## Guild Diary

### August 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pilot Aptitude Assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### September 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>5th General Purposes and Finance Committee Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>3rd Court Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>3rd Education and Training Committee Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>GAPT/AST Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Election of Lord Mayor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Guild Luncheon Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Sir Frederick Tymms Lecture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### October 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pilot Aptitude Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>3rd Technical and Air Safety Committee Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>6th General Purposes and Finance Committee Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Trophies and Awards Banquet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### November 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4th Education and Training Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Flyer Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Benevolent Fund Board of Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>7th GP&amp;F Committee meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4th Court Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Scholarships Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Silent Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Lord Mayor’s Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Lord Mayor’s Banquet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>St Cecilia’s Festival</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### December 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pilot Aptitude Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>4th Technical and Air Safety Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>8th GP&amp;F Committee meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>New Members’ Briefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Guild Carol Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Christmas Supper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Guild Closes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### GUILD VISITS PROGRAMME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - 3 Sept</td>
<td>Flight Training Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Sept</td>
<td>RAF Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Sept</td>
<td>RAF Boscombe Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Oct</td>
<td>RAF Northolt, including Mess Dinner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please see the Flyers accompanying this and previous editions of Guild News or contact Liveryman David Curgenven at guildevents@dcai.co.uk.

Cover Photo: Freeman Peter Vacher’s magnificently restored Hurricane, standing outside Marshall’s ‘art deco’ Headquarters building at Cambridge Airport, makes a wonderful reminder of the technology and scenery of the era of the Battle of Britain, waged 70 years ago. This Hurricane was an actual Battle of Britain participant and many pilots were trained in the war years at Cambridge by Sir Arthur Marshall’s flying school. Photo is reproduced by courtesy of Paul Eldridge, Design Team Manager, Marshall Design Team, Airport House, Cambridge.
NEWS
ROUND UP...
• A fascinating explanation was given by a French Avocat as to why the French judiciary are involved immediately there is an accident as opposed to waiting for the results of the investigation. There is general suspicion that members of what might be termed ‘the club or family’ should not investigate the activities of another club/family member. Only a Judge is seen to be independent.

• It is hopeful that the final EC document, which is currently under discussion, will subtly shift the emphasis so that the judiciary play a less leading role, by requiring better cooperation between the investigators and the judiciary. Evidence should remain in the hands of the investigators unless the judiciary believes a criminal act may have been committed.

• There should not be one European AIB, but existing AIBs should be used to everyone’s advantage. It is proposed to establish a ‘Network’ of Investigating Authorities consisting of the Chief Inspectors of the 27 EU states who would be able to provide help and guidance to those states which lack effective AIBs.

• There needs to be effective protection of sensitive safety information which might be subject to requests under Freedom of Information Acts.

• There should be better protection of the rights of victims.

• Implementation of safety recommendations must be enacted within 90 days or the reasons why no action is to be taken must be published. A European database of safety recommendations should be established.

• EASA should be part of the investigating team but only with Observer status

REACH FOR THE HEROES.

Professor Diana Green, Trustee of Flying Scholarships for the Disabled, Project Manager of Reach for the Heroes, Assistant to the Gapan Court writes: In 2009, four intrepid pilots, in the highly successful “Reach for the Islands” flight, flew in formation around 11 UK islands in a single day and managed to raise £25,000 for the Flying Scholarships for the Disabled Trust (FSD). They also came second in the annual “Dawn to Dusk” Competition.

For 2010, the same pilots - Edwin Brenninkmeyer, Robert Lough, Timothy Nathan and Dierk Reuter- are undertaking a different challenge to raise much needed funds for the charity. This year “Reach for the Heroes” links the charity’s aims of transforming the lives of disabled civilians and service personnel wounded in recent armed conflicts with the heroic achievements of “The Few” in this year, the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain, by the same theme, the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

There will be two flights. The first flight, on 20 August, will be in partnership with BBMF (Battle of Britain Memorial Flight). Only one of our aircraft, sporting the FSD logo (see photograph) will be involved in this flight. It will fly in formation with two Hurricanes and a Spitfire. After departing RAF Coningsby, the formation will fly over 11 Battle of Britain airfields in the south of England, landing at Duxford, Biggin Hill and finishing at Northolt. (We are hoping that Cliff Spink will join the formation in his Spitfire for part of the route). The BBMF will overfly the Cabinet Office War Rooms at which will be gathered a number of veterans and VIPs. We aim to carry a celebrity in the FSD aircraft. BBMF are organizing media coverage of this flight, including a photoshoot with the BBC.

For the second flight on 15 September, our four aircraft (two Aztecs and two Cessna 210s), flying in formation, will visit 14 Battle of Britain airfields in southern England, starting and ending at Biggin Hill. We hope to have Spitfires “on guard” at a number of airfields (The famous “Kent Spitfire” will be at Biggin Hill). We are planning to take two celebrities and two former FSD scholars on this flight and are trying to identify an ATA veteran to join us for a short flight and assist with media interviews.

We are currently seeking sponsorship, not to cover the costs of the pilots (who will cover their own costs) but to increase the funds donated to the Charity directly. Securing sponsorship and individual donations is proving even more difficult in 2010 than last year, given the continuing global financial crisis. But we remain optimistic.

In order to further publicise the flights and the work of the Charity, FSD had a stand at the Biggin Hill Battle of Britain Air Show on 26 and 27 June. This included a static display of a PA 28 fitted with a hand controller, one of the Cessna 210s and, on the 27th, the Aztec clad in the FSD livery. Further details about the flights will be found on the dedicated website www.reachfortheheroes.org.uk which will be updated regularly. Donations can be made through the website and, however small, will all help FSD continue its important work.

LIVERY SKI CHAMPIONSHIPS 2010 AND 2011

The inaugural inter-livery skiing and snowboarding competition took place earlier this year in January, located in the resort of Morzine, within the Portes de Soleil region in the heart of the French Alps. The competition entailed both slalom and giant slalom races for both skiers and snowboarders, and was held over two days. The slalom competition, held on the first day, took place during the evening, providing a fantastic opportunity to ski down in front of the resort, with the ski slope illuminated by only the flood lights. The giant slalom competition took place the following day, on one of the main pistes of Morzine and provided a very exciting finish to the competition.

Past Master David Mauleverer, along with Freeman Edward Scurr provided support and pre-race advice for both races. Liverman John Davy provided support and pre-race advice for both races.

Thirty to forty competitors, from up to ten different Livery Companies took part over the two days, comprising both skiers and snowboarders. The Worshipful Company of Vintners fielded a very strong team winning both events with several of their members winning other awards.

The competition not only boasted some fantastic skiing in what can only be described as one of the most superior ski regions in Europe, but also a brilliant atmosphere between all the competitors and supporters from the different competing Liveries.

The idea was born by the Ironmongers’ Company under the leadership of Ironmongers’ Past Master, George Bastin. Such was the success of the inaugural competition, they have decided to make it an annual event and the next one is planned on the 21st and 22nd January 2011 again at Morzine, France.

Although all standards of skiers competed it would be marvellous if the Guild were able to field a strong team.

Those interested in participating should first visit http://www.liveryskiing.com, which gives all the details to hand at the present time.

David Mauleverer and Edward Scurr have agreed to coordinate the Guild entry. In order that entrants can get their ski legs and hopefully practice on a course just before the races it is suggested that those participating meet up a few days beforehand. With this in mind Liverman John Davy has kindly offered to accommodate members in his lovely Chalet at Les Carroz near to Flaine. He has offered up to 8 rooms and will be able to organise the practise skiing. Les Carroz is about 40 Minutes by car from Morzine and we can either commute to the races or stay in Morzine overnight.
The Master Writes
A SINGLE VOICE
DR MICHAEL A FOPP

The election is over and after years of Labour we now have a Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition. Let us hope that the optimism and goodwill of the nation towards any new government will not be wasted. The British public, almost regardless of their political colour, is pretty even-handed with their leaders, provided those leaders deliver what is best for the country. A coalition may just be exactly what is needed to sort out the current difficulties - what we most certainly do not need is the constitutional tinkering and prolific politically correct manoeuvring which resulted in so many losses of traditional freedoms suffered under the previous administration. We have been warned of the ‘pain’ to come and there is an inevitability about things getting worse before they get better.

But what does the future hold for aviation under the new leadership in Westminster? Things do not seem to have got off to a good start with the immediate decision to cancel plans for a third runway at Heathrow. A decision on a subject so important to the nation’s pre- eminent position as an international aviation hub needs, in my opinion, to be taken carefully. I do not know all the pros and cons of a third runway at Heathrow, but I do know that it is a complex subject on which the competing priorities of the nation’s interest and the wellbeing of people local to Heathrow, must be properly considered. Such a short period between coming to power and making such an important decision strikes me as choosing a ‘quick fix’, popular, PR-induced, sound bite to use immediately, while more pressing issues (such as the economy) are considered in greater detail. If that is the case we must blame ourselves for creating a situation where we, the electorate, have created a situation where politicians feel they must provide us with urgent announcements in spite of the risk that a mistaken decision may be the lasting result. Decide in haste, repent in leisure - as the old saying goes.

I am sure that this does not signal that aviation will be plagued by more years of, at best, disinterest and, at worst, obstruction. The period we have just lived through was based on a misplaced ideology that aviation was, somehow, elitist. I believe that this government will recognise the importance that our sector brings to the life and wealth of the nation. It will do this simply because it values education, ambition, entrepreneurship and the pursuit of profit. Characteristics which were stilled by the previous regime because their intrinsic sense was that, in aviation, such characteristics were only there by virtue of the privilege enjoyed by the participants. Rubbish of course, but it is a fact that the perception still exists that aviation is an arena in which only the well-off can participate (perhaps because, until recently, MPs did not need to use budget airlines!). The negative perceptions and general ambivalence to aviation are not helped by the lack of a single voice to represent our interests. I could list all the organisations to whom we could go if we wanted to find out about aviation. If I were to do so for this country alone I would exceed your Editor’s strict word limit for this column. Suffice to say there are many and I cannot think of a single one that does anything less than an excellent job for its constituency. However, there lies the problem as each constituency has its own pressing issues and problems. Sometimes the interests of one overlap, interlink and underscore those of another. Occasionally different constituencies have a conflicting agenda or even a fundamental disagreement. In spite of this there is much more that we all have in common than upon which we disagree. Yet a single message is rarely communicated to the public from an authoritative source, because there is no single voice. Worse still has been the history of failed attempts to create that authoritative single voice for aviation. All have lacked either the credibility to be authoritative or the confidence of the whole community that they are not just ‘in it for the money’.

I am not suggesting that the Guild attempts to become that authoritative single voice for aviation because it is not, nor ever has been, our role. However, we have demonstrated over the years that we have a unique ability to bring together people to find common ground and then act to achieve a result. I believe strongly that re-inventing wheels is a waste of time and that it is better to work within an established framework, if one exists. To this end I shall provide my personal opinion from which, I hope, others may develop a way forward with the Guild to better enable our sector to represent itself to the public and government.

The Air League was founded in 1909 by a group of people who had exactly the same concerns that I have brought to this article. In those days they wanted government and the public to be better informed and aware of the new technology that was aviation. They saw the air transport, defence, and recreational aspects of what the aeroplane would bring; they were determined to ensure that British aviation was nurtured by government, appreciated by politicians and, literally, loved by the public. Their campaigns to make Britain “Air Minded” worked. We live in a free society today because the Air League successfully promoted a strong aviation infrastructure of airfields, manufacturing and public participation (through Air Shows and the Air Training Corps), underpinning a vibrant GA sector delivering well trained pilots to provide the critical air defence in 1940. The Air League provided the single voice for many years and I hope that, with some effort by us all, it can be so again. To that end I wish the Air League’s new President, Chairman and Chief Executive all the best as they, jointly, take the reins as a new government also comes to power. The Guild, as always, stands ready to help in any way we can.
Guild History Published

PAST MASTER HUGH FIELD

The first volume of the history of the Guild covered the formative years up to 1964. It was described by the author of the newly published Part Two as “a year-by-year history, heavy with detail” and Ian Frow determined that any successor volume would not turn out to be “an ocean of factual trifles”. Rather he sought to produce a document which would give a broad impression of the Guild’s activities in the years from 1965 onwards. He wanted his readers to be not only briefed on the Guild’s achievements but also to gain an overall impression of how it works. The result is a masterly work, crisply laid out and more than achieving its author’s aims.

The Guild’s Patron, His Royal Highness Prince Philip, has contributed not only a Foreword but also a Conclusion. Effectively bracketing a period through which, for all but the last two years, he has been Grand Master, the book shows the close interest taken by the Prince in the Guild’s affairs. Successive Masters have been amazed by his knowledge and judgement and these have both been to the fore on the many occasions when he has attended a Court meeting or a social function.

While the earlier volume was strictly chronological, Ian has chosen to present his history through the medium of fourteen chapters, each looking at a different facet of Guild activity and, as appropriate, expanding on the background to and history of each element. Thus in the chapter describing the Guild’s office structure the author refers to “the nomadic existence of the Guild’s office” to introduce a clear history of our various headquarters - South Street, Alitalia House, Eclestone Street, Gray’s Inn Road and finally Cobham House - and the personnel who peopled them. This allows him to enlarge on the secretariat and the all-important Clerks who have headed it up.

Discussion of the Guild structure allows a review of the various working committees as the emphasis of their work over the years has changed, not only with developments in aviation but also in the Guild’s ever-increasing involvement with other professional bodies and Governmental departments. The two senior committees - Technical and Air Safety and Education and Training are each afforded a chapter in their own right where there is more consideration of the subject matter upon which they have been engaged.

Due weight is given to the Regional Committees, covering in each case their foundation, their current activities, relationship with their local civil aviation regulators and ongoing relationship with the Court.

In my opinion one of the most absorbing chapters is that devoted to the Guild’s financial management and in particular the dependence on the Cobham family. The complexity of the trusts which support the Company is a subject that few members (even on the Court) fully understand and this chapter sets the issues out very clearly. There was a period during the 1990s when the Guild’s entire existence was threatened and the tortuous negotiations that went on were largely unknown to the membership at the time. All was resolved by the patient hard work of a small number of key people and Ian Frow has researched this vital piece of history diligently and set it out clearly.

Subjects given their own chapter include the Benevolent Fund, the Trophies and Awards Committee, with which are associated the Guild’s scholarships and bursaries, and the Guild’s relationship with bodies outside the City which enables consideration of our relationship with the Armed Forces through the medium of Affiliated Units. These are listed in one of the six valuable appendices.

Profiles of the Masters through the review period fill another appendix, pride of place being given to Sir Alan Cobham and Sir Michael Cobham. Thereafter, each Past Master features in a short word sketch accompanied by a photograph. An even shorter space is allocated to the five most recent Masters thus bringing the review up to date. These incumbents fall technically beyond the end of the review period but the short profiles allow their inclusion at greater length in a future Part Three of the history.

Ian Frow sets out details of the many social events that fill the Guild calendar, showing that, while banquets feature at the top end of the spectrum, Guild members also enjoy aviation activity. The Denham garden party that sadly saw the demise of the Blenheim stands out in the memory but equally popular and always oversubscribed have been the annual visits to Royal Air Force Brize Norton during which members have experienced flight refuelling at close quarters from a VC-10.

The task facing Ian Frow when he undertook to produce an updated Guild history was daunting and it is greatly to his credit that he set about it at a steady pace and in an orderly manner. The result is a triumph of clear English, logical subject layout and detailed research. It is, moreover, thoroughly readable. Good value and deserving of a place in every Guild member’s household.

The History of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators, Part II 1965 - 2004


---

Gazette

APPROVED BY THE COURT ON 15th JULY 2010

As Freeman
Michael John CRONK
Kelly Terese CRAWFORD (HK)
David Anthony EARLE
Flight Lieutenant Christopher Michael FOPP
Nigel Peter Adrian FOSTER
John Richard KING (NZ)
Dr Ian McKENZIE
Jacqueline PERRIN (CAN)
Greg Edward RAFTER (CAN)
Peter David SMOOTHY
Charles Weston Stuart WATERS (GYM)

As Associate
Major Nicholas Paul BARTON (GYM)
James Philip BURNHAM (GYM)
Benjamin Steven Devet CHAPMAN (GYM)
Gabriel CHAN Ka Shing (HK) (GYM)
Jack CHONG Tsz Leung (HK) (GYM)

Dr Rhydian HARRIS (GYM)
Philip Ronald MACGregor (GYM)
Daniel MEANLEY (GYM)
John David RANDBYLL (GYM)
Trevor SLACK Wai Tai (HK) (GYM)

ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE COURT 15 July 2010

REGRADE
To Livery
Dr Jack Antoine MILAVIC (OS)
Bradley Allen PATTerson (OS)

DECEASED
Hugh Sinclair CLARK
Raymond Donald MAPLESON

RESIGNATIONS
Andrew Philip DUDMAN (HK)
Felix Leslie HART (HK)
Graeme Laurence WRIGHT (HK)
On The Warpath With The Apaches
The Guild Visits The Main Operating Base At Wattisham

ASSISTANT GROUP CAPTAIN TOM EELES

Thirty seven Guild members, led by Past Master Hugh Field and ably organised by Assistant Chris Ford, visited the Army Air Corps’ Apache Main Operating Base at Wattisham Airfield on 26th May. After a short welcoming introduction by the Deputy Chief of Staff, Major Dave McGee, the visitors were taken to one of the recently upgraded hangars to see an array of equipment, ranging from the specialist vehicles used to support the Attack Helicopters in the field, to the helicopter itself, its associated range of weapons and the portable Mission Planning System. Every item of equipment was enthusiastically described by a range of AAC personnel from 663 Squadron (Motto: We Fly For The Guns) and it was evident that the helicopter was proving to be an exceptionally capable weapon system in Afghanistan, a far cry from its originally planned use in the Central Region to stop any armoured thrust by Warsaw Pact Forces in Europe. Not everything was perfect - the Mission Planning System didn’t like the Afghan heat and fine dust and is soon to be replaced by a new system, there were problems with aircrew shortages, weapons expenditure had been very high, but overall the impression we gained was that the Apache was proving to be robust and very capable in a highly demanding combat zone. Many Guild members clambered in and out of the helicopter, discovering in the process how challenging it would be to egress from the cockpit in an emergency, particularly over water!

The visitors then returned to the Officer’s Mess, where Colonel N J W Moss OBE, Commanding Officer 16 Air Assault Brigade, outlined Wattisham’s long history as a military airfield and described its current role as the Main Operating Base for Apache in the UK and the largest military community in Suffolk. The Training Provider, Aviation Training International Ltd (a consortium of Agusta Westland and Boeing) provided the training facilities for both air and ground crews on site. Aircrew arrive at Wattisham after completing Conversion to Type at Middle Wallop; Conversion to Role training is undertaken at Wattisham with the emphasis on Afghan operations. Most live firing is undertaken during Exercise Crimson Eagle, the 8 month long work up in Arizona prior to deployment to Afghanistan. The UK Attack Helicopter Force undertakes a wide range of combat activities in Afghanistan, including Immediate Response Team (IRT), supporting troops in contact (TIC), escort and detached operations. The Rules of Engagement (ROE) are complex and tightly controlled, but need strong leadership to interpret them correctly; the maxim at the moment being ‘Courageous Restraint’. Also, based at Wattisham are 7 Battalion Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) who provide 1st and 2nd line servicing support for Apache, the Suffolk Constabulary’s Police Air Support Unit, various support services, a fire and rescue service and the Sea King helicopters of 22 Squadron B Flight, RAF Search and Rescue Force. Colonel Moss concluded by emphasising the base’s strong links with the local community and the undoubted success of the Apache attack helicopter on active operations.

Prior to an excellent curry lunch, Colonel Moss invited Liveryman Yvonne Trueman to unveil a magnificent painting she had donated to the Officer’s Mess by David Shepherd of gazelles grazing under the Tree of Life. The picture was in memory of her son, an Army Air Corps Captain and Gazelle pilot sadly killed in a motor bike accident in Belize in September 1994. After lunch in the Officer’s Mess the visitors were taken to visit B Flight of 22 Squadron RAF, commanded by Squadron Leader Holly Steele. She explained the Flight’s role, which was to provide Search and Rescue (SAR) Services in an area from Dover to the Wash, some of the busiest shipping lanes in the world. Equipped with 2 Sea King Mk3A helicopters, the Flight was often tasked on longer range missions well beyond its normal area of responsibility. She also mentioned the forthcoming civilianisation of the Search and Rescue Services, when a contractor would take on the whole task of providing the Search and Rescue capability currently provided by the RN, RAF and Coastguard, using civilian aircrew and Sikorski S92 helicopters. This arrangement would probably involve only a fairly small number of very experienced military SAR aircrew and would introduce a considerable change to the current service with far less military involvement in SAR work.

There then followed a short flying display by an Apache, followed by a visit to the extensive training facilities operated by Aviation Training International Limited. Located in a smart modern purpose built building, the training facilities included a wide range of part task trainers and full mission simulators, essential for training both air and ground crew on the complex systems and procedures the Apache has brought into Army aviation. It was interesting to see that the simulator cockpits were single man, rather than a full 2 seat replication of the aircraft, so a crew are physically separated when working in the...
simulator. Apparently this causes no problem as there is minimal physical or visual communication between crew members in flight. The customer buys training time from the company, which is staffed by a mix of civilians with service backgrounds, and some military with recent operational experience. Given the complexity of the Apache’s systems, it is easy to see why this facility plays such an important role in the training of the crews, contributing significantly to the overall success of the Apache force.

After the visit to Aviation Training International the Guild party joined many other base personnel outside to watch a solo flying display by a Typhoon fighter of 3 Squadron RAF. It was an impressive, vigorous and noisy display which showed off the fighter’s agile maneuvering capabilities to best advantage - nothing to do with the Apache Force but highly enjoyable none the less.

After a short closing address by Colonel Moss the party dispersed, some to fly home, others to drive. We all left with great admiration for what Wattisham has to offer with its unique mixture of contractors, AAC, REME, SAR Flight and Suffolk Police all working together. It has to be said that the star of the day was definitely the Apache, closely followed by the Typhoon; we were treated to an outstandingly interesting visit and our thanks for a wonderful day out to Colonel Moss and his highly professional team.

GAPAN sails again
PAST MASTER DAVID MAULEVERER

On the weekend of 21st - 23rd May 2010 four Guild members took part in the City Livery Yacht Club (CLYC) Regatta at Cowes.

David Mauleverer, Barry Woodhouse and Ross Stuart crewed with our Skipper, Rick Roberts who kindly lent his yacht Luana, a Grand Soleil 50.

The CLYC Cowes Regatta is an annual event. This year it got off to a great start on Friday evening with a wonderful buffet supper at the Royal Yacht Squadron Pavilion filled to capacity. The weather was perfect and members and their guests enjoyed breathtaking views over the Solent.

On Saturday we were again blessed with perfect sailing weather. Sixteen yachts competed in the race with the “all Guild” team well up in the fleet; however the perfect weather rather favoured the smaller and lighter craft on handicap. In the evening around 160 members and guests enjoyed a superb dinner at the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club with a “Baron of Beef”, which was presented by the TS Osborne Sea Cadets in a Guard of Honour. The Baron was received in traditional form by the Club’s Admiral and Past Lord Mayor, Sir Clive Martin. Those present enjoyed it so much that the Sea Cadets received nearly £400 in donations.

The CLYC was originally born out of the City Livery Club, but has been a separate entity for many years with permission to use its own defaced ensign. The club holds several sailing and boating events each year as well as several dinners in London, principally at the Royal Thames Yacht Club. The club is of sufficient size to support various charities, notably the Tower RNLI Station in the City and various Sea Cadet units. It is also supporting one of our aspiring 2012 Olympic sailors, Lucy MacGregor.

Several Guild members belong to the club, which is thriving on a very low subscription rate of only £35 a year. Membership is open to all Guild members and details can be found on the website at http://www.cityliveryyc.co.uk/ where members of the Guild can apply for membership. If any member would like any further details please contact David Mauleverer at david@mauleverer.com.

Before going to dinner on board yacht Luana. From left to right: David Mauleverer, Ross Stuart, Barry Woodhouse, Rick Roberts
Archimedes, Newton, and Bernoulli were three great men of science, but only the latter is normally associated in any way with aviation. However, this is not so, as Neil Gregory explained lucidly in his briefing on how to operate an aircraft from water. Neil is one of a very rare breed of float plane flying instructors working in the United Kingdom at Lochearnhead in the Highlands of Scotland. He flies an Aviat Husky amphibian float plane, a two seat aircraft powered by a Lycoming engine driving a constant speed propeller and fitted with Wiplane 2100A floats.

At Lochearn the float plane is operated in the public domain, bereft of any of the security provided at a land airfield, so extra vigilance is required to ensure the safety of the inevitable crowd of fascinated spectators and other water users. Archimedes featured first, as once the Husky had started and taxied down the slipway into the water, its floats provided displacement buoyancy just like a conventional boat, allowing the aircraft to be taxied slowly, steered through the moored boats by means of retractable water rudders at the rear of the floats, operated by the rudder pedals. At the same time, the four wheel landing gear in the floats can be retracted as they are not needed on the water. Once clear of the moored boats and associated obstructions it is time to leave Archimedes behind and bring Newton into play. Hold the control column hard back, check the area ahead is clear, retract the water rudders and open up to full power. The Husky starts to accelerate, it pitches nose up in two distinct separate movements and then smoothly rotates nose down to a level attitude. It does this of its own accord without control column input - you just relax your hold - and it is now planing at high speed on the step, courtesy of Newton. Reduce power a bit to hold the speed and concentrate on maintaining the correct attitude. Use rudder to turn, but beware of raising the nose too high as this will cause the rear of the floats to contact the water and make the aircraft skip. Equally, do not lower the nose too much as this will cause the front of the floats to dig in building up a wave formation which will develop into a divergent pitching oscillation which if unchecked can be dangerous. So there you are, taxiing at high speed, suspended between air and water. I know of no land airfield where you can taxi around at 40kts!

Time now to leave Newton and use Bernoulli. Point into wind, maintain the pitch attitude and increase power to full throttle. The Husky accelerates and all of a sudden but very gently, without any pilot induced rotation, you are airborne. Its a wonderful sensation. Getting back down again is equally exciting. In addition to the normal light aircraft pre-landing checks, float plane pilots will add an additional check - FCARS - which translates as Flaps/Carb heat/Area clear/Rudders up/Stick position. It is also vital NOT to lower the landing gear, an instinctive action for a land plane pilot, as to touch down on water with the gear extended would be disaster. When up, four blue lights are illuminated, each relating to a wheel, so the trick is to remind yourself that as you are landing on blue water you need four blue lights. It is also mentally challenging to land deliberately with the wheels up! If you are to touch down on the land - green- you need four greens. Apparently landing wheels up on land in a float plane is not the disaster it might seem, whereas the other way around, wheels down into water, would be catastrophic.

On final approach, as you get close to the water, maintain a trickle of power and concentrate on holding the planing attitude, particularly important if landing on glassy calm water. You sink gently onto the surface and start to slow down. If you need to taxi any distance, increase power to hold the airspeed at 40 knots, hold the attitude and off you go. When its time to slow down, close the throttle and keep the control column hard back and you sink back to the Archimedian water-borne slow taxi, with the water rudders down. To get back on dry land, lower the landing gear, retract water rudders and
climb up the slipway. What a wonderful way to fly!

Flying a float plane from Lochearn gives access to some of the most spectacular scenery in the country, with countless opportunities for landings and take offs, no landing fees to pay, no one to talk to on the radio, just open spaces with lots of good beaches to stop for a brew up and a sandwich. My three days were blessed by superb weather. We visited Loch Lomond, Loch Fyne, Loch Voil, flew past enormous sea cliffs on Mull, looked across into Fingal’s cave on Staffa, had lunch on a beach in Loch Morar, the deepest body of water in Scotland. We skirted Ben Nevis and waved at the climbers near the summit, we saw an eagle, a pod of Minkie whales and stags on the hills of Mull. We called in at an amazingly opulent hotel on the shores of Loch Awe for tea and cucumber sandwiches and also landed on Loch Ness. We also landed on a hard runway at Oban to pick up fuel. It was a really stunning experience. Many people think you have to go abroad to places like Florida or Canada to fly float planes. Not so, Neil Gregory’s Husky is not that far away even from the south of England. A steady stream of aviators kept turning up whilst I was there. I travelled by train, an adventure in itself, but every train was bang on time there and back. The Lochearnhead Hotel offers a discount to float plane pilots and provides a lively social scene. I grant that I was very lucky with the weather, but go and try it sometime. Its fantastic. Neil Gregory can be contacted at Springbank, School Road, Lochearnhead, Perthshire, FK 19 8PR, mobile 07789 447490.

Moored on Loch Awe, no landing fees to pay, no need for the radio.

Refuelling at Oban - with the wheels down!

Loch Fyne, Loch Voil, flew past enormous sea cliffs on Mull, looked across into Fingal’s cave on Staffa, had lunch on a beach in Loch Morar, the deepest body of water in Scotland. We skirted Ben Nevis and waved at the climbers near the summit, we saw an eagle, a pod of Minkie whales and stags on the hills of Mull. We called in at an amazingly opulent hotel on the shores of Loch Awe for tea and cucumber sandwiches and also landed on Loch Ness. We also landed on a hard runway at Oban to pick up fuel. It was a really stunning experience. Many people think you have to go abroad to places like Florida or Canada to fly float planes. Not so, Neil Gregory’s Husky is not that far away even from the south of England. A steady stream of aviators kept turning up whilst I was there. I travelled by train, an adventure in itself, but every train was bang on time there and back. The Lochearnhead Hotel offers a discount to float plane pilots and provides a lively social scene. I grant that I was very lucky with the weather, but go and try it sometime. Its fantastic. Neil Gregory can be contacted at Springbank, School Road, Lochearnhead, Perthshire, FK 19 8PR, mobile 07789 447490.

Moored on Loch Awe, no landing fees to pay, no need for the radio.

Refuelling at Oban - with the wheels down!

Loch Fyne, Loch Voil, flew past enormous sea cliffs on Mull, looked across into Fingal’s cave on Staffa, had lunch on a beach in Loch Morar, the deepest body of water in Scotland. We skirted Ben Nevis and waved at the climbers near the summit, we saw an eagle, a pod of Minkie whales and stags on the hills of Mull. We called in at an amazingly opulent hotel on the shores of Loch Awe for tea and cucumber sandwiches and also landed on Loch Ness. We also landed on a hard runway at Oban to pick up fuel. It was a really stunning experience. Many people think you have to go abroad to places like Florida or Canada to fly float planes. Not so, Neil Gregory’s Husky is not that far away even from the south of England. A steady stream of aviators kept turning up whilst I was there. I travelled by train, an adventure in itself, but every train was bang on time there and back. The Lochearnhead Hotel offers a discount to float plane pilots and provides a lively social scene. I grant that I was very lucky with the weather, but go and try it sometime. Its fantastic. Neil Gregory can be contacted at Springbank, School Road, Lochearnhead, Perthshire, FK 19 8PR, mobile 07789 447490.

Moored on Loch Awe, no landing fees to pay, no need for the radio.

Refuelling at Oban - with the wheels down!

Loch Fyne, Loch Voil, flew past enormous sea cliffs on Mull, looked across into Fingal’s cave on Staffa, had lunch on a beach in Loch Morar, the deepest body of water in Scotland. We skirted Ben Nevis and waved at the climbers near the summit, we saw an eagle, a pod of Minkie
The Livery Dinner 2010

The Master and Immediate Past Master greet Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Dalton, Chief of the Air Staff.

The Master with his Principal Guests, Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Dalton, and Sheriff P J Cook, together with Mr S P Sherrard, Prime Warden Shipwright, Mr M D Stemp JP, Prime Warden Basketmaker and Mr S R Parsons, Master Security Professional.
The Master with the recipients of the Master Air Pilot Certificates.

The Master and Immediate Past Master greet two distinguished navigators, Air Commodore David Wilby and Group Captain Mike Bruce.

The Master with the newly-clothed Liverymen.

The new Warden, Mrs Dorothy Pooley, looking calm and relaxed before her speech.

Photos by Gerald Sharp Photography, view images and order prints online, 020 8599 5070, www.sharpphoto.co.uk.
Warm Autumn sunshine, blue skies, a stunning display of fast, precision, aerobatic flight. What more could we ask from the Perth round of the Red Bull Air Races? Well, the majority of the 140,000 crowd wanted a podium finish for Australia’s first Red Bull pilot, Matt Hall. There was great excitement when Australian, Matt Hall stood on the podium to accept the trophy for second place with Austrian pilot, Hannes Arch the winner and British pilot, Paul Bonhomme, in third place.

For those who are not familiar with the Red Bull air race event, the “track” of pylons is opened to pilots for practice on Wednesday before the weekend. The media seemed to consider the high light of the event was the crash of one race plane into the Swan River during practice on Thursday. Fortunately the rookie Brazilian pilot was not injured. He was very quickly pulled from his aeroplane by the rescue crew. He spent the night in hospital and was released the next morning.

There are 15 pilots in the competition, all of whom have to meet stringent standards of experience and they have all passed the Red Bull training program. The race format is qualification heats on Saturday when the 15 competitors each have two chances to fly their best time around the track. The fastest 10 go forward automatically to the main competition on Sunday. The slowest five get one more chance on Sunday to try once more for the final two places in the competition. Then, 12 pilots try to fly the fastest time to reach the “Super 8” who fly again to reach the “Final 4”. Those four fly one more time to gain the podium positions and the maximum points towards the World Championship.

I have attended all four Red Bull events in Perth and I have enjoyed them all. As a pilot with an aerobatic endorsement, I have some small idea of the skills needed although I have no experience of the severe “G” forces they endure. Up to 12G is allowed during the one to two minutes it takes to fly the track with absolute precision to go through the “gates” at the correct height and orientation. Even as a spectator I feel all my muscles tense as the race plane goes through the start gate!

The West Australian Major Events organisers in conjunction with the Red Bull Event organisers have improved the weekend experience each year. The Swan River in Perth is a stunning location for the event. Spectators can watch from either side of the river although the pylons are located closer to the south side where the grandstand, temporary race control tower and podium are located. On the North side is Langley Park where the race planes are based and the temporary runway is located. Free bus transport (lots of them, so minimal queues) is provided from the esplanade bus station...
on the north side to the esplanade, right behind the spectator area on the south side. Watching the event is free unless you want to pay for an open grandstand seat. My friend Kathy and I preferred to find a spot where we could escape the sun between watching each flight. We were still in view of one of the giant screens and close enough to loud speakers to hear the commentary.

On Saturday afternoon, following the qualification heats, the “pit lane” is open to the public. Pit lane is a row of temporary, light construction hangars on Langley Park. This gives everyone the opportunity for a close up view of the race planes and a chance to meet the pilots. Needless to say, there was a huge queue to meet Matt Hall. I was delighted to see Matt in his new role. I have known Matt since his earlier days flying the F/A-18s in the RAAF and when he also had a share in an RV4 sport aircraft. Matt’s race plane is a purpose built MXS-R, Aerospace grade carbon fibre construction with an AEIO 540 EXP engine. It may not be as fast as the F/A-18 but it sure can fly tighter aerobatic manoeuvres.

It is very good to see an Australian pilot in the Red Bull competition. He joined the competition last year and finished third in the world championship - a superb effort in his rookie year. The support for Matt Hall in Perth was tremendous. If you are travelling to other countries this year have a look at the www.redbullairrace.com website to see if there is a Red Bull Air Race where you could attend and support our Aussie pilot.

By the time I am writing this all the temporary buildings and equipment - hangars, control tower, podium, large screens, kilometres of cables for the audiovisual equipment - will have been dismantled and packed into chartered jumbo jets. The race planes are dismantled to remove the wings, everything is plastic wrapped and carefully packed into more chartered jumbos for the whole event to move to Rio de Janeiro for the next race in two weeks time.

Just out of interest, this year my friend Kathy and I decided to make a more extensive holiday out of our visit to WA. We flew with Jetstar into Perth on Monday, hired a car and drove to the Margaret River region. We enjoyed wine tasting in a small selection of the dozens of boutique wineries in the area and came to the conclusion that the MR winemakers can make very good whites but they did not make a red that met our taste for a “very good” classification. (We are from South Australia after all!) We also enjoyed visits to the chocolate factory, the fudge factory, the ice cream factory (44 flavours) and the lavender farm. It was all good fun despite the wet conditions. Fortunately the weather improved dramatically as we drove back to Perth on Thursday ready to enjoy the Red Bull race weekend.
Canada's 19 Wing Stands On Guard

P.C. FYNES

"I’m glad to be a taxpayer" is one of those statements you’re unlikely to hear on the street or in a pub anytime soon, but Kevin Kenny is serious. In 2006 he was the front seat passenger in a Bell Jet Ranger that crashed on a remote mountain overlooking Knight Inlet on Canada's Pacific Coast. Battling darkness and appalling weather, a 442 Squadron CH-149 Cormorant helicopter, dispatched from 19 Wing Comox, hoisted the survivors to safety and earned its crew much acclaim. Most notably, the crewmen were honoured with the Prince Philip Helicopter Rescue Award at the Guild’s annual banquet.

A CP 140 Aurora of 407 Squadron over hostile terrain.

CFB Comox, which is 140 km northwest of Vancouver, is Canada’s only airbase on the West Coast and is headquarters for 19 Wing, which consists of three operational units: 407 Long Range Patrol Sqn., 442 Transport and Rescue Sqn. and 19 Air Maintenance Squadron. The Wing is also home to the Canadian Forces School of Search and Rescue (CFSSAR).

407 Long Range Patrol Squadron’s five CP-140 Aurora protect Canada’s interests along 27,000km of British Columbia coastline, west to 1,200km offshore and from the US mainland north to the Alaska border. Although built for Cold War anti-submarine (ASW) missions, the Aurora’s speed and monitoring systems are ideal for interdicting illegal fishing, smuggling, polluting or any other infringement on Canada’s sovereignty. The CP-140 is also equipped with air-droppable survival pods when tasked for SAR missions.

A CH 149 Cormorant of 442 Squadron.

407 Sqn was officially formed as part of Coastal Command in May 1941 at Thorney Island, Hampshire. The squadron’s attacks against enemy shipping earned the crews the nickname “The Demons” and in modern times the ATC call sign is simply “Demon”. The squadron’s badge consists of a winged trident and a pair of anchors arranged in a ‘V’ for Victory formation.

The mission of 442 Transport and Rescue Squadron is to provide air support for the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre in Victoria, B.C. The busiest of three SAR regions in Canada, the territory consists of British Columbia and the Yukon, an expanse of wilderness that is greater still than the combined areas of the United Kingdom, France and Switzerland. Since its inception in 1964, 442 Sqn has operated a mixed fleet of fixed and rotary wing aircraft. Today the squadron operates six CC-115 de Havilland Canada Buffalo and five CH-149 Cormorants, with one of each ready on 30 minute standby.

Although the Buffalo has been in service for almost four decades, nothing to replace it has gone farther than the drawing board. The Buffalo’s Vref of just 52 knots permits it to land on a football field and there’s never a need to move the goalposts. The type’s low manoeuvring speed makes it equally suited for searches in mountain valleys or circling survivors in the water. The CC-115 is equipped with observer bubbles and a rear ramp which may be opened in flight to drop bailing pumps, life rafts, winter survival kits or even a SAR Tech.

19 Wing Commander, Col. Michel Lalumière, is very familiar with the capabilities of the CH-149 Cormorant; previously he was both a 442 Sqn pilot and a member of the team which oversaw the type’s procurement and initial deliveries. Col. Lalumière in fact ferried two of the early orders from Augusta’s factory in Italy to CFB Comox in 2001. Based on the EH-101, the Cormorant has features that delight her crews, such as superior single-engine performance, a rear ramp, the autopilot’s ability to hold a tight hover and avionics compatible with night vision goggles. Clearly the aircraft’s advantages enhance the squadron’s ability to fulfil its mission.

The 442 Sqn. callsign is “Snake” since the crest displays “Haietlik” the legendary beneficial water serpent of the indigenous Nootka people.

This June 17th, the thirteen members of Course 43 of the Canadian Forces’ School of Search and Rescue ‘dropped in’ on their graduation ceremony at CFB Comox. After stepping out of his parachute harness, each graduate was given the prestigious orange beret, promoted to Master Corporal and conferred in his posting as a SAR Tech to an operational unit. Four of the class were immediately assigned to 442 Sqn.

Every February the school invites a few dozen applicants to attend fitness screening at CFB Edmonton and the best are then given further evaluation at Jarvis Lake AB, to assess survival skills, navigational knowledge and physical endurance. Only the super-fit and the fearless are ultimately enrolled each August in CFSSAR’s ‘Search and Rescue Technician’ (SAR Tech) eleven-month program.

Course 43’s syllabus included paramedic training, search strategies, ‘overturned-vessel extraction’ diving in Victoria BC and parachuting in Arizona. Of course, since this is Canada, no challenge would be complete without a trip to the Arctic, so Course 43 spent a week in Nunavut’s -50°C darkness learning how to build wind-breaks and igloos. All these diverse skills are learned and perfected for one purpose, to save lives.

Kevin Kenny could have been talking about all of CFB Comox’s 19 Wing when he noted “You don’t know what’s on your own doorstep, people with these skills and abilities” but it’s clear the men and women of 407 Sqn, 442 Sqn and the CFSSAR do these demanding jobs not for the money but for the greater good. When lives are in jeopardy and the odds are long, as they are from time to time, 19 Wing’s motto Vestigia nulla retrorsum is particularly appropriate, ‘We do not retreat’.
Cranfield Visit Report

PAST MASTER ARTHUR THORNING

On 17 May some two dozen Guild members visited the School of Engineering at Cranfield University at the invitation of Professor Minoo Patel, Head of the School. This represented an overdue repeat of a similar visit in 2001 and an opportunity to learn how the aeronautical research and development activities at Cranfield have progressed in the meantime.

In his welcome to Cranfield Professor Patel explained that the University operates on two sites; the Cranfield campus which accounts for 79% of its business and another at Shrivenham (Wiltshire) which covers defence studies. Cranfield is a post graduate university with the aim of producing highly employable graduates, with masters or doctoral degrees. The School of Engineering alone runs 18 MSc courses; 16% of income is from the Higher Education Funding Council for England, 27% from student fees and 57% from external contracts; this spread ensures relative security in case of government cut-backs. International customers represent a valuable source of business, including specialist training for China and India. Future technologies under research include very large wind turbines, aviation bio-fuels and micro-algal bio-mass production for bio-fuels.

Operating from the Cranfield aerodrome is a Jetstream 31 aircraft of the National Flying Laboratory Centre - a facility available to all UK universities to provide airborne, practical training for aeronautical engineering students. The aircraft is positioned around the country as required. Naturally the School of Engineering make use of this and also have a Bulldog training aircraft in which Cranfield students receive a limited amount of 'hands-on' experience.

The Guild party then divided into two groups to investigate a wide range of Cranfield’s aeronautical work - guided around the campus by Miss Pryah Singadia (who had organised the programme) and her colleague, Jennifer Edis. The morning programme covered the UAV laboratory and aircraft design centre and the Cranfield Safety and Accident Investigation Centre. The latter is now the world’s leading centre for the postgraduate training of accident investigators, be they in aviation, marine or rail transport - we were briefed on this by Matt Greaves. Notable among the examples available for study is a carriage from the Greynig railway accident when a high speed train was derailed in Cumbria. On the aviation front there is a varied collection of rotary and fixed wing wreckage.

Professor John Fielding gave us an insight into the work of his department where each year the students produce a complete, sometimes very novel, aircraft design. One such concept is the 'box-wing', which might be described as a staggered biplane layout providing high stiffness and low induced drag. In recent years some of these projects have been tested by flying large scale models. The department have been at the forefront of designing unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), employing stealth technology where appropriate; some of these were available for the Guild party to inspect.

After a generous buffet lunch Dr Rebecca Wilson led us upstairs to the large airliner cabin mock-up which is used for testing a range of physical layout configurations and also studying the behavioural aspects of passenger evacuation. Dr Wilson gave us a lively and very informative presentation on previous, current and forthcoming work in this field, illustrated with relevant film clips. Practical experiments looking at a range of parameters are supplemented by computer simulations. She paid tribute to the late Professor Helen Muir who had led this work for over twenty years on behalf of CAA, FAA, Boeing, Airbus and other international authorities and who had been honoured by Guild awards on two occasions.

We then moved on to a very topical presentation by Dr Guy Gratton head of the Facility for Atmospheric Measurements. The principal component of this facility is the Airborne Research Aircraft (ARA) which is a modified BAE 146-300 aircraft (G-LUXE); it can carry a wide array of atmospheric measuring instruments. The aircraft has uprated engines and a stronger fuselage to enable it to operate at higher altitudes than a standard 146. The ARA is a joint operation funded by the National Centre for Atmospheric Sciences, the National Environmental Research Council and the Meteorological Office. The aircraft, which has been in service since 2004 is hired from BAE Systems and operated by a company, Direct Flight, with offices at Cranfield. The ARA has a crew of two pilots, one cabin crew (the aircraft is operated on an AOC) and up to 17 scientific crew members operating the instrumentation, most of which is bespoke equipment.

Dr Gratton gave a vivid account of the urgent efforts which were made to get the ARA quickly into service when the Icelandic volcano started to disrupt air traffic (as luck had it, the aircraft was under maintenance at the time). However within a very few days it was in action and was airborne on the day of our visit - its downward facing backscatter LIDAR (laser radar) being of particular value in assessing the ash conditions. In the first days of the ash emergency a Dornier aircraft of Airborne Research Surveying Facilities (from Staverton airport) was pressed into service but has since had to be withdrawn due to corrosion damage caused by sulphur to which it became exposed.

Finally, we were introduced to the Jetstream aircraft (G-NFLA) of the National Flying Laboratory Centre by Dr Jim Gautrey who is both the Technical Management Pilot and Contingency Airworthiness Manager for the Centre. Dr Gautrey, who took his PhD studying aircraft control systems, was the recipient of a Guild Scholarship enabling him to acquire his Instrument Rating - truly an aviation all rounder. The Jetstream can carry up to 15 students, each with a computer display on which can be shown real time aircraft parameters such as airspeed, angle of attack, power settings and navigational data so that a structured, real-time lesson can be provided in a minimum of flying time.

As we gathered for a parting coffee it was clear that the Guild party had been greatly interested by the variety of projects and facilities seen - 'I never realised so much was going on' being a typical reaction, and we had only had snapshots of some of the work at Cranfield. The Guild is indebted to Professor Patel and his team for their time, effort and hospitality on the day.
It doesn’t matter how old you are, there is nothing like the prospect of a flying display to whet the appetite for packing a picnic, plugging in the car’s Satnav and heading off to an airfield somewhere in the country.

And so it was that some 168 Guild members and their guests descended on RAF Brize Norton in the heart of the Oxfordshire countryside on a glorious Saturday in June at the invitation of then Station Commander, Group Captain Jon Ager, to whom congratulations are belatedly due in having relatively recently been promoted from Group Captain to Air Commodore and now having moved onwards and upwards to Air Command, High Wycombe.

With a steady breeze coming predominantly out of the north, one or two challenges presented themselves to some fly-ins and the more elderly and crosswind-challenged flying machines, but the Tigers and Chipmunks etc. of the Flying Circus acquitted themselves well with their traditional aerial stunts of balloon bursting, flour bombing and limbo flying.

The fair weather cumulus as well did not detract from the more adventurous displays from the likes of our very own Warden, Cliff Spink in his Spitfire, who managed to scare the living daylights out of one of the crewman attending his start-up before departure when flames licked hungrily around his exhaust pipes.

With the flying display being interspersed with the regular arrivals of an operational base there was something for everyone, not least the touch of nostalgia felt by those ex-commercial pilots at the sight of Tristars and VC-10s from what, for them, would seem a bygone age.

Special thanks, of course, must go to Assistant Mike Glover for facilitating the event in the first place and liaising with the principal officers involved namely; Sqn Ldr ‘Geordie’ Lawson, as Project Officer (OiC Families’ Day) and Flt Lt Myles Thorne who looked after our ‘fly-ins’.

In conclusion, and to quote Frederick Barnard, “One picture is worth ten thousand words”, here are a selection of photographs taken on the day, which encapsulate the bonhomie such an outing engenders.
Battle of Britain 70th Anniversary

Editor’s Note As all Guild members will know, this year marks the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. August 1940 witnessed some of the fiercest air combat ever to have taken place over southern England and much has already been and doubtless much more will be written to mark this anniversary. The following articles have been contributed by Past Master Arthur Thorning and Warden Air Marshal Cliff Spink by way of their contribution to the celebration of this event. I, too, have contributed a small piece on another little known aspect of the Battle.

‘High Flight’
PAST MASTER ARTHUR THORNING

‘High Flight’ is perhaps the best known of aviation inspired poems. Readers of Guild News will no doubt have read it and heard it recited many times. However, less well known is the story of the very young man who wrote the poem - it is worth telling.

John Magee was born on 9 June 1922 in Shanghai - his parents were Anglican missionaries in China. His father, John Gillespie Magee Snr, was from a wealthy and influential family in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania who had been ordained as an Episcopal priest and was sent to China as a missionary. His mother, Faith Emmeline Backhouse, was a member of the Church Missionary Society. They married in 1921 and went on to have three more sons. They planned to send their sons to schools in England and colleges in America. John Magee attended the American School at Nanking from 1929 to 1931 and then was sent to England, where he first attended St Clare’s School near Walmer, Kent. In 1935 he moved on to Rugby School where he distinguished himself by winning the school poetry prize in 1938. John was a great admirer of the poetry of Rupert Brooke, who had won the same school prize some 34 years earlier, and it was his sonnet to Brooke which won the prize. 1939 found John in the USA and it was not possible for him to return to Rugby, so he went to Avon Old Farms School in Connecticut, where at the age of 17 he published his first and only book of poems. In 1940 John earned a scholarship to Yale University (where his father was a chaplain) but did not enrol - instead he crossed the border to Canada and enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force.

After flight training with the RCAF in Ontario, John was promoted to Pilot Officer and sent to the UK where he learned to fly the Spitfire at 53 Operational Conversion Unit, RAF Llandow. He was then assigned to 412 (Fighter) Squadron, RCAF at Digby, Lincolnshire. John had his first experience of combat in November, but tragically was killed on 11 December 1941 when his Spitfire collided in poor weather with an Airspeed Oxford from Cranwell. He was observed to bale out, but too low and was killed instantly. He is buried at the Holy Cross, Scopwick, Burial Ground and his headstone is inscribed with the first and last lines of ‘High Flight’. The inspiration for a poem ending with the words ‘to touch the face of God’ seems to have come to John Magee during a high altitude test flight in a Spitfire, and he completed the first draft later that day. He sent the poem to his parents on the back of a letter. His father, then the Rector of St John’s Episcopal Church in Washington DC, reproduced it in church publications. Eventually it was included in an exhibition of poems at the Library of Congress, where the manuscript still resides.

‘High Flight’ has been used by many people in a variety of circumstances. James Irwin, the lunar module pilot of Apollo 15, took a copy with him to the moon and later founded a religious organisation called The High Flight Foundation. Most famously, in his speech to the American nation after the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster in January 1986, President Ronald Reagan said of that fated crew ‘We will never forget them this morning as they prepared for their journey and waved goodbye and “slipped the surly bonds of earth...to touch the face of God”’. John Magee’s last, possibly unfinished, poem was titled ‘Per ardua’ and was dedicated to those who gave their lives in the Battle of Britain. It was written shortly after his first combat mission in November 1941 and sent to his family.

Reference: There are numerous references to John Gillespie Magee Jnr on the web, as well as various books. The author can recommend the Wikipedia entry for general information.

HIGH FLIGHT

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I’ve climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds, - and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of - wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov’ring there,
I’ve chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air... .

Up, up the long, delirious burning blue
I’ve topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or even eagle flew -
And, while with silent, lifting mind I’ve trod
The high untrampled sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.
The Forgotten Fighter of 1940

ASSISTANT GROUP CAPTAIN TOM EELES

In 1935, concerned at the relative invulnerability of the new generation of German bombers to rifle calibre ammunition, the Air Ministry issued requirement F37/35, inviting the aircraft industry to submit designs for a cannon armed fighter. The weapon of choice was the Hispano 20mm cannon.

Westlands, a firm that up to this time had produced only rather staid biplanes, submitted an advanced twin engined single seat fighter design, incorporating many novel features such as a bubble canopy, integral radiators in the wing leading edge linked to Fowler flaps, a four cannon armament grouped in the nose and construction using electron castings and magnesium alloy skinning. It was an elegant aircraft which looked more like a racer than a fighter and it was powered by two 880 hp Rolls Royce Peregrine engines, a final development of the Kestrel series. Soon named Whirlwind, it proved to be a very fast aircraft, faster even than the Spitfire Mk1, but its development was protracted. There were many problems with the engines and armament, not entirely to be unexpected with such an advanced design.

Whilst Westlands ‘tooled up’ for the anticipated large order for Whirlwinds, before the outbreak of WW2 the Army was authorised to expand and the War Office informed the Air Ministry of a greatly increased requirement for Westland Lysander army co-operation aircraft. Westlands, a small company, when informed of this declared that it was unable to satisfy the demand for both Lysanders and Whirlwinds; the Air Ministry told the firm to cancel the Whirlwind and concentrate on Lysanders. Westlands protested that it had already sourced enough material to produce 115 Whirlwinds, and what was it to do with this; the Air Ministry relented, authorised production of 115 aircraft and then told the firm to concentrate on the Lysander. In the event, once Whirlwind production was complete there was no longer a need for Lysanders in the numbers anticipated, but only 116 Whirlwinds were ever built, including the two prototypes. By June 1940, when only 3 Whirlwinds had been delivered, questions were already being asked about its future. Lord Beaverbrook, Minister for Aircraft Production, wrote on 28th June to Air Chief Marshal Sir High Dowding, C in C Fighter Command, asking him for his opinion of the Whirlwind and reminding him that under current plans production was soon to be terminated. Dowding’s reply was equivocal. He observed that the pilots liked it, but that was ‘probably in relief for getting away from the Blenheim,’ he thought it could never be flown at night because of its high landing speed and he felt it was an extravagant design in that it needed two engines to lift four cannon, whereas the new Hawker fighter would be able to lift six with one engine. However, he observed that he might be glad to have as many of them as possible in the event of invasion, as it was the only fighter capable of attacking tanks with any likelihood of success. He asked for his opinion not to be quoted against him.

263 Squadron was reformed at the same time as the first Whirlwind squadron, based at Grangemouth and Drem in Scotland. It had a flight of Hurricanes, declared as operational, and was tasked to work up the Whirlwind as an operational fighter. This took some time; production was slow, there were still many problems to resolve, with gun stoppages and engine problems featuring regularly, but in the September State of Aircraft in Fighter Command document 6 Whirlwinds are declared as being available. By November 1940 the Whirlwind was finally declared fit for front line service, the squadron relinquished its Hurricanes and deployed south to Exeter. However, by this time the Battle of Britain was over so the Whirlwind never had a chance to prove its worth as a bomber destroyer, its originally intended role.

The Whirlwind continued in service, equipping only two squadrons, until the end of 1943. It found a new role as a fighter bomber in which it enjoyed considerable success in sweeps and escort work over occupied France and the Low Countries. It rarely became involved in air combat but destroyed many ground targets, perhaps fulfilling Dowding’s initial opinion of the aircraft. Had Westlands produced the Whirlwind more rapidly and fitted it with the Merlin rather than the smaller Peregrine, it might have participated in the Battle of Britain with success in its originally intended role. No Whirlwind exists today, the last one, retained by Westlands as a company hack and registered as G-AGOI, was broken up in 1947. Only some fragments excavated from a crash site remain, including a Peregrine engine currently on display in Rolls Royce’s Heritage Museum at Derby.
I am never quite sure whether talking about flying the Spitfire to aviator friends is a healthy pastime - I am sure there is underlying desire to break one of my limbs! To say that I have been lucky to have had the opportunity to fly this most iconic of aircraft is an understatement of gigantic proportions. The Spitfire still stands apart after so many years as arguably one of the most elegant fighter aircraft ever built and true to the adage that what ‘looks right flies right’ the aircraft is an absolute delight to wheel around the sky - I hope that the following few paragraphs bring some of that experience to life.

My first experience of the Spitfire was at the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight when I commanded RAF Coningsby. I was lucky because, despite being a long term pilot of jet fighters, I did have a fair amount of tail dragging time from my early days of glider towing in Chipmunks and the like - but there were still a few hours to be gained on the Chipmunk as refresher before being let loose on the heavy metal. A further 15 hours on the Hurricane (a story for another time!) and then the Spitfire. This was to be Spitfire II - a Battle of Britain veteran and arguably one of the most valuable and rare marks of this aircraft in existence - quite irreplaceable. Nervous..... Nah! Terrified....Yes! That flight now is a hazy memory of 20 years ago and since that time I have been most fortunate to fly a further eight different Marks of the Spitfire from the smaller engine Merlin types through the later two stage ‘big’ Merlins to the mighty Griffon powered later Marks. A span of 1350 hp through to 2100hp. Despite the inevitable changes in handling brought about by increasing weight the essential elements of balance and responsiveness are, in my opinion, still the same on these aircraft - the Spitfire soul remains intact. Much of this was of course due to the wonderful elliptical wing which, while internally changed through the generations, never lost the external profile apart from ‘clipping’ for better roll response at low level on some marks and extended tips on some high level variants.

Perhaps I can take you through the actual experience of flying a Spitfire and use the Mk XVI as my steed - a particular favourite of mine and somewhere in the middle of the range of Spitfires with regard to power and weight. The initial walk round reveals a lot about what can be expected later - the very large wing area - lots of lift there. Small split flaps - one action - more drag than lift and when down neatly blank off the exhaust end of the two large radiators - cooling problems in the circuit? The long, long, nose housing the wonderful 1600hp two stage, two speed, supercharged Merlin 266 - not an aircraft for long straight in approaches if you want to see where you are landing. Narrow undercarriage, not quite as bad as the Me 109 but the tail wheel is fully castoring and does not lock like so many aircraft of the WWII fighter types - so careful handling on the ground. All looks OK so into the cockpit. The Spitfire cockpit is not massive but perfectly adequate and feels about right for someone of my medium height - it may have been a little tight for tall chaps and certainly does not have the room that some of the American fighters had of similar vintage. That said it is relatively cavernous when measured against the tiny cockpit of the 109. The pre start checks are pretty much left to right. Trims come easily to hand low left and the full range is checked leaving the elevator half a notch up from neutral and the rudder a little right of neutral. The book says use full right rudder trim but even the small fin/rudder on the early Spitfire are easily held on take-off and you do not have to wind off a great handful of trim just after breaking ground. This is not to be confused with the Griffon powered version which does need full left rudder trim - the prop goes the other way! Get that wrong - as has happened - and you will see aspects of the airfield that you had not planned for in your take-off! The throttle quadrant houses the idle cut off...
the knees (there are not enough hands for all booster coil button simultaneously. As the rpm while watching that the oil pressure impending start. Fuel boost pump is off at the top end of the engine with the electric pump - laborious but essential if the engine is not to start with dry cams and cause a great deal of wear. Air pressure is checked on the triple pressure gauge by exercising the brake lever on the control column. Gear light is green and then a check of the main instruments and engine instruments. Gear lever ‘down’ - it is on the right so this necessitates changing hands just after takeoff - therefore it makes sense to have the throttle friction tight or you can get an awful reduction in noise (and power) just as you cross the perimeter fence....

The main fuel cock situated below the main panel goes on and then we are about ready to start. With the idle cut off closed the boost pump is put on to put pressure in the fuel lines for a few seconds. The primer is then pumped until it starts to deliver fuel and then, for a cold engine, 6 strokes are delivered to the engine. Throttle set a quarter of an inch open, stick back between the knees (there are not enough hands for all of this!) and press the starter button and booster coil button simultaneously. As the prop spins - it often starts to fire on just the booster coil - after 4 blades mag switches go on and there is (normally) an explosion of noise as 27 litres of Merlin bursts into life. Catch it on the throttle and settle it at 1000 rpm while watching that the oil pressure rises almost immediately. Close the side door, radios ‘on’ and get taxi clearance - we don’t hang about in dispersal as the engine is beginning to warm already and with a long taxi on a hot day the radiator liquid can be boiling by the time we get to take off. The brakes on the Spitfire are OK but not brilliant - air bags in the wheels do not like over use and the brakes can fade so I try to achieve a weave without constantly dabbing the brakes. At the holding point it is always a balance between getting the engine oil temperature up to 30°C minimum (40 better) for the run up, before the radiator temperature starts to get excessive. Turn into wind, stick firmly back and hold on the brake - putting the hand brake ‘on’ is not a good idea as you need to be able to get the brakes off instantly should the tail start to lift. When the oil temperature is OK run the engine up to 1800 rpm and exercise the prop a couple of times and then check the mag drop on each mag switch in turn - 100 rpm drop is normal but as important is that the engine remains smooth running.

A final check of trims - prop fully fine - throttle friction-fuel boost pump on - fuel contents - fuel cock ‘on’-engine Ts and Ps - harness tight and locked - full and free movement of controls and we are ready to take off.

Smooth handling of the throttle is essential with the big piston engines if you are going to minimise handling problems and therefore I progressively ease the power up as we start to roll. Acceleration is swift and the control column is allowed to ease away from the fully back position and the tail almost instantly starts to come up. The Merlin powered Spitfire will try to swing left so judicious - and early - use of rudder is required, although it is not an ogre ...but you do have to work at it! The take off run is relatively short and by the time she skips into the air the power will be up to about +6 lbs of boost with the rpm governed to 3000 maximum. Change hands, and smoothly bring the gear handle ‘up’ - I say smoothly because the Spitfire Gear mechanism is a complex assembly of mechanical and hydraulic bits and pieces and it does not appreciate excessive zeal. As I watch for the red light to come on indicating gear up (not unsafe as in more modern aircraft) and with the power back a little, to +4 lbs, so that I can get the engine rpm back from 3000 to a less frantic 2400 rpm. Close the sliding canopy , settle her into the climb and get the radiator flaps into ‘auto’ which allows the radiator flaps to open and close according to engine coolant temperature. This pretty much means they will stay closed as the radiators are good at keeping temperatures down - even during aerobatics at high power settings. Early marks of Spitfire have just one coolant radiator and the flap is manually controlled with a lever to the left of the seat. Fuel boost pump can come on as well.

Suddenly the heat and fire of takeoff are transformed and the Spitfire truly starts to exhibit all the qualities for which it is justifiably famous. The aircraft feels agile and harmonised and the control inputs produce instant and satisfying response. There are vintage fighters that can roll slightly faster but none in my experience have quite the balance of the Spitfire or the excellent and sensitive elevator. The rudder is well balanced but you need to work at it during power/speed changes to keep her running straight. The sum of the parts in this aircraft make it what it is and aerobatics are a delight. However, it is not a Pitts Special and flowing manoeuvres complement the elegance of this graceful beast - and with the wonderful wings you do not need to pull excessive ‘G’ to achieve a display sequence that is well contained within the crowd’s view. I normally try to run in for my display from 2-3000ft getting her nicely trimmed as it is for an aircraft - and achieving 280 - 300 mph allows me to fly prop up to fully fine, check (again)that I have a green light for the gear. The Spitfire has excellent slow flying characteristics and I trim to 95-90mph as I descend half way round finals. Coming across the fence I am at about 85mph and the flare for landing comes very quickly after the wings are levelled. Forward visibility has now gone behind the long nose of the Spitfire and you are forced to take your bight perspective from looking out of the sides. A little fast on a calm day and you will float forever - this aircraft wants to fly - but get it right and she settles satisfyingly on 3 points. But she is still some way above the stall at landing so for the first part of the landing roll you must continue to ‘fly’ her and it is imperative that you do not allow a swing to develop - the rule is don’t relax until she is closed down in dispersal.

Taxing back means getting flaps in, boost pump off and not over using the brakes even though she is getting a bit warm and you want to get on. Stop, a quick ‘dead cut’ check of the mags and pull the idle cut off back - the engine coughs its way to silence and fuel, radiators and electrics can be turned off. It really does not get any better than this!
Farewell VC10

Editor’s Note After many years flying in both civil and military colours, the VC10 is finally being retired by the RAF. To mark the passing of this classic British aircraft, there follows two ‘I learnt about flying from that’ articles from the military and civilian operators of the VC10. The first article, published in Air Clues in July 1969, is reproduced with the kind permission of HQ Air Command, RAF High Wycombe. The passengers on the flight were all V bomber crews on their way to the Strategic Air Command Bombing Competition; imagine the coup the USSR would have achieved if the VC 10 had continued and ended up over Siberia. The second article was written by Liveryman Chris Spurrier about his experiences on a BOAC route.

The VC10 pounds powerfully through the inky darkness of the early morning. From 30,000 ft, the roar of its engines is heard only distantly by those aloft on the unfriendly seas of the North Atlantic. Perhaps a few pause in their vigil to gaze aloft and marvel at the speed and ease of air travel in comparison with the rough and tumble of the ocean in winter. Others perhaps pause to reflect on the skill of those who navigate so unerringly through the night skies, following so closely the curving track that forms the shortest distance from the old world to the new.

Aboard the speeding aeroplane, the passengers are for the most part sleeping peacefully in the pre-dawn blackness. The cabin is gloomy. Further forward the crew sat shrouded in the eerie glow of the instrument lighting. A sense of timelessness persists, and the scene, one imagines, resembles that in a spaceship bound for a distant planet. This apparent tranquillity and the steady hum of the equipment belies the unceasing routine activity that keeps the ship upon its course.

The navigator takes an astro-fix. As he does so, he is interrupted by the captain who says that a return has appeared on the cloud radar—it looks like a coastline. But how can it be, out here in mid-Atlantic? The crew discuss the possibilities. It must be a large amount of ice—but it is surely a long way south?

The astro-fix shows that the aircraft is not on track. The navigator ponders; his 8000 hrs experience telling him that this suspicion is well founded. The navigator had a total experience of nearly 8000 hrs. Yet when his log and the navigator’s attention was drawn to the gyro at the rate of nearly 24° per hour growing in his mind cannot be true. The last track. The navigator ponders; his 8000 hrs experience telling him that this suspicion is well founded. The navigator had a total experience of nearly 8000 hrs. Yet when his log and

Eventually he dropped off and his next recollection was of being woken at 4 o’clock the next morning. At 0430 the crew were driven to the Flight Planning Section, and the navigator remained there while the rest of the crew went to breakfast; the navigator took his meal later. About this time the captain heard the navigator say that he felt tired owing to the beat-group preventing him from getting off to sleep. At Flight Planning, the navigator found that the North Atlantic Planned Tracks for the day were not available, but the Minimum Time Track was available so he decided to use that. He also decided to use the Gyro/Grid Technique of Navigation, not being aware that it was not command policy to practice Gyro/Grid steering over the North Atlantic except when two navigators were operating together, with one of them holding an A or B category. He was unable to finish all his planning and told the captain that he would calculate the Point of No Return and some other items after getting airborne.

The VC10 took to the air at 0710 and, with the co-pilot flying it, followed airways to Tory Island off the north-west coast of Ireland. The aircraft had been cleared to fly at FL 310 after requesting Flight Plan clearance at FL 350. Having previously extracted the value of Earth Rate from the tables and added the Residual Transport Wander, the navigator had set the product, -11.8°/hr, on the Rate Corrector of the starboard compass system, and switched over to GYRO.

But the correct figure that should have been set on the Rate Corrector was +11.8°/hr. This simple error had the effect of processing the gyro at the rate of nearly 24° per hour causing the aircraft to diverge slowly north of its intended track.

What was happening aboard the aircraft that led to this error not being noticed? The Captain’s knowledge of Gyro/Grid navigation was scantly and when he carried out a cross-check of the E2B, Magnetic and Gyro compasses, their relationship appeared satisfactory to him. Because the navigator’s first astro-fix gave a plot close to the intended track and the Howogoz showed that fuel consumption was close to that planned, the Captain had little reason to suppose that the flight, so far carried out entirely in darkness, was anything other than normal—until some time before he was due to give a position report at 40° W, he saw a 40-mile wide return on the cloud radar, about 100 nm ahead.

It was during the second astro-fix that the navigator’s attention was drawn to the captain’s sighting on the radar. After some discussion the crew decided that the object could only be a large amount of ice. Indeed it was a large amount of ice, but it was ice attached to the coast of Greenland—for by now the VC10 was approaching a point some 510 nm north of its intended track! But at last the penny was beginning to drop in the navigator’s mind. The result of the astro-fix, which to him seemed hopelessly wrong, coupled with the radar-return caused him to try tuning some NDBs. A bearing from the Prince Christian beacon at the southern tip of Greenland confirmed his worst fears and he told the captain the bad news.

The captain took the controls and command of the situation. The aircraft was later fixed overhead the Prince Christian beacon and eventually landed safely at Gander with rather less fuel than intended.

Wing Commander Spry says:

I hope the pilot and the navigator of the VC10 will forgive me for reviving this ghastly episode, which I can well understand they are anxious to forget. But I consider that this story should be published as a warning, and in the hope that its appearance may prevent others from falling into a similar trap.

For is it not one of those “there, but for the Grace of God, go I” stories?

This navigator had a total experience of getting on for 8000 hrs. Yet when his log and chart of this trip were examined afterwards by a highly-qualified examiner, an appalling number of errors, omissions and deficiencies were brought to light, not the least being the fact that his astro-fixing was woefully inaccurate.

I could say a great deal about this particular story, a very great deal, but I think that it speaks for itself. Read it again and remember that no matter how good or how sophisticated the aeroplane and the navigation equipment it carries may be—the safety of the aircraft still relies upon the skill and fitness of those who operate that equipment.
I am sitting in the right hand seat of a VC10 on the way to Addis Ababa and the events which follow are most unusual and more than somewhat interesting, so I am going to tell you about them. Esteemed Commander is on his first trip post-command course, the aeroplane is going via Addis to the Seychelles and I am looking forward to a couple of days in each. Addis is rather a nice place in the seventies and a good time can be had by one and all. I am somewhat friendly with the station manager and there’s a couple of pounds of best cheddar in my suitcase for his young son who has a craving for the stuff. This, it is to be hoped, will see a few beers float our way some time after landing. Then there’s a rather good restaurant called The Cottage, where the waitresses are particularly sinuous Nubians who wiggle in a most enticing manner. In fact I was there just a couple of weeks back when Roz Hanby, the BOAC personality girl, was one of our crew. And I am here to tell you that the prospect of another evening at the Cottage was filling me with a rosy sort of glow. So one way and another evening at the Cottage was filling me probably get there all right so frantic sums

We ought to shut down no 4 engine...

Well the sun comes up on schedule and we eventually pop into VHF range of Nairobi. They seem somewhat surprised to hear from us but we’re mostly expecting that. What we’re not expecting is the instruction to enter the hold - number eight to land. It’s foggy. This is definitely not part of the Master Plan. In fact, we are more than somewhat embarrassed on account of being seriously short of petrol by now. Moreover, the passengers are beginning to wake up and enquire why the aeroplane is still whizzing around the atmosphere rather than sitting on the ground in Addis. Only one thing for it - Kilimanjaro. Kilimanjaro is quite close, has a very long runway and no fog. It’s also very seldom used. So off we go again. This time, everything works as advertised and here we are sitting on the ground with a hundred and forty passengers, a dead VC10 and a near-deserted airport. This is turning into an Adventure. We manage to get the terminal opened and some breakfast sorted out - there aren’t enough local chaps on duty so all the crew chip in and help serve. Silver service eggs and bacon might come in handy when I retire! Meantime Esteemed Commander is trying to find hotels. There are some, but they’re all about ten miles away and there’s only one thirty-odd seater bus to get those present to them. And there aren’t enough rooms anyway. New career two looms as the other First Officer and I set up an accommodation bureau, pairing off all singles on the passenger list so that we can cram them into the hotel rooms we have got. There is an enormous amount of goodwill considering the passengers were all expecting to be in either Addis or the Seychelles, and here we are in Kilimanjaro. Anyway, eventually it’s all sorted and we go off our hotel (Yes, we saved enough rooms so that the crew didn’t have to share. My wife is reading this). A very long day and overtime payments haven’t been invented. I’ve still got a letter in my log book from someone high up in Cabin Services, thanking me for being a good steward and helping to serve meals on the ground. I’ve never worked out whether he actually knew I’m a pilot

Minimum rest and it’s time to get the aeroplane to Nairobi, so back to the aerodrome, leaving our passengers having breakfast, and into the sums for a three-engine ferry to Nairobi. The cabin crew come along but no passengers of course. No-one thinks twice about this. I’ve done three-engine take-offs in the RAF before I joined BOAC and I assume E.C. had done at least one as part of his command course. So no requests for permissions or dispensations, we just do it. And very interesting it is too at that altitude. Finally deliver our aeroplane to meet it’s new engine and off we go to the hotel. The entire BOAC African schedule is in tatters by now, what with the fog and our epic journey so we eventually wait for the new engine to be fitted and fly it home empty. No meal in the Cottage. No days in the Seychelles. But I learnt about flying from that.

I learnt that when the forecast nearly always says fog it’s often because there nearly always is fog. I learnt that if you’re going to initiate a long-range diversion, it’s a good idea to have a spare diversion-for-the-diversion up your sleeve. And above all I learnt that flying commercial aeroplanes isn’t just about flying. It’s very much about looking after your passengers in unexpected circumstances and taking control of your own destiny when you’re somewhere out of the way. Don’t ask - do it.

And finally, I learnt that even then there was someone in a high place in the airline who thought pilots came under cabin services.