blue skies with a wind speed of about 8 m.p.h.



This is Phil on a rather a cool Easter Monday 2008 at the gate.

First job last Friday was to programme the spare 6-channel tranny for the 'Greensleeve' and put everything on charge. That done, Saturday saw the maiden flights which went wonderfully well - we had two ten-minute sessions each without touching anything but, unbelievably, there was no thermal assistance. Made a few adjustments afterwards like adding coupled aileron/rudder to improve the turns and also putting in some down elevator on the throttle stick to stop it going over on it's back during the climb. Tried all these changes out yesterday afternoon and with a little help from very weak thermals Jonathan managed 50 minutes of flying time including some low fly-pasts for the camera.

When you think of what a crap kit it was the end result really is very pleasing. Checking the battery after yesterday's session he had used 1597 of the 2200 mAh capacity (Flightmax 2200 25C 3S1P) which we could hardly believe. It's got to be the climb. Today's job - some wingtips to make it look prettier and maybe as Ken suggested, afford a bit of extra protection for the ailerons. If they are not ready by the time Jonathan gets home from work, we shall no doubt go and fly again anyway. - eh! - three days on the trot - can't grumble at that.

All for the present. Set off for Reno early Wed. a.m. (i.e.0200 hrs.) Will send second report on return, probably next Monday. Take care-



Phil's in warmer climes supporting a couple of models at the 'Reno Air Show' USA 2009
The model on Phil's left looks as though it could have a centre of gravity problem

Letter No2

Thanks for sending me Septembers News Letter: makes very interesting reading. Maybe we should all opt out of the BMFA since they don't seem to represent the modeller at all when there is a problem!.

Hope you are all enjoying some decent flying weather. After a wonderful few days at this end which enabled us to get numerous flights with the 'Greensleeve' - see Letter No.1 - and also a cracking four days at the Reno air races, the mid-west is now having more than it's fair share of rain (and that includes us) so it looks like the weekend before we can get out again. The crystals I bought on the previous trip so that Jonathan and I can fly together don't seem to work so am off to the model shop this a.m to get them changed.

Hi Ivan,

I have to agree with some of articles in the recent news letter, such as skill versus luck.

A golfer was once told, after he played a very good shot, that he was very lucky. He replied in an instant saying that he had noticed that the

more he practiced the luckier he got !

I also question the value in buying the cheaper engines available as I have found most to vibrate, use lots of fuel and struggle to hit reliable runs for more than a few minutes.

Now I am questioning the use of Spektrum radio sets, I've never seen so many aircraft lost to radio problems of some sort.

Keep up the good work.

Regards Ian Skeldon

*A report of the second Aero-Tow meet at Camphill
By Andy Wagstaff*

Rob & I started cutting the frost bound grass for the take off strip at 7:30 a.m. using the club mower. There was a gentle SE wind that stayed with us most of the day. The conditions were perfect for the event with light cloud and plenty of warm sun. 23 modellers turned up with the usual variety of well turned out gliders and tugs. Flying commenced at around 10:00 a.m after a slow start mainly due to registration formalities and the modellers chatting amongst themselves. People say women can talk! John Vaughan's wife and Simon Cocker got stung by an angry wasp. Simon offended the insect 3 times although it did not seem to affect his flying.

The flying continued without a break until 5:30 p.m. Tug pilots took turns with each other towing up to 1800 ft and



A group of tug and glider pilots with Rob Faulkner in the foreground checking out who is the next in the queue for a tow

above. There were few incidents with the exception of my canopy detaching itself on the tow up. Luckily somebody taking a movie of the event enabled me to find it in the long grass on the other side of a dry stone wall about 500 mts away. Another, had an unplanned crash landing down the west slope somewhere. Luckily with minimal damage.

As the Camphill club do not fly full size gliders on Mondays during the winter months, Rob is trying to arrange for either slope or aero towing to be made available to local modellers on a less formal basis. Nothing definite yet so watch this space.

Thanks to all those who attended and especially the tug pilots who made the event possible. We plan to repeat the event in April 2010.



The start of the day's towing at the pits~ it got quite crowded as the day progressed You can see the freshly mown take-off strip to the right of the picture

Note::

Next year's subs will be £10 with a 20% reduction if paid before the end of February (This means that the subs will still remain at £8 for prompt payers)

This is an attempt to make the accounts easier to keep and to discourage existing members from flying before they've got round to renewing their BMFA. Some have been leaving it until late springtime.

AGM Report

Meeting opened 2.03 pm with Ivan thanking every one for coming

There were 30 present

6 Apologies --- K Hooker, M Ollier, S Ravenscroft, A Ray, A Jervis, A Wagsraff

Offices Report

Keith Rathbone gave out copies of this year income and expenditure and then explained them in details. Copies are available on request send a stamped addressed envelope to Keith.

Ian Webb and Simon Cocker said that the only incident this year had been the accident extensively reported in Septembers Newsletter,

Scott Ravenscroft report was read by Ivan in which he said the there had only been one competition held this year due to a combination of poor turnout by members and bad weather. He went on to say ~ I was reading an old newsletter the other day when Carl Baker was Comp Sec. His comments were that he does not think the club needs comps due to the unwillingness of the general membership to get involved. I can not agree with him more. It seems it is always the same people doing the thankless job of running this club, lots of people giving suggestions not one of them willing to actually do anything. Unfortunately due to this I wish to stand down from Comp Sec. I look forward to reading the minutes of this AGM, maybe I'm wrong and there will be loads of names put forward to be on the committee, giving you and Keith a well deserved rest. Anyway I hope you are all well and look forward to flying with you soon
Best Regards Scott Ravenscroft

Ivan Bradbury said that more members were now receiving the newsletter by email . Now only 40 members are sent hard copy

Keith gave a detailed report of the club's involvement with a recent accident on our slopes in which neither the BMFA nor the insurance underwriters, Royal & Sun Alliance, came out smelling of roses

Considering that both parties were members of the BMFA there had been a gross lack of help and guidance from the BMFA in filling in accident/incident reports leading to a misunderstanding resulting in the RSA turning down the claim It was only as a result of many phone calls and letters sent to the different bodies by the club and a threat of legal action that had eventually resulted in an amicably settlement.

It was proposed and passed that all members of the committee must get their BMFA insurance via the club

Next years subscription will be £10 however, if it is paid before the end of February it will remain at £8 ~ a 20% reduction for prompt payment.

An alternative insurance to the BMFA was discussed but it was felt that with so many constraints put on flying sites by other insurance companies, it would be impossible for club officials to verify whether a person was covered to fly on all our sites

Manny Williamson BMFA official has offered to give the club a talk on insurance. It was asked if there would be sufficient interest amongst member to take up Manny's offer. People at the meeting seemed to think it was a good idea so it has been decided to pursue this sometime in the New Year

New Club Rules

The club rules have been up-dated to include all the amendments passed in the last few years like:: club policy for the care of children and vulnerable adults.
powered models safe flying

Election of new Officers

Ian Webb (Safety Officer) Scot Ravenscroft (Comp Sec) and Ivan Bradbury (Newsletter Editor) said they would not be standing for office again

New Officers

Stewart Howard was elected to be Safety Office

Simon Cocker would be 'The Events Organiser' (Note change of title)

Ted Horton was elected to be Newsletter Editor

Keith Rathbone would continue to be Treasurer/Secretary

AOB

No other points were raised

Keith Powell thanked Keith Rathbone and Ivan Bradbury on behalf of members for their effort in dealing with the BMFA etc on behalf of a member's insurance claim.

Meeting Closed



Ian Webb and Ian Buckley doing a bit of high-speed pylon racing with their Mini-Dragons.



Mark Ollier in a Christmas mood



Neil Barnett flying his 3m Dragon



Keith Powel with his Bobcat

A Merry Christmas to You All

Wishing You

Fair Winds

Good Lift

And

Soft Landings for 2010