

C/L Secretary's Report for 2018-19

Firstly, I want to thank the organisers of, and the participants in, the many C/L competitions and get-togethers that took place under SAM35 auspices last year at venues all around the country, including Barkston, Buckminster, Old Warden, Middle Wallop, Colerne and many others. The members organising them form the nucleus of a UK 'brotherhood of the circle' who not only have to devise and schedule an attractive event, but provide a venue, publicity, prizes, a contest director and helpers to ensure that everything runs smoothly. Even then, when everything is looking good, the weather can ruin a day's sport for everyone – I expect many of you remember the September Old Warden meeting last year! So to mention just a few, Bill Longley, Dave Cowburn, Tony Goodger, Mick Taylor, Brian Lever and Brian Waterland all deserve our thanks for the hard work they have put in over the past twelve months. However, we had seemed to have arrived at a crisis-point for the continuation of the innovative one-design and vintage competitions that the two Brians have been running for many years at OW, as they are now standing down now in order to fly models themselves rather than run events. This will leave a large gap in our event schedule, so it was welcome news to find that member Dave Cowburn has volunteered to step into the breach and organise further C/L challenges going forward – thank you very much, Dave!

Moving on to look at key C/L events during the year, the Buckminster hard circle is now a firm BMFA commitment targeted for this year, although realistically 2020 does seem more likely. Enough money has been pledged or donated to ensure that the build will be started (more is needed to guarantee its full completion!), although finding the right contractor has been a challenge and there have also been concerns over the original proposed siting of the circle amongst the Aerobatics fliers. Hopefully this is well on the way to resolution, at which point we will have a fantastic facility for serious speed, team racing and stunt events. Regarding tethered car use, there is now talk of a separate circle to avoid over-booking of the c/l circle – this is ongoing. The drone-related events at Gatwick and elsewhere last year have had a potentially serious effect on all model flying. You might think that as C/L fliers we wouldn't be affected by this at all as we only operate what are effectively powered kites, but there is still some doubt as well as some optimism for C/L (and indeed all conventional model aviation) being exempted from the 'drone laws' as discussions continue between the CAA and the BMFA. The good news so far is that there has been a relaxation for C/L model flying near ATC airspace as long as the C/L model does not cross airfield boundaries – this is thanks to the BMFA, who are also vigorously contesting the overall registration requirements and fees that have been proposed. On the literary front, the Quality Inspector and I have continued to enjoy writing our 'Wind in the Wires' column for 'SAM Speaks', in which we try to provide as wide a range of C/L material as we can – thanks must go again to our contributors and correspondents, without whom it would be impossible to entertain you each month. The QI is convinced that my own escapades are a warning to all serious C/L enthusiasts about how not to design, build or fly successfully, and as such are probably worthwhile including as long as our readers see them as such, although the Stop-Work notices, Non-Conformance Reports and Concessions that he's raised against me now fill a substantial filing cabinet in his office at the back of the boot cupboard...

Another literary challenge last year saw us taking on the production of the SAM35 Yearbook 16, although I must admit that after twelve months' work we were rather

pleased to see it completed and delivered to the printer! Again, my thanks go to all those who provided material for the book and to all those who have purchased a copy –and of course thanks as well to my wife Jane (editing and data management) and the QI (Quality Assurance), both of whom kept me on the straight and narrow throughout the job.

What about the coming year? Well, I've already suggested in 'SAM Speaks' that, due to my home location – hundreds of miles from the epicentre of most SAM activity in the Midlands - and my personal focus on some of the odder forms of C/L such as carrier, I might not actually be the ideal chap to continue as SAM35's Control Line Secretary, so if there is someone else who would like to take on the role, the AGM is the ideal time to speak up and the Committee can put it to the membership. If no-one else volunteers than I will continue in the role until someone else appears who does want to take it on.

Best wishes for a great year's model aviation on the handle,