

Hamble River Luke & Co Seaplane

In 1914 Hamble River Luke & Co was endeavouring to build a massive seaplane, which was probably the first aeroplane to be designed & built at Hamble.

This company was formed in 1912 when old established yacht builders "Luke & Co." and racing motor boat builders "Hamble River Engineering Co." joined forces to produce their own aircraft. Of course, boatbuilding skills were very appropriate for building the early wooden aircraft.

The HL1, as the seaplane was known, was a two seater, single engined pusher biplane with two floats and a 60ft wing span, designed by F.Murphy. It was displayed at and dominated the 1914 Olympia Aero Show in an incomplete condition and later proved unsuccessful. As a local inhabitant remembered, (the late Claude Bevis), the test pilot was Gordon England but, as the Luke's plane's floats & body were constructed more like yacht hulls, it could barely get off the water. It was also supplied with its own Seaplane Clinker Dinghy.

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Lukes HL1 Seaplane at Olympia Aero Show