



Claude Grahame-White with a lady passenger in a Farman biplane, c.1911. Photo from a collection by Clive R. Smith.

Memories of Hendon Aerodrome

A new exhibition for the summer takes place at the Church Farmhouse Museum, in Greyhound Hill Hendon, to celebrate 100 years of powered flight. The material is drawn from the extensive collection of Clive Smith, a postcard dealer based in Brent Street, who, over the years, has put together this singular collection of photographs, posters, tickets, brochures, and ephemera from London Aerodrome Hendon, much of it from the period before the First World War.

The Vision of Claude Grahame-White

In January 1910, at the age of thirty, Claude Grahame-White came to the top of Greyhound Hill and gazing down on the flat fields of Colindale below realised that it was the perfect location for a flying school and aerodrome. By 1914 it had become the premier centre for aerial demonstrations, racing and the London social elite in which Grahame-White was a larger than life character. One of the original "magnificent men in their flying machines", he was charming, debonair, sporting, and certainly cocky. He wowed the ladies, and in the photographs he poses as a man in his prime, confident of his success. Many of the

demonstrations, such as *looping the loop*, may seem like publicity stunts; but they are distractions from White's list of genuine and serious aerial experiments.

Flight firsts

Hendon was the centre for the development of night flying, particularly important in the defence of London during the Zeppelin raids that came with the Great War. It was from Hendon that the first defensive patrol of London was launched (led, of course, by White himself). Hendon also saw the first ever parachute jump from an aeroplane in 1914, and the first airmail, from Hendon to Windsor Castle. White realised the potential of this new invention. Literally thousands

of people flocked to watch the shows at the aerodrome itself, and during those golden summers before the darkness of the oncoming war, Sunny Hill Fields was packed with spectators. The exhibition lasts until 25 September, and the museum is open 10.00am-1.00pm and 2.00-5.00pm Monday to Thursday (closed Friday), 10.00am-1.00pm and 2.00-5.30pm on Saturday and 2.00-5.30pm on Sunday. Tel. 020 8203 0130 email gerrard.roots@barnet.gov.uk or hugh.petrie@barnet.gov.uk.

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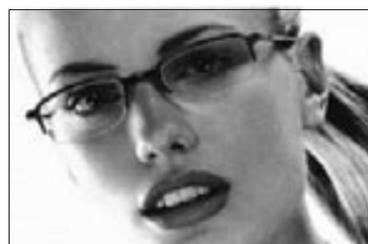
Foxy, foxy

Hark, I hear the sound of the unconscionable in hot pursuit of the inedible. Yes, it's fox hunting time again and our beloved legislators have got themselves into another twist over it. Labour rebels are backing the fox in ways that they would never back the poor and oppressed while true blue Tories support the fox hunters in a way they would never back any other bunch of self-righteous thugs. Why? Because parliament decided that men and women in red coats can't follow dogs following Basil Brush and then watch the dogs rip poor Basil apart. The Labour rebels say hunting with dogs is cruel, the Tory toffs say it is part of our rich cultural heritage like slavery and witch burning. Besides, the poor foxhounds will suffer if they don't have foxes to rip apart. With some of the greatest minds in Britain gathered together in Westminster I'm amazed that they can't find a solution, so I guess it's down to me to ensure that the fabric of this fine country of ours does not go to the dogs/foxes etc.

So, let's get this straight, it's only hunting with dogs that's banned, so why not hunt with something else. What about hunting with two-headed mutant sheep? That would concentrate the foxes' minds at lambing time. Or hunting with elephants, werewolves, kangaroos, armoured personnel carriers or local councillors. All comes down to the same thing; mindless thugs rampaging across the countryside in the name of liberty, violence and the British way of cruelty to animals.

Naturally the maniacs on horseback would say it's not the same without the dogs, so what about drag hunting? The bigots could combine their love of a violent death with a spot of cultural vandalism by chasing Lily Savage and Danny La Rue across open fields. Actually, the way to stop fox hunting is blindingly simple. All you need to do is breed mutant foxes. After all, who is going to want to chase a six-foot-high furry beast that's armed with a couple of machine guns and has a very bad attitude...

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