



-----  
**WE MADE IT THROUGH  
2020 - LET'S MAKE THE  
MOST OF 2021 (soon!)**  
-----

## HAPPY NEW YEAR !!

Hopefully everybody is well, and has made the best they could of some 'different' Christmas and new year celebrations.

Although 2020 was a difficult year for many, some things may have changed for the better, we do now have a flying site ready for when things improve and with vaccines being rolled out quickly we may be flying again really soon.

Another good 'new' thing brought about by the need for change during the Pandemic, the BMFA have started running Zoom presentations. I joined one of them just before Christmas and being live it gave a more inclusive feeling. Personally, I would say that the BMFA doesn't do enough for us 'down south', perhaps these presentations will help make us 'southerners' feel more included in the future. The chaps running the meeting watched excitedly as they watched the on-line numbers rise, reaching a record 270 viewers.



You can still watch these presentations, search in YouTube for BMFA.

See you all soon (hopefully).

Chris



## Christmas DRAW !

The Christmas Draw took place on Sunday the 20th in the car-park of our flying site, thankfully the weather remained dry and several members came along with their masks and anti-viral hand gels.

Several members bought tickets before the draw started including me, I bought another £10s worth of tickets and although I didn't check, perhaps it was one of those that won me a prize...

I chose the Hobby King Cessna TTX EPO, hopefully it can fly slow enough for me!



Here is a list of prizes and winners. (made by Rob on his phone)

|            |                           |
|------------|---------------------------|
| Chris      | Cessna TTX                |
| Lee        | Buffalo                   |
| Russ       | Razorback                 |
| Geoff      | Thunderbolt (in absentia) |
| Keith      | Superglue and kicker      |
| Dave Hoppê | Plane stand (in absentia) |



See image right - Rob making the list on his phone.

Images below... 1. 'The long arm' of a socially distanced draw. 2. Russell hiding his 'pleased' smile under a mask 3. Pete Hiding in his van 4. Lee and his Buffalo being 'photo bombed' by Alan.



## **A SNEAKY VISIT !**

Russell and Geoff visited our site on the 9th January (Tier 4 rules allow 2 persons to meet for exercise) they walked across the farm passing by our strip and they confirm that it is still extremely wet, the grass on the strip is both too long for use and too wet to mow.

As they passed the shed, Russell started (although it was resisting), the mower and left it running to charge the battery so we are all ready to go as soon as the world returns to normal.



## THIS YEARS FEES

Adult club membership fee for 2021 is £62. The BMFA fee stays at £38 so the Total payable for most members is £100. If you are a country BMFA member you will just pay the £62 to the club.

NOTE: The above excludes the CAA licencing charges, which like last year the club recommends members do directly with the CAA, and remember your 2021 renewal could be soon for many.

## Paying your membership

OPTION 1. Find a committee members letterbox and drop it in.

OPTION 2. By post - send a cheque to

Firebirds Model club  
c/o 6 Maytree Close  
Locksheath  
Southampton SO31 6NQ

OPTION 3. By Bank transfer

Account name: WARWICK KA (he's our membership secretary)

Sort code: 55-70-05

Account number: 75528037

Use a reference: Your Initial Your Surname and FB (for Firebirds)  
Example: K Warwick FB

## AGM (normally January)

Due to the ongoing lock-down / tier 4 restrictions the committee confirms that the AGM will be postponed until it is both legal / safe to hold properly. All existing committee members have agreed to remain in their posts until the AGM can be completed.

Please contact a committee member if you have any concerns that you would like to raise prior to the AGM.

## Christmas presents anyone?



This potential new member (for 2031/2 season) received his first model aeroplane this Christmas, the model came in kit form, 'almost ready to fly' but luckily for him, doting Grandad took the kit into his shed and showed off his assembly skills. Anybody guess who Grandad is?





## Drones under 250g

Previously, if you flew drones under 250g then you didn't need to register as an operator. Under the new rules from 31 December 2020 if your drone is under 250g and has a camera then you will need to register as an operator and renew this annually. The only exception to this is for drones which are toys. The law doesn't require you to also obtain a flyer ID but we strongly recommend that you do. It is free and gives you an overview of the rules to keep your flying safe and legal.

You can register and gain a flyer ID at [Register-drones.caa.co.uk](http://Register-drones.caa.co.uk)

## \* WARNING \*

Graham Barker whilst relishing in his year of free membership, earned for his sterling work in helping us find a new site, has a rather important warning (and reminder) to us all.

... he wrote.

*Hi all.*

*These pics are the scary result of leaving an apple 8s smart phone plugged into a standard lightning charging lead, for just 2 days. !!*

*The battery had swollen up so much that it forced the rear glass panel to crack and push it away from the surround bezel about 30 mm.*

*The phone battery was well cooked, round in shape, instead of thin and flat, and scalding hot. A £600 iPhone 8s gone in a "flash"*

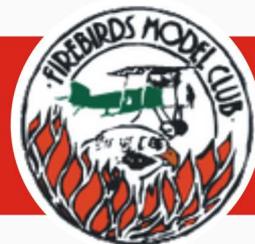
***"The thoughts of the fire it could have caused is unimaginable"***

*So be carefully during any battery charging.*

*Wishing you a Happy and 'safe' New Year.*

*Graham.*





## And now for something completely different – Geoff Griffiths

Back in the 1960s when I first started flying RC, unless you had about 2 months wages to spare control was by a single button! No sticks, no proportional servos, just a single button to control the model. The single “servo”, or escapement as they were called, was operated by a long elastic band which you had to wind up from the rear of the model. It was a bit like steering by Morse Code. Even then it was expensive, just over £300.00 by today’s standards for such a radio set. The models were very different too – much smaller and they had to be tough, as the gear was anything but 100% reliable! But here’s the thing, It was great fun! To take a model home in one piece was a real achievement!

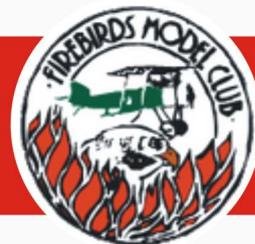


Over the years (and to some extent encouraged by Roger Stanton) I’ve built quite few old designs, but equipped them with modern radio. Yes, they’ve (mostly) flown well, but somehow there has been something missing. With modern radio it’s become almost too easy, and with that, the sense of achievement diminished.

Those of you that read RCM&E will doubtless have seen Shaun Garrity’s Retro Ramblings column. Now his mate, Phil Green has for some years now been producing a very clever little circuit board, that coupled with a 2.4GHz transmitter module will produce the equivalent of those 1960’s sets, but with all the advantages of 100% reliability and using modern servos. I just had to have a go!

A couple of emails later Phil had agreed to make me up one of his magic “emulator” boards. He does these at virtually cost price; £20.00 including postage. It will work with any available 2.4 module, but rather than use the expensive Futaba one, I chose to use the Corona DIY unit. This comes complete with an 8 channel Rx for less that £30.00! All I needed now was a suitable box to put it in. Before the demise of Maplin this would have been easy, they used to sell plastic boxes in all shapes and sizes. Now however, there seems to be nothing similar on the market. What to do? I still had my original MacGregor (yes, it’s the same Company, still going strong) valve transmitter, but I’d built it from a kit and the aluminium box I’d cobbled together was in a very sad state. All that was useable was the nameplate & on/off switch. After much scrabbling around in the backs of cupboards I eventually found an old plastic box of about the right size,





but it was full of holes. It originally housed a launch battery & buttons for the Estes rockets I'd played around with in the 1990's (never did see where they went!) Thanks to the wonder of Isocon P38 filler it was soon whole again and we were in business. It's also amazing what a bit of hammer finish paint will do.

As you can see from the photos, it really is very simple and easy to put together. All that's needed is a couple of old servo leads, a bit of wire and some soldering. The encoder board is the lower one, all the rest is the 2.4 kit. The battery is a 9.6v NiMh. It all worked perfectly. The amazing thing is that Phil's clever little gizmo is fully programmable, even servo reversing, and all done using the on/off switch and button.

All we need now is the end of this wretched lockdown and a bit of decent weather.

One press Right, Two presses Left, and three quick presses will give up elevator. It's going to be very interesting! The Sharkface is just rudder only, but the Wee Snifter has the addition of kick – up elevator.

One last thing, if anyone has a genuine old single channel transmitter they can bear to part with I'd be very interested in buying it. I'd really love to create something that looked genuinely authentic . . .



See you at the field. (eventually)

Geoff

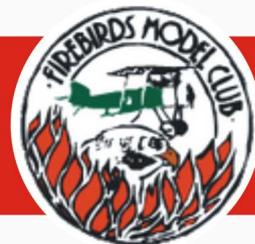
## **BMFA Advice** (received 4 January)

As advised in previous communications the regulations for model aircraft and drone flying for BMFA members has changed and we can now operate under an Article 16 authorisation which you should read up on at <https://rcc.bmfa.uk/article-16>

The Article 16 authorisation essentially means we are able to continue flying largely as we have been doing previously.

There is however a small change regarding remote pilot competence for BMFA members as follows:

From 1<sup>st</sup> January any remote pilot of a free flight or radio controlled model aircraft or drone of mass greater than 250gm that is operating in accordance with our Article 16 authorisation must demonstrate a suitable level of pilot competence by one of the following 3 methods.



1. Have a valid BMFA Registration Competency Certificate (RCC)
2. Passing the CAA online DMARES test and having a 'Flyer ID'
3. Have a BMFA Achievement Certificate that was obtained before 31/12/2020 and confirming to the BMFA that they have read and understood the conditions and restrictions that apply when operating within our Article 16 authorisation. (N.B. Certificates gained after 31/12/2020 cannot be used)

Taking the Registration Competency Certificate at <https://rcc.bmfa.uk/rcc> is an excellent way of ensuring you are familiar with the Article 16 authorisation and we recommend all members use this as their demonstration of competency, the questions are much more relevant to the activities of BMFA members than the CAA online DMARES test questions.

From 5pm today we will be adding a check box to our membership portal at <https://bmfa.azolve.com/> for you to indicate you have read and understood the Article 16 authorisation.

We recommend all members log in to the portal to indicate they have read and understood the authorisation from that point. Please note you are required to do so if you are relying on a BMFA Achievement Scheme certificate obtained before 31/12/2020 as proof of competency.

Kind Regards  
The BMFA

Tel: 0116 2440028

**Flying times at new site: \*\*\* FLYING SUSPENDED \*\*\***

| Monday           | Tuesday          | Wednesday | Thursday         | Friday    | Saturday         | Sunday           |
|------------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|------------------|------------------|
| Quiet (Electric) | Electric and I/C |           | Electric and I/C |           | Electric and I/C | Electric and I/C |
| 14-00            | 12-00            | NO FLYING | 12-00            | NO FLYING | 10-00            | 10-00            |
| 20-00 or dusk*   | 16-00            |           | 16-00            |           | 14-00            | 13-00            |

### PADMAC flying times.

**The shared site arrangement with PADMAC has ended**

### Poorly club member

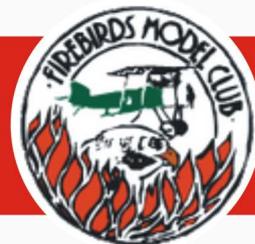
Continuing thoughts and good wishes from the committee to all poorly members.

### FUTURE CLUB NIGHTS - Advance notice

ALL \*\* Postponed \*\* due to Covid 19 restrictions.

# Firebirds Model Club

News, Views & Information - January 2021



## Club Information

This section gives a summary of club services and contact details.

### Glow Fuel, Glue and other bits and pieces available

Fuel is available through the club and supplies are held by the club. All grades of fuel are available to order. Russell holds many other useful items: glo-plugs, propellers, glue, fuel tubing, wing bolts etc.

Russell Lewis

023 8056 1397

[russell@pilot1.co.uk](mailto:russell@pilot1.co.uk)

## Club Meetings

Our meeting venue is the Hamble Club at this address:

Beaulieu Road  
Hamble, Southampton,  
Hampshire, SO31 4JL



The Club requires each member to sign in at every arrival using the book usually kept at the bar. There is a way round this and that is to join the club. This is not expensive, particularly for OAPs who pay £8.00 for the first year, and if you live locally it provides a cheap night out!

## External Events

If you need more details on any particular event, then go to <https://bmfa.org/Contests-Events/Contest-and-Event-Calendar>. **BMFA Bulletins are available on-line at this [link](#) ...**

## Firebirds Model Club Committee

The following are the contact details for the Committee. Each has given permission for their phone number and email addresses to be included in this Newsletter.

|                  |                 |               |  |
|------------------|-----------------|---------------|--|
| Chairman         | Russell Lewis   | 023 8056 1397 | <a href="mailto:russell@pilot1.co.uk">russell@pilot1.co.uk</a>             |
| Vice Chair       | Dave Hoppe      | 07704 826343  | <a href="mailto:davehoppehome@gmail.com">davehoppehome@gmail.com</a>       |
| Treasurer        | Alan Shergold   | 07973 221915  | <a href="mailto:alanshergold@hotmail.co.uk">alanshergold@hotmail.co.uk</a> |
| Secretary        | Rob Cope        | 07795 996549  | <a href="mailto:copes02@ntlworld.com">copes02@ntlworld.com</a>             |
| PRO              | Peter Clark     | 07867 557964  | <a href="mailto:psclark911@hotmail.com">psclark911@hotmail.com</a>         |
| Flying Site Rep. | Vacancy         |               |  |
| Safety Officer   | Geoff Griffiths | 023 9265 5931 | <a href="mailto:ggriffiths@hotmail.com">ggriffiths@hotmail.com</a>         |
| Membership Sec.  | Keith Warwick   | 07887 486040  | <a href="mailto:keithw11@hotmail.co.uk">keithw11@hotmail.co.uk</a>         |

## Firebirds Constitution and Rules.

The Firebirds constitution and rules document can be found at the bottom of the 'about us' section on the web-site or by clicking the following link.

<http://firebirds.org.uk/onewebmedia/FIREBIRD%20CONSTITUTION%20%26%20RULES.pdf>

**Remember... Safe flying is no accident.**