Diary

OCTOBER 2016
13 General Purposes & Finance Committee  Cobham House
13 Court  Cutlers’ Hall
27 Trophy & Awards Banquet  Guildhall

NOVEMBER 2016
5 Pilots Career Live  Sofitel, Heathrow
10 Benevolent Fund Trustees Meeting  Cobham House
11 Silent Change  Guildhall
12 Lord Mayor’s Show  Cobham House
17 General Purposes & Finance Committee  Cutlers’ Hall
17 Court  Cobham House

DECEMBER 2016
15 General Purposes & Finance Committee  Cobham House
15 New Members’ Briefing  Cobham House
15 Carol Service  St. Michael’s, Cornhill
15 Christmas Supper  The Counting House

VISITS PROGRAMME
Please see the flyers accompanying this issue of Air Pilot or contact Liveryman David Curgenven at visits@airpilots.org. These flyers can also be downloaded from the Company’s website. Please check on Company website for visits that are to be confirmed.

October 5–6th RAF Valley (IV Sqn.)
October 11th Middle Wallop (Army Air Corps)
October 19th Farnborough (AAIB & TAG Aviation)

GOLF CLUB EVENTS
Please check on Company website for latest information

Cover photo: Master Air Pilot Dave Holbourn’s Nanchang CJ6 over Goolwa, South Australia - photo by Upper Freeman Steve Nelson & Chris Dearden
A message from your Editor...

Many UK-based members will have seen the recent BBC series Skies above Britain. In my opinion this will have done a reasonable job in stimulating interest by the general public in careers in aviation, and not just piloting careers. One of its strongest underlying themes was the complexity of airspace management, and it showed vividly the skills of the air traffic fraternity on whom we all depend (and possibly take for granted!).

Several of us will no doubt have recognised friends and colleagues on screen. Indeed I almost fell off my sofa when I saw a largely male, middle-aged group wandering around the Airlander hanger, instantly recognisable as an Air Pilots visit; moreover they were asked for their thoughts on camera. The series also underlined the breadth of people who enjoy the skies – for work and pleasure. It also captured the elation and increase in self-esteem that follows a first solo, doing no harm at all for stimulating trial lessons, I hope.

Perhaps an average viewer will not have realised in one programme they were watching the bottom of this particular food chain: it featured a Navajo captain enduring single-pilot freight operations to a demanding timetable. One sensed that weather diversions and delays were barely tolerated by his ops department. His aside about working a fourteen hour shift certainly underlined our Master's recent comments about flight crew fatigue.

As I write, EasyJet pilots have voted for industrial 'action' scheduled for the half-term holiday this month. Their grievances are primarily about crew fatigue. One wonders whether self-loading freight ever makes the mental connection between rock-bottom fares and fatigued pilots.....As a passenger recently on another low cost operator (Ryanair), I was dismayed to find myself next to a young man of proportions so ample he had to pour himself into the adjacent seat. But even more dismayed that cabin crew failed to notice (because they did not check), that he never donned his seat belt throughout the flight – because he couldn't. Low cost should not mean low safety.

Going back to a gentler age (when even the jazz age had not conceived of gastric bands), albeit one where single-pilot operations in poor weather were a fact of life, I am pleased to introduce the first of several articles that will profile the pioneers who were crucial in forming our Company. Arthur Thorning has written an fascinating outline of our first Learned Clerk - Lawrie Wingfield.

Paul Smiddy - Editor
We sadly have to report the death of Past Master Rod Fulton – an obituary by Past Master Clive Elton will be found on page 20.

THE E-GO COMPANY
The curse of the Press! The company which has been covered in recent issues is likely to cease trading in November. Since I previously reported there have been no firm orders for the single-seater, and a further funding round floundered. Liveryman Terry Holloway, now chairman, now believes there is little commercial potential for a single-seater, despite its very low running costs. Ironically it was only the fact that the single-seater could be developed under the regulation-light mantle of a SSDR, that allowed the creation of the company and successful prototype flight testing, on such limited funds. Terry believes that the commercial future of the venture lies in developing the canard concept into 3 and possibly 5-seater models. The company is in talks with its powerplant supplier, Rotron, about suitably upgraded engines, but is also exploring the use of Rotax engines.

E-Go is therefore looking for a trade buyer in order to fund the development into this potentially more lucrative market.

AIR PILOTS GOLF SOCIETY
17th Annual Ray Jeffs Cup was held at Hartley Wintney Golf Club on 28th July. Danny Hendry is delighted to report that the Air Pilots Team 1 (Jeff Turner, Rick Thomas, David Gilson & Peter Kirtley) successfully defended the Ray Jeffs Trophy with a team score of 93 points. Jeff Turner was delighted to be presented with the Cup from Jo Armand of the DoE London Office. The Environmental Cleaners pipped the Actuaries to second place both with 85 points. Alas the Air Pilots Team 2 and the Court Team could not match the superb efforts of Team 1 and finished in the middle of the pack. This win meant a successful two weeks for the Air Pilots Golf Society having earlier won the Newsom Smith Cup through the efforts of (Jeff Turner, Steven John, John Mason & Danny Hendry).

The Newsom Smith Trophy dates back to 1936. It was presented to the Turners Company by Frank Newsom-Smith, a Past Master of the Company. Members of the Turners Company on a rather intermittent basis had played for the Trophy until 1961. From 1971 it became the trophy in matches between several Livery Companies, with the Guild of Air Pilots Golfing Society winning the first four matches and then four more in succession from 1984. The Trophy was shared by Gapan in 1975 and 1980. These were our halcyon days, as after that, our Golfing Society only won again in 1991 and 1995.

PAST ASSISTANTS LUNCHEON CLUB
After Assistants Diana Green-Davy and Gerald Hackemer had attended their last Court meeting they agreed that they would miss not just the sharing of information about the Honourable Company but also, and perhaps more importantly, the social interaction that membership of the Court provides.

Observing that Past Masters meet and lunch together occasionally, they conceived the idea of setting up a similar "club" that should be available, by invitation, to those Past Assistants to the Court of the Honourable Company, and its predecessor Gapan, who had not gone forward to the heady heights and responsibilities of Warden and Master. In outline the proposal was to invite those Past Assistants who are still members of the Honourable Company to a luncheon at the RAF Club once or twice a year. The sole purpose of the luncheon would be simply the enjoyment of good food, wine and conversation.

With the assistance of Ruth Cundy in the Company office, thirty three Past Assistants, who are still members of the Honourable Company, were identified. The senior being Maurice Hickmott, who served on the Court from 1968 to 1972. Twenty seven of the thirty three replied positively to the proposal of forming a Past Assistants Luncheon Club so the RAF Club was booked for the inaugural lunch on 12th April.

Due to illness and other commitments initial numbers were lower than had been hoped for but the ten Past Assistants who attended agreed that it had been an excellent initiative that should be repeated later in the year maintaining the same format. At the request of Kent Johnson (2010-2013) in the USA and Allan Boyce (2003-2015) in New Zealand the second lunch has been arranged for the week of the Trophies and Awards Banquet, which they are both proposing to attend.

The photograph shows the attendees at the inaugural lunch on the 12th April 2016.

RAF ODIHAM FAMILIES DAY

Assistant Richie Piper writes:
The Company supported the RAF Odiham families day on the 21st July via the Air Pilots Flying Club. The objective is to provide an enjoyable day for the families of the service personnel and includes funfair rides, car club displays and an airshow together with static displays of base and visitor aircraft. Past Master Chris Ford was asked if the Air Pilots could provide some interesting historical or former military aircraft for the static park. The request to members for support brought good a response (including several from Liveryman Peter Greenyer’s Shipping & Airlines) and despite a few aircraft going tech, we managed to field 10 interesting aircraft, the largest group supporting this event.

Even the weather decided to be kind for a change with light winds and clear skies. The Air Pilots aircraft involved ranged from the Antonov An2 and the sublime Dragonfly to the diminutive Civilian Coupe. There were also Moths of the Tiger and Leopard variety (well done to Freeman Malcolm Ward in the Tiger Moth coping with only a tailskid on the hard) and two Chipmunks, one of which had been at Odiham for the Queens Coronation Review in 1953 and so repeating its static role. A Cub in military markings, Junkers Cl1 replica and a Travelair completed our line up.

One of our group, Liveryman George Blundell-Pound, had a pleasant surprise when his son managed to successfully bid to bring the Tucano into Odiham. A nice extra treat for the day.

Apart from the early arrival slots, the day was both relaxed and enjoyable with the pilots and crews well hosted with a BBQ and refreshments in the crew room. In the morning, many of the service families were treated to flights in the Chinooks, whilst the air display in the afternoon was more role-based. This included demonstrating a number of the capabilities of the Chinook workhorse but the one that stuck in my mind was seeing six soldiers being lifted off the ground on two 150 foot ropes and flying a circuit at several hundred feet! Rather than me, although once they had stabilised in a backward facing position, they gave the impression of being relaxed. Naturally a number of services display items were included such as an extended routine from the BBMF pair of Spitfire and Hurricane, Hawk, C17 Globemaster, Wild Cats and Falcons. The Breitling Wing Walkers also did their first ever display at Odiham.

Viewing the RAF Odiham Memorial in a quieter moment, provided a poignant reminder of the importance of supporting these events and the service personnel. Thank you to everyone who came along so we could play our part.
ACADEMIC BURSAIES 2016

Assistant Marion Wooldridge (Chair, Academic Bursary Selection Panel) writes:

As usual we had a strong field of applicants for the four 2016 Academic Bursaries available to students at City University, studying for the MScs in Air Transport Management, Air Safety Management, and Aircraft Maintenance Management. All students on these courses, whatever their background, are eligible to apply if they have no other source of financial support for the course and, very unusually, this year we had more applicants with an engineering and technical background than we did from commercial pilots. This led, perhaps also not surprisingly, to three of our bursaries being awarded to engineers, and one to a pilot.

Mark Smith and Tamás Oroshazi are both engineers studying for the MSc in Air Transport Management. Mark has worked for a number of years in the airline industry, at both Bournemouth and Luton, where he is currently the Continuing Airworthiness Manager of a start-up company, Oryx Jet. Working for a small start-up airline has been a new challenge, allowing Mark to become involved in a wider variety of management related activities, for which he says the course has already been extremely useful. Tamás Oroshazi is a young engineer currently working as an Operations Control Officer for ASL Airlines Switzerland. He qualified with a Bachelor of Transportation Engineering from Budapest University, specialising in Aviation Transportation and Logistics, and after a short spell working in Hungary, moved to Switzerland, where he has had a number of roles in Operation Control Centres.

He is particularly interested in the development and management of regional airlines.

Our third engineer Bursary winner is Richard Pemberton, who is enrolled on the Aircraft Maintenance Management MSc. Richard is currently Managing Director of Tillingham Aviation Compliance Ltd, with a background which includes six years in the RAF, where he began as an Airframe Mechanic working on Hercules aircraft, and after three years became a commissioned officer. Volunteering has been a large part of Richard’s life; he has experience as a Sea Cadet Instructor, a Special Constable in the Essex Police Force, and is currently a volunteer firefighter for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service. Once he has completed his MSc, he hopes to be able to complete a PPL, and perhaps even a commercial licence.

Frans Huib de Zeeuw, studying for an MSc in Air Transport Management, is currently a Second Officer for KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and flying Boeing B777s. Prior to this he was a First Officer for Germanwings, part of Lufthansa, flying Airbus A320 aircraft, and decided to return to KLM last year. Although it could be viewed as a step back in flying terms, he felt there was more opportunity to broaden his management experience back in his national airline, where he had worked previously, and where he had trained in the KLM Flight Academy. Prior to that, Frans gained a BEng in Technology Management from the Hague University. Frans enjoys coaching and training others, became a Sailing Instructor as a teenager, and at University led a group which developed an energy efficient vehicle which won the 2008 Shell Eco-Marathon. He is now also applying for membership of the Honourable Company.

Once again all our bursary winners demonstrated that they are very worthy of the award, and committed to the aviation industry and the vital importance of safety as the underpinning culture of that industry. We wish them all well in their future careers.

BLESMA SCHOLAR

Courtesy of Major Marc Le Gresley AAC (OC, CFI & Head of Training, the Army Flying Association), we have the following report from Rick Boardman, whose flying scholarship has been partially funded by the Company.

To Fly

Long before I got shorter hair, got off the dole and into an (average) career in the Army, I had other dreams…

I think I first started wanting to fly when I was about five. As a “pads brat” whilst my Dad was based at Netheravon in Wiltshire, I’d be sneaking into the Parachute Club’s old Rapide biplanes on occasion. So maybe it started there? Or perhaps it was wanting to be the pilot of Thunderbird 2 when I grew up? The parachuting connection detoured me for a few years (about thirty actually), but I’d always look at the back of the jump pilot’s neck, and wonder what it must be like to stay in the plane for once. Ironically the parachuting “detour” did get me a permanent below-the-knee paralysis in 1988, so without my foot-drop splints, I do in fact now walk EXACTLY like Virgil Tracy.

So at 53, and after life-getting-in-the-way many many times, I’d almost given up on the dream of flying. Then via a helicopter project, and contact with some BLESMA members, I discovered that as a partially paralysed veteran I could join BLESMA, and things changed.

The Army Flying Association (AFA) is based at Middle Wallop (my old Army Air Corps stomping ground), and operates a Cessna 172 from there. Motivated by their CFI, Major Marc Le Gresley, they offered to get three BLESMA members flying. Chris, Andy and myself were all given a short assessment flight last October, and, with a few medical provisos, were cleared for training.

The number of people who have contributed either their time, knowledge, encouragement, funding, or all of the above, has been nothing short of overwhelmingly heart-warming. We are deeply grateful to the following: Pooleys (ground school packs), the Doctors (medicals), Goodwood (waived landing fees for the navex), the Instructors (Mark Phillips, Peter Benest), the Examiner (ground school exams, assessment flights) and the AFA of course...
(membership).

Blesma, the Honourable Company of Air Pilots, the Worshipful Company of Chartered Accountants, AFA member Alfie Southwell who made the first very generous contribution which kick started the whole process off, and other generous AFA members who did not want to be named.

There have been a few adventures along the way relating to our individual injuries. For me, with reduced control and feedback from the feet, my first big nemesis was taxiing without inadvertently applying the brakes at the same time! The aircraft has rudder pedals, but pushed on above the “instep” point, you’re applying left or right brakes if you’re not careful.

Quite frustrating at first, but it just took time to adapt and choose the right splints. I have carbon fibre support for getting about, but for flying (as with skydiving), I revert to my older moulded foot-drop splints. I’d have to say the other big challenge for myself has been getting a 54 year old’s head into the books again.

My instructor Peter has been brilliant – infinitely patient. He’s already done the hardest part (I suspect), having to sit on the side of the runway and watch me take the Club’s aircraft solo for the first time.

The route to achieve that milestone involved basic handling, and everything I needed to pre-flight check the aircraft, start, taxi, take-off, fly around the circuit, and bring her back down again, plus how to handle any emergencies of course. It has taken me about eighteen hours of dual instruction until I was deemed ready to go solo, which happened back in May.

In the finest tradition of flying training, I had little warning. All I got before Peter walked away to watch from the edge of the runway was a very serious stare, and the words “Just remember, the club’s only got the one aircraft, Rick….” Peter can stare very, very seriously when he needs to……

Choice words, and like so many wannabee ‘Mavericks’ before me, I found myself suddenly alone in the cockpit with just a checklist and my own heavy breathing for company. The first solo is a necessary rite of passage which (like my first freefall jump back in 1981) is very short, but permanently etched into my brain. There was a moment about half way round when I glanced down at Middle Wallop, where in 1983 I was told that (contrary to the careers office sales pitch), I would not be flying military helicopters with my less than perfect eyesight. Looking down at that moment, I confess I had a truly euphoric feeling of utter disbelief and pleasure. It’s only taken me 33 years!

It seemed wrong not to celebrate at that point, so Sharon and I spent an evening with a glass of Baileys, watching the Blackadder Goes Forth episode with Squadron Leader the Lord Flashheart in it. It just seemed like the right thing to do….

I’ve now consolidated the first solo with some more circuits, some better than others (that very serious stare again…..). As I write this, Peter has started to introduce steep turns, practice forced landings, basic instrument flying (this is in case I ever find myself in bad weather and unable to see), and navigating over longer distances.

The aim finally will be a solo navigation over 80nm, to include landing away at another airfield. Beyond that? Well, unless life-gets-in-the-way again, the intention for now is to keep right on flying the AFA Cessna out of Middle Wallop, and yesterday Sharon has just had her first half hour of introduction for a Companion pilots qualification (effectively a co-pilot). Best give the grandchildren a ride too, they can remember it, on the days when they realise that I’ve spent their inheritance.

Beyond that, all I know is from now on I want to get inside an aircraft five times a day. It’s a terrible cliché, but the sky’s the limit.

Rick with his Instructor, retired British Airways Captain, Peter Benest.

Rick and Peter checking out G-OAFA, the AFA’s trusty Cessna 172 steed.
The Air Pilots Garden Party was held at White Waltham on West London Aero Club’s members’ day. This is a fun event for all ages with the serious objective of supporting the RAF Benevolent Fund and the Thames Valley Air Ambulance, as well as raising awareness about aviation. The garden party atmosphere was created by many attractions including the brass band, ice cream vendors, tombola, raffle, bottle stall, aviation book stall, plant sale, barbeque, and displays of classic and vintage cars.

The morning dawned bright and clear but increasing cloud, a strengthening chilly wind with rain later in the afternoon made the assembled party of over one hundred Air Pilots and their guests grateful for the comfort and protection provided by our marquee. We were greeted on arrival with coffee or tea and biscuits available and then each party enjoyed their own picnic. A wide variety of sumptuous food and beverages were evident as Air Pilots and their guests enjoyed chatting with friends new and old.

The flying fun started in the morning with the opportunity to have a go at flour bombing a target marked alongside the runway whilst being flown in either a Tiger Moth or a Super Cub. For a charitable donation passengers got three chances to “bomb” the target. There was also the opportunity for a flight in a 1944-built Harvard for a reasonable price, and several people experienced vintage style flying in the 10-seat Antonov AN-2 biplane. British Airways brought along their mobile simulator, and Booker gliding club brought their glider simulator, as well as an example of the latest high performance sailplane.

There were flying displays and demonstrations of aerobatics and formation flying, including some by Waltham’s most entertaining pilots, as well as by many visiting aircraft including the Tiger Nine display team. Several local model aircraft groups flew models of all types. Some were very large, some small and buzzy like angry insects. A few were powered by jet engines, others performed an impressive array of formation and aerobatic manoeuvres. There was lots of fun for children with a bouncy castle and some funfair activities as well as a candy floss stall. The Joystick Club is a group of pilots based at White Waltham led by Freeman Captain Mike Clews who are very active encouraging young people into aviation. They were offering “flights” in a variety of beautifully made pedal planes and a chance to fly rubber powered balsa model aircraft in the calmer air of a hangar. Their impressive Piper Tomahawk based mobile simulator, now fitted with a visual system, was also in great demand. Perhaps the most popular event of the day was when a hovering helicopter made several drops of crisps for the children who ran around excitedly trying to catch a packet or two. In previous years this has proved a challenge for the organisers with most of the crisps ending up in the gardens of local houses but this year it was a great success! We all thoroughly enjoyed watching the excitement with the occasional packet landing in our enclosure. Jan Epton demonstrated excellent catching skills as shown in the photograph. Proud husband, Past Master Wally Epton, put it down to the experience of managing and playing for the RAF Netball team as well as playing for Gloucestershire during a 27 year involvement in the sport.

Later in the afternoon the rain set in but by then we had enjoyed a great day at White Waltham. Liverymen David Curgenven and John Davy must be thanked and congratulated for all their efforts on our behalf creating such a memorable and successful event.
Industry estimates suggest 535,000 new commercial airline pilots will be needed over the next twenty years, alongside 603,000 technicians and engineers to maintain the global fleet, itself estimated to need circa 30,000 plus new airliners in that time.

These are astonishing numbers. In the course of representing the Company at various events I have had the privilege of listening to some remarkable speeches. One stands out, given by the Chairman of a large UK engineering conglomerate, a billion pound plus turnover company. If I paraphrase him somewhat, he said that UK industry faces an absolute skills crisis, and needs literally anybody minded to get involved in training to be an engineer to step-up, train and to join the profession.

We might not be at that point quite yet in the UK when it comes to pilot numbers, but I suspect that a shortage, particularly of experienced flight crew, is not far off.

Surely the UK ought to be a leader in these fields. We have a strong engineering heritage, and we created the global foundation of flight training, largely based on the Gosport System, as described in my last message.

Addressing these shortages is a fundamental challenge facing us if we are to make a success of Brexit, as has been said of late, let alone win the global race, as has also put about recently in political circles.

If political slogans are to mean anything then they need concrete plans, finance, and determined administrative action, to deliver the aspirations within them. As I have said before, a part of the problem lies in the seemingly diminishing capacity for UK governments to deliver numerically meaningful outcomes in these critical areas. If industry wants to affect these outcomes, then it will in future fall to them to devise and/or support initiatives that seek to meet these needs.

The Honourable Company of Air Pilots is playing such a part in meeting these demands. In addition to our seven PPL scholarships, this year we also have had four young scholarship winners attending week-long residential gliding courses at London Gliding Club in Dunstable and a further nine winners attending residential week-long courses at the Portsmouth Naval Gliding Club. The first group of five at PNGC took part alongside scholarship candidates paid for by the Fleet Air Arm Officers Association, the second group of four was purely an Air Pilots course.

My sincere thanks go to those in our Company who help select and administer the scholarship process, as also to the amazing team at both London Gliding Club and Portsmouth Naval Gliding Club who deliver these life-changing courses, and to Ruth Cundy, our Assistant to the Clerk, who looked after the residential side of the course in week two at PNGC when the candidates lived on the airfield.

Aviation courses like these make so-called STEM subjects come alive and to be relevant to young people’s lives, and have the power to influence the participants in a profound and positive way. A father said the following to me at the event held at the end of the first week’s course, and I hope he won’t mind my repeating it:

“We’d like to thank your Livery Company very much indeed for all that you have done for our son. We have no connections in aviation and did not know how to advise him or where to direct him”.

They had driven hundreds of miles to be there at his end of course presentation. This surely describes the dilemma facing so many young people and their parents.

In my speech at the dinner following our last Annual General Meeting I stated that the Company has to aspire to be the largest single grant-giving organisation to young people seeking to enter aviation in the UK. We may well be close to that now, but in my view we face a generational challenge to increase profoundly the number of such scholarships that we can give.

We are establishing a mentor scheme to offer every young member of the Company intent on joining the profession guidance to fulfill that ambition, but there remains the critical need to spark the life-changing enthusiasm that gets a young person to that point.

We need to engage with all of the membership of the Honourable Company in a drive to find new sources of funding to enable this critical work to continue, and to increase. If you have industry or other connections that may be able to join us in delivering these vital outcomes, or advice and comment to offer, please get in touch with the Company at office@airpilots.org. Every suggestion will be considered and receive a reply.

We have enjoyed some magnificent flying weather this summer, and I hope Company members have been able to get airborne and enjoy the special beauty of our countryside seen from a light aircraft.
The following are the awards approved by the Court for the 2015-16 year. Presentations take place at the Company’s Trophies and Awards Banquet to be held at the Guildhall in the City of London on October 27th.

**The Award of Honour**  
Robert Lee “Hoot” Gibson

**The Grand Master’s Commendation**  
Commando Helicopter Force

**The Grand Master’s Commendation**  
Flight Lieutenant Michael Jones RAF

**The Master’s Medal**  
Tracey Curtis-Taylor

**The Master’s Medal**  
Major Tim Peake

**The Hugh Gordon-Burge Memorial Award**  
Captain Richard Alvarez

**The Prince Philip Helicopter Rescue Award**  
US Coastguard Rescue 6033 – 15 February 2015

**The Prince Philip Helicopter Rescue Award**  
HMS Gannet SAR R177 – 30 December 2015

**The Grand Master’s Medal**  
Flight Lieutenant Colin Bostrom RAF

**The Master’s Commendation**  
Major Jean Leroux CD

**The Brackley Memorial Trophy**  
Flight Lieutenant Stephen Hewer RAF

**The Johnston Memorial Trophy**  
The Royal Air Force UK Reaper Force

**The Sword of Honour**  
Fred Marsh

**The Hanna Trophy**  
Flight Lieutenant Charlie Brown RAF

**The Myles Bickerton Trophy**  
Major Ryan Chute USAF

**The Derry and Richards Memorial Medal**  
Lieutenant Commander Rob Dowdell RNR

**The Sir James Martin Award**  
The PBN Research Project Team

**The Glover Trophy**  
Flight Lieutenant Jennifer Boyd RAF

**The Central Flying School Trophy**  
Tayside Aviation

**The Pike Trophy**  
Phil Mathews

**The Grand Master’s Australian Medal**  
Temora Aviation Museum

**The Australian Bi-Centennial Award**  
Matt Hall

**The Jean Batten Memorial Award**  
William John Funnell

**The Award for Aviation Journalism**  
Nigel Everett

**The Sir James Martin Award**  
The PBN Research Project Team

**The Glover Trophy**  
Flight Lieutenant Jennifer Boyd RAF

**The Central Flying School Trophy**  
Tayside Aviation

**The Pike Trophy**  
Phil Mathews

**The Grand Master’s Australian Medal**  
Temora Aviation Museum

**The Australian Bi-Centennial Award**  
Matt Hall

**The Jean Batten Memorial Award**  
William John Funnell

**The Award for Aviation Journalism**  
Nigel Everett
With some six aircraft flying in, and a goodly number of cars, this was a very popular and over-subscribed visit. We were welcomed by a presentation by Capt Malcolm Lyne AAC, a former Lynx pilot coming to the end of his exchange tour with 27 Squadron. The mission of 27? “To deliver and sustain Chinook and SF aviation operations worldwide, in order to meet UK defence mission and tasks”. Formed on November 5, 1915 it is known as The Elephants, after the unglamorous first type it operated – the Martinsyde G100 Elephant. Its centenary last year was celebrated by a rebranding of one of its Chinooks as ‘Nellie the Elephant’.

After the withdrawal from Afghanistan it was some surprise to Company members that 27 still has such a global reach. The scarcity of aircraft on the 27 pan outside was due to their deployment to all four corners of the globe. The squadron owns 8-10 airframes, but is somewhat below its manning strength of 25 (4 man) crews. It flies c 3000 hours p.a. Since the start of the Falklands Campaign, 27 Squadron has been on operations almost continually. Coming full circle, since June this year, it has had crews stationed back in the Falklands.

Mal took us through the CH47’s performance envelope, which for a design which first flew in 1961, continues to impress. With a 8.5 tonne max payload of up to 54 (‘clean’) passengers, or 40 in combat gear, or perhaps, as we were to discover later, 25 gentlemen of a certain age, it is a heavy lifter. Even before the optional additional tankage, it has an endurance of 2 hours 45 minutes. We were shown photos of craft that had returned to Bastion with damage which would have been mortal in lesser craft.

The Chinook is also immensely useful in its wide-ranging roles in support of the UK’s civil powers. Indeed one aircraft is on standby at Odiham 24/7 (the role rotates with the neighbouring 18 Sqn), and crew regularly practise delivering payloads into confined urban spaces. Moreover 27 Sqn has to be ready to deploy anywhere in the world at 5 days’ notice. Hence there are always crews available, fit for role, in any of the demanding environments (maritime, arctic, desert and jungle). The training matrix must be very complex. The squadron participated in 13 exercises over the last 12 months; so the workload on squadron personnel, which reached barely tolerable levels during the Afghan conflict, has diminished only slightly.

The squadron’s 130 engineers work 2 shifts to keep these hard-worked airframes in the air; perhaps the heat of the battle in Helmand is slipping from the collective memory a touch, but when we had our tour of the hangar, a close inspection of the airframes showed many instances of battle damage repair. HMG has certainly had her pound offlesh from these Boeing workhorses! We had the option of playing (respectfully) with the 7.62mm Dillon Read minigun, of which the Wokka is equipped with two. To put this into sharp relief, we were also shown the variety of weapons used by
The bad guys in Afghanistan against ISAF: The squadron is looking forward to delivery of a number of HC6 airframes which will have enhanced autohover capability.

We then progressed to the survival equipment section, where many members were surprised at the weight of personal equipment carried by aircrew.

Roles were reversed and the Company then presented to the Squadron. The Master outlined the role and current activities. The DAA ran through our current programmes, focussing on laser attacks and crew fatigue (a concept no doubt familiar to the Squadron!). Lunch in the Officers’ Mess allowed more informal discussion of the morning’s topics. The hazards of operating helicopters and RPAS in the same Afghan sky had some airing.…. The highlight of the day was when all members were able to join a crew training sortie. The sight of 25 gentlemen, besuited rather than in grow bags, to a rotors-turning Chinook was something to behold. After a prolonged dry spell the Hampshire countryside was dry and yellow. My thoughts turned to the many British soldiers who had used the Chinook Force as a bus service, but with folk on the ground in Helmand considerably more hostile than the occasional Nimby! On a personal note my elder son, during his Helmand tour, had been picked up by a Chinook at his patrol base, and thought he recognised the voice of the captain on the intercom – it was a 27 Sqn chap, who was a close friend of my younger son!

As we taxied in it was gratifying to see that mix of excitement and apprehension on the faces of a group of Air Cadets (nostalgia) whom, having spent the week at Odiham for their Summer Camp, were about to comprise the next load.

The flight was an apt and very enjoyable demonstration of this great machine – surely one of the MoD’s most productive aviation procurement decisions?

With thanks to Captain Lyne for all his efforts to create a great day, Past Master Mauleverer for effecting the introduction to 27 Sqn, and to the Immediate Past Master for his efficient organisation.
Air Cadets controlling their hyperventilation

The smartest ever pax in a Wobka?

The best sort of tailgating

War wounds were in plentiful evidence if you looked hard
Harrier Boys I
by Bob Marston

Harrier Boys I covers the period of service of the Harrier GR1, T2, GR3 and T4 from 1969 to 1990. Contributors to this very entertaining book include no fewer than two Chiefs of the Air Staff, five Air Vice Marshals, two Air Commodores and three Group Captains, let alone countless others of lower rank including a number of engineers and ground crew. Despite the generally perceived notion that single seat fighter pilots do not know how to write, the stories in this book are well constructed, informative and in many cases very amusing. The book starts with a fascinating description of the Harrier’s participation in the 1969 Trans-Atlantic Air Race, when the aircraft could only be described as immature, a huge leap of faith which in today’s risk averse world would never be considered, let alone undertaken. The subsequent widespread adoption of the Harrier by the US Marine Corps can be attributed to this venture. Readers who attend the Company’s Luncheon Club will recognize much of Liveryman Peter Dodworth’s description of the Harrier’s introduction to service. The photograph of the Harrier Conversion Team rather belies the notion that the early Harrier was critical in respect of payload; none of the pilots in the photograph, apart from Past Master Duncan Simpson, could be described as lightweights.

I found Heinz Frick’s description, ‘Fastest Glider in the World’, of a Harrier forced landing into a completely closed Boscombe Down late in the afternoon of 31 December, and the subsequent farce of convincing the bored policemen in the Guardroom that he was not in fancy dress for the New Year’s Eve party in the Officers’ Mess, quite hilarious. Yet again, an event that today would be inconceivable. Harrier operations world-wide are well covered, including Belize and the Falklands as well as the more usual NATO commitments in Europe. Air Chief Marshal Sir Peter Squire’s chapter on Operation Corporate makes for sober reading, when aspects of inter-service rivalry and jealousy seem totally inappropriate to the main aim of fighting a very difficult war in a hostile environment. Sea Harrier operations in the Falklands are also described well. On a lighter note, Peter Day describes landing a Harrier at a strip close to the border between Belize and Guatemala close to one of the few accessible and legal border crossings. He decided not to refuel the aircraft, given the appalling state of Belizian roads and the need to conserve the only fuel bowser, but the water injection system for the engine would need replenishment. A good attendance by Guatamalans was expected. Sure enough, one of the army intelligence officers in the ground party identified two of his opposite numbers who were showing a keen interest in the aircraft. In true British fashion he offered to act as interpreter. The groundcrew decided to demonstrate to the two spectators, through the interpreter, how to refuel a Harrier. The Guatamalans observed the ground crew pouring jerrycans of water into the Harrier, followed by small white pills. To quote verbatim; ‘The look of amazement on the opposition’s faces was even more incredulous when, half way through the operation, they asked to see the water in a jerrycan and were offered a cup to drink. Shortly after this, and before the ‘refuelling’ was complete, the two gentlemen walked quickly back to their car and disappeared over the border. Technical note: obviously Paludrine antimalarial tablets do no harm to the Harrier water injection system.’ Wonderful stuff.

The book is well illustrated with colour and black and white photographs and the print is clear and easy to read for those of us with less than 20/20 vision. It is published by Grub Street at a cost of £20. There is a copy available in the Company library. Overall, it is highly recommended; I congratulate the author, Group Captain Bob Marston, on producing an excellent volume.

Reviewed by Liveryman Tom Eeles

Tornado Boys
by Ian Hall

Published by Grub Street, London, 2016

199 pages illustrated throughout black and white and colour. £20.

Tornado Boys is the latest in the series of ‘...Boys’ titles and accompanies the author’s first of these in Jaguar Boys. Ian Hall has a rich background of seven fighter-bomber tours flying five different types and retiring as a Group Captain and having commanded 31 Squadron flying the Tornado GR1 from RAF Bruggen. The book is a collation of 20 ‘thrilling tales from the men and women who have operated this indomitable modern-day bomber’, including both the views of the aircrew and others whose ground role was so essential to its operational success such as a SENGO (Senior Engineering Officer) and an Army GLO (Ground Liaison Officer) on secondment.

As the author states, as the Tornado GR4 continues in service for the present on operations against Daesh, the book is too early to be an epilogue ‘...but it is easy to see why the ‘Fin’ attracts such respect from its operators’, who ‘continue to regard it with such pride and affection. It has already undoubtedly proved to be one of the great strike/attack aircraft-and indeed reconnaissance and close air support aircraft-of modern times’.

The chapters chronicle a fascinating story of a fighter born out of the post-TSR2 debacle to serve as an essential part and spearhead of the UK’s nuclear deterrent (thankfully never proven but always tested by NATO through TACEVAL). Yet it has been at the core of a deployed and expeditionary air force since 1990 in Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia/Kosovo (whilst also operating from ‘home’ in RAF Germany), Libya, and now Iraq/Syria. A true warbird that has excelled in roles beyond its initial concept, and which is also testament and witness to the commitment and bravery of the men and women who have served on continuous operations for over 25 years. The Tornado is symbolic of such a significant portion of the history of the RAF as it nears its centenary year in 2018.

The stories themselves are entertaining, well written, honest, amusing in parts, reflective in others and all illustrate the passion and enthusiasm of all those who flew, fought, serviced and supported the aircraft. In giving personal anecdotes and observations, the book really brings to life what it is like to serve on front-line fast-jet units and on operations. Ian Hall has managed to encourage and cajole a diverse collection of contributors of whom all bar one (at present) achieved either executive, senior leadership, or Air Rank. Although in places this is reflected in their narrative, where some frustrations and politics become apparent as well as achievement and inspirational leadership. One suspects that there might be room for more stories from the ‘Boys’ if there were to be a second volume.

Overall, Tornado Boys is a hard-to-put-down excellent read.

Reviewed by Assistant Nick Goodwyn
From the desk of the Director Aviation Affairs

Liveryman John Turner

INTRODUCTION
The lack of contingency planning before the UK’s referendum on EU membership for the final result provides an unexpected opportunity. There is now increasing pressure for the DfT to trigger Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty, which could impose a new relationship on the Union. Two years later, whether negotiations are concluded or not, under Article 50 all EU legislation will cease to apply in the UK.

The aim following Brexit must be focused on long-term political stability, economic prosperity and the national interest but the departments that advise ministers will have very little time to establish a plan of what that future might entail. Furthermore, those departments were never established to handle such massive legislative change in such a short time. Fortunately, the Department for Transport (DfT) which looks after aviation (including the Civil Aviation Authority and Air Accident Investigation Branch), recognised very quickly that this meant it would need to engage even more closely than usual with stakeholders. Given this opportunity for urgent closer dialogue and consultation, in July the Air Pilots Court set up a small working group comprising DAA and other members of the DfT’s stakeholders. Given this opportunity for urgent closer dialogue and consultation, in July the Air Pilots Court set up a small working group comprising DAA and Court members, as reported below.

UK DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT STAKEHOLDER MEETING
Together with other members of the DfT’s EASA Industry Forum, DfT invited the Air Pilots to attend a meeting to discuss the implications of and opportunities presented by the UK public’s decision to leave the EU. The meeting was wide-ranging and started with a review of DfT work on information gathering to date, followed by stakeholders offering their various views. Most significantly, the meeting was not intended to reach a consensus on the best way forward but rather DfT wanted to receive any guidance, even when it conflicted with other inputs, to be able to reflect all stakeholder opinion when informing the government decision process. Principal points that emerged were as follows:

• Article 50 timescales will pose a significant challenge.

• There has already been a concerted “We want to stay under EASA” pitch from almost all Commercial Air Transport (CAT) stakeholders.

• Within General Aviation (GA) there is a mix of views; those who routinely fly to/tour through Europe want to stay with EASA while those who do not, want the option to revert to pre-EASA days but with the continuation of the Red Tape Challenge. About 50% of GA-related Red Tape Challenge suggestions were deemed impossible due to EASA rules though ironically, there are already plans in EASA to incorporate most of those in their future regulations.

• DfT/UKCAA believe that the UK’s history of strong involvement within EASA would help it retain a fair degree of influence within EASA even if UK became a non-voting member; UK could still hold a position on the Management Board as a non-EU EASA member.

• DfT were keen to receive any guidance, even when it conflicted with other inputs; they wanted to be able to reflect all stakeholder opinion to help inform the decision process.

• BREGIT’ WORKING GROUP

“Our BREXIT’ working group first established the topics it felt might be important and developed outline views, before de-selecting as necessary to retain focus on those that were considered more urgent and would more usefully inform the government thinking in the short term. The chosen topics were:

• Actual time and the fatigue-inducing stress that crews experience commuting to and from the airport.

• Fatigue implications/regulation of those who are:

• Flexible working.

• Engineers’, dispatchers’, and other airport workers’ fatigue affecting the safety of a flight.

• Use of Karolinska Sleepiness Scale (KSS)63, Samn-Perelli Seven Point Fatigue Scale and the Visual Analogue Scale.

• Guidance on rest, nutrition and exercise for their off duty time so crews can best prepared for duty.

• Code share airline fatigue measures.

• Flagging Out and use of employment agencies implications.

• Separate treatment of fatigue absence by employers from sickness absence.

• Inclusion of “Chronic Fatigue Syndrome” in insurance underwriters medical list and Part-Med rules.

• Fast tracking penalties for non-compliance with fatigue regulations.

• Increased “hands on” approach to fatigue regulation by regulators.

ADDRESSING THE LASER (& DRONE) THREAT
Neither the threat to aircraft from lasers nor that posed by drones being flown in inappropriate places needs repeating here. In the margins of the meeting reported above, DfT confirmed that the work...
towards laser legislation continues, albeit there is some difficulty in finding a precise framework to turn carrying a laser device into a criminal act.

Although perhaps not immediately apparent nor connected, there are similarities between the threats that lasers and drones pose to manned aircraft. It struck me while I was preparing a short presentation on both for the Company’s recent visit to No 27 Squadron at RAF Odiham that there might be an opportunity to combat both in a similar manner. The new (21 July 2016) FAA Part 107 rules for small unmanned air vehicles (UAV) ensure that drone pilots are qualified and drones are controlled; they mean that anyone carrying a ‘ready to use’ drone in USA without also holding the FAA Registration and Remote Pilot Airman Certificates is potentially about to break the law – just as could someone carrying a laser in UK once legislation is completed. The USA has civil and criminal penalties for failing to register a drone, including up to $250,000 fine or 3 years in jail. It is not a major step from there to the UK’s developing an approach to lasers, where just having one without good reason may become an offence.

UK legislative work on lasers is going in the right direction albeit more time is needed for it to come to fruition. Therefore, any attempt now to conflate drones with lasers would be counter-productive. However, once UK legislation on lasers is complete we might find that it, plus a drone licencing/registration regime, provides a sound basis with which to tackle the drone threat.

The WW1 adventures of Lawrie Wingfield - our learned, gallant, and first Clerk

Past Master Arthur Thornig

Background

Lawrence Arthur Wingfield, MC DFC (1898 -1989) – always known as ‘Lawrie’ - had a long and remarkable career connected with numerous aeronautical bodies, not least the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators of which he was a founding member, and for 25 years the Clerk. When I first met him, nearly 40 years ago, he told me, with a twinkle in his eye, that he was distinguished because he had received the Military Cross for ‘running away from the enemy!’ In fact he had escaped from a Prisoner of War camp in Germany and made his way back to England - an effort which was deemed worthy of the MC. This article centres on this episode which began 100 years ago in 1916 – the rest of his remarkable career is another story. I am grateful to Philip Wingfield for the loan of Lawrie’s memoirs; words in quotation marks are his own.

Lawrie was born at Richmond, Surrey to George Arthur Wingfield, a solicitor, and Laura Evelyn, née Paterson, on 17 April 1898. He was the eldest of five children, one of whom died at birth; his surviving siblings were two sisters, Elise and Phyllis, and a brother John who was the youngest. In 1909 Lawrie was sent to Aldenham School at Elstree, Hertfordshire where he did well, matriculating with honours in 1914 – his last report from the headmaster said ‘His success has been earned by hard work’.

His initials, L. A. W, pointed to his future profession and his matric pass opened the door to this career. He joined the Inns of Court Officers Training Corps in 1915 and became a temporary 2nd Lieutenant, on probation, in the Royal Fusiliers. He soon transferred to the Royal Flying Corps to satisfy his enthusiasm for aviation.

His father introduced Lawrie to aviation. In 1910 his family moved to Hove on the Sussex coast, where his father conceived the idea of an aerodrome near Shoreham on the banks of the River Adur. By 1911 the aerodrome was in operation and thereafter Lawrie made several visits by bicycle from Hove during the school holidays – he saw many strange aircraft there, including Col. Cody’s ‘cathedral’. The aerodrome did not pay and when it was commandeered by the War Department a long legal case for compensation ensued – fortunately this was resolved eventually, and the family fortune restored.

Flying Training

Lawrie’s flying training began on 13 September 1915 at the No 5 Reserve Aeroplane Squadron at Castle Bromwich, Birmingham – initially on Maurice Farman Shorthorns, which he described as ‘an equable enough machine, a pusher bi-plane with an open cockpit in front, giving a wonderful field of view’. Flying instruction consisted of ‘straights’ (instructor in front seat), then circuits (usually with instructor in rear seat), next followed ‘straights solo’, more circuits with instructors in rear and finally, prior to the actual test, ‘circuits solo’. On 22nd September he was granted his brevet, after a total flying time of 5 hours 32 minutes, of which 1 hour and 56 minutes were solo – an alarmingly small amount of experience by modern standards! He soon received a letter, dated 25 September 1915, from the Royal Aero Club informing him that he had been granted an Aviator’s Certificate (No. 1781).

Lawrie was then posted on 30 September to 7 RAS at Netheravon for further training. He recalled ‘The training aircraft were Avros which were dangerous, being unstable; consequently, we were instructed on no account to get into a spin….but the flying was good fun and I managed to fly everything there, including the BE 2A…this aircraft had no ailerons and control of turns was by wing warping – satisfactory enough in calm air…. On 8 December I started my tests, with two cross country flights, one short, one long then landing on ‘Tee’, all on Avros’.

For passing out Lawrie was sent to Upavon a few miles away on Salisbury Plain. He was examined by Lt Commander Breese – ‘a kindly and fair examiner’. Next he was posted to 19 Sqn at Castle Bromwich where he arrived ‘proudly wearing my new wings on my jacket, and with 39 Hours 28 minutes flying time to my credit.’
BE 2Cs, with a couple of Bristol Scouts reserved for flight commanders. The work consisted of reconnaissance, spotting trains or troop movement, gun ranging in more – not much chance for bombing practice at first. Duration of patrols three hours, height 6500 ft or higher, if attacked five aircraft would turn into a defensive unit’ – the observers each had a Lewis gun.

‘That winter poor weather frequently interfered with flying. Then, off duty, the usual high jinks in the mess...how to get round the room without touching the ground! Drink was plentiful...flying in an open cockpit one gets plenty of oxygen to burn it up’ There were occasional trips to Doullens or Amiens.

‘We were young and exuberant with an easy discipline...in our uniforms we were the lordly and glamorous ones, or so the girls made us believe...but we were mostly very innocent’.

Lawrie was granted a period of leave in England for his 18th birthday. On his return he met a kindred spirit on the boat who confessed to similar inexperience with the other sex so they resolved that ‘As we are going to be killed, let’s find out. So we found a couple of obliging females’ The other young man was sadly killed soon afterwards.

At this time the Fokker monoplane, with its machine gun firing forward through the propeller disc and its superior speed and rate of climb ‘rendered any single BE 2C practically defenceless’. Thus any reconnaissance work east of the front line needed a fighter escort. The BE 2C with its 90hp engine had to be flown without an observer (who occupied the front seat) if carrying any substantial weight of bombs.

In preparation for the Somme offensive a scheme was devised to send a series of single aircraft, each loaded with two 110lb bombs, one on each side of the undercarriage and with a simple cross wire aiming device, to attack the railway at St Quentin, some 30 miles into enemy territory. These raids were scheduled to be flown at intervals during the first phase of the battle, with the object of preventing reserves of German infantry reinforcing the defenders. Learning of this scheme and knowing he would be involved, Lawrie calculated that the first machine to attack would have the best chance of survival, so he volunteered to go first and was ‘...granted this privilege...’ and set off first at 12.30pm on 1st July 1916 (Lawrie did not find out until much later that this day was the most costly in British military history).

He crossed the lines favoured by a south westerly wind. The promised fighter escort did not appear. Arriving at St Quentin, ‘a slight haze enveloped the town, but not enough to make sighting difficult’. Taking careful aim he released both bombs ‘at once from a height of about 5000 feet’ he saw them fall and was disappointed ‘...that they fell short of the railway station canopy. Within seconds, however, I observed to my astonishment an enormous cloud of smoke rising, a cloud far larger than my bombs could cause...’ Lawrie learned later that he had hit an ammunition train. It was described by witnesses as “the great explosion”.

Lawrie was not far on his return when he was attacked by a Fokker monoplane. ‘Looking behind I saw the thin line of the Fokker wings and heard the rat-tat-tat of his machine gun...I decided to rely on side slipping...I could see the line of holes in my lower wing going outwards, after which my pursuer would overtake, turn and come up on my tail again. Then I would sideslip the other way. This tactic had the merit of keeping me on course for home, but with the penalty of eventually running out of airspace!’ At about 1000 feet a shot splintered his instrument panel and at about 500 feet a bullet hit his engine – it spluttered and stopped.

Lawrie landed in a field where many German infantry were at exercise and he was soon surrounded by soldiers ‘...whose first thought seemed to be to remove as souvenirs as many of my personal belongings as were available. I was saved from comparative nudity by the arrival of an officer...’ Shortly afterwards a German Air Force staff car arrived containing officers of the Squadron whose pilot had brought Lawrie down. A guard was placed on his aircraft and he was taken to their HQ in a magnificent chateau some eight miles NW of St Quentin. He was much impressed by the manner in which he was treated and it was arranged that a message be dropped on the British side of the lines to inform his family and colleagues that he was alive – a message was indeed received by 12 Sqn some
three weeks later. While taking tea in the chateau he met the officer, Herr Frankl, who had shot him down. Then, accompanied by Frankl, he was taken to St Quentin's town prison, stopping on the way to look at a Fokker on the aerodrome. Lawrie later learned that two other aircraft had been shot down but that large fires had been reported at St Quentin station and the raids had been called off.

On 1 April 1918 Lawrie was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for this action with this citation:

For gallantry and good service in the field. On 1.7.16 this Officer set out from No.12 Squadron’s aerodrome for the purpose of bombing St Quentin. He went entirely by himself without escort or observer. His machines (sic) were hit; he was brought down and taken prisoner by the enemy, but not before he had successfully carried out the bombing of his objective.

A report from prisoners taken later in the year said that on that date a British aeroplane dropped bombs on St Quentin. An ammunition train was hit and the greatest confusion and consternation ensued. A regiment which was being entrained fled, took to the woods and were not all re-collected until the following evening.

It is known that no other aeroplane reached St Quentin on this date.

His work with the Squadrons had previously been excellent and he set at all times a fine example of keenness and gallantry.

Signed J M Salmond, Major-General Commanding RFC in the Field

**Prisoner of War**

Lawrie spent the next three days in a small cell in St Quentin prison – he was unimpressed by this accommodation but ‘...I should be uncharitable if I did not mention the kindly attention of some Sisters of Mercy who daily provided me with an excellent meal, of which, on at least one occasion, chicken and strawberries were part of the menu...on the second day my captor, Frankl, arrived and obtained leave of the Governor to have a photograph taken of himself and myself together. I possessed a copy of this photograph for some time...unfortunately in my later wanderings it became lost as did so much else of personal property’.

On the evening of the third day he was one of a batch of prisoners departing for Germany escorted by a Lieutenant and half a dozen men – the Sisters gave them bread and wine for the journey. ‘Arriving at the railway station one could observe, even in the dark, that it looked the worse for wear since few panes of glass remained, but I had not the least idea of the phenomenal damage my bombs had caused...a very formidable officer arrived, a major, evidently the Railway Transport Officer (RTO) in charge of the station...this German major assumed that one of us was responsible for the damage to his station, for he worked himself into a fury...finally, in an excess of passion, he turned and with obvious lethal intent, tried to snatch the bayoneted rifle from one of our guards. That stolid soldier was not used to having his rifle seized in this way even by his officers and would not let go. The ensuing tug-of-war recalled to the RTO some sense of dignity, while the lieutenant in charge of us sought to pacify him. In the end the RTO contented himself with confiscating the food the nuns had given us and entrained us in a 4th class carriage with French Senegalese troops, also recently captured, black as night and very pongy!’ The lieutenant in charge of the escort was too much in awe of the RTO to raise objection, but after an hour ‘he stopped the train and transferred us to a 2nd class compartment. We were very grateful on leaving our allies.’

They travelled on via Cologne to Mayence (Mainz) where the prisoner of war camp was an old fortress on a hill overlooking the town. There were some 500 prisoners of French, Russian and British nationality in this camp. After a week at Mayence Lawrie and a small party of about 50 prisoners were sent south to a small fortress in Bavaria called Neuburg a Kammel. ‘Here again we found a mixed bag of nationalities, mainly French. We were not there long and my principal recollection is of a Frenchman (Lacroix) who for the first time introduced into my head the idea of escape. Long before any serious plan could be thought out some of us were entrained again and I never saw Lacroix again until after the war.’

Soon he was moved on to Rosenberg-Kronach, also in Bavaria. ‘This proved a real fortress, so fortified that escape was very difficult and very far from any neutral frontier...there were no attempts during my stay from August 1916 to April 1917. Situated high above the village and overlooking the river, our occasional walks outside on parole were a delight. Inside the cavernous vaults were chilly...’

Life and daily routine for a prisoner of war has been described many times. Certain features of such life were common to all camps and Lawrie has described some of these:

‘The prisoner of war suffers most from the feeling that he is useless to himself and his comrades at home...without work of some kind he is in grave danger of mental atrophy...we usually took advantage of the opportunity afforded by the presence of other Nationals to adopt a French or Russian ‘professor’ to teach him language in exchange for instruction in ours. Then as to physical exercise, whenever possible we would make a tennis court or a hockey pitch...or go in for running and organised games.’

‘The principal events of the day were morning and evening roll-call and the meals provided, which were supplemented with food received in parcels from home. The quality of the food provided by our captors varied, but always for the worst as time went on and food got scarcer in Germany owing to the Allied blockade...ultimately we were really dependent on our parcels from home.’

‘Treatment varied dependent on the nature of the Commandant.... Other ranks’ treatment was less favourable – farming being the best, salt mines the worst...unfortunately officers could do nothing to help other ranks.’

‘I remained a prisoner for 15 months...one thing which kept one alert was the possibility of escape. This activity, regarded as undesirable by many regular officers, was an individual effort, not as in the 1939-45 war, under the control of an Escape Officer. Undesirable because privileges could be withdrawn.’

In April 1917 the Germans decided to move all English prisoners from Rosenberg Kronach to a large camp at Krefeld, Westphalia, only 15 miles from the neutral Dutch border.

‘It was a long train journey. Just as we arrived at Krefeld station there was a great commotion, caused by a party of British officers who jumped the train as it was stopping and bolted down the line.'
They were hotly pursued but managed to get away from the town and one or two of them were successful in getting across the Dutch Frontier to Holland.” It seems the Germans became concerned about the possibility of a mass escape and half the prisoners there, including Lawrie, were moved to a camp at Strohen, further East.

Escape

Thus in late May 1917 Lawrie was moved to Strohen some 45 miles WNW of Hannover, 35 miles South of Bremen and 90 miles from the Dutch border. However this still offered a realistic possibility of escape. ‘Many prisoners were enthusiastic and the idea began to take hold.’ The camp was situated on a sandy moor. Unlike some previous camps which had well constructed buildings Strohen had only temporary wooden huts. ‘The camp was surrounded by steel trellis work about 9 feet high, topped with barbed wire and other defences. Fifteen feet within was a light wire fence, marking the prohibited zone. At night there were bright lights at intervals of 50 yards but no towers with search-lights and machine guns’. The rough sketch below is from Lawrie’s memory.

Lawrie dismissed the idea of tunnelling on grounds of claustrophobia – ‘but once the escape bug got hold of me…ones whole existence was geared to it. As the weeks and summer of 1917 progressed to autumn there were several successful escapes from Strohen…I refer to men who got clear away…these gave us tremendous encouragement.’

‘The plan which had been evolved between a brother officer, Lt B Robinson, and myself, depended upon the use… of an old disused gulley… which provided some cover to a man lying full length in it. The drain crossed the neutral zone, passed through the steel trellis (at which point it was secured by coils of barbed wire) and ended in the ditch. Upon the outer side of the ditch was an embankment along which sentries patrolled and from which they had a good view down into the camp. Beyond that was a road, leading to the guard room. Still further beyond, though we did not know it, was a second ditch full of water’

Lawrie had decided that he would walk to the border once out of the camp, so false papers and money for trains were not required. ‘I had seven large pockets on the inside of my tunic. In them I concealed everything required for a week’s march, plus map and compass…I proposed to carry a light raincoat. The outstanding difficulty of our particular “getaway” was that it would take us three or four minutes at least to cut through the wire…we had to wait until the two sentries…were both standing still at the opposite ends of their beats. The attempt was to be made after dark and on a wet night…during September we waited for a fortnight, without obtaining favourable conditions.’ A fellow prisoner, Somerville, had some wire cutters and ‘it was agreed that he should be first to make the attempt, with the best chance of getting clear away…we planned to signal to him, by a series of taps on a china plate how the sentries were behaving. This method of signalling was adopted because, amidst the general noise of the camp, it was less likely to attract attention than whistling or using lights.’

Eventually, on 4 October 1917 there was ‘a very dark night, raining hard, and the two sentries nearest our drain were launched in their rain coats and standing still at frequent intervals. At about 9pm Somerville, with his wire cutters entered the gulley and crawled along to the wire...he cut through the wire and without making a sound crawled through the hole he had made. We saw him pass, running, through the zone of light into the darkness …without being noticed…we gave Somerville his four minute start then Robinson entered the gulley…I followed immediately…we wriggled along on our bellies keeping one eye on the sentries. When they moved we waited…Unknown to us two other officers, seeing what was happening, had entered the gully behind us. Wriggling in mud and water is exhausting and I was fairly tired when I reached the wire. When my raincoat caught in the loose strands of wire, I stuck, but the chap immediately behind me, with herculean strength,…shot me through the hole like a cork from a bottle! Only later did I learn that it was an officer of the Gloucestershire Regiment named Fitzgerald.

The noise made by the wire attracted the attention of the two sentries…I have an impression of scrambling over the embankment, and of my comrades receding into the darkness…there was much noise as the camp guard turned out…Those who had rifles could only fire with difficulty. I was still breathless from my crawl and took cover by diving into the further ditch of whose existence I was previously unaware. I stayed as nearly as possible below the surface of the water for three quarters of an hour…the guards continued to fire in all directions in the dark, which chiefly endangered themselves. The bugles sounded throughout the camp and the roll call was taken while I was lying in this ditch. …when the commotion had died away I got out and crawled across the moor until clear of the camp lights. The rain was light but continuous – but already being soaked to the skin, unnoticed….I stopped and took stock of my stores (I had abandoned my raincoat) and found that my matches and cigarettes were spoilt, also my compass would not work.’

The country near Strohen was low lying and wet and Lawrie made slow progress, but he soon found the best plan was to take cover in a barn and travel at night. Towards the end of the second night, sheltering in a barn he was confronted by a group of French prisoners of war who
were working on this farm. He confessed his situation to these men who proved most helpful. They gave him eggs to eat and an old French military greatcoat, took him back to their quarters, another barn and concealed him in a loft. ‘So here I was, back again in a prison camp, although not now as a prisoner.’

‘I stayed with them (as far as they knew) for two nights to recuperate. They were now anxious to get rid of me, being endangered by my presence...at the end of the two days they wished me well and gave me some provisions... In fact I returned to the same hiding place as it was much too wet too proceed...the third night I left...it was till raining.’

‘It took four more days to get to the Dutch frontier, travelling at night, in stages of about twenty miles. The journey was more or less without incident as I seldom met anybody. In appearance I resembled nothing more than an animated scarecrow. For additional food I found plenty of apples and potatoes which I ate raw...where possible I followed railway tracks...there were few trains...on the eighth day after leaving Strohen I came to the River Ems...exhaustion was near, my feet were sore and painful, and I determined to stake everything on crossing the Ems.’

That night, looking for a place to swim across the Ems Lawrie encountered a man with whom he could converse in French. This man from Alsace showed him a place where the river was only about 100 yards wide. ‘I went down to the water’s edge, found a plank of wood and tied my clothes on to it with my puttees. I asked him if there were any patrols on the opposite bank and he said ‘No’. The object of having Alsatian guards near the frontier was not so much to keep prisoners of war from escaping as to prevent Germans themselves from creeping through into Holland. I swam the Ems pushing the plank in front of me, dressed on the far bank and set off west again...I steered roughly westwards by the direction of the wind, which I guessed to be from the South-West.’

‘About 2am the sky cleared and I steered by the Pole Star. I arrived at a new canal in course of construction and presumed I had arrived in Holland...but went about two miles further. About 4am I took my courage in my hands and knocked on a farmhouse door and the farmer told me it was Holland. He welcomed me in and invited me to share breakfast with his family.’

After breakfast Lawrie was handed over to the Dutch police at Emschide, and then went via Rotterdam to London. On the ship he met Fitzgerald, the man who had pushed him through to hole in the Strohen wire. ‘On arrival in London I was told to report to the War Office, so put up at the Waldorf Hotel, bought some kit and shortly received a letter inviting me to Buckingham Palace. It was on 25 October 1917, that I was accorded the great honour, perhaps my greatest moment, of being received by His Majesty King George V. At the Palace I met Fitzgerald again. His Majesty took great interest in our adventures and appeared very well informed about conditions in Prisoner of War camps. He gave Fitzgerald a Military Cross for some previous exploit. Many months later, when escape was recognised as meritorious, I got one also.’

Lawrie was not posted to France again for fear of recapture and served as a pilot with the RAF Wireless Experimental Establishment at Biggin Hill until demobilisation in December 1918.

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**Obituary - Past Master Rod Fulton**

Past Master Clive Elton

Born in Sunderland on 5th April 1933, Rod, (short for Rodley) was educated at Bede Grammar School where he gained distinctions in English Literature and Geography and was awarded a place at St John’s College, York.

Rather than take deferment from National Service he joined the RAF in 1951 and obtained a Short Service Commission, training as a pilot. The urge to fly originated from visits to air displays and weekend trips to local RAF airfields with his father.

After gaining his wings on the Harvard Rod trained on the Vampire at RAF Merryfield before being posted to 98 Squadron at Fassburg in Germany. Unfortunately a mastoid, suffered as a child came to the attention of the Medical Officers and further high performance jet flying was ruled out. There followed a spell on Hastings in Transport Command and then a posting on to Neptunes with Coastal Command.

In 1957 the infamous Duncan Sandys cuts took place with an inevitable reduction in pilot requirement in the armed services. Rod, along with over 120 other pilots opted to go into commercial flying as both BOAC and British European Airways were recruiting.

As a Second Officer in BEA Rod trained on the Pionair, otherwise known as the DC3 or Dakota. He was based at Manchester until 1963 when he was selected for training on the Comet at Heathrow. He then took on the additional role of instructing at the ground school on Schedule A Performance. In 1969 came the long awaited command course which he completed on the Vanguard followed very soon by being appointed a Training Captain. In due course he moved into management where he held appointments on the Vanguard, Merchantman and Trident.

Amongst his achievements were what was probably the first operational Category 3B landing in a Trident and commanding the Royal Flight to Italy in 1980. He was involved in negotiations with the CAA to achieve a common type rating for all marks of Trident and also the development of engine out ferry procedures. In 1982 he demonstrated his flying skills at Hatfield flying a Trident 1 in the display to mark the centenary of the birth of Geoffrey de Havilland.

Without doubt the pinnacle of Rod’s career came with his appointment as Flight Training Manager on the Boeing
757. Involved from the very beginning he ensured that he had the training team of his choice and won the everlasting respect of them all. Rod commanded the first direct 757 flight from Boeing Field to Heathrow, this being his route check on the delivery flight of the second aircraft. He also commanded the first ETOPS flight from Manchester to New York and the inaugural 767 flight from Heathrow to Seattle.

Having joined the Guild in 1966 and being invested with the Livery in 1977 Rod had two spells as an Assistant on the Court being elected Warden in 1994 and becoming Master in 1998. Exceptionally active in that he served on the Education & Training Committee, the Trophies & Awards Committee, the Benevolent Fund and as a Director of 9 Warwick Court Ltd. In 1993 he received the Brackley Memorial Trophy for his outstanding and individual contribution to air transport training over many years. He was also awarded a Master Air Pilot Certificate in 2004.

A highly successful year as Master was followed by him forming and chairing his Past Master’s Association and subsequently initiating the Guild, now Air Pilots, Past Master’s Luncheon Club.

Both professionally and socially Rod was always taking the lead and was the most generous of men with both his time and his wallet. Apart from aviation his interests were music, particularly choral singing, philately and wine.

Rod was someone who showed great concern for others of all ages, the huge turnout of family and friends at his funeral held on a glorious sunny day in the Oxfordshire village of Ewelme bore testament to that.

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**30th Anniversary Lunch of The Air Pilots Flying Club**

**Freeman Richard Brown**

Sixty-eight Members and Guests of the Air Pilots Flying Club gathered in a sumptuous marquee at White Waltham on Sunday 14th August - Sensational Sunday- as it became after Team GB produced a wave of Olympic medals later in the day.

Sensational for us, as we were celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the founding of the Club in 1986 following the proposal by the then Master, Tom Brooke Smith in 1985. We were received by the President (Peter Davis), Chairman (Dacre Watson), and our hostess and organiser Diana Green-Davy, with glasses of prosecco, amidst the bustle and engine noise of many visiting aircraft. White Waltham was also playing host to the visiting Helicopter Club, and a vintage aircraft group, and local club members; all intent on enjoying the fine weather and splendid barbecue fare. As usual interesting aircraft types, both old and new, were in close attendance.

As we took our seats for lunch thoughts turned to to those who had worked hard to establish our Club in 1986. We all rose for a minute’s silence to salute Rod Fulton who very sadly had died during the week; with our deep sympathy expressed to his widow, Linda. In attendance were some of the original cast of 1986, notably Clive Elton and Norman Hutchings. Specific reference was drawn to Frank Dell in Australia, and Johnny Turner. Charlie Owens, also unable to attend, was represented by his son, Robert, who informed us of the continuing pilot careers of his son and nephew; and of course we renewed memories of Lettice Curtice and Freddie Stringer. All of them conspicuous on the first membership list.

Our secretary, John Denyer, ensured an orderly flow of self-service courses through prawn kebabs, veggies, salads, chicken and tasty steak. The wine flowed and conversation rumbled, all the while with flying activity continuing outside. Delicious desserts then appeared, … and disappeared.

After the Loyal Toast our Chairman, Dacre Watson, welcomed all with particular reference to the original members listed above, and also his nonagenerian guests, wartime Halifax pilot Doug Evans and David Holloway, previous recipients of the Malt Whisky cadeau. Roll on 90! He also warmly welcomed the Master to the President’s table. Dacre gave us a brief history of how the first group of 97 people showing interest in forming the Flying Club had flowered into currently 183 fully-paid-up members. He also described how the Club early on had chosen to become affiliated to West London Aero Club at White Waltham - a successful move. Dacre went on to report the success of the Club’s Gliding Scholarship programme, with students achieving gliding solo certificates; the objective in the future was to be able to award a scholarship to full PPL standard.

The Master responded with a Toast to the Club on reaching its 30th Anniversary and wishing it all success in the future, with its particularly varied and interesting flying lunch and visits programme.

The President completed the formal proceedings with his customary jocular short story, and the informal session continued for some time into the summer afternoon. A fine occasion which we all enjoyed enormously. Many thanks to Diana Green-Davy and the organisers, and to the catering staff at West London Aero Club, and to the members and their guests for such a bubbly occasion.
4624 Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force

The Editor, Photos by the Editor and Sgt Helena Thomas, RAF Brize Norton

As the second in our series of profiles of affiliated units, we look in this issue at 4624 (County of Oxford) Movements Sqn RAuxAF, perhaps the most esoteric of our affiliations since it is not a flying unit. With the increasing importance of the Reserve Forces within Britain’s overall military capability after the implementation of the Future Reserves 2020 Programme, which also recognised their crucial role in improving the country’s cyber-warfare resources, it is timely to examine the contribution of a Reservist unit.

Number 4624 Sqn was formed on August 8th 1982, in response to the Falklands War, becoming fully operational in 1987. Its first mobilisation was in 1991 for Op Granby, and it has been mobilising personnel ever since.

I flew into RAF Brize Norton in late July to meet with Officer Commanding number 4624 Squadron, Wing Commander Bev Peart, RAfR. Like most reservist units, its personnel’s annual commitments to the unit comprise 15 days of continuous training, and 12 days of non-continuous service (for which they are paid the normal daily rate for their rank, plus the traditional 5% X factor). There is an underlying commitment that Reservists must not be out of pocket due to deployment.

The role of the squadron is to provide fully trained Movements reservists to support RAF operations worldwide. It is part of the A4 Force, headquartered at RAF Wittering. Number 4624 Sqn is the only Movements unit in the RAF Reserves, and lays claim to being the largest Royal Auxiliary Air Force squadron with 289 established posts.

Somewhat to my surprise the squadron conducts all its own recruit basic training, although this concludes with a fortnight at RAF Halton. Thereafter all training is operation-focused, with the objective of creating a squadron member who is totally interchangeable with a regular counterpart. Training takes place at RAF Brize Norton on 46 weekends each year, on a selection of 13 different courses. Recruits usually progress from attestation to being certified as fit for role in two years. Typical squadron members tend to be in their late thirties/early forties, but can serve up to age 60. Most are not involved in movements in their day jobs. There is tangible proof of the opportunities 4624 Sqn provides: Wing Commander Peart’s predecessor as OC progressed from AC to Wing Commander!

Over the last 5 years, it has been estimated that between 20-23% of the RAF’s deployed logistic support activity - under the aegis of 1 Air Mobility Wing - has been provided by reservist personnel from this squadron. Its bread and butter is helping out at its home base. Up to 16 personnel are tasked (on three days a month) to supplement the Saturday shift at Brize. Whilst squadron members have access to the full gamut of the RAF’s adventure training resources, recruitment is Wing Commander Peart’s biggest challenge. The start point is that there are 5 RAuxAF squadrons at RAF Brize Norton, essentially competing in the same talent pool. 4624 Sqn is ‘nationally recruited’, but in practice most staff come from within a 150 mile radius. I was astounded that many squadron members drive from as far afield as Scotland to train and operate at RAF Brize Norton. Many of Britain’s companies would be envious of that level of staff commitment! The need for Friday night training sessions clearly makes 150 mile travel more difficult, so that weekly session is under review. Whilst some reservist units in other corners of the armed forces have various financial inducements on offer to meet their recruitment targets, within the RAF only a bonus for returning ex-regular is available. Indeed almost all 4624 Sqn’s SNCOs are ex-regular. The opportunity for foreign travel is clearly an attraction for many
4624 personnel: last year some 142 personnel carried out 174 tasks overseas, the bulk of which were in Europe and the Gulf.

Staff churn is within what I would judge are normal parameters at 20% (a conservative measure, deriving from all factors including end of service, medical discharges, etc). The qualities of 4624 Sqn under Wg Cdr Peart have been recognised more widely — this year it won the Robinson Efficiency Prize as the best RAuxAF Squadron.

Aside from thoughts as to how the demand for movements services may evolve, one question for the squadron’s future is whether to embed its personnel in other squadrons. Wg Cdr Peart is ideally placed to take the squadron forward. After a career as a (regular) Fighter Controller (now the Aerospace Battle Management branch), Bev joined the RAFR under full time reserve terms in 2004. In June 2012, until her appointment as OC 4624 Squadron she was the programme manager for the Royal Air Force’s Future Reserves 2020 Programme.

Returning to my aircraft through RAF Brize Norton’s passenger terminal, it had echoes of Lympne or Lydd in the Sixties — a tired, under-invested look that was out of kilter with the progressive can-do attitudes of 4624 Sqn!
Does anyone remember RAF Kenley?

Mike Wicksteed

Are there any memories left of this WW2 RAF fighter aerodrome? Now a haven for a gliding club, dog walkers, cyclists, and joggers, Kenley - England’s best preserved Battle of Britain airfield - lies on the southern border of London and next to the Surrey countryside.

During the Battle of Britain RAF Kenley was a key sector station, controlling Biggin Hill and Croydon - a few miles to the east and west respectively. It is a highly evocative place, with the WW2 concrete runways and perimeter track still intact, as are many E-type aircraft revetments.

Built on a former golf course annexed in 1917, Kenley was then called No 7 Aircraft Acceptance Park. Manufacturers would send their aircraft, mostly Sopwith Camels and DH9A bombers, to be assembled from kits and fitted with their wartime role equipment, armaments, and instrumentation, before being ferried across the Channel to France.

Immediately after the war, flying Handley Page Bombers converted to civilian HP42s, No 1 (Communications) Squadron conveyed officials to and from London to the Versailles peace conference. After this the aerodrome faced closure, but was saved by the intervention of Winston Churchill, whose home Chartwell was a 20-minute drive away. Churchill believed it was essential for the defence of London. How right he was.

Badly bombed on 18 August 1940, the aerodrome faced closure, but was saved by the intervention of Winston Churchill, whose home Chartwell was a 20-minute drive away. Churchill believed it was essential for the defence of London. How right he was.

Memorabilia?

It’s a long shot, but the aim of this short article is to see whether you have anything relating to Kenley squirreled away - letters, diaries, photos or even physical artefacts. If so, I would love to hear from you. An email will do the trick – to Mike.wicksteed@btinternet.com

I served in the New Zealand Army between 1965-87, but have lived in England since 1989. I am a member of the Kenley Airfield Friends’ Group, and the web champion of the Kenley Revival Project.

Some Q&A:

Q: How will any objects you receive be displayed?

A: At this early stage of the project there are no plans for a museum. We’re going down the digital route and will be encouraging people to post pictures of their own objects through our online archive. The archive itself is still in its development stage - eventually we hope that people will use it to share their stories and own collections such as photographs or PDF copies of letters or diary entries etc.

Q: Why should people (presumably families of former RAF members) consider supporting this project?

A: Broadly speaking to extend the memory of their relatives who served England during WW2. We would hope that if a family were to find a wartime artefact directly related to Kenley - and be willing to pass a photographic or PDF a copy of it to the Revival Project - it would help promote general awareness of the valiant work undertaken here in England during WW2.

Q: What sort of items have you already received from people, and from where across the world?

A: None yet. These are early days and the bid for mementos is just underway in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. The next phase will be to contact veterans’ organisations in Belgium, the Czech Republic and Poland.

Q: Do civilian aircraft still use the runway and facilities?

A: The Station closed in 1974 since when there has been no powered flying. The Surrey Hills Gliding Club and 615 Volunteer Gliding Squadron operate from the airfield, as does 450 Air Cadet Squadron, which has served local young people since 1941.