



December Newsletter 2025

Welcome

Welcome to the December newsletter.

As 2025 draws to a close, this is the final newsletter of the year. All of us of the BRA hope you've managed to get some good flying in during the last 12 months, all that's left for us to do is wish you a happy Christmas and a happy New Year. We'll be back again in January, but before we go, we have the following for you...

For Rotorsport owners: one of our committee members wanted to highlight where to find the relevant service bulletins etc online as things have moved around a bit in the last few years.

BRA committee member, Allan Mackey, reports on his recent LAA permit revalidation now that the system has moved online.

I round off my year with a bit of poor decision making with weather and daylight.

We draw your attention to an interesting EASA article on electronic conspicuity, an interesting insight into what might be heading our way (no pun intended).

And finally, Clive is finishing off his year of fabulous Rubber Side Down articles with a look at radio communications.

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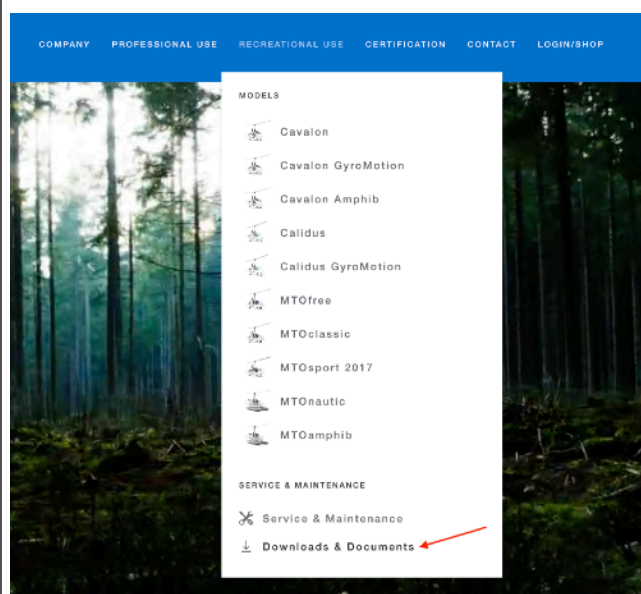
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Where to find your Rotorsport documentation

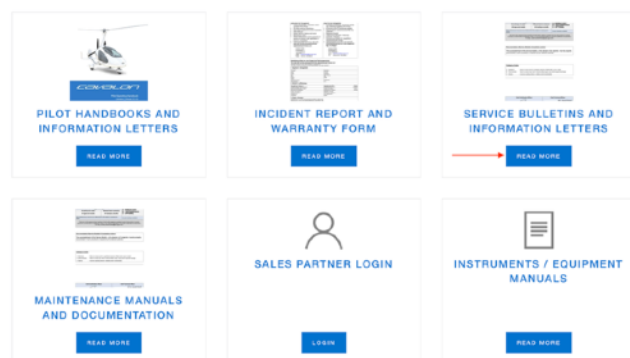
By Chris Rose, Steve Paffett, and Kai Barnett

For as long as I can remember, I had always gone to the rotorsport.org website to look up service bulletins and the like. But then a couple of weeks ago Steve Paffett emailed to say that things had been moved about and these were now on the auto-gyro.com website. Kai Barnett then clarified what has actually happened, and pointed out an important point. So, let's look at where to find the documents and what to note...

Go to the auto-gyro.com website and click on the **Recreational Use** heading at the top of the home page. Select Download & Documents from the dropdown menu.

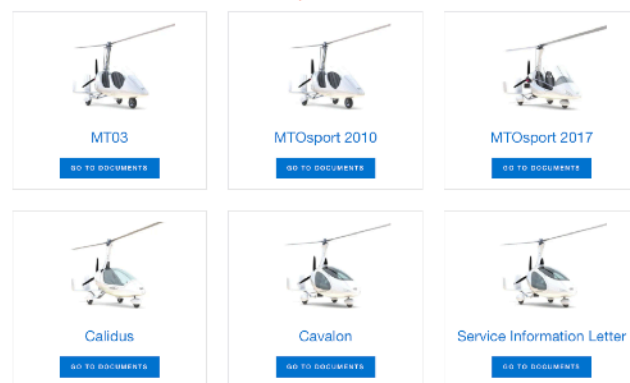


A page will open with all the documents that are available. In the **SERVICE BULLETINS AND INFORMATION LETTERS** area click on the **READ MORE** button.



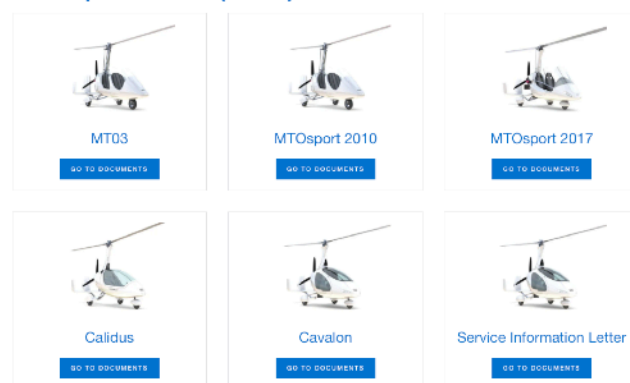
On the new page that opens, you will see all the AutoGyro aircraft and you can click on the **GO TO DOCUMENTS** button for the specific aircraft you're interested in.

Documents all Countries ← New documents after December 2023



Original documents up to December 2023

RotorSport UK Ltd. (RSUK) aircraft until December 2023



Now here's the important thing to note...

The original Rotorsport UK only documents are listed in their own section further down the page. **BUT NOTE:** these are for all documents up to December 2023. After this date you should use the Documents all Countries at the top of the page.

LAA Permit Validation: Alan's experience

By Alan Mackey, Committee Member

Permit revalidation time has rolled around again for my gyro and for the first time I shall be using the LAA's new online revalidation system. This article is to document my experience with this system.

The LAA Website

For detailed information: logon to the LAA website: on the home page, click "Engineering", then "Revalidating a Permit to Fly". This displays the permit revalidation process outline page and this is a handy checklist to follow:
www.lightaircraftassociation.co.uk/revalidating-a-permit

Scroll down and select "Step-by-Step Video Guide": the video is 18 minutes long, but look at the chapter headings and you can see Step 1 (the first 2m 12s) and Step 3 (the last 2m 12s) is all the owner/operator needs to see; Step 2 takes the remaining 14m 30s and is for inspectors.

My gyro was serviced and inspected by my friendly neighbourhood engineer, who updated the records online.

I started the revalidation process by logging on to the LAA website: on the user page (the one with the "Member Area" drop down at the top), I clicked the orange button labelled "My Aircraft Data", then I clicked on the green button "Apply for Revalidation".

I selected my Inspector from the drop down list, studied the information on the page then at the bottom of the page I selected the green "Apply" button. Confirmation was displayed: "Application submitted. Your Inspector has been notified and the Airworthiness Review is now available for them to complete. You can

track the progress of your application on My Aircraft Data. Once the Airworthiness Review is complete, you will be notified by email to complete the owner's declaration and pay for your application."

Application submitted
Your Inspector has been notified and the Airworthiness Review is now available for them to complete. You can track the progress of your application on My Aircraft Data. Once the Airworthiness Review is complete, you will be notified by email to complete the owner's declaration and pay for your application.

Note: to get back to the user page (for the "My Aircraft Data" button), click the "Login" again and you will be transferred.

I received an email titled "Revalidation Inspector Selection Received", echoing the confirmation that I had already seen on screen. The email explained about the check flight requirements and declaration, then has a section titled "What happens now". There are two steps documented:

1. Your inspector will complete the Airworthiness Review form with your aircraft's information.
2. Once your Inspector submits the Airworthiness Review, you will receive an email prompting you to continue your application online.

While waiting for the email, I reviewed the check flight status and requirements. If you have performed a check flight in the last three months, the evidence can be submitted with the application.

Some time passed - then some more time and eventually after several days (I was very busy!) I had not received the email that I had been expecting. No, it wasn't in the Spam folder!

To see if I could find the reason for the delay, I logged on to the LAA website and selected "My Aircraft Data". I was surprised to see a green button labelled "Continue Revalidation". In my aircraft work records, the status of the latest entry was "Awaiting owner declarations".

20/08/2025

Continue Revalidation

I clicked on the green button - the web page change to a message "No previous Airworthiness Check Flight (ACF) data found", and invited me to enter the date of a check flight performed within the last three months.

No previous Airworthiness Check Flight (ACF) data found.

Note: Owners submitting a revalidation application through the online system for the first time must declare a check flight date within the last three months.

NOTE: In my case, my permit had expired and I had not performed a check flight in the last three months. I checked that the paperwork left for me by my inspector included a "Permit Maintenance Release" form, signed and dated.

If you need to perform a check flight then plan the flight and study the weather forecasts to see what days are likely to be suitable. Book the times in your diary!

The Check Flight

I downloaded the new Airworthiness Check Flight Schedule from the LAA website, Home Page -> search for CFS-1 -> select document **LAA CFS-1 (GYRO) - Check Flight Schedule - Issue 1.pdf**.

LAA/CFS-1 (GYROPLANE) Issue 1

		AIRWORTHINESS CHECK FLIGHT SCHEDULE		LAA/CFS-1 (GYROPLANE) Issue 1 July 2025
SECTION 1 AIRCRAFT INFORMATION				
Aircraft Registration	G-	Aircraft Type		
<small>See Technical Leaflet 2.00 for information and guidance on completing this form at www.laa.uk.com</small>				
SECTION 2 CHECK FLIGHT SCHEDULE				
<small>INSTRUCTIONS TO THE CHECK FLIGHT PILOT: For safety and legal reasons, the flight must at all times be within the terms of the Permit to Fly. This schedule</small>				

Information and guidance on completing the form is given in Technical Leaflet **TL 2.00** on the LAA website, although the document is pretty self-explanatory.

This is different to the check flight schedule that I used last year: the main differences are:

- the sections describing the various tests are arranged in a logical and

practical sequence, I could work through the form from start to finish: with the previous form I found I was jumping forward and back through the schedule, especially on the flying tests;

- there is no complex data table to fill in during a sustained full power climb, so less head-down time in the cockpit;
- there is a new/revised engine run test to check the maximum static rpm. In my case the static engine run had already been performed by my engineer as part of the inspection;
- there is no graph section and consequently no complicated calculations;
- there is no need to submit the form to LAA Engineering unless requested, but the form does have to be signed and dated, and kept with the aircraft's records.

Before starting the tests, I printed the form and annotated it with the limit data for my gyro, taken from the Pilot Operating Handbook. I also added the radio frequency for Brize Norton Radar, for use in the radio and transponder tests.

I was to perform the check flight without a briefed observer, so I prepared the following:

- a full fuel load;
- ballast sufficient to bring the take-off weight up to 450 kg (90% of the maximum) - I did not have any more securable ballast to raise the weight any further.

I planned the flight on SkyDemon and reviewed the NOTAMS and weather.

I checked the actual wind direction when on the airfield (climbs and descents into wind reduce the amount of ground covered, which helps to stay local to the airfield).

I checked the timer and OAT indicator in my gyro were present and correct.

I used the annotated form during the check flight, writing in the results obtained at the appropriate time. *NOTE: the form was printed in its A4 form, which was cumbersome to use in the cockpit, next time I shall reduce it to A5 format.*

When the check flight was complete I reviewed the results, verifying that each result was satisfactory, that I hadn't missed anything and adding any comments I felt were appropriate.

I signed and dated the form then filed it with the aircraft's records. I took a note of the date and added a reminder (to the Gyropedia, or electronic calendar, or diary) for the next check flight date (3 years hence).

Completing the Revalidation Application

Then I completed the revalidation application on the LAA website by adding the date of the check flight and clicking the Submit button.

No previous Airworthiness Check Flight (ACF) data found.

Note: Owners submitting a revalidation application through the online system for the first time must declare a check flight date within the last three months.

Please provide the date of the most recent airworthiness check flight to support this revalidation

25/11/2025

☐ I confirm that a satisfactory check flight was conducted in accordance with LAA/CFS-1 or LAA/FT-NEW for fixed-wing aircraft, or LAA/CFS-GYRO for gyroplanes, on the date stated above. This flight has been recorded in the aircraft's logbook and the signed schedule included in the aircraft's records.

Submit

Cancel

Submitting Check Flight 25/11 @ 22:58

At this point in the LAA video there are instructions on confirming syndicate ownership - in my case I am the only owner of my gyro so I had a simple verification check, to which I clicked on the Yes button.

According to our records, this is the latest list of aircraft owners:

	Membership Expiration Date	Membership Status	Membership Type
Allan Mackey	31-May-2026	Current	Full Plus Member Direct Debit

Is this correct? (All owners require a current membership to continue)

Yes

No

I then completed a list of declarations by ticking the checkboxes, then entered my payment details (not shown) and clicked on the green Pay Now button.

According to our records, your aircraft's Maximum Take-Off Weight (MTOW) is 500kg (if this is incorrect, please contact LAA Engineering before paying).

Your revalidation fee: £292.00

Total Amount: £292.00

Email Address: allanmackey@gmail.com

Owner's Declaration (Declaration Version 1.0)

I, Allan Mackey, owner of G-YROZ, declare that, to the best of my knowledge:

- ☒ The flying times recorded in the aircraft's logbooks are correct.
- ☒ The aircraft has not been modified or repaired outside of LAA approval procedures.

Owner's Responsibilities (Declaration Version 1.0)

I, Allan Mackey, owner of G-YROZ, understand that:

- ☒ I am responsible for keeping the aircraft in an airworthy condition.
- ☒ I am responsible for operating it within the conditions of the Permit to Fly and Operating Limitations.

Permit to Fly Invalidation (Declaration Version 1.0)

I, Allan Mackey, owner of G-YROZ, understand that:

- ☒ Failure to maintain the aircraft's airworthiness will render the Permit to Fly invalid.
- ☒ Any unauthorised modifications may invalidate the Permit to Fly.
- ☒ The Light Aircraft Association is hereby empowered to act as my agent for the revalidation of the Permit to Fly.

Pay Now

Revalidation Applications Declaration completed 25/11 @ 23:01

The webpage showed a confirmation message.

Thank you for your payment and completing the Owner's Declarations. Your application will be reviewed by LAA Engineering. You can track the application's progress on My Aircraft Data. You will be notified once the aircraft's Permit to Fly is revalidated. If you would like to tell us your thoughts on the revalidation system, please complete our [user feedback survey](#).

Your transaction has been processed successfully.

Contribution Information

Item	Qty	Unit Price	Total Price
Your revalidation fee - £292.00	1	£292.00	£292.00

Contribution Total: £292.00

Date: 25-Nov-2025 23:02

Transaction ID: ch_35XVFH4FUXFmW13ZV9nmg

Your Email

allanmackey@gmail.com

Revalidation Payment Successful. 25/11 @ 23:03

I submitted the application on 25/11/2025 at 23:02 and received an immediate email reply acknowledging receipt of the application (timestamped 23:02) and containing a PDF file with the complete application for my records.

On 26/11/2025 at 22:12 (i.e. 23 hours later) I received an email with my new Certificate of Validity.

Summary

Apart from the glitch where I was waiting for an email that never came, *(on reflection I am wondering if my engineer completed submitting the Airworthiness Review before I even started the revalidation process)*, the procedure was smooth and straight-forward. The turn round time from submitting the application to receiving the new Certificate of Validity was under 24 hours, which is commendable and reassuring. Next time I shall be monitoring the LAA website so I can be ready to respond to the green "Continue Revalidation" button in good time.

Not my best decision making

By Chris Rose, Editor

A couple of weeks ago, I was going to fly to a friend's airfield to witness his maiden flight of his recently acquired gyro. It was all a bit of the spur-of-the-moment decision on my part, and that was perhaps the start of my bad decision making - I was already a little complacent as I was very familiar with Damyns Hall, his home airfield, and the route around North London from Holmbeck, past Elstree, and round past Stapleford.

A cursory glance at the Met showed mostly broken cloud with sunny spells, with the possibility of a light shower over Holmbeck around 15:00. It was a gusty crosswind from the south at Holmbeck, and nudging my personal limit for what I'll fly in, but I decided to pull on my big-boy pants and figured a bit of challenging crosswind would be good practice for me.

Arriving at Holmbeck to get the gyro out I thought it was windier than I expected, the flag billowing almost horizontal and only slightly favouring a 29 runway takeoff, however the skies were almost cloudless. Another cursory glance at the updated Met showed the wind gusts had crept up and were now on my personal limits, but they were set to drop off again around 15:00. There was still the chance of the shower at 15:00. Sunset was at 16:00, so I figured if I timed my return to Holmbeck for just before 16:00 I'd miss the potential shower and have a more manageable crosswind for my landing back there, still within legal daylight hours.

With my pre-flight inspection completed, NOTAMs checked, PPR done, I lined up on 29

and readied myself for the expect crosswind on the takeoff roll. The takeoff was uneventful, though not my best as I was a little sluggish in catching the drift to the right as the wheels lifted. All good practice, I thought to myself, and happy to be in the air and on my way.

The flight to Damyns Hall was pretty bumpy, more than I expected, and I started to ponder my decision to go flying in the first place. I was mostly concerned about the landing back at Holmbeck with the gusty crosswind when I returned. I knew Damyns would be fine as the wind was pretty much down the runway, so comforted myself with that thought and the fact the Met predicted the wind would drop off for my return to Holmbeck.

After spending a couple of hours at Damyns, enjoying the gyro banter, and being a passenger for once as we did a few circuits in my friend's gyro, it was time to head home.

It was now 15:00 and it had been pretty much clear skies all day, so with a 50 minute flight home I thought I'd get back with enough daylight left. Another check of the Met showed the winds were dropping off back at Holmbeck and the predicted light shower was no longer showing.

I got airborne, and as I rounded the corner of London at Stapleford I looked to my west across the sprawling skyline of the city. It looked awesome with the sunsetting beyond it, but what wasn't awesome was the huge black cloud bank looming off in the distance, just starting to encroach on the far west of the city. Still, the skies above and ahead were clear, and I'd be home way before the cloud bank pushed any further north potentially in the direction of Holmbeck.

Following the M25 past Elstree it was now worryingly getting dark quite quickly as the cloud bank started to encroach on what was left of the setting sun. I didn't have far to go now so

I wasn't overly concerned, and I settled back in my seat watching the lights of the cars in the heavy traffic light up the M25 in rivers of white and red.

I turned north at Bovingdon to head in pretty much a straight line towards Holmbeck, past the westerly edge of the Luton zone. "Last leg", I thought, "I'll be home soon".

I became aware that the visibility ahead, and over the top of Holmbeck, looked a little misty, and as I got closer I realised that it was actually a bank of light rain.

I was now literally a mile from Holmbeck and I could not see the runway due to the poor light and the rain! I pressed on a little closer hoping I would be able to pick out the familiar outline of the hedges around the airfield through the murk and was rewarded with almost zero forward vision! A quick 180 degree turn took me back out of the rubbish and back into clear air.

To make matters worse, my helmet visor picked this moment to fog up so I tried to wipe it clear with my gloved hand. This didn't improve things much so I raised it and instantly regretted doing this as the wind caught the visor and damn near ripped the helmet off my head! I yanked it back down again. I could now feel panic starting to set in, it was getting so dark now that I was having trouble making out details on the fields below.

I felt trapped and knew I had to come up with a plan quickly. I knew there was a private airstrip, not on the maps, just to the south east of Holmbeck so I headed to where I thought it was, but in the failing light and poor visibility I couldn't find it.

With that option ruled out I headed back south towards the edge of the Luton zone and to Cheddington, another airfield I knew of and this one was actually on the map. I resigned

myself that I'd have to phone a friend to pick me up in their car, and I'd have to come back to get my gyro the following day.

I entered the overhead at Cheddington and started a descending turn to bring me round and on to final. In the turn I looked back in the direction of Holmbeck to see that the rain bank had moved away from over the top of it, so I broke off the turn and headed back there again.

It was now a straight clear run from Cheddington to Holmbeck and as if to help me out the sun was now out from behind the black cloud bank to the west and just sinking into the horizon. It's orange orb sandwiched between the bottom of the black cloud and silhouetted Chiltern hills would have been a beautiful sight if I wasn't so shaken up, right now it just looked evil.

I made straight for the 11 end of the runway at Holmbeck. By now I had forgotten about my original worry of a gusty crosswind, and just wanted to get the gyro on the ground. To my relief, despite the crosswind, the landing was a perfect one, albeit with a slight tailwind. I touched down at 16:10, and by the time I had put away in the hangar, some 15 minutes later, it was almost completely dark outside.

In the end it wasn't anything to do with my initial worry of wind gusts that got me it was:

- Ignoring the possibility of showers and not taking into account that I might not be able to see through them.
- Leaving it until the last minute to do the journey home. If I had left earlier to come home I'd have comfortably had enough light to circle until the shower passed. The same goes for the black cloud bank, although I couldn't have predicted this would develop and obscure the sun so much, it wouldn't have been a factor if I'd left earlier.

So, what seemed like a familiar flight, on a rather gusty day, with mostly clear skies, tuned

out to be one of the scariest flights I've had, and not for the expected reasons.

Below is a screen shot of my SkyDemon bread crumbs that shows just how close I got to making it home on the first attempt, with the black arrow showing where I made my 180 turn out of the rain to head off to find another airfield.



EASA electronic conspicuity article

Here's an interesting article from EASA about electronic conspicuity and ADS-L, a simplified ADS-B tailored for general aviation. Given that what gets adopted by EASA might just get adopted by the CAA too, it could be an

indication of things to come. You can find the article here:

<https://www.easa.europa.eu/community/topics/spot-conflict-iconspicuity-general-aviation>

Rubber side down

By Clive Rose, BRA Safety And Training

Radio calls between Pilots and Air Traffic Control are conducted in English, worldwide. But the airwaves get busy with lots of aircraft vying for attention, so our conversations use a specific set of phrases for each situation. We don't want to hog a radio channel for longer than necessary. We certainly don't want other pilots hogging the radio as we're trying to make a call.

Pilots need a Flight Radiotelephony Operator's Licence (FRTOL) so they can legally make calls on the radio in their aircraft. If your Flying School doesn't have a Radio Instructor/ Examiner, you can find one via the CAA, here: <https://www.caa.co.uk/our-work/publications/documents/content/cap1585e/>

You operate the Radio in your training aircraft under the authority of your Flying Instructor. Once you qualify, you need your own FRTOL to legally operate the same piece of kit. On the upside, submit your initial PPL(G) application WITH your FRTOL application and you save yourself a few bob.

I attended a Radio Brush-Up Course at Popham last night, specifically aimed at dusting off the grey cells of long-time pilots who don't get out much. Even if you do get out a lot, CAP413 gets updated periodically, so it's useful to check-in with a Radio Instructor to (as it says on the tin) brush-up your skills.

The Instructor told us the CAA had recently carried out documentation spot checks on pilots arriving and departing. Their Enforcement Branch take a dim view of anyone flying without a FRTOL. They won't be too impressed with un-Permitted aircraft or un-Licensed Pilotes, either, but that wasn't the subject of last night's meeting.

We attendees were joking amongst ourselves that some of the radio calls we hear are shoddy and you wonder if the voices you hear are actually qualified. 5 minutes later, our Radio guy said he'd recently coached a long-standing Flying Instructor through a Course and Exam to gain his FRTOL. He'd been flying and instructing for many years without one. Gulp!

Talking on the radio can be intimidating. It sounds like a foreign language when you first hear people talking in the cockpit. But early in your flight training you'll be given a cheat sheet of calls to make during your lessons and every time you click the PTT button to speak, you'll gain confidence.

The guys we talk to at the other end of the radio are a real asset. Not only do they tell us where to taxi/park, which runway to use, what the wind is doing, they can also provide a whole host of information and services in the airspace we normally occupy and, of course, in the controlled airspace we sometimes have access to.

Bottom line is: don't fear the radio - think of it as talking to a really helpful know-it-all mate who learned English from a book. And this one's called CAP413. When you understand what he's on about, it will really enhance your enjoyment of this great sport.

If you haven't already done a radio course, get yourself booked on one. And when you qualify you can tell your (other) mates you have the same Radio Licence as the pilots flying those jets overhead.

Every day's a school day.

Upcoming events:

You can find the BRA calendar which details all our events, and many others you might be interested on our website. You can find it in the [Events](#) section of our website. Click on the Events Calendar button.

If you have any events you'd like added to our calendar, then please feel free to send an email to: events@britishrotorcraftassociation.co.uk

Keep checking back as we'll soon be adding new official BRA events for 2026!

Record-Breaker 2026

13th June, 2026, Old Warden

Get this date in your diary now for the 2026 gyro record-breaker where we attempt to beat our previous record.

We hope the Aston Martin owners club will be in attendance, the connection being James Bond and Little Nellie. Last time I think we had 300 Astons show up. We are also working on having some of Ken Wallis's other gyros on show.

More details to come.



For Sale:

Got a gyro to sell? Or maybe a gyro related item? Please contact:

events@britishrotorcraftassociation.co.uk

They will put your items on the BRA website For Sale area until you tell us it's sold. It will also appear in this newsletter for one issue.

Advertise your gyro or gyro related stuff for sale here for free!