



Issue 8 - Jun10 - Aug10

Contrails

Newsletter of the Christchurch Aviation Society

AGM - 5th May 2010 held at Druitt Hall

At the AGM, 24 members, including officers, signed in. Prue Ingall was delighted to announce that Chris Christie, a long standing committee member of the society, has agreed to stand as Honorary President.

Prue thanked Steve Bishop for maintaining the website which continues to be a valuable asset to the society and thanked the committee and society members for their support. Prue said that fundraising continues for the new Druitt hall and that alternative venues were being looked at.

John Head reported that bank interest was down to £1 from a previous £34. Subscriptions will remain at £5 which would ensure the society remains in the black. There was £272 in the bank and £2321 in the Building Society. A vote of thanks was given to Pat Brown for auditing the accounts.

Steve Bishop reported that membership forms now have a section for member's email ad-

resses so that up to date information can be sent quickly to those who are on line. The website continues to receive hits from around the world and the newsletter, now available on the web site, keeps people informed.

Steve Robson reported on visits to Solent Sky, followed by a visit to Calshot, and Tangmere museums. Sally Windsor had spoken on Bournemouth airport after the AGM, Steve Billet on private jets but Bob Wealthy's talk on Britten Norman had been cancelled due to bad wather. Mike Phipp's talk in March on Hunter One was enjoyed and his talk on Jet Heritage has been booked for 2011. A visit to Wroughton was planned for the 7th July. Also mentioned were a Biggles event and Charles Rolls commemoration.

The AGM was followed by the talk reported below.

Post AGM Talk - Boscombe Down Aviation Collection (BDAC) by John Sharpe.

John commenced with an outline of Boscombe Down's history leading up to the creation of the BDAC followed by how the Collection has developed.

Boscombe Down activity dates back to 1917 to a site called Red House Farm when BE2bs were the aircraft in operation. From then until 1939 a range of aircraft were in use such as Virginias, Heyfords and the ill fated Battle. In 1939 the Aircraft and Armament Experimental Establishment (A&AEE) at Martlesham Heath near Ipswich was considered vulnerable and was moved to Boscombe Down in the role with which we are familiar with today. In 1943 the Test Pilot Training Flight was created and during that year the slip wing Spitfire was tested. In 1945

Charles Rolls - Commemoration

As reported in the last issue, Charles Rolls was the first aviator to die in a powered aircraft in Britain - this happened on 12th July 1910 during an Air Pageant to commemorate Bournemouth's centenary. On 9th July, the first of four days of events, the sound of the legendary Merlin was heard during a display for St Katherine's school in the morning and a fly past during the unveiling of memorial plaque superbly refurbished by Rolls Royce plc. The plaque resides in the playing fields of St Peter's School and Tony Harrington has been providing guided tours during the school holidays for people interested in seeing the plaque.

Tony is now embarked on the task of raising funds to provide a statue to CS Rolls, there is one at Dover to commemorate his return crossing of the English Channel and one at his birthplace [Cont over](#)

Meetings List

Wed 03Nov10, Gliding by Mike Radice.

Wed 05Jan2011, Jet Heritage by Mike Phipp.

Wed 02Mar11, RAF Engineer by Steve Robson

Wed 04May11, AGM and talk tba

Other Events

Visits in planning

Middle Wallop

Wroughton Museum

CSE Citation Centre

BDAC cont the Empire test Pilots School was established and by 1945 Boscombe Down had 175 aircraft on its books. It was realised that the experience built up was relevant to civil aircraft and the Civil Aircraft Test Section was established in 1946. The Airborne Forces Experimental Establishment from Beaulieu was transferred to Boscombe Down around this time. Notable aircraft to pass through since then have been TSR2, MRCA (followed by the Tornado Operational Evaluation Unit), Pucara and of course Typhoon.



Photo Wikipaedia (not one of the BDAC aircraft!!) John explained how the Boscombe Down Aviation Collection was started in April '99 with a mission to record the history of the site and flight testing along with preserving aircraft that have had involvement at Boscombe Down – to preserve the past for the future. Aircraft in the collection go back to the a BE2b replica, representing the first aircraft to land at BD. The Collection consists of whole aircraft, cockpits,

The Leopard that changed its spots

For the Bournemouth Air Festival the Air Festival team wanted to display an aircraft at St Pauls roundabout but the Vampire used last year was not available. They asked Bournemouth Aviation Museum for help and immediately liked the Leopard and asked if it could be released for a few weeks. The wings and one tailplane needed to be removed for transport and one Sunday afternoon was spent on this the day before moving, although the tail-plane refused to budge until the day of the move when some extra engineering persuasion was used. The Leopard with its new spots at St Pauls roundabout is shown at right. This is one of two Leopards made.



(Photo Howard J Curtis)

Charles Rolls cont in Monmouth so it seems fitting to recognise the place of his death. For anyone interested to help Tony in his quest or visit the plaque please contact him on 01202 428819 or email him at



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BDAC cont and aircraft undergoing reconstruction. Crashed aircraft are a useful source of exhibits from which an able band of volunteers have managed to return the aircraft to their former glory. A classic case was a Sea Harrier that needed its side re-skinning with fuselage members needing replacement. An ETPS Hawk that had crashed at the end of the runway after take off was so badly damaged that only the cockpit could be restored, again with major re-skinning. Other restoration projects include a Swift (nose reconstruction) and a Sycamore (rebuild after heavy landing). A Jaguar that suffered an uncontained engine event produced a useful cockpit; other cockpits, some of which are exhibited around the country, include a former Queens Flight Andover (much modified for Low Light TV and IR trials), BAC 111, Canberras, Hunters, Lightning, Scimitar, Sea Hawk, Sea Vixen, Tornado and Jet Provosts. Whole aircraft include a Phantom, Sea Harrier, Harrier T4, Jindivik, Hunter T8, Jet Provost amongst many others.

John explained that the Collection now operates as a not for profit company as it has a complex relationship between sitting in an MOD environment with a 'private' company, Qinetiq, who operate the site. With such a fascinating Collection it is a great shame that public access is not currently allowed following an adverse fire risk assessment. There is also the problem that the site is 'behind the wire' of Boscombe Down airfield. However, the work of the enthusiasts moves on.