

Booker Gliding Club

Newsletter

October
2022

We're back
home
at last!

Wycombe Air Park



Home to gliding for over 70 years

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*Dates for your diary – **Members' meeting Sunday 30 October, 1700 in clubhouse***

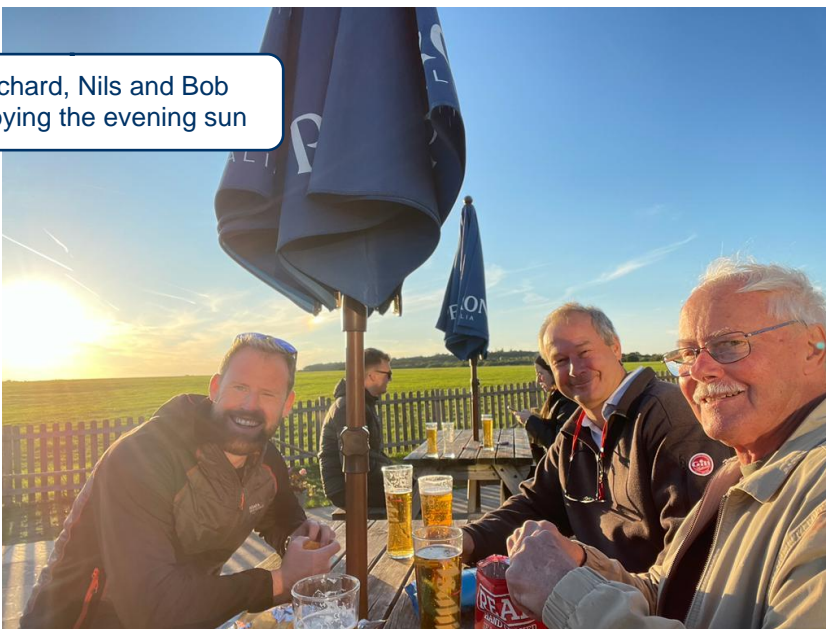
The journey home

It's a long time since that frosty day in February 2021 when council contractors planted some sticks across the airfield and set in train the events which launched us on our nomadic existence. We were barred from Wycombe Air Park so we went back to Chiltern Park, where we had spent most of the 2020 soaring season. We had a great summer, as detailed in previous newsletters, but as September approached, and with it the termination of the lease at Chiltern Park, the search for a new site became increasingly urgent. Finally we got a foot in the door at Abingdon, which would make a fantastic gliding venue. The Army, which runs Abingdon, were very supportive. We flew the two seaters over, set up camp and did some test flying – getting used to 1.5km of tarmac runway.



After the Aboyne expedition we erected a temporary hangar.....and then the RAF noticed we were there, got anxious about the idea that there would be some aircraft in uncontrolled airspace, and put a stop to it all. We managed to do a bit of flying In December and early January, and then were grounded yet again. The Denbigh expedition in March 2022 was our next opportunity for some fun.

Richard, Nils and Bob
enjoying the evening sun



Back at Booker we were still banned from flying, and there followed months of work to establish Abingdon as an aerodrome, in parallel with a steep learning curve on planning law as it relates to film studios and airfields. After many assurances that we would be 'flying next week' we finally re-started on 11 September 2022. We have dismantled our establishment at Abingdon and are concentrating on our historic home.....and packing for the imminent Aboyne expedition.

We've discovered the new airfield bar too!

Member achievements

Booker members and the **Committee** have worked incredibly hard over the past two years to achieve the club's return to Wycombe Air Park, where it belongs. We now need to focus on rebuilding the club and working together to ensure that it remains a special place to go gliding. There will be a **Members' meeting** at the club on **Sunday 30th October** at **1700** to exchange ideas.

Dean Miller wasted no time in going **solo** at Wycombe Air Park. He first joined us at Chiltern Park and went solo there, came to Aboyne, although sadly missed out on wave, and then flew at another club this summer, re-joining us at the first opportunity after we resumed flying.

Simon Jones followed a similar path and has also now gone **solo** at Wycombe Air Park.



Aspirational pic – Dean in front of his next glider



Nils Wedi deserves a mention for field selection when his first flight back at Booker didn't go quite according to plan!

Come and fly!

As of 11 September we have restarted flying at Booker. Our instructors are now current again and all full and course members are welcome back to continue their training – or just having fun - regardless of level. At the moment we are flying the winter program - weekends plus good days during the week. The online booking system has re-opened for trial lessons and short courses, but there is no on-line booking for club members. You can assume that **we will always be flying at the weekend when weather permits**, just turn up before 10am to help get the kit out and discuss what you would like to do with the duty instructor. If you can't make it to the airfield before flying starts, let the duty instructor know via the Booker Whatsapp group. **Weekday flying will be when a good day is forecast**, so keep an eye on the Whatsapp group and let us know if you are coming – bear in mind that your instructors and tug pilots are fellow members. *See below for news of Aerobatics Courses.*

Autumn cleaning

During our long absence the place had got a bit shabby, so we have had a series of working parties to tidy things up a bit. The first dealt with all the weeds and rubbish outside the hangars, and the area outside the clubhouse. Then it was on to the inside of the clubhouse, which was cobwebby and full of junk. Tim Scott revealed that he had other skills than flying airliners and whizzing round cross-country tasks, so the clubhouse is now squeaky clean, and you can see through the windows.

The final task was the blister hangar, which contained an extraordinary selection of junk, up to and including a kitchen sink. This has all been disposed of via multiple trips to the dump and the hangar actually has room for tugs now.



Ace vacuuming in progress



An assortment of metals

Richard is off to the CAA

Richard Crockett has been at Booker for nearly 13 years, starting as a course instructor, then deputy CFI, and for the past 9 years as CFI. During that time he has inspired countless students to achieve their goals, led memorable expeditions to clubs in the UK and abroad, and done sterling work in the last two years in the fight to get us flying again. He is now off to a proper job at the CAA, working on standards for display flying, a role for which he is well qualified, being a display pilot for the Shuttleworth Collection in his spare time.



We had a party to wish him well – though he isn't going away, he will be staying on as member CFI. The party was also a great opportunity to celebrate being back together again.



And those of us going to Aboyne are looking forward to posting pictures of wave flights for him to enjoy from his desk at Gatwick.



Here's one from last year as a taster.....





All the best, Richard!

Symeon Economou hangs up his boots



Symeon is hanging up his flying boots after 35 years and 3,000 launches. We will miss him. A stalwart as an instructor, he had two spells on the committee, more recently serving as chairman and then as our liaison with Bucks Council during our recent troubles.

He was also a member of the marketing team, here he is with David and Chris, showing dedication to the cause, rigging the Junior in the rain for the Henley Show in 2013. How we laughed!



New members



We welcome Thierry James, a power pilot who happened to see us flying, came over for a chat, and signed up.

We also welcome back Paul Brice, who was at one time treasurer. Paul had to drop out for a while because of family commitments but is now back at Booker.

Aerobatics courses

Graham Saw, champion aerobatics pilot and ace instructor, is putting together some ideas for aerobatics courses over the winter. He plans to work with Paul Brice, who is a whizz at aerobatics in both power and gliding.

This is an opportunity not to be missed. Whether you need to hone your stall turns and rolls, or you would like to boost your confidence with some elementary figures, improving your handling skills and understanding of what a glider will and will not do (aka the 'flight envelope') then this is for you. If interested, have a word with Graham, he's often in the workshop, and is also on Whatsapp.



Here's Graham on a recent xc flight with Richard – surprisingly the right way up!

Dates for your diary

2022

8th - 23rd October: Autumn expedition to Aboyne
30th October: Members' meeting – 1700hrs - clubhouse
TBA: Aerobatics courses



Club Communications

We use WhatsApp groups, as below:

Booker Gliding Club – general club information and notifications including details of online daily briefings

Booker Instructors – information and swap requests for instructors

Booker Expeditions – set up in the run up to each expedition.

If you wish to be included in any of these groups, contact the CFI.

Booker XC – for tasks, cross country discussion and feedback – contact Jane Moore or ask for a link on the main Whatsapp group

Booker Banter - for general chitchat – contact Jane Moore

Condor Flyers – for those wanting to join in Condor group sessions – contact Bob Smith or Henry Ross or ask for a link on the main Whatsapp group.

The **Booker GC website** at www.bookergliding.co.uk has a Members Page. This contains the latest Club news snippets and links to previous newsletters, meeting minutes and several useful and informative Club documents. The Members' page is accessible to everybody (not just members) but certain documents, such as committee minutes, need a user ID and password. To obtain these, go to the members' page and click on the 'email Administrator' link. Don't forget to include your name and membership number.

For the latest news about what's happening check out

<https://www.facebook.com/bookerglidingclub>

The Booker blog is no longer maintained but has a wealth of pics and stories from previous years

<http://bookergc.blogspot.com/>

*** All views expressed within the newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Club or committee ***

Contributions to the newsletter are welcome. If you would like to submit an article for a future edition please send it to Jane Moore at jxmoore@gmail.com

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