

**CHICHESTER AND DISTRICT
MODEL AERO CLUB
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2004**

AGENDA

1. Minutes of 2003 AGM
2. Chairman's Report
3. Secretary/Social Secretary's Report
4. Treasurer and Membership Secretary's Report
5. Senior Training Officer's Report
6. Safety Officer's Report
7. Competition Secretary's Report
8. Thorney Representative's Report
9. Porthole and Indoor Flying Rep's Report
10. Slope Soaring Representative's Report
11. Editor's Report
12. BMFA Representative's Report
13. Junior Representative's Report
14. Webmaster's Report
15. Any other business
16. 2004 Competition Winners Trophy Presentation

Refreshment Break

17. Election of 2005 Committee members



DECEMBER 2004 2004

CLEAR



In this issue:
Capricorn
Motor Torque &
The Incredible Journey

CHICHESTER AND DISTRICT

Chichester and District Model Aero Club

Committee 2004

Chairman	Peter Sackman	01243-373041
Secretary &	Trevor Bowry	01243-780949
Social Sec.	email address: bobbycadmac@freenet.co.uk	
Treasurer &	Alan Misselbrook	02392-470871
Membership Sec.	email address: alan.misselbrook@talk21.com	
	1 Swarraton Road, Havant, Hants. PO9 2HH	
Snr. Training Offr.	John Riall	01243-782922
Safety Officer	Tony Chant	01243-828506
Competition Sec.	Morris Campbell	02392 637728
Thorney Rep.	Harry Walton	01243 375156
Porthole Farm Rep.	Mick Blundell	01243-670791
Slope Rep.	Ron Hemblade	01243-572819
BMFA Rep.	Ken Knox	02392-593104
Webmaster	Lee Hackett	01243 820689
	email address: lee@cadmac.co.uk	
Junior Rep	Gavin Bidwell	01243 861293
CD Editor	Bruce Smith	01243-531602
The Aylings, Queens Avenue, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8QB		
Email Address: aerobruce@aol.com		
Fax to: 01243 531602 but please telephone first.		

Committee appointed positions

Junior Members Protection Co-ordinator:	
Bruce Smith	01243 531602

Visit our new website
cadmac.co.uk

Cover photograph:

Stranger than fiction goes on and Super-Heroes in our midst. Roger and Giles at Itchenor. Intrigued? Read On,

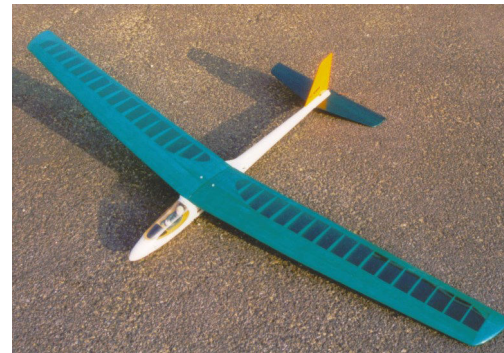
FOR SALE



Precedent T180

71" wingspan trainer
Complete with OS 46 FP engine (very little used), 4 servos, Switch harness, Nicad, Receiver and xtal.
Just fuel up and fly!

£100.00



Graupner Electra Glider

Top quality 75" wing-span slope/thermal soarer which converts easily to electric.
Complete with receiver, xtal, servos, switch harness and nicad.
Charge and fly

£60.00

Contact Bruce on 01243
531602 or aerobruce@aol.com

TeX & ReX by Ecurb



CONGRATULATIONS



To Andrew Gibbs on passing his 'B' Test (F/W) on Sunday 21st November. Tested by Tony Chant and witnessed by John Riall.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

INDOOR FLYING at Westbourne House School
The very last meeting will be:
Thursday December 16th
From 8.00 pm to 10.00 pm

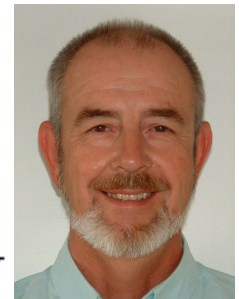
BMFA MEMBERSHIP runs out on 31st December
If you don't pay your CADMAC fees In January
you're no longer a member
You're not insured
And you can't fly on our sites!

Editorial

In defence of Grumpy Old Men...I've had a belly full of duff technology this month. Went broadband to help speed things up - spent two days on the phone to my Internet Service Provider, had my PC at the mend for two weeks only to discover after hounding them mercilessly, that they couldn't find fault with it! Brought it home - no better - finally sorted it myself!! If I boot up the PC with the BT modem attached the PC thinks it's under attack and shuts down all the USB ports - but plug it in once its all booted and running and everything is sweet as a nut. Progress? Didn't think there'd be a Clear Dope this month as I've only had ten days to produce and print it but there's been such a wealth of quality material from our members that its done and dusted and in your hands. Its lovely to receive personal accounts of your findings and expe-

riences. If you haven't already made a contribution, come on, have a go. Another exciting move forward in this issue is the commencement of Trevor Bowry's series on engine related matters. There's very little he doesn't know about aero engines and that's probably not worth knowing. Sadly we've had notice that we're losing Westbourne House School from January, Just as Mick Blundell was wishing to thank all those who came to last month's record meeting which made a profit!! Oh yes - my other techno-gripe. Well you'll come to that later.

HUMBUG!



NEW INDOOR FLYING VENUE

The club have been looking to use the Bosham village hall for some time for in door flying. The hall is not as big as the Westbourne school but it will be ideal for R.T.P helicopters and small planes. The Bosham hall will be less expensive than Westbourne the problem is that the hall is fully booked every evening except Friday evenings as it is the policy of the hall committee not to allow regular booking for Friday evenings but as caretaker I managed to arrange the use of the hall on some Fridays in 2005 ,the first being 28/01/05 starting at 8pm when I

hope that all indoor flyers will come along. I have also booked April July Aug Sept Nov Dec as these are the only Friday available dates at the moment. With the lost of Westbourne I hope Bosham will go some way to fill the gap and if members want me to I will try to get more bookings later. If you want a pint during the evening , there is the Bosham football club next door!



Chairbourne

“A quick overview of 2004 from a CADMAC Committee perspective”

I am happy to report, that under the ever-watchful eye of Alan Misslebrook, our Treasurer and Membership Secretary, the Club ends 2004 in a healthy financial position and with a membership numbering 142.

Mick Blundle, Ron Hemblade and Harry Walton have overseen a generally trouble-free and enjoyable year of flying at Porthole Farm, the Trundel and Thorney Island respectively.

John Riall and his team have kept on top of the demand for Club pilot training, coming as usual, in the main, from new members and are able to report that a satisfying number of BMFA Certificates were awarded during the year to both senior and junior members.

The Club flying competitions organised by Morris Campbell in his first year in post, appear to have been enjoyed by competitors and spectators alike, although one or two of the events could have been better supported.

In-door flying is still proving to be a good route to providing activity for the Club's free-flight and indoor I/C enthusiasts, with regular monthly sessions being held at Westbourne House School. Mick Blundle did his usual great job in organising these in-door meetings, in addition to his Porthole flying site responsibilities.

On the whole, all of the above Club flying activities have been conducted against a background of generally good safety awareness, overseen

by our ever-vigilant Safety Officer, Tony Chant.

Under Bruce Smith's editorship, our Club monthly magazine has continued to flourish, providing a vital and at the same time, enjoyable and informative membership communication link. Lee Hackett, in co-ordination with Bruce, has steadily built up the Club website to provide an up to the minute Club information source and to provide more general information about the Club to potential new members. In this latter role, it is proving to be a major Club membership introduction route.

Whilst undertaking the above communication tasks, Bruce still found time to put together and to introduce last January, the Club's new 2004 policy on the Protection of Juniors and Vulnerable Adults. This is a trailblazing policy, of which he and the Club can be justifiably proud.

Gavin Bidwell actively represented our junior members' interests in Committee but having reached 18 years of age this November, he will not be eligible for re-election to 2005.

On the BMFA front, Ken Knox has represented CADMAC's interests at the Southern Area meetings, providing an important communication link between the Club and it's Area BMFA representatives. Well-appreciated support was again given to BMFA Southern Area, in the form of a CADMAC flying display team provided for the Royal Victoria Park Model Show held in August, at which John Riall also provided the commentary for the whole show. The CADMAC involvement has become a regular and major contribution to the show's success. Well done to all Club participants. Similar

BITS AND BOBS

WEB WATCH

WW1 SCALE DETAIL

I don't know if we have any WW1 scale model aficionados in the club, but just take a peep at this site. It's quite astonishing.

<http://members.shaw.ca/flyingaces/archive1.htm>

MORE PICTURES TO INSPIRE BUILDING

This is a gorgeous site. Broadband would be a decided asset.

<http://www.wonwinglo.scale-models.net/id23.htm>

HINTS AND TIPS

You might like the tips at this site Bruce but I didn't spot anything about keeping a model afloat!

http://www.rcdon.com/html/hints_and_tips.html

TTFN, Colin Stevens

Editor's Note: I've checked out all these web sites personally and they are all excellent. Colin never sends us any rubbish.

A CHEAPER PAINT OPTION

I have been using a water-based Acrylic paint for colour matching the engine bay areas of my Olive drab Super 60, non-smelly, most colours, quick-drying and surprisingly fuel proof, all at a cost of £1.60 a bottle and available from most local artists and stationery suppliers. Will have some samples to hand.

Louis Louth-Davies

business if they were not), you just have some that are better than others and even that is debatable looking at some of the engines that have passed through my hands recently.

Next month, I am going to look at the dear old glow plug. A poorly performing engine can be improved by a plug change as can pick up from idle. Wildly screwing the mixture needle in and out is not the answer in 90% of the time.

We will look at the various types of plugs available and their effects on performance, followed by propeller selection and finally carburettor adjustment. Now there's a can of worms if ever there was one!

If you have any engine related problems, give me a ring and I will try to solve them for you. If I can't, through

my network of friend's, I will find a man that can!

Maybe, if Bruce has room in Clear Dope, we could run an engine clinic so that everyone gets the chance to identify possible problems of their own.

Until next month, safe flying and non-sticky engines and models.

Trevor.

Photograph - John Riall



PHOTO CALL

Morris Campbell with a smile as wide as his new 1/3 scale Cristen Eagle - and why not?

It flies as good as it looks, Fuji 34cc petrol powered, it's a very well mannered aircraft to fly in all respects but careful handling on operating, these large engines deserve respect.

John Riall

support from CADMAC was given to the Fishbourne Club's successful Open Day also held in August.

Over the year, the proceedings of the Club's monthly Committee Meetings were faithfully recorded by Trevor Bowery our hard working Secretary and in spite of a shrinking pool of suitable guest speakers within a reasonable travelling distance of the Fishbourne Club, Trevor managed to provide an interesting programme of talks and events at the Club monthly meetings. In addition to these "home" events, very successful group trips were made to the year's major model shows. On the financial front, Trevor's "Spot the Plane" competition again played a valuable part in Club fund raising.

The Club Spring auction was again a financial success, with John Riall making his usual major contribution as auctioneer.

All in all, 2004 has proved to be yet another good year for the Club.

I am sure that all Club members will

wish to join me in thanking all the above-mentioned 2004 Committee members for their sterling work on behalf of CADMAC over the past year. I personally would like to thank them all for the full support they have given me as Club Chairman during this period.

Ending on this satisfactory note, I would like to wish all members and their families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

You are invited to a New Year's Eve

BAR BQ & FLY-IN

Friday 31st December

1.00 o'clockish at Porthole

Bangers and Burgers in house

Bring any other food you like

CAPRICORN **From Derek Honeysett**



Back in the mid seventies there was a series of programmes on television called Model Magic, introduced from what I remember by very enthusiastic Bob Symes

One particular program featured radio controlled aircraft, which included a large pattern model being taxied in the studio, followed by some film of it being put through a n aerobatic routine.

This particular model was called a Capricorn and was designed by quite a famous modeller Mike Birch. At the time I was flying a Crescent Bullet and being into aerobatic models I had to have one.

A year or so later I managed to obtain a part kit, which consisted of glass fibre fuselage, foam wings, tail plane and not much else including instructions for the princely sum of £20. For the next 23 years it sat

in my loft, until January 2001 when I decided that I would build it.

It was at this stage that I enlisted the help of friend and fellow club mate Mike Callow, being one of the best model makers in the club I knew his advice would be invaluable. So a large order was sent to Inwood models and building commenced.

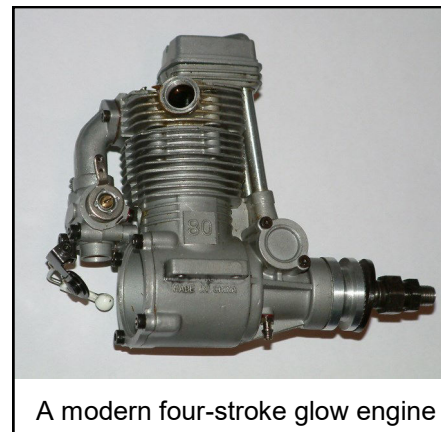
The foam wings and tail plane halves were joined, control surfaces sanded to shape, then all of these covered with glass cloth and epoxy resin. The fibreglass fuselage was of poor quality where the halves were joined so these were reinforced on the inside with more resin.

The next major job was installing the engine I knew this was going to be difficult so I bribed my mate Mike to give me a hand.

unlike our cars!

Still on the subject of 4 stroke engines, the best way to ruin one is to use Castor oil as a lubricant. Castor clogs up the oilways, cokes up the valves and seizes up bearings. Use a synthetic oil based fuel in 4 strokes and you will have a nice clean and free running engines, in fact, if you own a Saito 4 stroke on Castor based fuels, you invalidate the warranty!

Old myths die hard i.e., Castor is the best lubricant, it doesn't break down at high temperatures or pressures, and neither does modern synthetic oils. In my team race motors, I only use 12% oil (ML70) at revs between 20000 and 28000 rpm's with no ill effects whatsoever. A synthetic based fuels is more expensive but it looks after you engine and doesn't cover your model in messy black goo. It can't be that bad because all new motor car engines these days run on synthetic oil and it would be a good move to switch over to it on your 2 stroke motors as well.



A modern four-stroke glow engine

Finally on the subject of 4 stroke motors - use a fuel with a minimum 10% nitromethane content. Four-strokes seem to run more happily on this amount of nitro, it gives better slow running and pick up and it makes the needle setting less critical.

If you are going to lay your engine up for the Winter or a long period of time, if possible take it out of the model, carry out the procedures mentioned above, clean all the accumulated dirt and unburnt fuel off the engine and store it covered in an oily rag. If you have to leave it in the model, do not stand the model on its nose, any rubbish left in the engine will find its way into the crankshaft bearings. In 40 years of engine repair and servicing, bearing replacement has played a major part in the work and replacing bearings is a major strip down something you don't want to do on a fully run in working engine.

I hope that this article has helped some of our newer members to understand their engines a little better, after all in most cases, after the radio equipment, the engine represents a major portion of the expense of getting airborne.

Over the years, I have heard all the myths and old wives tales about engine care and operation and have made a considerable amount of money fixing the consequences of some of them. The same thing applies to so called good engines and bad engines; these days there is no such thing as a bad engine. They are all good (they wouldn't stay in



MOTOR TORQUE

with trevor bowry

Now that winter is upon us, this is an opportunity to discuss engine care and maintenance. This is aimed specifically at newcomers to our hobby but the more experienced members might benefit from the following article.

Simple care and maintenance can keep your engine/s in top condition and keep them working reliably. First steps are at the flying field. After each days flying let the engine run dry. By this I mean don't just shut the engine down on the throttle, but pinch the fuel tubing and allow the engine to stop via fuel starvation. This simple action has removed all the unburnt fuel from your engine. Remove the glow plug, inject 3 or 4 drops of after run into the carb intake and turn the engine over a few times. Repeat this process through the glow plug hole. A lot of people think that after run is an unnecessary expense, but when you consider that when Nitromethane is burnt in the fuel, its by-produce is Nitric Acid! Result, one ruined engine in a very short space of time. If you don't want to use after run, automatic transmission fluid will do and it can be purchased in larger

quantities quite cheaply. 3 in 1 oil can be used; it's better than nothing but on no account use WD40 or other penetrating type fluids. They do what they advertise clearing all the muck and clag from the inside of your engine it sits in the bottom of the crankcase just waiting for the next time you start up. Enter a possible set of ruined bearings and possible liner/piston damage.

Four stroke engines should be treated in the same way with the following additional actions. On the crankcase under the front bearing area or fitted into the backplate is a crankcase breather nipple. This allows surplus oil to drain away from the crankcase. Inject 3 or 4 drops of oil into this nipple and turn the engine over a few times. Stand the engine nose down for minute or so still turning the engine over, finally stand the engine on its head for the same amount of time still turning the engine over. Why you might ask? Unlike a two stroke engine the only lubrication that the crankshaft, bearings cam shaft etc gets is by the small amount of oil that blows past the piston ring/s. No pressurised sump oil systems on our engines

Its amazing what you can get people to do for the promise of food and a trip to the local pub.

With the engine installation complete it was time to finish her off. The wings and tail plane were painted with white spectrum paint and the fuselage in dark blue. Patterns on the wings etc were done with solartrim, transfers made on a computer and the whole lot was sprayed with gloss fuel proofer

With engine, tank and radio installed C of G calculated I was fast running out of reasons why it wasn't ready to fly, after all I cant go on flying my Bullet forever, so the Capricorn was taken to Mike Callows Engine Test Facility [His back garden:] and the engine set up. One thing that became evident from this session is that the Irvine 72 doesn't lack power!

Test flight day dawned and a forecast of a fine day with light winds it was time to set off on the 1 1/2 mile trip to Thorney, before I knew it control surfaces and range were checked, and the Capricorn was on the runway waiting to go! The throttle was opened and off she went.

Once at a safe height the throttle was eased back and a couple of clicks of left aileron trim and that was it, wow! Does this plane eat up the sky! The rest of the flight was carried out at half throttle where lovely axel rolls, loops, Immelmans and huge reversals were tried. Before long my transmitter told me it was time to land, so a landing pattern was flown as per full size and the Capricorn was brought in for a smooth landing, this plane eats up

runway as well as sky!

Over the next few months I flew the Capricorn several times and I think its fair to say that its competition pedigree shows, although I am just a average sports flyer, its very smooth to fly and looks great! It's a pity that I couldn't of fitted retracts but their were enough problems to overcome from what was a very basic part kit.

Whilst I don't have a problem with ARTFs (I have just finished a Flair Swallow) you can't beat the satisfaction of flying something you built and finished. I think John Riall summed it up, he came up to me and said nice to see something different down here!

Recently I have managed to obtain some back copies of early seventies Radio Modellers where I found quite a few pictures of Mike Birch and his various National winning Capricorns, including a colour front cover and full page advert of Mike and his Capricorn advertising Skyleader Radio.

Specifications Capricorn

Type	Early seventies competition pattern ship,
Channels	4
Span	64"
Weight	10 lbs
Engine	Irvine 72
Radio	JR 378

Committee Meeting 2nd November 2004 FPA Club - 8.00pm



Apologies for absence: Peter Sackman, Alan Misslebrook, Gavin Bidwell and Morris Campbell

Matters arising from previous minutes: None

Correspondence: Lee Hackett received an application form from Chichester Library that will enable our Club to go on their records. It was passed to Trevor Bowry for action

Club/Membership Issues: Peter Sackman has prepared the list for inclusion in November's Clear Dope of all candidates for Committee members 2005. Because Gavin had reached the age of 18 he was standing down as junior rep. It was suggested that other juniors be approached.

The update and preparation of 2005 Pilot's Handbook needs consideration and input from the Committee apart from the obvious changes that have presented themselves during 2004.

Monthly Meetings/Social Events Programme: John Riall will give a Wing covering demonstration at the November meeting. The December meeting will be the AGM. A buffet has been booked and Trevor will speak to Alan Litchfield reference the Microphone etc.

Competitions Programme: There will be an "B" certificate exercise at Thorney Island on Saturday 13th November.

Training: Graham Ousby passed his "B" certificate. Nothing to report on Silent Flight Programme.

Safety: Nothing to report

Communications: Clear Dope is progressing well with no problems and Lee Hackett said that the Web Site is also okay.

Thomey Island: Nothing to report

Trundle: Nothing to report except that the new sign is ready to go up. Action Ron Hemblade.

Porthole Farm: The mower now appears to be working okay but an eye will be kept on it for future action.

Indoors Flying: Westbourne House School still continues to lose money. Ron looked at the possibility of using Bosham Village Hall as well but it is only available on Friday's and cannot be easily booked.

BMFA: Nothing to report

AOB: Nothing

Trevor,



My advice to your club members should they find themselves in a similar circumstances would be to contact the Harbour Authority in the first instant-and they would in turn contact a patrol vessel. If out of hours they should contact Solent Coastguard on the non-emergency number and they will in turn contact the duty harbourmaster. A note should be made of the time the aircraft went missing as this will greatly assist in working out where it might be allowing for tide, wind etc.

Roger Young

Harbour Master: 01243 512301

Solent Coastguard 02392 552100

through ferrite rings and the aerial was routed along the outside of the fuselage.

With the Tx aerial fully retracted a range check showed reception in excess of 75 yards so you can perhaps begin to imagine my chagrin when only two weeks later

she flew away again in almost identical circumstances, but this time in a northerly direction!

To be continued.

Roger

sat the Giles - sparkling like it'd just been displayed on the Flair stand at Sandown!

Gently we navigated it back through the office and once outside I gave it a full external examination. Amazingly the only damage seemed to be the displacement of the block on which the steerable tail wheel sits and my guess is that this only happened as the tail stressing wires, which pass through it, were used to hook the plane out of the drink. Turning the prop I couldn't believe how free the engine felt but all was revealed as her saviour explained how he'd come to rescue her from a watery grave.

Roger, who lives in Selsey, has worked for the Chichester Harbour Conservancy for 7 years. He is employed as the full time Patrol Officer, running a team of 8. They basically enforce the byelaws, collect harbour dues and deal with the incidents which occur on the water. This season they have dealt with in excess of 200 incidents ranging from vessels aground, rescuing people from mud banks, boat fires etc. When they found the Giles, he and James Winterton (crew) were returning from rescuing a yacht that had run aground with 5 people on board at Emsworth. They spotted the plane some distance off but were unable to tell what it was until we were virtually on top of it.

Once they'd got the plane back to dry land Roger had set to work on the engine. Few are better placed to know the importance of engine maintenance and my guess is - it wasn't the first submerged engine

he'd ever come across! Having removed the spinner and cowling Roger had then removed the cylinder head and liner of the ASP 1.08 Next he flushed the crank-case out before finally forcing oil through every fibre of its existence including the crankshaft bearings.

What a star!

The reward for his efforts was realised once I'd returned home and set up a temporary control system for the throttle - given a hefty prime the engine started immediately and she purred away faultlessly as I ran a full tank of fuel through her.

The electrics, on the other hand, did not fare so well! Having entered salt water with the circuitry active the whole system would have rapidly deteriorated. On inspection, once they'd been stripped out of the plane it was found that the receiver was severely corroded with components falling off at a touch; the servos were all u/s and suitable only for gear spares; all the servo leads and switch harness were riddled with black wire corrosion and of all the electrical components only the cells of the battery pack seemed to have survived the ordeal.

The air-frame, which did not appear to have warped, was hung in our walk-in, airing cupboard for over a week and on re-immersion the timber seemed to have suffered no damage from salt infusion so once she'd been fitted out with all new electrics she was ready to fly again.

As previously, the receiver was embalmed in three layers of aluminium foil, all long servo leads were coiled

CADMAC ACCOUNT 2004						
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT 2003...2004						
INCOME			EXPENDITURE			
SUBSCRIPTIONS	£6,179.00		BMFA Subs		£2,596.00	
Auction revenue	£57.00					
			Fishbourne Club		£799.50	
Indoor flying	£20.00		Rents.			
			Thorney	paid last year		
Raffles	£135.00		Porthole		£200.00	
Donations	£223.00		Trundle		£117.50	
Sales	£118.39		Trophies		£16.80	
TOTAL	£6,732.39		EXPENSES			
PETTY CASH BOOK			Print Handbook		£40.00	
In hand	£18.92		Gift (Raffe.)		£25.00	
April	£20.00		Xmas buffet		£70.00	
			Bowling buffet		£70.00	
Expenses	£29.81		Moles		£18.50	
Balance	£9.11		Prizes Bowl & Ind.fly		£35.00	
			CLEAR DOPE			
CASH IN HAND			Inks		£928.02	
Sale of Logos	£14.10		Paper/envs.		£201.64	
			Post		£169.58	
			Print 1xmth		£75.00	
			PRINTER		£201.93	
			Indoor flying		£140.00	
			Refunds		£58.00	
			Sundries		£16.00	
			To Petty cash book		£20.00	
TOTAL INCOME	£6,746.49		TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£5,798.47	
FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2003...2004						
INCOME			EXPENDITURE			
Subs etc. from above	£6,746.49		From above		£5,798.47	
Bank interest	£4.71		Surplus / Deficit	+	£952.73	
TOTAL INCOME	£6,751.20		TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£6,751.20	
ASSETS at December						
	2004	2003				
Deposit A/C	£3,376.00	£3,471.79				
Current A/C	£1,309.30	£276.38				
Petty cash in hand	£9.11	£18.92				Prepared by
Cash in hand	£14.10	£10.60				Alan Misselbrook
Book assets	£1,240.00	£1,268.00				Hon.Treas..CADMAC
Unsold Logos	£212.00	£215.00				
TOTAL ASSETS	£6,160.51	£5,260.69				
Membership	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999
	144	153	141	127	107	95

The Incredible Journey



***“There once was a cat of St. Ives,
Who nearly lost all his nine lives,
By sailing the bay,
On a battered tin tray,
But strange to relate, he survives!”***

It was a bright, sunny, afternoon that last Sunday in October. Wispy clouds and a fairly strong northerly off-shore breeze that filled the sails of the various ‘class’ sailing dinghies across the sparkling water of a high tide.

I was really starting to enjoy those large lazy aerobatics which my new (second hand) Flair Giles 202 was pulling. Compared with her predecessor, a pattern ship, it was a real pleasure to fly something not so intent on become a speck in the distance every time you blinked. No, the Giles was nimble but slow. “Very much a one speed aeroplane,” as Adrian had observed. At

her cruising speed she was steady as a rock, predictable and smooth as silk through any manoeuvre but like most scale aerobats of her ilk she had an Achilles heel. Tip stalling. Two weeks previously she’d cart wheeled across the grass, short of the runway, as I’d tried to milk out the glide of a deadstick against a gentle westerly. A couple of years ago, I’d learned from bitter experience’ with a twitchy bipe’ how a plane can just fall out of the sky if you bleed off too much speed on the down-wind leg of a landing approach so today I was taking no chances - a full powered down-wind leg out over the sea, a gentle turn and I’d bring her in low over the runway, well into wind before easing back on the throttle stick - but NO!!!!!!!

What the devil was happening?

Amid my desperate cries of ‘I’ve lost her, I’ve lost her,’ the Giles didn’t turn but just kept on and on out to sea, taking what seemed like ages to roll over and disappear below the immediate horizon, irrespective of my frenzied stick stirring.

I don’t really recall shambling across the runway and through the coarse grass to the top of the banking but I do remember standing with a group of friends looking out across the sparkling water at the forlorn site three to four hundred yard out to sea. Virtually in silhouette, the Giles, inverted and nose down was sailing into the sun-set as the off-shore breeze bore her rapidly away.

We must have stood a full twenty minutes peering and frantically waving every time it looked as though a yacht or a safety boat might be heading our way but all to no avail. We watched in fatal fascination until we could only see the tranquil slick of 5% nitro glinting in the lowering sun and then reluctantly, we resigned ourselves to the fact that although we could see boats, we couldn’t see people and it was highly unlikely they’d ever spot us. So that was that then.

Trance like, in a state of shock I packed up and drove home trying to reconcile myself to the fact that my beautiful bird had had gone for ever and I couldn’t even salvage a solitary servo horn.

In the bar at Fishbourne, prior to the committee meeting that following Tuesday night, I was relating my tale of woe to colleagues when in strides Webmaster Lee. “Any body lost a Giles?” he called in a cheery greeting to us all and it crossed my

mind that that was the sort of sick joke that could easily ruin a friendship - but no - it was a genuine inquiry, he’d just taken a phone call from the Conservancy patrol to say they’d fished a Giles out of Itchenor Harbour and did it belong to anybody in our club?

Having got the basic facts and contact details from Lee, first thing next morning I was on the blower to Roger Young, who’d phoned Lee the previous night.

Roger was off duty on the Wednesday but kindly agreed to meet me over at the Harbour Conservancy Office and so filled with apprehension at a little after 9am I entered the pretty, white, quayside building.

On announcing my presence the attractive young woman on the other side of the office desk laughed and said Roger would be devastated that I’d come to collect the plane, “He’d have loved to take it home,” she said,” and spent all yesterday polishing it!” She called Roger on the internal phone and once we’d shaken hands he led me through the office towards a rearward room. Now I’d been machinating all night long as to what sort of state the Giles would be in, having hit the water at full chat. Considered opinion is that hitting water’s like hitting concrete and you can imagine my amazement and delight when he led me through a door and there, in the middle of the room....