



Westland Whirlwind Mk.I, P7056 'Pride of Yeovil'

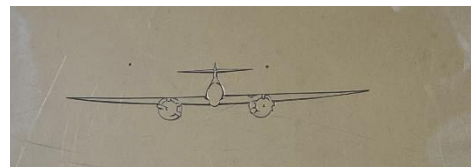
Whirlwind Fighter Project

Winter Newsletter 2024 Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our members.

Project News.



GROUP CAPTAIN TOM (T) EELES



BOTTOM OF SILVER PLATTER

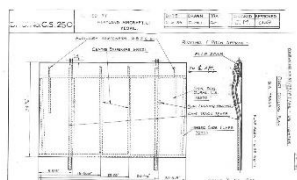
The project is proud to announce that our Honorary President Tom Eeles has donated to us a silver platter that was itself presented to his father in December 1940. Squadron Leader Henry Eeles, who was the first Commanding Officer of 263 Squadron based at Drem, Scotland where they were getting to grips with this new and unknown aircraft – the Westland Whirlwind. Because of the secret nature of the Whirlwind at the time a front view of the aircraft was inscribed on the underside of the tray.

The tray was presented as Henry Eeles moved to higher things in his career with the RAF.

The Silver Platter will be on show to the public when The Kent Battle of Britain Museum reopens in April 2025.



Tom has a prized part of P6966 (which his father flew more than once) which he was presented with by Yorkshire Air Museum after giving a talk on the Whirlwind.



Also on show at the Museum in Hawkinge will be a small model of Avro Vulcan XH508 that was presented to the project along with the Robert Fleming Trophy by AHUK last year in recognition of the manufacture of the only example of the innovative WW2 Westland Whirlwind fighter.



MINIATURE OF ROBERT FLEMING AWARD

Our chief engineer Pete Smith's suffered a recent health issue that entailed him stepping back from engineering work in the early Autumn of this year. The build of P7056 has had to be kept in situ until Pete feels fit enough to return to metal bashing. As of now – late November - he is only undertaking light work on any project at the moment i.e. he is on the road to recovery - but under the watchful eye of his wife Alma. He assures us that the plan is still in place to get the tail section fitted on P7056 by the time the Kent Battle of Britain Museum Trust reopens after its winter break in 2026.

I'm sure the whole membership wishes Pete a full return to rude health!
Or a rude return to full health – take your pick.

A break from activities has been put to good use as Pete and the team have come up with an alternative plan such that the tail section phase can be delivered and installed in two parts - one much earlier than the other. The fin spar has already been trial-fitted to the fuselage so can go back on – with the

rear wheel assembly all the way up to the tail-plane connector; especially as Pete has confidence that the rest can be attached at a later date.

So it's possible we will be able to demonstrate on-site progress of the build of Whirlwind P7056 much earlier than a year from now.

AGM.

The Project held its Annual General Meeting in late September – during which Pete did manage to present what work he had completed on the tail assembly before having to step away, temporarily, on medical grounds.

The AGM minutes are available on the Project's website here:

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

Here is a link to a recording of the AGM as it was held on Zoom. The usual routine matters were worked through before the best stuff i.e. Pete the engineer's talk started at 16 minutes 45 seconds!

<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/1dop08lkMeexaVPA86cnZzzjdlqx1FrBbZ-5wgBecbHC-IIQGGETsLHL5Kd5TSgd.IS4z6g4hsTGkEDwO>
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Some interesting contributions were made by users later in the meeting.

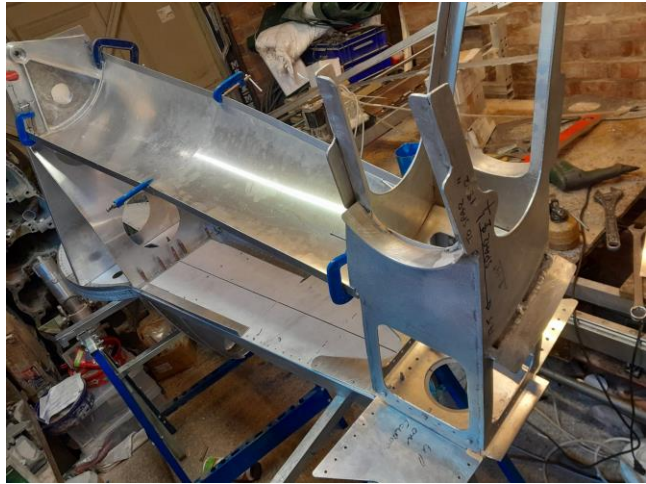
Build News.

Progress on the fin and tailplane (August – September). Irrespective of the order of the delivery and install of the tail plane phases, components still have to be made. Some images of work Pete completed over the late summer:



Fin nose rib gussets – which are handed and angled. The fin spar sits back at 13 degs, but the nose and trailing ribs are horizontal to the longitudinal axis. This shows the upper connection ribs for the complex bolted slip connection for the fin to fuselage.

The asymmetric design of the Whirlwind rudder, requires a complex manufactured form for the rudder screen. The screen is rolled off centre, tapered, but maintains a parallel aspect to the angled fin spar.



The "T" tail design requires a complex set of castings/fabrications. These form the connection of the tail plane to the fin. The upper rudder pivot bearing, the elevator centre bearing. It also carries the upper and lower mounting for the rudder screen and the elevator screens.



The fin spar forms the main structure for the "T" tail. Its deep flanged construction provides the main bolted connection to the fuselage. The fin spar holds the lower pivot casting for the retracting tail wheel.

The forward side of the fin spar holds a number of angled ribs. The upper one forms the bolted connection of the fin to the upper rear fuselage. The lower rib is the main locking plate for the tailwheel when in its lowered position.



Other Project News



SHEPWAY MILITARY MODEL CLUB

At one of their meetings at the Kent Battle of Britain Museum the Shepway Military Model Club very kindly presented the Whirlwind Fighter Project with a sizeable donation, towards the continued build of P7056.

Engines and things



As discussed, for the first time, at our AGM - Jamie, our brilliant 3D printer expert has built a Quarter scale model of a Peregrine engine as fitted to the Whirlwind. This of course opens up possibilities for the future presentation of P7056. Jamie helped the project by creating fittings and parts that went inside the fuselage and helped us stick to our authentic mandate for P7056.

Although Pete has had to forswear work in a cold environment for a while he hasn't been sitting around idle. He and Jamie then moved onto building a full-scale 3D-printed representation of a Peregrine. In fact, they've made a pair!



The printed full scale Peregrine block, cylinder banks and heads with rocker boxes.



A great deal of this will be shown and explained to the Members at the next Club Night which will be on the 19th January 2025.

As many of you know the next major phase of the build will be of the wing centre section of the airframe. As you can imagine this part of the airframe has to be constructed strongly enough to support the fuselage and strong enough also to help it stand on its own two wheels. Therefore, to be able to continue the build we need a lot of funds to achieve this.

Over the next 12 months we are looking to raise about £6K which is the basic amount of money our engineer Pete Smith has indicated that he needs to achieve this milestone in the build. If you feel that you can help in any way at all with the funding, please click on the QR code below and that will take you straight to our website where you can find the donations page.



All monies donated to the project, apart from our minimal running costs, go towards the build of P7056.

The project has also applied to the Charity Commission to be recognised as a proper charity rather than one that comes under the auspices of HMR&C. This is because our income has now increased to over £5k p.a. which is the lower limit for the Charity Commission. I will keep you up to date as things progress.

Westland Whirlwind Mk.I



Westland Whirlwind Mk.I, P7116/HE-F, flown by Sqn. Ldr. Eelse operated by No.263 (F) Squadron, based at RAF Exeter, 1941/42.



Wishing all our members a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Thank you to all who have supported the project over the last decade. We can't do this without you.

Honorary President Tom Eeles

Honorary Vice president Jim Munro

Member of the Aviation Heritage UK

Charity number EW37349

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