

# The Amberley Society

The aim of the Society is the conservation and improvement of the amenities, character and interests of Amberley and its surroundings

## Newsletter June 2009

**Saturday 27 June 2009** - The Amberley Glider Centenary Celebration

**Friday 17 July 2009** - North Stoke Suspension Bridge Gurkha Party

### The Amberley Glider Centenary Celebration



The world's first recorded soaring flight in a glider was from Amberley Mount on June 27, 1909. The glider was designed and built by Jose Weiss, a French artist living in Amberley, and flown by a local 17-year-old, Eric Gordon-England. He gained a height of 50ft and flew for 59 seconds before landing in the valley below. Gordon-England later went on to become a famous Brooklands racing driver.

The Southdown Gliding Club has kindly extended an invitation to us to attend their centenary celebration of this event at Parham airfield. There will be vintage gliders flying along with other historic aircraft displayed. An Austin Seven car rally is also planned, which will include a rare racing car designed, built and owned by Gordon-England. Also on display will be a 5/8ths scale replica of the Weiss glider. It is hoped that members of both the Weiss and Gordon-England families will be present. Finally, the daytime airfield event, to which we are invited, will close with some superb model flying displays, followed by a spectacular display by the Swift Aerobatic Team featuring Guy Westgate. Many local residents will have seen the team rehearsing their amazing routine which includes aerobatics whilst still under aero-tow.

Events are from 11am – 6pm. For entry, please let the people on the gate know you are from the Amberley Society. A chance to show off your new membership card! Unfortunately there maybe insufficient parking space for our cars so we are requested to find alternative local parking and walk in, unless like me you intend to arrive by bicycle via Amberley Mount!

We are also welcome to visit the club's vintage glider rally at Parham any time from Wednesday 24 June - 1 July. In addition, Amberley Museum has a collection of Weiss and Gordon-England artifacts, and documents on display.

On Saturday, June 27, I will endeavour to meet members and brief them on arrival but it is most important to heed the various 'Danger' notices around. Airfields are dangerous places if one doesn't take care. The club has had members of the public before walking straight across the runways (rather than round the outside of the field) in the path of landing gliders, giving risk to serious injury, or worse, to them and pilot. Remember you may not hear a glider approaching and it doesn't have the use of an engine to climb and avoid you.

### North Stoke Suspension Bridge Gurkha Party

Repair and restoration work is going well. In order that Society members, along with others involved directly with the project, selected guests and the media can see the works in progress, meet the Gurkhas and celebrate the success of the restoration, the Amberley Society and the Gurkhas are holding a party. David Lock is kindly allowing us to use his field by the bridge site, along with car parking at North Stoke. Full details are still to be

finalised and there may be changes, but the plan is to start from 6.30pm on Friday, July 17. It is intended to be a relaxed and informal event. It promises to be a very special evening. Construction work can be viewed, after which a Gurkha curry will be served followed by a programme of entertainment under canvas. This will be a true mix of our cultures, with a range of professional home-grown live music provided by the Amberley Folk Club, and the Gurkhas performing their famous sword dances and more. In order that everyone is able to attend, we plan to provide transport to and from the site for the less able and those without cars, as well as an alternative menu choice for vegetarians or those who don't like curry. It will be a bring-your-own-drinks affair. Unfortunately, the costs of equipment hire, public liability insurance etc soon mounts and, in order to keep ticket costs to a minimum, we would welcome any individual sponsors. Ticket prices will be £15 for adults, £8 for children. If the sale of tickets, plus sponsorship donations, leaves any funds over, it will be added to a pot which has already attracted funds donated by Society members for Gurkha charities.

Demand for tickets is likely to be high and will be issued on a first come first served basis. Please also note the early closing date for ticket applications of Friday, July 3.

Any offers of help in conjunction with the event would be much appreciated.

This is going to be one-off occasion not to be missed.

Grahame Joseph

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Dismantling the North Stoke suspension footbridge May 2009

# The Amberley Society

## North Stoke Suspension Bridge Party

**Friday, July 17, 2009**

from 6.30pm, at North Stoke

Gurkha Curry

Entertainment by the Gurkhas and Amberley Folk Club

Tickets: Adults £15 minimum; children £8  
Additional donations or sponsorship welcome.

Name .....

Address .....  
.....  
.....

e-mail .....

Telephone Number .....

Curry Tickets required ..... Vegetarian tickets required.....

Total cost ..... Please make cheques payable to The Amberley Society

Transport required YES/NO

Bring your own drinks, warm clothing, suitable footwear and a torch.

Try to share transport

Please return this form and your remittance,

Cash or cheque made payable to The Amberley Society to:

Grahame Joseph

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