

Buzz Bulletin

February 2023
Edition 2 Vol. 8

Newsletter of the
North Hampshire Prostate
Cancer Support Group



Welcome to the Buzz Bulletin

We welcomed two new members to our group at the February meeting, which saw an attendance of over 40 people. Some of you may have been wondering why Ernie Dickson was invited to attend and take pictures of us during the meeting. Your committee has decided we want to refresh the publicity posters we use at public events. To help us achieve this we have engaged Basingstoke Voluntary Action (BVA) to assist. Ernie has been appointed as our liaison and one of the ideas he wants to pursue is using actual pictures of our group meeting to add to the publicity posters. We wait to see what results from his visit.

I am pleased to say that four of our group members have put themselves forward as prospective committee members. However, the overarching worry is that no one has volunteered to stand as our next chair person. It is difficult to envisage how the committee will be run without a chair person. Potentially we will have a committee of 8 people, four of whom have many years experience of the group. Without doubt a great deal of help and support would be on offer to whoever steps forward to be our next Chair. Please consider if you could fulfil that role and help the group to move forward and improve.

As a final note, I would like to thank our members on behalf of Steve Markham for their generosity in donating to Steve's RAF Benevolent Fund bucket to the tune of £164.40. On a similar theme new members may not know that our raffles prizes are donated by our members and the proceeds from the raffle along with donations for the tea, coffee and biscuits are used to pay for the hire of the hall at Brighton Hill and replenish the tea, coffee and biscuit supplies. It's thanks to this generosity that the group is able to pay its way.

I hope to see you all at the AGM as it is important for you to have your say and ensure you get the committee you want, to keep us going for another year

Richard

DIARY DATES

2nd March
Red Lion Hotel, Basingstoke
Pub Pint and Chat

30th March
AGM

6th April
Red Lion Hotel, Basingstoke
Pub Pint and Chat

27th April
Group meeting
Speaker to be advised


Group Meetings

Brighton Hill Community
Association Hall
Gershwin Court
Basingstoke.
RG22 4NN

Meetings are held on the last Thursday
of every month except December



Contact

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 North Hampshire Prostate Cancer
Support Group

February Meeting

Steve Markham gave us a fascinating talk on how he built and flew a replica Spitfire. It is an 80% scale model of a Mk26 photoreconnaissance aircraft built during the second world war.

The project started in 2006 after attempts to purchase an original Spitfire had failed, the asking price being in the region of 2-4 million pounds in today's money. By choosing to model at 80% full scale the final aircraft would be about half the volume and a quarter the weight of the prototype meaning that a smaller engine



could be used rather than the supercharged 1000HP Merlin fitted to the originals. The smaller craft would also bring advantages in fuel consumption and of course cost.

The Supermarine designs and trade marks are currently owned by a US company, which supplies kits to enable people to build replica Spitfires. Building the aeroplane started in 2006. After fitting more than 1000 rivets, which are used to hold the aeroplane's panels in place and many jigs to enable all of the curved surfaces to be accurately reproduced, Steve was ready in 2009 to take delivery of the engine, a Japanese Honda 3.5 litre air cooled V6 and in 2016 a German made three blade propeller was delivered. The irony of the countries of manufacture was not lost on Steve. By 2019 the aeroplane was ready for its first test flight.

After a series of test flights to iron out problems and fine tune some of the 'features' of the new aircraft it was almost ready for its final test when the aeroplane decided to pose one last problem. During takeoff and after achieving about 30 feet of altitude, the engine suddenly cut out. An emergency landing got plane and pilot safely on the ground and after letting things cool down, Steve tried to restart the engine, but with no luck until he switched over to the secondary system of his dual engine control. The engine started, but when reverting to the primary system, the engine stopped. It took many hours of investigation to discover that the switch used to select the engine system had itself failed.. With the switch replaced, with a rather expensive military grade component, all was well and on 2nd September 2022 the Spitfire was awarded its CAA certificate of airworthiness, and Steve was awarded the prize for the best kit built aeroplane of 2022.

Richard