

George Fuller (2 Dec'1929 - 30 Dec'2012)

George Fuller died in hospital on Sunday 30th December 2012, following a taxing illness, bravely borne.

Over at least 60 years, he had influenced aeromodelling, eventually becoming known far and wide. In the inverse ratio to his achievements he was very modest, and another endearing characteristic was his great sense of humour, which remained with him all his life.

The following is a potted history of George's life, taken largely from a tribute to him on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Dixielander, given in 2009.

The year 2009 marked a milestone in the history of British power flying. The Dixielander had reached its 50th Anniversary. This was a significant event as, it is almost certainly true to say that few, if any other model had been popular for so long, been built in as many numbers (around the world), and enjoyed contest success, over such a long period. Additionally, it generated a family of designs - an FAI version, and 5cc and 10cc models being among them.

On such a rare occasion, it is interesting to look into what lies behind it, and try to understand what led up to it.

George was fascinated by Aviation since a small child, and had once been found sitting in an orange box acting out the role of an embryo pilot. Vastly eager to become involved with aeromodelling, he would with youthful impatience, often try to fly a kit model he was building, before it was completed.

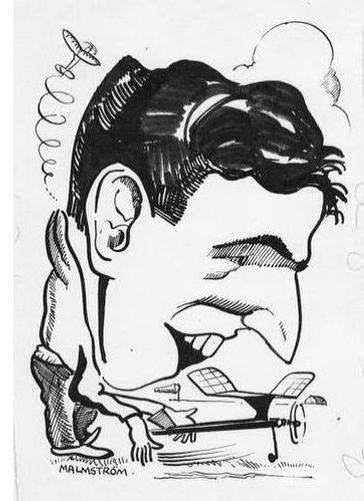
In time, and just at the end of the war, he became one of the earliest members of the newly formed St. Albans club. He initially (as might be expected) built gliders and rubber models attentively following the designs of Ted Buxton and Mick Farthing, (see photo with trendy trilby). He also worked in the local model shop beginning a lifelong association with the model trade.

He later became Manager in the Luton model shop, which would become the source of the Yeoman kit range.

By the early 50's he had settled into his lifelong devotion to power modelling. His first successful design was the Stomper (1952) and it was subsequently published in the Feb.'53 Aeromodeller.

The Zootsuit followed, allowing George to place in the British team in 1953 for the World Championships. He could not have come closer to being World Champion, coming 2nd to Kneeland. The next day George was timekeeper to Joe Foster's winning flight in F1B.

Continually refining/testing (something he never stopped doing) the Stomper/Zootsuit evolved into the Dixielander. It was a case of adapting American trends



to suit British conditions and was successful from the start - as George says, "it scarcely missed a max in its first season"

By 1959, Yeoman negotiated to kit the Dixielander, and it is this original kit version that was chosen for the 2009 celebration event.

At that time, the best way of beating a Dixielander was to experiment, and refine the design further and John West underlined the soundness of the basic design by doing just that.

The FAI version took a fellow St Albans member into the British team for the 1960 World Championships, when George was incidentally, the team manager.

In a national contest around this time, George, with the FAI version, jointly won after he and his fellow competitor agreed to share 1st. place, after 10 consecutive maxes!

In 1965, the US Nationals were won with a standard Dixielander, whilst at this time George was flying a stretched 5cc version which he had named the "E type" George made the British team again in 1969, making the fly offs and finishing 9th. Incidentally the photos at the time show a youthful Elton Drew as the new World F1A champion possibly looking a little precarious carried aloft on George's shoulders.

Probably the high point of 1969 though, was when he was beaten in the UK Nats by his young son Christopher who took 1st. place - and yes it was a Dixielander.

In 1972, the prestigious US NFFS made the Dixielander the power model of the year, a very special international recognition.

Moving to the West Country, George joined Bristol and West in 1985 and in 1995, again became Open Power Champion and National Power Champion. In 1996 the Vintage scene (SAM1066) paid tribute to the Dixielander, and in 1997 George won SLOP at the Nats with a modified version. This being 50years since he attended his first (1947) Nats.

The alert reader will probably have recognized that most of George's models are named with a Jazz theme in mind, and is recognition of another of his life-long Being a regular/contributing B and W member, George encouraged us all to treat him as a normal club member, but on reflection, we can remember that there are very few aeromodellers (and on a worldwide basis) who can match or exceed the continuity of his achievements as a high ranking power flyer.

A sad time for the free flight fraternity, another "good ol' boy" has left us.



R.I.P

Bernard Aslett