

Whirlwind Fighter Project

Newsletter Nov 2023



Robert Fleming Award for Innovation - Aviation Heritage U.K.

The Whirlwind Fighter Project is pleased to announce that it was awarded the above trophy by Aviation Heritage U.K. last month during their 221st meeting at Boscombe Down Aviation Collection.



Mike Eastman, Chris Hayward, Peter Lancaster, with the Award Certificate.



Peter Lancaster guarding the Trophy that will go on display at Hawkinge for a short time next year.

The Aviation Heritage UK website has been updated with all the awards they presented at the meeting.

<https://aviationheritageuk.org/aviation-heritage-awards-2023/>

Although this was a team effort over many years, major credit must go to Gunnar Olsen and Pete Smith. Pete's innovations in attempting to make head or tails of Petter's design along with his mantra of "if it looks right, it must be right" and Gunnar's 'rivet counting' and deep CAD expertise have enabled the project to deliver the first major and complex part of P7056 to its new home at the Kent Battle of Britain Museum Trust at Hawkinge.



Recent developments.

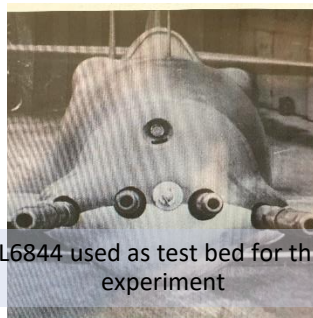
Pete was approached by the Kent Battle of Britain Museum Trust to see if he could fabricate a display for their latest acquisition which was a 20mm Hispano cannon that was recovered from the crash site of the first production Whirlwind (P6966) which crashed in Scotland and was later recovered during a dig by Steve Vizard in 1979. The cannon was in good shape considering P6966 harpooned in nose first.



original Whirlwind 20mm Hispano cannon.



Layout for horizontal cannons plus gun camera



L6844 used as test bed for this experiment

This display was fully funded by the Kent Battle of Britain Museum Trust as it was not relevant to P7056 and was therefore outside the scope of The Whirlwind Fighter Project.

The P7056 Members Club had an online meeting in September, just prior to our AGM. There were a number of members and team present and we were able to watch the latest of the engineering videos that Pete had filmed, this was number 17 which is now on the website – via a link to Pete’s YouTube Whirlwind Project Engineering page:

<https://www.youtube.com/@whirlwindfp/videos>

They are all there so you can watch at your leisure. The Club meeting also looked at the construction of the horizontal cannon layout for the Museum.

2023 AGM.

The AGM was held at the Kent Battle of Britain Museum on the 8th of October 2023.

This was a hybrid in-person/online event utilising Zoom which enabled 16 members to attend.

Please read the minutes of the meeting by going to our website:

<https://www.whirlwindfp.org/committee-meetings-and-reports>

We have also published the reports from AGMs going back to 2014.

After some comments about the sound quality at the AGM a microphone will be purchased to help those on Zoom to hear the proceedings better – a recording was made which has been emailed to all members.

Update on the gofundme issue - I was finally able to get our funds cleared and the current donations are now safely in our bank account.

Date for the next AGM will be announced in due course.

So, what’s next?

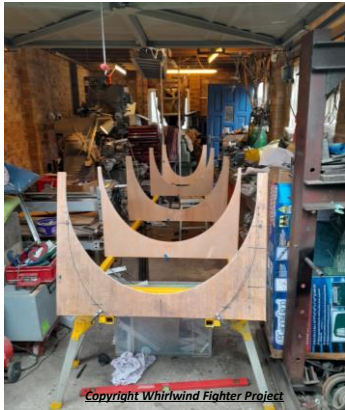
Well as most of you know Pete is now dealing with the construction of the rear fuselage. This part is over 12-foot-long with curved alloy panels and was started several years ago by Airframe Assemblies. They did some of the rolling of the panels on a machine previously owned by Westland to do the job on the Whirlwind which, we hope, will make Pete’s job a little easier but knowing Petter’s designs I suspect he will be tearing his hair out in the not too distant future.



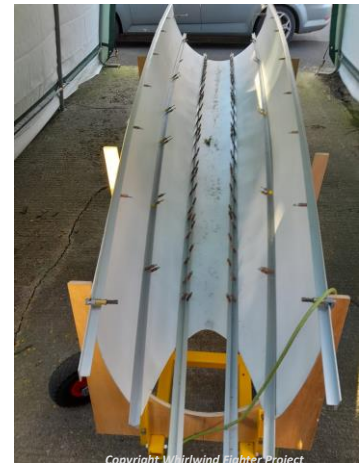
With the retractable tail wheel complete and an authentic wheel to fit to it, all is looking good for the completion of the rear fuselage. We hope it will be ready to fit to the cockpit section by next February, that will give time for the Kent Battle of Britain Museum to apply a coat of camouflage paint before the Museum opens to the public.

These are, of course, our current plans...

Progress on the rear fuselage construction.....



Upside-down construction – the jig for the upper half of the rear fuselage.



Panels pinned in place in the jig.

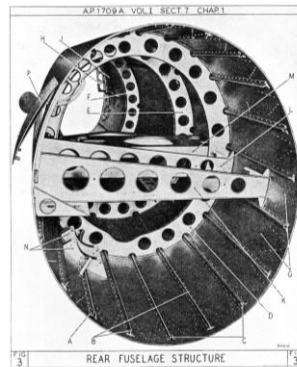


Port and starboard, upper quarter skins trimmed off, drilled and countersunk. Fuselage panel shaped and drilled and awaiting the next step and with 704 holes drilled so far.



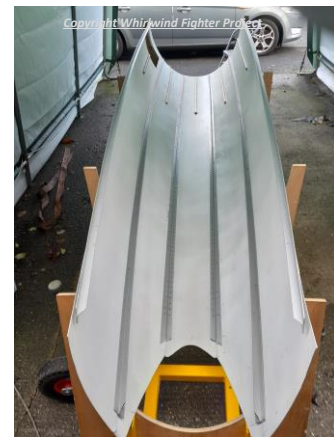
First rivets in the assembly of the fuselage.

Spot the radio access hatch!



Upper skins fitted in jig, just 480

rivets to do and the top skins are almost complete.



As usual the money pit needs topping up if anyone can help it would be much appreciated - considering that the next phase after the rear fuselage/tail plane is the main spar!

Thank you all for your support so far – we can't do this without you.

Peter Lancaster/Chris Hayward

Honorary President Tom Eeles
Honorary Vice president Jim Munro
Member of the Aviation Heritage UK

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