

PRESS RELEASE: National Transport Trust Awards 2023

Steve Slater wins Restoration Award for 'Airymouse', a Currie Wot biplane

The restoration of 'Airymouse', a 1930 Currie Wot single-seat sports biplane, has led to Steve Slater of Chesham, Buckinghamshire being announced as a winner of a Restoration Award at the National Transport Trust's (NTT) annual awards. The Award was received by Anne Hughes on behalf of Steve by the NTT's Royal Patron, Anne, HRH The Princess Royal at a ceremony held in the Railway Museum at Fawley Hill (www.fawleyhill.co.uk) on 18 September 2023.

Airymouse was built to the original 1930s drawings for Hampshire Aeroplane Club by its designer Joe Currie, a former WW1 pilot and engineer. It is a classic wood and fabric design and the oldest example of the type. Airymouse has a particular history in that in late 1950s, it was acquired by Westland's chief test pilot Harald Penrose, whose own flying career began in the 1920s. He wrote a series of books, one of which, Airymouse, chronicled his flying the biplane over the English countryside. Even then, the aircraft was an anachronism; a 1930s aircraft with a tailskid and no brakes, and, to quote its original owner, "A diminutive biplane of insignificant horsepower".

NTT Awards Director Paul Brook comments: "Airymouse was acquired by Steve Slater in 2016 and returned to flight after several years in storage. In early 2022, he decided deeper restoration was required, so the fabric was stripped from the airframe and its woodwork repaired. The aircraft was then re-covered and repainted by Steve and friends. Final re-assembly is currently underway. Airymouse is a rare example of a low-cost, aircraft which pioneered the early post-war sport flying movement. As such, we were keen that Steve's excellent project should be recognised with a National Transport Trust Restoration Award."

The National Transport Trust

Founded in 1965, (as the Transport Trust), the National Transport Trust is the UK's only national charity established to promote and encourage the preservation and restoration of Britain's unique transport heritage in all its forms – by air, land (road and rail) and water (sea and inland). The Trust is

managed within a very streamlined structure, with the Board of Trustees representing the wider interests of the nation, for whose benefit the Trust exists.

Photographs

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The National Transport Trust Awards

The National Transport Trust Awards are a key event in the Trust's calendar. Designed to recognise and reward the efforts of the UK transport preservation movement, a number of awards are made to individuals and organisations every year. Categories include Preservationist of the Year, Young Preservationist of the Year, Lifetime Achievement, and Restoration Awards.

Help us to help them

In order to help the UK's the preservation movement the Trust depends on its members and therefore encourages all those who share our aims to join us. Membership of the Trust is open to private individuals and affiliated organisations.

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