

Flying in the 1930's was very different from today. Aircraft were mainly constructed from wood and fabric, there was no radio contact and engine noise was deafening. Few pilots seemed to mind though because it was the ideal occupation for those looking for thrills and excitement.

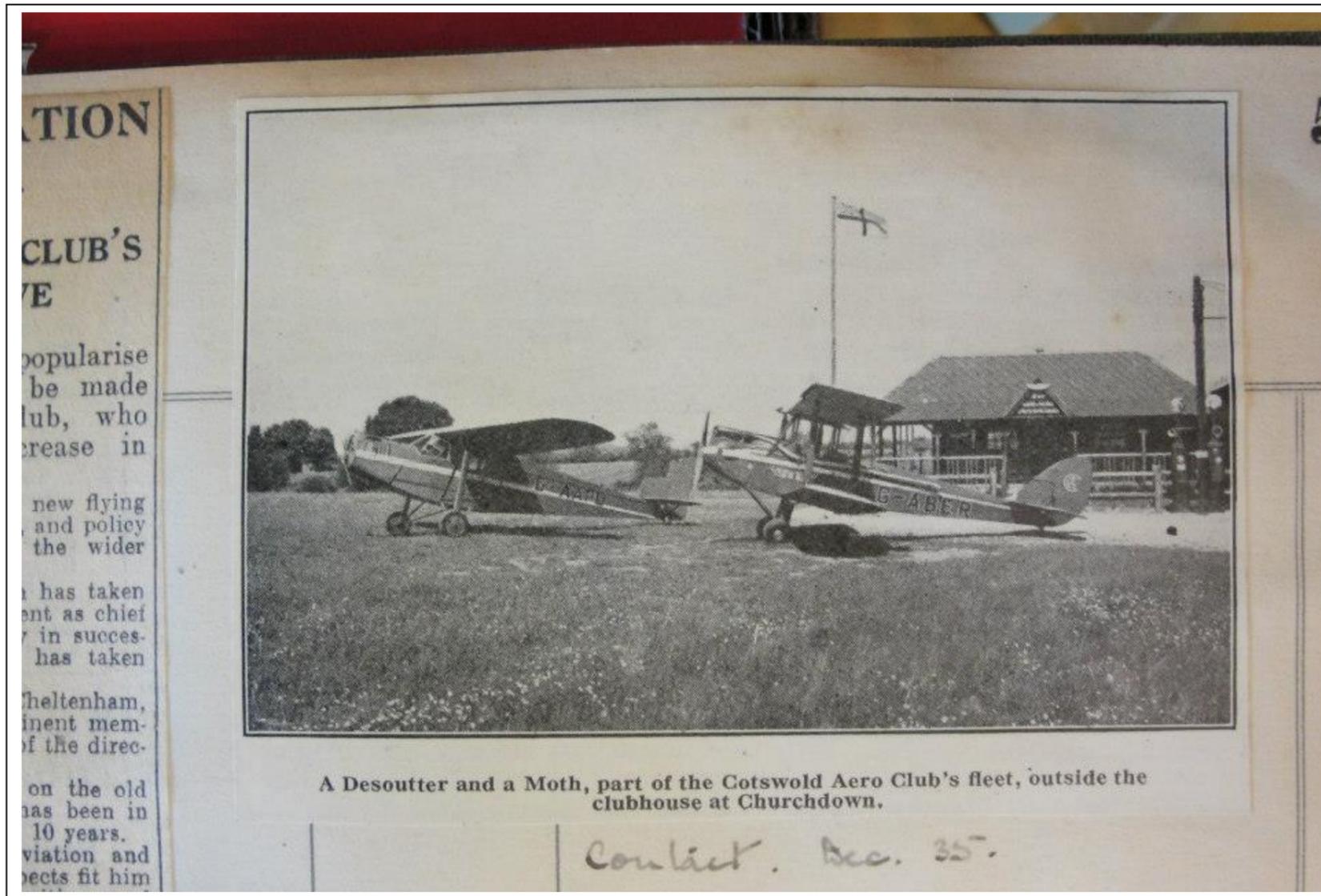
1927 saw the beginnings of Cotswold Aero Club. Now, at nearly 90 years old it remains one of the longest established flying clubs in Britain.

The art of flying has come a long way since those early daredevil days before the Second World War, but one thing that hasn't changed is the fact that, above all, flying is fun!

CAC Timeline:

- 1927 First recorded use of the name Cotswold Aero Club – a group of pilots operating a DH60 Gypsy Moth
- 1930 Westgate Motor Company appointed agents for de Havilland aircraft.
- 1931 Westgate Motor Company and Cotswold Aero Club become associated. CAC developed to serve local aeroplane enthusiasts and to act as a base for sales demonstrations of de Havilland aircraft.
- 1932 Down Hatherley Aerodrome opened on 26th September. Club house and hangar erected.
- 1933 CAC registered as a private company.
DH60 Gypsy Moth and Dessouter aircraft on club fleet.
By end of the year 20 pilots has 'A' Licences (equivalent of today's PPL) and Mrs Joy Lloyd became the first woman in Gloucestershire to gain an 'A' Licence.
Amy Johnson visited the club.
- 1934 Gloucester and Cheltenham councils discuss building a municipal airport.
Another DH60 Moth and a Parnall Elf added to the fleet.
- 1935 Westgate Motor Company transfer clubhouse ownership to CAC. A Klemm Swallow is added to the fleet.





Down Hatherley Aerodrome 1935

- 1936 Another DH60 arrives. Membership has grown to over 200.
2 CAC aircraft participate in the 'greatest send off in the history of Southampton' – the maiden voyage of the liner Queen Mary.
Gloucester and Cheltenham Municipal airport is opened.
- 1937 CAC continue to operate from Down Hatherley aerodrome.
Municipal airport attracts new businesses and air services.
- 1938 New club house built on municipal airport, CAC moves over the road. The old club house is used by Rotol until destroyed by fire in the early war years.
- 1939 CAC contracted to train pilots for the Civil Air Guard.

- 1937- CAC act as airport operator on behalf of the councils.
1939 3rd September - private flying ceases due to the outbreak of World War Two.
1940 CAC Continues as a social group, based at Coombe Hill
1945 Private flying restarts after World War Two ends.
CAC operated a Tiger Moth and Auster from a small club room in an ex RAF building.
Pre-war club house badly damaged. Eventually taken over by Wynstruments for production and testing of marine windscreen wipers. The building was demolished in mid 1990s to make way for a hangar and office.
1945- Various operators, including CAC run airport on behalf of the councils.
1962 CAC continues as a much smaller club with the Tiger Moth and Auster.

An Auster



A Tiger Moth

- 1964 Thoughts about updating the aircraft fleet start to emerge as new nosewheel aircraft become available.
- 1966 Auster and Tiger Moth disposed of. A new Bolkow Junior is introduced.
- 1969 A Glos Airtourer is added to give additional capacity for flights.
- 1970- Various aircraft owned by members made available for club use. They include Cessna 150,
1974 Airtourer, Jodel, PA-28 and PA-28 Arrow.
- 1972 A second Bolkow Junior is acquired.

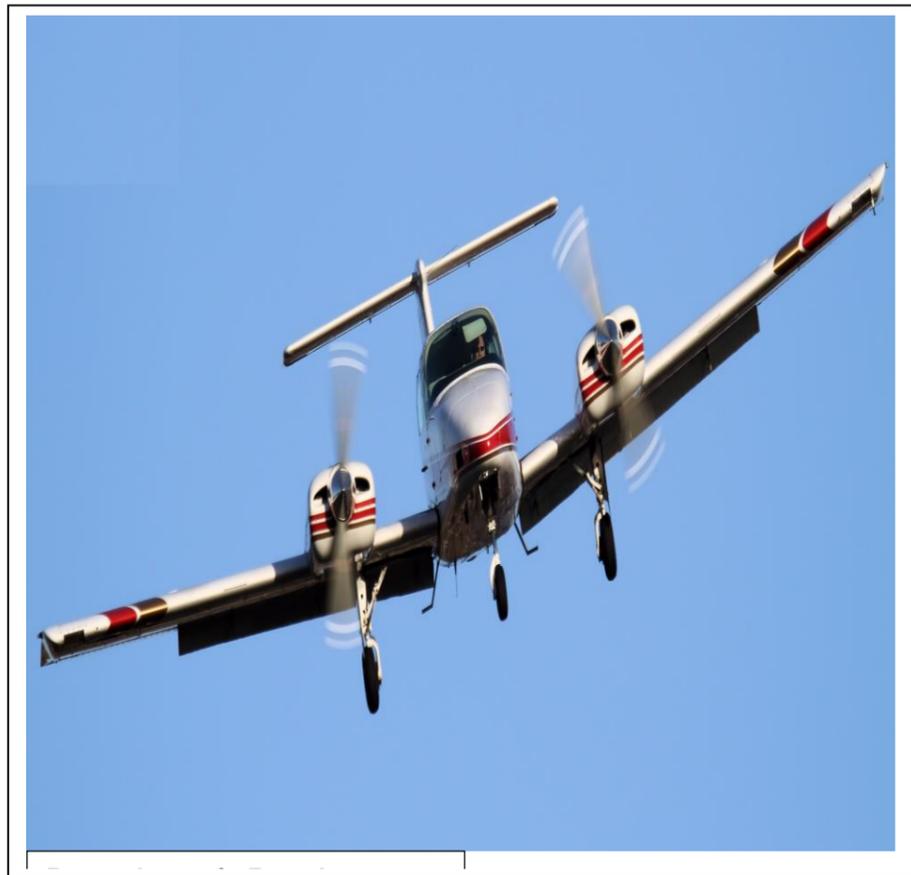


The Bolkow Juniors

- 1975- Difficult times, both Bolkows are unserviceable. Rented aircraft keep the club going.
- 1977 In 1976 CFI, John Cole, injured in an aircraft accident. Flight training almost grind to a halt for 4 months.
- 1979 Mike Oldfield (of Tubular Bells fame) learns to fly with CAC.
- 1981 Time to update again. A Robin R2112 is purchased.
In December a new ATC Tower and admin building opens.
- 1982 CAC moves into former airport admin offices.
The Bolkows are retired and a second R2112 joins the fleet.
- 1983 John Cole receives the Lennox-Boyd trophy in recognition of his special contribution to private flying.
A Robin DR400/160 is added to the fleet.
- 1985 Founding director Rex Walwin dies.
- 1987 A Robin DR400/120 arrives.
John Cole retires from ab initio training



- 1988 To cater for demand another Robin DR400/120 is purchased.
Phil Mathews takes over as full time instructor.
- 1990 Recession bites, flying hours take a hit but we carry on.
An association with CSE Helicopters generates a couple of helicopter PPLs.
- 1995 Talk of multi engine training which will eventually lead to a Beech 76 Duchess joining the fleet.
- 1996 Airport development plans require the existing club house to be demolished. Plans start for a move to a new home.
The Robin fleet is updated with the addition of a Robin R2160 and the departure of the R2112s.
- 1997 The new club home is the former Airport Inn building into which we move in the early part of the year.
For services to Flying Instruction John Cole is awarded the Pike Trophy by the Honourable Company of Air Pilots.
- 1998 Beech Duchess starts work, several multi ratings gained.



Beechcraft Duchess



Diamond Katana



Slingsby T67C

- 2000 More fleet changes, 2 DR400s and Beech 76 depart, 2 Robin HR200s, a Robin 3000 and a Slingsby T67 arrive.
- 2001 Another clubhouse move, this time to Aviation House, our current home.
More fleet changes with a DR400 and HR200 departing and a PA-28 Arrow and Diamond Katana arriving.
- 2002 Club participated in commemoration of Lindberg flying solo across the Atlantic in 1927.
- 2003 Club participated in commemoration of 100 years of flight. BBC Radio Gloucestershire mid morning programme broadcast from the clubhouse.
- 2004 The Katana and Slingsby leave the fleet and 2 Robin R2112s arrive.
- 2006 One of the R2112s departs and a DR400/120 arrives.
CFI, Phil Mathews, presented with a Master Air Pilot certificate by the Honourable Company of Air Pilots
- 2007 CAC celebrates 80 years of flying over Gloucestershire.
- 2008 - ongoing The fleet has stabilised at one R2112, 2 DR400s and the PA-28 Arrow.
We continue to provide high quality flying training and aircraft hire along with a club-type atmosphere. The club will be 90 next year and we hope we'll get to 100 and beyond!



Location of Down Hatherley Aerodrome

