

INDIVIDUAL HISTORY

HAWKER CYGNET G-EBMB
MUSEUM ACCESSION No.74/A/28

Constructor's Number 2; Bristol Cherub III Engine.

- 10 Jan 24 Air Ministry announcement that it was putting up a £3,000 prize in a competition for a two-seater light plane with an engine of no more than 1,000cc - the competition to be organised by the Royal Aero Club.
- August 1924 Hawkers announced that they would be entering two Cygnet aircraft, then under construction, in the competition, which was to be held at Lympne. These were the only Cygnets built, one with a 34hp Anzani engine (the RAFM a/c) and one (G-EBJH) with a 34hp ABC Scorpion. The Cygnet was Sidney Camm's first design and the Hawker company's only venture into the light plane market.
- 29 Sep - Both aircraft, newly completed, participated in the Lympne trials.
04 Oct 24 The Anzani engined aircraft (34hp 1,100cc) was numbered 14 for those elimination trials; and was flown by W H Longton, the aircraft performing well, despite a split fuel tank which caused a forced landing at Monks Horton. Engine trouble plagued both aircraft, though the Anzani engined Cygnet, No.14 was placed fourth and the Scorpion-engined No.15 third. The Anzani-engined plane achieved a low speed of 43.95mph, a take-off in 269 yards and a landing run of 66.7 yards, flying for 8 hours 24 minutes and 400 miles. No.14 gained first place in the trials for best take-off and pull-up and also won the short landing competition but suffered valve problems on the last day of the competition, possibly robbing it of victory. Photos Flight October 2 1924 p.637 and October 9th 1924 p.652; Aeroplane Monthly October 1985 p.554.
- 04 Oct 24 Both Cygnets had been entered for the Grosvenor Challenge Cup on this date but both dropped out with engine problems, No.14 with its recurring valve problems after only one lap.
- 26 Nov 24 Flown by Fg Off H F V Battle for 10 minutes to a height of 500 feet at the A&AEE, Martlesham Heath (recorded in Battles' log book - DoRIS Ref.B1606). Battle described 'MB the Anzani engined Cygnet as better than the Scorpion-engined Cygnet he had flown the previous day, both being at Martlesham for trials.

- 03 Dec 24 Battle again flew 'MB, commenting in his log book 'improves with acquaintance' - another 10-minute flight.
- 12 Dec 24 Another flight by Battle, for 15 minutes, ending with a forced landing on Martlesham Aerodrome 'through lump of ice on petrol cap' as recorded in his log book.
- (Also held in DoRIS Ref.B559; is F P Raynhams log book - he flew the Scorpion engined Cygnet at the 1924 Lympne trials and these flights, 27 Sep 24 - 4 Oct 24 are recorded in this log book).
- 21 Jan 25 Trials at Martlesham continuing - Battle made a fuel load test in 'MB on this date, recording it as the 'Cygnet I' the Scorpion engined aircraft being the 'Cygnet II'.
- Another logbook held by DoRIS, that of Sqn Ldr J H England (B1894) records Cygnet trials continuing at Martlesham Heath Feb-Mar 25.
- 29 Jul 25 Registered as G-EBMB.
- 1-3 Aug 25 'MB entered in the Royal Aero Clubs' meeting at Lympne, still with the Anzani and flown by P W S Bulman, winning the 100 mile International Handicap race at 75.58mph on the 3rd Aug and coming second in the 50 mile light aeroplane scratch race at 65.95mph. Photo - Flight 6 August 192
- 28 Aug 26 Issued CofA with 34hp Bristol Cherub III two cylinder engine.
- 10-17 Sep 26 Both Cygnets entered in the Lympne light plane competition - first prize of £3,000 sponsored by the Daily Mail. 'MB was entered by Fred Sigrist and again flown by Bulman, carrying the competition No.6 - both Cygnets now being fitted with the Bristol Cherub III. Photos - Aeroplane Monthly December 1973 p.410 and Oct 1995 p.554. Bulman in the open handicap came sixth, but won the principal competition and the Daily Mail prize, the other Cygnet coming second. Bulman had flown 1,994 miles in a total flying time of 30 hours 41 minutes, at an average speed of 64.9mph.
- Shortly afterwards, 'MB was displayed at the huge Croydon demonstration of British aircraft before senior Dominion representatives.
- 15 Apr
-18 Apr27 Both Cygnets entered for the Bournemouth Easter races and 'MB for a number of other events during the rest of the year.
- March 1929 'MB CofA expired - stored at Brooklands.
- 1948 Taken out of store, stripped and rebuilt by Hawkers at Langley. Photo flying over Langley at this time - Wingspan International May/June 2001 p.36.

- 08 May 49 Appeared at the Royal Aeronautical Society's' Garden Party at White Waltham. This was also the first post-war appearance of the Hart G-ABMR. Photo - Flight 9th May 1949.p.596.
- May 1950 Officially restored to British civil register and flew at Royal Aeronautical Society Garden Party at White Waltham that month. Photo - Aeroplane Monthly October 1985 p.556.
- 19-21 Jul 51 Appeared at Daily Express 50 Years of Flying display at RAF Hendon. Photo – Flypast June 2007 p.63. Became a regular feature at Royal Aero Club Garden parties in the 1950s, and kept at Dunsfold with Hart G-ABMR and Hurricane G-AMAU.
- Jul 57 Displayed statically at Weybridge for the unveiling of the Brooklands memorial-by this time, quoted 'Flight' the Cygnet's joints were suspect so it was decided it could not be demonstrated. Photos - Flight 12 July 1957 p.63.
- 30 Nov 61 CofA Expired and cancelled from civil register. Stored at Dunsfold until 1968 at least. Photo - Air Pictorial September 1966 p.338.
- Jun 65 Displayed at Elstree Flying Club display at Elstree Aerodrome, Herts.
- 19 Jun 66 On static display at Royal Aeronautical Society Centenary Garden Party at Cranfield.
- Sep 68 Displayed at Battle of Britain display at RAF Gaydon, Warks.
 Later stored at Henlow and Cardington.
- 1972 To Hendon for permanent display, originally as centrepiece of Sydney Camm Hall, on loan from Hawker Siddeley Ltd. Underwent refurbishment at RAFM RC&RC Cardington 1981-83. Photos: Control Column May 76 p.66; Wingspan International May/June 2001 p.4.
 Photos of refurbishment at RAFM RC&RC, RAF Cardington, Beds; FlyPast Sep 1983; Aircraft Illustrated Feb 84 p.88. The aircraft was recovered, the Cherub engine was rebuilt and much oil removed from the fuselage framing. Photo back on display at Hendon; Aircraft Illustrated February 1984 p.88.
- 25 Jun 01 Following dismantling the previous week, moved by road to temporary storage at RAFM Cosford, until placed on display there March 2002.
- 16 Jul 03 By road to RAF Fairford, Glos on temporary loan for Royal International Air Tattoo for their 'Centenary of Flight' display (19-20 July); returned to Cosford 21st July 2003. Photo – Aeroplane October 2003 p.10.

TEXT - ANDREW SIMPSON