February 2012

8 Combined Courts Lunch Guild Hall Club
15 Luncheon Club RAF Club
16 10th GP&F Committee meeting Cobham House
21 5th Education and Training Committee meeting Cobham House
23 Pilot Aptitude Assessment RAF Cranwell

March 2012

7 Environment Committee Meeting Cobham House
8 11th GP&F Committee meeting Cobham House
8 6th Court meeting Cutlers’ Hall
13 6th Technical and Air Safety Committee Cobham House
19 Annual Guild Service St Michael’s Cornhill
19 AGM, Installation and Supper Merchant Taylors’ Hall
22 Lord Mayor’s Dinner for Masters Mansion House
23 United Guilds Service St Paul’s Cathedral
23 Lunch with Fan Makers’ Company Skinners’ Hall

April 2012

10 1st Education and Training Committee Cobham House
12 Pilot Aptitude Assessment RAF Cranwell
17 Benevolent Fund Board of Management Meeting Cobham House
19 Assistants’ Dinner Cutlers’ Hall
19 1st GP & F Committee Meeting Cobham House
26 Guild Luncheon Club RAF Club
26 Cobham Lecture Royal Aeronautical Society
28 Flyer Show Sofitel, Heathrow

May 2012

8 1st Technical and Air Safety Committee Cobham House
10 2nd GP & F Committee Meeting Cobham House
10 1st Court Meeting Cutlers’ Hall
24 Livery Dinner Drapers’ Hall

STOP PRESS - DATE CHANGE TO TROPHY AND AWARDS DINNER TO 1st NOVEMBER 2012

GUILD VISITS PROGRAMME

8 April Bletchley Park

Please see the Flyers accompanying this and previous editions of Guild News or contact Liveryman David Curgenven at guildevents@dciai.co.uk. These flyers can also be downloaded from the Guild website.

Cover Photo: A Hawk T2, resplendent in the markings of the recently reformed No IV(R) Squadron, a Guild affiliated unit. The squadron is an element of No 4 Flying Training School based at RAF Valley, Anglesey. A full description of the aircraft’s capability and the squadron’s role can be found in News Round Up.
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GUILD AFFILIATED UNIT REFORMED.

On 24th November, a very windy day at RAF Valley, No IV(R) Squadron RAF was reformed. The squadron, a Guild Affiliated Unit, had stood down when the Harrier GR9 was retired at the end of 2010. No IV(R) Squadron is equipped with the BAE Hawk T2, a new version of the incredibly successful Hawk advanced jet trainer that first flew in 1974, the first flight being undertaken by Past Master Duncan Simpson. The Hawk T1 was designed to train pilots for aircraft such as the Buccaneer, Phantom, Jaguar, Harrier GR3 and Tornado GR1, aircraft that could be difficult to fly but were not as technically advanced as current combat aircraft. The current front-line aircraft, Typhoon and Tornado GR4, with JSF expected to enter service in 2020, are easier to fly but far more complex to operate effectively as a weapons system. The Hawk T2 will prepare fast jet pilots for flying front-line aircraft by delivering a modern cockpit environment with digital displays, sophisticated navigation and advanced avionics, including simulations of the latest airborne weapons systems. This will greatly improve the training given to both the RAF and the RN. Features of the Hawk T2 include:

1. Three full colour Active Matrix Liquid Crystal Displays, each controlled by 'soft keys', and each able to display the full range of navigation, sensor, weapons and system data.
2. Synthetic radar and threat simulation.
3. Head-Up Display (HUD) featuring symbology compatible with front-line combat aircraft.
4. Hands-On-Throttle-And-Stick (HOTAS) controls with moding and switching fully representative of front-line combat aircraft types.
5. Inertial Navigation/Global Positioning System (IN/GPS) for enhanced navigation and weapon aiming accuracy.
6. Traffic Collision Avoidance System (TCAS)
7. Ground Proximity Warning System (GPWS).
8. Digital Moving Map (DMM)
9. Autopilot
10. Embedded weapons and sensor simulation allowing cost effective training to be carried out on systems and tactics used current front-line aircraft.
11. Uprated Rolls Royce Adour engine producing 6500lbs thrust.

In 2012, IV(R) Squadron will become the RAF’s only fast jet training squadron at RAF Valley. The first Hawk T2 course will commence in April 2012 as part of the UK Military Flying Training System (UKMFTS). In the current time of economic adversity the future conduct of flying training inevitably comes under scrutiny, with more focus than ever before on providing value for money whilst maintaining a product that is second to none. With the cost of flying a Hawk T2 in the region of £5000 per hour and the Typhoon costing in the region of £70000 per hour, there has been a focus on developing the quality of training that can be provided in a synthetic environment. The Hawk T2 programme has two state of the art Full Mission Simulators (FMS) which can provide almost lifelike real world scenarios. They use a dome visual display with fully immersive projection, together with ‘g’ cueing systems to provide realistic training for each student pilot against a multitude of other synthetically generated aircraft. The FMS can also be linked together to provide a training environment for two students simultaneously. In the future these FMS will provide the majority of the training in the student operational scenarios, including simulation of synthetic radar, surface to air missile, air to air missile and decoy systems. In fact the day cannot now be far off when all fast jet training will take place in a synthetic environment, actually getting airborne being an increasingly rare occurrence!

The Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Dalton was the Reviewing Officer at the Parade on 24th November which marked the consecration of the IV(R) Squadron Standard, which was held outside despite extremely strong winds that challenged the Standard bearer’s ability to keep the Standard from being blown away. Past Master Group Captain Roger Gault, who once commanded IV Squadron in its Harrier days, also attended the event in his capacity as Affiliated Unit liaison point of contact.

‘AIR PILOTS’ AND ‘AIR NAVIGATORS’

The Court has decided that it is neither necessary nor desirable to amend the Constitution to include definitions of air pilot and air navigator.

The Membership Committee was tasked to consider whether change was necessary and if so, how air pilot and air navigator should be defined. The Committee considered various definitions and concluded that each risked extending eligibility to people who were neither pilots nor navigators in the ordinary and well-established meaning of those terms.

The Court will continue to consider any ‘borderline’ applications on their merits. It also has power under By-law 2(d)(6) to admit an applicant who is neither a pilot nor a navigator but who, “in the opinion of the Court, has rendered outstanding service to aviation or has rendered or is likely to render substantial service to the Profession or to the Guild.”
NEW YEAR’S HONOURS, 2012. Congratulations to Warden Squadron Leader Chris Ford, who was awarded the MBE in the 2012 New Year’s Honours List. Chris has recently retired from active RAF service after some 41 years and 18,567 flying hours, mainly in the air transport world. The rumour that the award was for successfully avoiding ever to have done a ground tour is completely untrue.

REV PETER MULLEN RETIRES The Reverend Peter Mullen, the well known Honorary Chaplain to the Guild, retired as Rector of St Michael’s, Cornhill, after the City New Year service on 13th January. However, he remains Honorary Chaplain to the Guild at the request of the Court.

‘OUT OF THE BLUE’ This is the title of a recently published paper-back book. There’s a saying in the RAF that if you can’t take a joke you shouldn’t have joined. It is a perfect example of the wry humour that permeates the mind-set of Service personnel and it resonates throughout this book. Whether the tale is set in the air or on the ground, it offers a glimpse of what life was, and probably still is, really like in the RAF.

Over a period of two years, three ex-military pilots, who joined the RAF on the same day and have been life-long friends, collected the stories. Sometimes terrifying, occasionally outrageous, and frequently funny, they show that the business of flying military aircraft sporadically throws up challenges that even the most capable of aviators struggle to meet. Without exception, the stories are related with a refreshing candour that acknowledges the failures as well as the triumphs on each author’s part. Equally importantly, they are presented in a way that anyone can enjoy, regardless of whether or not they have any knowledge of flying or military life.

Many of the events recounted happened during the Cold War, when the surreal world of potential nuclear conflict was the backdrop to day-to-day operations, and nearly all the stories appear in print for the first time. Indeed, it is true to say that, from an aviation perspective, they are frequently more remarkable for the fact that the protagonist got away with it rather than demonstrated great flying skill.

The book appears in print thanks to the generosity of the sponsors, BAE Systems and CAE, and all proceeds will be shared between the RAF Benevolent Fund and Help for Heroes. The Master Elect, Air Marshal Cliff Spink, wrote the Forward. The book is sold exclusively by the publishers, Halldale Media Group, copies can be obtained online from them at www.halldale.com/shop.

BRITISH AIR DISPLAY ASSOCIATION. The recently formed British Air Display Association (BADA) grew out of a meeting at Duxford about 2 years ago when a number of Air Show organisers met to discuss how the Air Show community could be better represented. Following the Military Aviation Authority’s 2010 end-of-season symposium a number of willing volunteers put themselves forward to act as an interim Steering Committee and the new organisation stood up on 13th April 2011, at the same time as the Air Displays Association of Europe commenced to wind up. BADA’s Mission statement is ‘To encourage, promote and advance Safety and Standards in British Air Displays’. From this Mission Statement the Steering committee has formulated the following Objectives:

1. Through a Code of Practice promote safety and professional standards throughout the air display community.
2. To be the national association for all matters relating to the British air display community.
3. To provide a forum for the exchange of information between members.
4. To be an interface between the membership and the Civil and Military regulatory authorities.
5. To provide a programme of training and mentoring for new members of the air display community.
6. To maintain a liaison with other UK aviation associations and organisations.
7. To maintain a liaison with other international air display organisations.
8. To promote air displays to the media and the public and provide a focal point for information, discussion and informed comment.

BADA has formed four Working Groups covering Regulation and Training, Safety, Media and Communication and Event Management. These Groups will address best practice in the various disciplines, canvass opinions, identify areas to address and to co-opt specialist/subject matter experts to produce guidance for the whole industry. BADA has started a useful dialogue with the CAA and MAA and although it is unlikely in the short term that the air display industry will be totally self regulating, given support by the whole of the UK air display community it may well be possible to use BADA to shape and protect an industry that is the envy of the world for the better. For further information log onto the BADA website, www.bada.uk.com.
The Master Writes
WHY MEMBERSHIP IS SO IMPORTANT
CAPTAIN WALLY EPTON

Time flies when you are having serious fun, and many Masters before me have written in this magazine about how their year went by so quickly. I find it hard to believe that I am now writing my sixth and final message in this series, and I can only tell you that what previous Masters have said about a Master’s year in office is absolutely true.

The last month or so of my one year term of office has accelerated rapidly, borne along by the Global Jetstream of the Tour of the Regions (reported elsewhere in this edition of Guild News), followed by the High Pressure system leading up to Christmas, and then carried along by the prevailing Westerlies that led us into January 2012 with all the exciting promise the New Year brings. The 2 months since my last Message have just been a whirlwind of activity and here we are in February with only 40 days and 40 nights left before I hand over the chain of office to your next Master.

I have no intention of writing a valediction, nor shall I wander off into the wilderness because I am sure there will be plenty of opportunities in the future to help out the Editor with an article now and then.

I set out at the beginning of my year to represent the Guild as a journeyman business aviation pilot. My aim was to make both the City of London, and the “coal face” of aviation worldwide more aware of what this great Guild is all about, and how we can be of help to each other. My visit in May last year to the European Business Aviation Conference and Exhibition in Geneva, and my presentation at the International Business Aviation Council dinner helped to enlighten a lot of the movers and shakers in the business aviation sector who were not fully aware of the Guild’s existence, nor fully aware of what we do. After Geneva I felt that business aviation on both sides of the Atlantic was a lot more aware of the Guild, and how important it was to pilots, especially the younger ones struggling to get that vital first job.

I also found that during my Tour of the Regions the Regional Committees were moving towards closer involvement with general aviation as well as the airlines and the military such that individual pilots were becoming more encouraged to get involved with the Guild. I even signed a few proposals for new members “on the spot” and supported the Regions in their recruiting campaigns. During that Tour I gave several formal speeches where I took the opportunity to broadcast how important I felt strong membership was to the Guild worldwide. It is my personal view that strength in numbers is important to this Guild for several very good reasons.

Our Strategic Review of 2009 identified that there was still scope for a further increase in membership to ensure a good and appropriate representation from all sectors of aviation. When our founders set about forming this Guild in 1929 they recognised that if air pilots and air navigators were to protect and promote their interests in the rapidly developing commercial aviation industry they needed to band together. They knew that they needed a strong membership in numbers that would convince government, regulators, the industry and the public at large of their status and that they truly represented the profession of air piloting and air navigation. The Guild today is punching well above its weight today and this is highly commendable, but if we were to be challenged about the body of pilots we claim to represent, we might find ourselves reeling against the ropes because the numbers do not stack up.

As many of you know I travel quite a bit in my business aviation activities all around the world, and I “dead head” frequently to meet my clients needs. Whenever I fly “commercial” as an airline passenger I make a point of saying hello to the flight deck crew and in a few seconds of conversation swap notes about life in the airline compared with what I do. (I did quite a bit of this during my tour of the Regions when flying with BA and Qantas.) Of those pilots I talk to in all the different UK airlines I am dismayed to find that very rarely do I meet a pilot who is a member of the Guild, and disappointingly only about 1 in 10 flight-deck crew knows of the Guild and what we do. This is an impression I have gained not just from flying with UK based airlines but from my conversations with pilots at FBO’s and on the ramp. I always leave my business card as Master with a few words of encouragement to promote the Guild and recommend becoming a member.

Stand by their claim that the Guild truly represents the best interests of air pilots and air navigators in their communities. Here in the UK our current membership stands at around 1600 and many of our members are retired licenced pilots and no longer practicing aviation. We are sometimes criticised for being a bunch of retired aviators. I see nothing wrong with having a membership with a good number of retired aviators who are masters of their craft, with superior experience, and superior knowledge of aviation. They can give guidance to younger practicing aviators, the apprentices of our trade, who can benefit from the collective and superior wisdom the Guild provides. Also the superior wisdom provided by our senior members is very powerful when representing pilot’s interests to government, regulators and the industry. It is said that the Guild is punching well above its weight today and this is highly commendable, but if we were to be challenged about the body of pilots we claim to represent, we might find ourselves reeling against the ropes because the numbers do not stack up.

I became conscious of this factor where there is more obviously an older age membership, and where the members are not so active in flying as they used to be. The newly emerging Regions of North America, and perhaps very soon South Africa, recognise that they have to recruit active members if they are to be able to stand by their claim that the Guild truly represents the best interests of air pilots and air navigators in their communities.
Hopefully some of them respond and sign up.

UK Guild members who are practicing pilots today represent about 1% of the current 57,000 pilots registered with the UK CAA. It’s a similar story in the Overseas Regions where membership numbers represent probably less than 1% of the active pilot community. I am not suggesting that we should try to enrol all licenced pilots as members of the Guild, nor do I imagine that we could recruit around half of the pilot community into our organisation. However, if our membership was closer to say 2% or even 3% of the pilot community, I think we could justifiably claim to be truly representative of air pilots and air navigators in quantity as well as quality. The Guild will always need members with current experience and current flying skills in aviation to keep our technical committees continuously fed with up-to-date knowledge. It is therefore vital in my view that we constantly recruit active air pilots and air navigators from the airlines, and from general aviation, as well as from the military, into the Guild.

Since the Guild was formed much has been achieved over time, punching well above our weight. The comment I hear often within the Guild is that we punch well above our weight because we have the quality if not the quantity. The opinion is that numbers are not important providing we have the quality. That’s fine, but I believe it would be so much better if the membership of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators represented a greater number of the licenced pilot population. We could then truly claim to justifiably represent the interests of practicing air pilots and air navigators, and then we could claim to be punching at the correct weight.

Another very good reason for increasing our membership is of course that higher membership numbers brings increased income. The greater part of the Guild income is derived from membership subscriptions. More members would result in higher income and this would help to finance those objectives we strive for in the provision of scholarships and welfare. In increasingly difficult financial times an increase in income through wider membership would be very useful indeed.

When I speak with flight deck crew in my travels I am often questioned about what the Guild does for pilots, and am nearly always asked “what would I get out of being a member, and what's in it for me as a line pilot?” The answers to these questions are clear to me. By being a Guild member, the air pilot/air navigator gains access to a wealth of knowledge, and a wealth of experience through the Guild’s committees and regular activities. Members gain the support of an organisation that represents their best interests in aviation supports them in matters that affect their professional and or recreational flying lives, not as employees and tax payers but as citizens in the aviation community of air pilots and air navigators. Membership also gives access to “behind the scenes” knowledge through visits, lectures, forums, position papers - and this superb magazine, as well as social activities that provide great opportunities for bonding. These are activities so very important in the pursuit of gaining knowledge; improving piloting and air navigation skills, and enhancing the continuous efforts towards aviation excellence.

Guild activities help to fill some of those gaps in knowledge and skills that are potentially being created today by the reduction in training exercises to achieve cost-cuts, which in turn can lead to lower quality of training, and less than acceptable flight skills. Because of some high-profile serious aviation accidents that have occurred in the past two years or so, the whole world is questioning whether pilots are receiving adequate training in both basic and advanced flying. Even pilots are asking amongst themselves if they really have the knowledge, the skills, and the experience to know what to do when something goes wrong in flight. The Guild has a big part to play in these matters and we should continue to offer to all pilots a sympathetic ear to listen, to share our knowledge, to offer sound leadership, and to provide excellence by example in all of our activities. Training, teamwork and leadership are still our greatest assets when dealing with old or new safety threats in the air. Nothing is more important to maintaining professionalism than working side-by-side with professionals who model the right attitudes. Freemen and Liverymen of this Guild offer the right attitudes and practice professional excellence whether their flying experience is in commercial or private aviation. It’s up to all of us as Freemen and Liverymen to help each other. I have written before that we have to mentor each other, and mentor those who are following us because through our collective wisdom and experience we are the craftsmen and masters in our trade, and we are the most powerful influence on other air pilots and air navigators.

Thus my answer to the “What’s in it for me?” question from flight-deck crew is this. The Guild is an organisation that represents the pilots in air piloting and air navigation excellence. The Guild represents great value for money because it is an organisation that shares in air piloting and air navigation excellence. The Guild is an unparallelled source of knowledge and experience available to those wishing to pursue the highest levels of skill. I also usually add that it costs nothing to look at the website.

My last message to all of you as your current Master is to continue spreading the word, and by speaking with the air pilots and air navigators you meet wherever you go, let’s unabashedly recruit and swell the numbers of this powerful Guild so that we can punch at our real weight, and truly claim to represent the piloting and air navigation craftsmanship we represent. Our legacy should be “Each one - Join one” and by doing this we can continue to be a most passionate force for aviation professionalism and safety to both present and future generations of air pilots and air navigators throughout the world.

So my year as Master is coming to an end and we move on. I have been very proud to serve the Guild in this role and feel greatly privileged that you should have seen fit to choose me as your Master. It has been a fantastic 12 months in my aviation career and I shall treasure the experience forever. Thank you for supporting me and for helping me to fulfil my duties. The Master’s Lady has also enjoyed the year immensely and also would not have missed it for the world. Each and every one of you has made us appreciate that the year has really been worthwhile. I look forward to continuing in service to the Guild as a craftsman pilot and a Past Master, in the hope that I can keep flying for many more years and make as much of a contribution to our pursuit of professional excellence as I possibly can.
MASTER'S VISIT TO THE REGIONS 2011
A TOUR OF TWO PASSPORTS

CAPTAIN WALLY EPTON

The unique feature of being Master of this Guild compared with others in the City of London is that we are represented by active membership in four of the 7 major areas of the world - Europe, North America, Oceania, and Asia. Africa may soon be added, and who knows, perhaps one day the pilots and air navigators flying in Antarctica, and South America may join us with their own regions. For now the Master’s Tour of the Regions presents enough land and water to cover in the 30 to 40 days allocated to visit our established NA, NZ, AU and HK Regions. My aim will be to tell you something of what we experienced on the Tour but also to discuss some of the challenges facing our Regions and how the Guild as a whole may help to resolve those challenges.

NORTH AMERICA

In North America our membership is growing on the west coast centred on Vancouver and Seattle areas. Our visit was timed for the AGM, which turned out to be an interesting meeting. John Burley, the outgoing Chairman, has done a magnificent job of founding and establishing the Guild North American Region. He was to have handed over to Liveryman Assistant Lt Col Kent Johnson, but at the eleventh hour, Kent had to stand aside for personal reasons. As a result a new Chairman had to be found. Happily Commander Trish Beckman USN (Ret’d) who flies for the Boeing Company, stepped up to the plate and assumed the mantle of Chairman without delay, and the AGM progressed smoothly. A vote of thanks was passed unanimously to John Burley for his outstanding contribution as Chairman of the Guild North American Region from its inception. Particularly pleasing was the enthusiastic attendance by members and I was impressed by how far many of them had travelled to be at the meeting. At the dinner that followed I was pleased to present the Master’s North American Trophy to the Conair Group and a Guild Affiliation Certificate to Harbour Air. I was also delighted to present a Guild crest to Liveryman John Burley to mark his years of dedication and service to the Guild North American region.

On the 2nd November Region members gathered at the Boeing visitor centre at Paine/Seattle for a tour of the assembly plant and to view the production of Boeing 747-8F and -787 Dreamliner aircraft. It was gratifying to learn that this was the first “behind the scenes” visit that the North American Region had organised for its members. The Boeing plant was massive, and the tour that was very well arranged, was conducted by our lady tour guide keeping us all extremely well informed through a mobile mic and headphones system. Perfect for receiving her excellent running commentary on the Boeing production story whilst striding safely through the vast acreage of factory floor space. Having seen the Dreamliner close up, and sat in the PIC seat at Farnborough International 2010, I was particularly interested in getting close to the production process for the aircraft, and the Boeing tour did not disappoint one bit. The afternoon was spent with a short guided tour of Paul Allen’s Warbirds Flying Heritage Collection that contains a number of unique flying exhibits. There was not enough time to absorb them all as Jan and I had to catch a plane to Los Angeles that evening. Trish and Gary Beckman gallantly drove us through heavy rain that had arrived by 5pm and delivered us to Seattle airport and we moved on to meet up with Kent Johnson in Los Angeles.

In Long Beach California we visited the Boeing C-17 assembly plant and for me it was an opportunity to deliver a presentation on the Guild to Boeing executives. Due to dwindling orders, Boeing is transitioning to a lower production rate of 10 C-17s per year by reducing its workforce. The mood in the plant was one of an uncertain future for employees and these changes affected Liveryman Assistant Kent Johnson who hosted us at Long Beach on his last working day with the Military Aircraft Global Mobility Business Development Team. It became clear to us why Kent had declined to take over Chairmanship of the Region, but he has offered to return to Guild matters in earnest when his working life has settled down once more. That evening we joined Kent and other Boeing executives in a local restaurant with spectacular views overlooking the berth of the retired Queen Mary, where he was honoured and dined out at a very enjoyable meal.

It was a pleasure to be flown by Captain Todd Brouwer of the Australian (AUS) Region on the 13 hour flight from Los Angeles to Auckland. There was only one disappointment. During our slumber we crossed the dateline on the 4th November moving rapidly to the 6th and as a result for us there was no Guy Fawkes Night 2011.
Arriving in Auckland on a Sunday we were met by the NZ Region Chairman Liveryman Captain Brian Wyness and his charming wife Marion who quickly settled us into the Northern Club and promptly took us to a motor-cycle enthusiast’s coffee parlour for a review of the visit programme. It began the following day with the scenic flight that Upper Freeman John Gemmell has generously been laying on for each visiting Master over the past few years. He allowed me to fly the aircraft from start to shut-down with the Master’s Lady taking cine and still photos from the back seat as we flew around Rangitoto Island and the Auckland Harbour area mostly at 1500ft. A walk around the airfield hangars later revealed all the delights of historic aviation that previous Masters have been treated to, and I spent some time looking over the restoration work being carried out by Warren Denholm and his engineers at AvSpecs who have almost completed a DH Mosquito which was slated to fly early in 2012.

At Ardmore I discussed with Freeman Bill Bennett the emerging enthusiasm for the Guild amongst younger pilots centred on Auckland Aero Club. Bill introduced me to the ACFI Tim Steele another Guild member. Bill and Tim are keen to see a GYM established in New Zealand and gather in as many of the young pilot members of the aero clubs active in both North and South Islands. Tim Steele also invited me back to Ardmore to sample the Auckland Club’s new Cessna 162 Skycatcher, and this I did later in the week. (See sidebar)

RNZAF Whenuapai has become a regular feature of the Master’s visit to NZ but it gave me a buzz because the last time I was on the base was 40 years previously when I flew there as captain of a 48 Sqn C-130 on a training flight from Singapore. I am sure the base has been improved since 1971 and was very different from my first visit. The main runway is in the same place but it was undergoing reconstruction which when complete would be capable of coping with the heavier weight of the Boeing 757-200 aircraft operated by 40 Sqn based there. As guests of No 485 Wing, under the command of Gp Capt Tony Davies, we were given briefings on the Orions P3K Missions/Comms/Nav Systems upgrade, and the C-130H Life Extension. I was invited to give a power point presentation on the Guild, and this provided a good opportunity to let RNZAF 485 Wing pilots and air navigators know why we welcome them as members. We moved on to the flight line for a viewing of the P3K and C-130H aircraft types. Altogether it was a most informative and worthwhile visit in serving two purposes. Firstly it strengthened the ties with the NZ Region’s Affiliated Unit and secondly it provided an excellent “behind the scenes” technical visit for Region members.

**Master’s Impressions of the Cessna 162 Skycatcher**

For those of you not familiar with the Skycatcher it’s a light-sport aircraft intended for flight training and personal use. During the 1-hour flight with the Auckland Aero Club’s ACFI Tim Steele I was able to investigate the handling qualities of the aircraft. The Skycatcher performs very well indeed especially in the circuit, and it provides all the instructional handling qualities the civilian trained pilot should need. The stall characteristics are docile and viceless. General handling is a delight and it has an excellent climb rate in excess of 800 ft/min immediately after take-off. The Take-off and Landing ground rolls are more or less the same at less than 700ft. It is planned to replace the ageing Cessna 150 trainers but regrettably the purchase price tends to make the C-162 an expensive choice. However the Auckland Aero Club have taken the plunge, and I am sure they are going to make a success of it as a trainer.
At a regular committee meeting held later that evening to discuss initiatives and activities in the UK and the regions, I emphasized my views about increasing membership and recruiting young members. I encouraged the Committee to form working groups in Wellington and Christchurch similar to the pattern in Australia. I felt that WG’s in major centres had benefits and no doubt North America will need to do the same. I also urged the Committee to give support to the Bennett initiative to form a NZ GYM along the lines of the successful UK GYM.

The next 2 days were spent visiting RNZAF Ohakea and Wellington. Ohakea has transitioned from a jet-training base to the main helicopter-training unit for the RNZAF and Gp Capt Darryn Webb OC No 488 Wing briefed us on the challenges they faced during this period of change. The RNZAF has been gradually re-equipping from the Iroquois and Sioux helicopters to the NH90's had not been delivered when I visited the base but some of the A109’s were already in the hangars and being assimilated into service. The Iroquois were still flying at Ohakea and it will be some months before they disappear as the NH90’s come into service. Of great interest was the $12.4m A109 simulator facility where I was able to sample for myself the flight characteristics of the Agusta. Having flown the civil business version of the -109, I very much enjoyed carrying out a 15 minute simulated flight in the “local area”. Ohakea is also the home for the RNZAF CFS and their Red Checkers CT4 display team as well as the private collection of a Spitfire and a Harvard aircraft. That evening we enjoyed a splendid formal dinner in the Officers Mess where I was pleased to present a New Zealand Guild affiliation Certificate to No 488 Wing.

In Wellington the next day the new Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Nigel Gould received myself, and members of the NZ Region Committee to discuss topics of concern to the Guild. It was something of a surprise to me that the Regional Committee, whilst having a very good relationship with officers of the CAA, had not had the opportunity for a meeting with the Chairman for sometime, largely due to a view apparently taken by a previous incumbent that GAPAN was a trade union! All that was happily in the past and Nigel Gould was delighted to receive Brian Wyness and his team to talk over issues concerning pilot training and questions of ICAO compliance in certain areas of current regulation. The meeting was very positive and the NZ Regional Committee felt that it had been a tremendous success.

At a formal dinner held at the Wellington Club I was pleased to present to the Chief of Air Force AVM Peter Stockwell the New Zealand Region ceremonial sword that will be awarded to deserving recipients within the RNZAF in the future. The beautiful sword was gifted by Past Master Robert Pooley, and AVM Stockwell mentioned that he had someone already in mind as the first recipient in the Air Force. Another guest was Wg Cdr John Lanham who is the current GM for General Aviation at the NZ CAA and in his spare time an accomplished and well-known WW1 historic aircraft display pilot. John has been responsible for issuing new rules covering “Adventure Aviation” that take a more realistic and practical approach to the flying of aircraft at air shows and air displays that have led to the sustainment of the aircraft restoration and display industry in New Zealand. It was a splendid evening full of warm fellowship, and comradeship shared between the Guild, the RNZAF and the NZ CAA.

Back in Auckland the Walsh Centennial Dinner was held in the Aviation Display Hall at the NZ Museum of Transport and Technology, commemorating the accomplishments of NZ pioneer aviators Vivian and Leo Walsh who built and first flew a Wright Biplane in 1911. They established the NZ Flying School to train RFC pilots using their own flying boat trainers. This was a combined event organized by the Guild, the RAeS and the NZ Aeronautical Trusts Ltd. The Kiwis are very proud of the Walsh Legacy and the annual Walsh Memorial Scout Flying School bears witness to that. The 2011 winner of the Guild Pike Trophy was Mark Woodhouse for his outstanding achievements as the organiser of this annual school for the past 15 years. I met up with Mark and his wife once again and I was delighted to announce his award at the Centennial Dinner and go through the T&A presentation again.

FIRST AUSTRALIAN MASTER?
When we showed our Australian passports to the immigration officer at Brisbane airport, Jan and I were so delighted to be greeted with a cheery “Welcome Back, you’ve been away too long”. Met by Past Chairmen Buck Brookbanks and David Macdonald of the Australian Region I was quick to claim that I was an Australian Master, and accompanied by a Master’s Lady who was also Australian, and considered to be a “double first”. Our claim was not disputed nor by anyone later at the Queensland Club for the Working Group (WG) formal dinner which was very well attended. Numbers were swelled by a good turnout from the RAAF Richmond Air Mobility Control Centre transport contingent there to receive the Australian Grand Master’s Medal which I presented to their OC Gp Capt Steve Young. Amongst the other presentations made, I was particularly pleased to award a Master Air Pilot’s Certificate to Captain Philip Reiss who is the current Chairman of the Australian Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association (AAOPA). Recognition by the AUS Guild through the award of an MAP to Captain Reiss has contributed greatly to forging closer ties between AAOPA and the Guild.

In my speech at the dinner I spoke about how important it was for the Guild to go on rejuvenating itself with new members. I mentioned how successful the GYM had been in the UK and urged the AUS Region to do the same and set up AUS GYM’s in all of their Working Group areas. I noted that some WG’s were not as active as Queensland (QLD) and South Australia (SA). The New South Wales (NSW), Australian Capital Territory (ACT), Victoria (VIC) and West Australia (WA) all needed encouragement to be revived. I emphasized that the social events, technical “behind the scenes” visits, lectures, forums, and liaison with military and civilian aviation units through the Guild Affiliation scheme, were all activities vitally important to capturing the interest of new and current members. The QLD WG had been more active than most other WG’s in Australia and it was heartening to start my tour of the Region with such an impressive dinner at the Queensland Club.
Queensland flying and sporting fun. Jan and I were treated to the flying day from Caboolture to Caloundra that most Masters and their ladies have enjoyed on previous tours. Our party all flew in the vintage aircraft provided by Freeman Des Porter and his team. I took the controls of Tiger Moth VH-UXG with Upper Freeman Captain Sean Davis who normally flies for Cathay and is a member of the HKG Region. Jan boarded the Genairco biplane with her camera and later we joined Des for the return in VH-UXG the most beautiful example of a DH84 Dragon I have ever flown in. Flying over the miles of white sandy beach along Bribie Island and then back over the Glasshouse Mountains and the macadamia orchards and farmlands around Beerburrum and Elimbah was an absolute joy. With feet back on the ground we repaired for lunch at Maroochydore and then around sunset Upper Freeman Rod “Hutch” Hutchinson and I spent a pleasant half hour rowing on the river in a coxless pair to relive our glory days as young athletes! In rowing there is a saying that “the older we get - the better we were”.

A highlight was the QLD WG technical visit to RAAF Amberley. Our group was able to view the RAAF F/A-18F Super Hornet that has recently been introduced into service. Just a month before this visit the last of the Super Hornets was delivered to Amberley completing the full RAAF complement of 24 aircraft that equip Nos 1 and 6 Squadrons. The “on ramp” briefings by one of the F/A-18F instructor pilots covering handling qualities, combat effectiveness and mission capabilities was candidly informative and the Guild group felt very privileged to be given such first hand information. Complementing the Super Hornet fighters at Amberley are 33 Sqn’s brand new KC-30 Airbus tanker/transport aircraft equipped with the latest military commms and nav suites, plus electronic warfare self-protection systems against threats from SAM attack. The mood at Amberley was very up-beat with pilots and ground-crew clearly very positive about their capabilities as a fighting force enhanced by all these new aircraft. This was a really worthwhile visit and I was impressed by the job that the QLD WG is doing for its membership.

Onward to Sydney and the NSW WG members formal dinner at the Royal Exchange Club on Wednesday evening was honoured by Flt Lt Zane Sennett recently of the Red Arrows RAF, talking to us about his experiences with the display team. This was something of a coup for Regional Secretary Liveryman Sandy Howard since the speaker that had been lined up unfortunately couldn’t make it. Zane was transitioning from the RAF to become a F/A-18 “Legacy” Hornet fighter pilot RAAF and had not yet begun his training at Williamtown. With his mother living in Sydney he was only too delighted to visit the city and speak at the Guild NSW WG dinner. Also present at the dinner was David Bell the Executive Director of the Australian Business Aircraft Association (ABAA). There are very good relationships between the Guild, the ABAA and AAOPA in Australia, and hopefully this was leading to more GA and business aviation pilots joining the Guild.

Moving on from Sydney to Canberra we were met by ACT WG Chairman Freeman Mike “Wombat” Cleaver. The Australian War Memorial museum provided an opportunity to meet Freeman Dr Rob Lee, recipient of the Australian Bi-Centennial Award of 2010. It was good to swap notes with him on topical subjects surrounding recent aviation accidents. Dr Lee is an aviation psychologist and as we know each other well it was easy to discuss with him aspects of pilot behaviour in stressful situations which we both found very useful. Next appointment was at the Russell Offices for an audience with the Chief of Air Force, AM Geoff Brown, his immediate deputy AVM Neil Hart and Upper Freeman AVM Kym Osley. Kym is programme manager for new combat capability, which is essentially the F-35 Fighter. A very pleasant and useful half an hour was spent talking about the Guild and how relationships with the RAAF further might be developed further. We agreed that it would be good to have chosen RAAF units affiliated to the Guild, and I mentioned how in NZ the Guild had gifted a sword for the Air Force to present to an outstanding serving individual. AM Brown was interested in this concept and this idea will be progressed further.

Following a weekend in Temora at the outstanding Warbirds Down Under air show, Monday was full of meetings back in Canberra. Accompanied by Liveryman Sue Ball the new Chairman of the AUS Region, and Mike Cleaver who is taking over as Secretary AUS whilst continuing as Chairman of the ACT WG, the first on the schedule was with Greg Russell the CEO Air Services (Air Traffic Control) - where we talked about single skies and the benefits of Wide Area Augmentation Navigation Systems (WAAS). Then it was over to Northbourne Avenue to meet Martin Dolan and his general managers in the Air Transport Safety Board to discuss Loss of Control - In flight (LOC-I) as being the cause of accidents fast overtaking that of Controlled Flight Into Terrain (CFIT). Then we were off to meet head of Infrastructure and Transport to present the Chairman AUS Region’s credentials and to talk about developments in national policy towards aviation. Finally we had a lively discussion in Canberra with Martin Dolan, Air Transport Safety Board, his general managers and Liveryman Sue Ball.

Richard Skinner CGI Adelaide Soaring Club provided the Master with gliding experience.
meeting with John McCormick Director of Aviation Safety at Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) who had some interesting views on safety management schemes and the applicability - or not - to aviation.

Melbourne took Jan and I back into home territory and a lunch meeting at the RAC Club with the members of the Victoria WG. This was a small group but there were 2 business aviation pilots that I had known from my time in Oz, and special guest was Anthony Pyne Chairman of the Aviation Law Association of Australia and New Zealand (ALAA NZ). It was good to get Tony together with some of the local Guild members because the aviation lawyers do like to network with other aviation organisations especially the Guild. Liverymen Jim Duff and John Whittington were our hosts with their ladies Annie and Shirley. The VIC WG is supposedly non-active at present but following a frank and fruitful discussion about what needed to be done to revive the WG in Melbourne, hopefully we might see some renewed interest in that area soon.

Adelaide was the final stage of our Australian tour. SA WG Chairman Liveryman Rob Moore wasted no time in driving me out to Parafield for the customary Master’s visit to the Flight Training Academy. Michael Wallis the Business Development Manager was certainly a good ambassador for the company and gave an excellent presentation on the Academy. Lunch was taken with the students in their canteen and the afternoon tour of the facility revealed arrangements being made for a graduation ceremony for student pilots of the Cathay mentored scheme scheduled for that evening. The SA WG had its own formal evening at a splendid dinner in the Naval Military and Air Force Club where I delivered my speech again about membership and the Guild legacy to mentor young pilots. I also suggested that the AUS Region should consider affiliating with military and civilian aviation units and ought to give consideration to setting up regional GYM s. It was a splendid occasion and well managed by Past Chairman Liveryman Harold Walton with Rob Moore acting as principal host.

There were a number of fun activities such as the Aldinga Aero Club spot landing competition, as well as exploring wineries in the McLaren Vale, but our final day in Australia was spent with the Adelaide Soaring Club at Gawler for some very enjoyable gliding. There was a good crowd of members there all waiting to meet us, and I was asked to give a short presentation on the Guild especially for the younger glider pilots and Air Training Corps cadets assembled at the Club. I had never been launched by aero-tow before so this was an experience that I really enjoyed especially as it provided 25 minutes in the air. The DG105 Elan sail-plane that had been provided was a delight to fly and with the CFI Richard Skinner riding in the back to make sure I did the right thing, it was all over too soon. Jan had a similar 25 minute flight with Richard and so all too quickly it was time to bid farewell to our SA hosts and catch our flights to Sydney and Hong Kong. The Australian section of the Tour had come to an end and the Australian Master and his Lady put away their blue passports.

HONG KONG

The visit to Hong Kong began immediately after a very early morning arrival with a breakfast briefing on the programme for the week ahead. Later at a reception and cocktail party in The Peninsula Hotel Clipper Club, we met a large number of the HKG Region members. Some were already known to us by virtue of the Cathay Airline connection that enables some of our Upper Freem an to be in London frequently, but I was pleased to present a Freedom of The Guild Certificate to Sidney Kwong and HKG PPL Scholarships to Winnie Tang and Bryan Chu who will be trained at Tayside Aviation in Dundee. It was impressive to learn that a lot of the enthusiasm for aviation amongst the young people of Hong Kong is cultivated in the air cadet corps that boasts around 4000 members.

At a HKG Region Committee Meeting we discussed a number of issues one of which was the continuing problem of wind turbulence generated by the close location of new freight sheds and the planned Civil Aviation Department (CAD) HQ Building at Chep Lap Kok affecting landing aircraft. This was ongoing work in collaboration with the Hong Kong Observatory and the Guild HKG Region had recently published a guide for pilots about these wind turbulence characteristics at the airport. The Committee was concerned that the turbulent characteristics at the airport. The Committee was concerned that the
The newly formed Asian Business Aircraft Association (AsBAA) was led by aircraft manufacturing and service companies and this could affect the status of pilots in the business aviation industry. An answer was to follow the structure the International Business Aviation Council (IBAC) recommends that only corporate and individual owners of aircraft have the vote and service companies are Associate non-voting members. This ensures the “balance of power” is effectively with the business aviation pilots who represent their aircraft owners and thereby protect their own status.

What has become an annual meeting during the Master’s visit, hosted at the CAD by the Director General Mr Norman Lo, provided an opportunity to discuss issues such as the airport wind turbulence problem, and the Accident Investigation Department that is embedded in the CAD and reporting directly to the DG. Aircraft accident investigation in most other nations is usually undertaken by an independent organisation. Mr Lo assured the Guild that all his investigators were highly trained, and he planned to eventually create an independent body for accident investigation, but the timing of this was uncertain.

The presentation on the Government Flying Service (GFS) by the Controller Captain Michael Chan was really impressive. With his officers, he showed us around the base at Chep Lap Kok giving us access to the aircraft and operations and engineering sections where we were fully briefed on the functions of each. This was after a tour of Hong Kong by helicopter, now a regular feature of the Master’s visit. As the Guild enjoys such a good association with the GFS, it is perhaps time for the HKG Region to consider affiliation with the unit. At present the Region has no affiliated units or companies in Hong Kong and 3 possibilities that I suggested the Region consider were the GFS, the Hong Kong Observatory and Cathay Pacific. The Observatory was next on our itinerary for a briefing on the weather services provided both to aviation and the community. Provision of aviation weather began as early as 1920 and the HKO plays an important part today in providing accurate weather information in an area that has many peculiarities caused by the terrain and the cyclonic conditions that prevail over the South China Sea. The visit proved fascinating and most worthwhile.

A meeting the next day with the CEO of TAG Aviation Asia, Keith Morgan explained that the expansion of business aviation in the region had been almost meteoric, and his biggest problem in meeting all his client’s needs was finding pilots to fly the ever increasing numbers of aircraft being introduced by wealthy individuals and companies. It was a similar story for the other major business aviation player Metrojet Ltd. When I met Captain Laurie Stapleton the Director Fleet Management later on he told me much the same story. This rapid expansion of business aviation was causing real problems in the Region and involved the Guild because it affected the pilot profession.

The HKG Region formal dinner was a splendid evening and well orchestrated by Liveryman John Farley who did a magnificent job pulling all the arrangements together. In presenting an MAP Certificate to Captain Mike Davis who is the Director Flight Ops at TAG Asia I persuaded him to join the Guild. I also presented the Master’s Hong Kong Award Trophy to Liveryman Captain Peter Robinson which was richly deserved. Guests of Honour at the dinner were Norman Lo Shung-man and Mr Shun Chiming.

The last 2 days in Hong Kong were spent mostly enjoying social events so it was all good serious fun to the last until we departed on the Sunday evening. We touched down at Heathrow the next day completely exhausted but so glad that we had completed the tour and with a feeling that we might just have achieved something for the Guild around the world. Our 2 passports had been well exercised and we could comfortably say - mission accomplished!
Happy Chinese New Year from Hong Kong!

It’s been a bustling time in the Hong Kong Region - just past Christmas and New Year and just prior to Chinese New Year at time of writing.

In October, we had a great guest speaker in USAF Lt Col Dan King, Military Liaison at the US Consulate, who gave a lively brief on his time flying the F-15 and the Harrier. His Harrier experiences were on an exchange tour with the RAF in Afghanistan several years ago and were especially colourful!

On 27 Nov, the Hong Kong Aviation Club and the Civil Aviation Department sponsored an aviation carnival that celebrated the Centenary of powered flight in Hong Kong. GAPAN staffed a booth where we also included two recent recipients of our GAPAN Youth Flying Scholarship (YFS) who had just returned from completing their flight training in Adelaide. They related their experiences with great enthusiasm to a good number of interested young people at the carnival.

This holiday time of year wouldn't be complete without a visit by the Master. We were graced with a week-long visit, starting 27 November, by Master Wally Epton and his Lady, Janet Epton. It was an event and fun-filled week starting Monday with a cocktail party at the venerable Clipper Room at the Peninsula Hotel. In a setting of real aviation history and air memorabilia, the Master presented awards to the two recent recipients and graduates of the YFS after their recent return from Flight Training Adelaide. Soon enough was a trip upstairs to the helipad where there were great views of Hong Kong harbour on a windy night.

Wednesday saw a return to the Happy Valley Racecourse. A beautiful private box was arranged by one of our GAPAN members who is a Jockey Club Member. Situated above the finish line, we were in perfect position to see for ourselves the horses and the results of our wagers. All supposed "hot tips!" were discovered to be false and it was determined the most effective bets were placed with ones eyes closed!

The Master’s Formal Dinner on Friday was again held at the Parklane Hotel and was a memorable evening. The Master’s speech was invigorating and the night was one of the best social events of the year. A very good time had by all!

One of Hong Kong’s oldest modes of public transport, the Tram, was the venue for the last social event of the Master’s visit on Saturday, 3 December. A full car was reserved for the Master and a small number of GAPAN members and guests as it plied its way between Causway Bay and Central - giving a true feel of “old Hong Kong”. At the end, the Master was presented with a picture of an antique tram by a member of the Tram historical group.

We bid the Master and his Lady, Wally and Janet Epton farewell on Monday, and as well to all:

Best wishes to all for a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2012! 🎆

NEW ZEALAND REGION

NATIONWIDE EFFORT IDENTIFIES OUTSTANDING PIONEER NEW ZEALAND AVIATOR

The year 2011 was the Centennial year of a flight in 1911 made in Auckland by pioneer New Zealand aviators - the Walsh brothers, Leo and Vivian.

It is 100 years since the brothers made this country’s first powered, controlled and sustained flight. They made it in an imported ‘Howard Wright’ British biplane - witnessed by a small group of people - near the Papakura district in what is now known as Takanini. The flight took place from a privately owned racecourse called ‘Glenora Park’.

To help commemorate the centenary, a small group of prominent New Zealand aviators - including well-known, knowledgeable pilots and engineers held an event on Friday 11 November 2011 at which they made an appropriate award to whom they saw as the person who has demonstrated “outstanding innovation, leadership and achievement in New Zealand aviation - in the spirit of the Walsh brothers’ pioneering legacy”.

The colourful event attracted 200 people and was held at the new aviation display hall at the Museum of Transport & Technology in Auckland.

The current award experts include Gordon Ragg, Bryan Wyness, Gerard Robertson, John Mounce, Neville Hay and several other prominent individuals from various aviation organisations including the Royal Aeronautical Society, and the Guild of Air Pilots & Air Navigators. The group designed a unique one-off award medal to be presented to the recipient, or their next of kin.

Referring to written citations, all current group members made an assessment that took note of each person’s areas of Walsh-like innovative achievements.

The group of current experts individually evaluated the award contenders and their results then went before two invited independent assessors and the weight-adjusted results sheet was scrutinised by yet another independent person.

The Walsh Centennial award nominees included: Rodolf & his son Sir Henry Wigley, Guy Robertson, Max Clear, George Bolt, Ossie James, and E.A. “Gibby” Gibson.

The Walsh Centennial award was made to flying pioneer (the late) George Bolt whose unique services to NZ aviation were formally recognised.

The special unique and especially crafted Walsh Centennial “one off” Medal was awarded and presented to George Bolt’s son, Sir Richard Bolt.

George Bolt was a close associate of the Walsh brothers and their pioneering NZ aviation endeavours.

On the right is Sir Richard Bolt receiving - on behalf of his late father - the Walsh Centennial Medal. On the left is Gerard Robertson, President of the New Zealand Division of the Royal Aeronautical Society, and in the centre is Chairman of the New Zealand Branch of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators, Bryan Wyness.
George Bruce Bolt was born in Dunedin on 24 May 1893 and from a very young age had a fascination with aviation that determined his choice of a career. In the years before the First World War he was credited with the first gliding flight in New Zealand from the Port Hills in Christchurch in a glider designed and built by himself. In 1910 he founded the Canterbury (NZ) Aero Club essentially a club concerned with designing and building model aeroplanes and engines. With the outbreak of the First World War, George Bolt began work as a mechanic at Leo and Vivian Walsh’s New Zealand Flying School at Mission Bay, Auckland. He quickly showed considerable skill with flying boat maintenance and repair as well as all aspects of their performance and operations. To improve the performance and safety of the school’s basic aircraft George Bolt developed the first air speed indicator for the Curtiss flying boat, a simple but effective device in which a pointer geared to a pressure plate moved across a quadrant marked “take off” - “climb” - “cruise”, and a barometric indicator to establish aircraft altitude. The wooden propellers on the school’s aeroplanes often suffered damage and replacements from the UK took a long time in transit and were very expensive. To overcome this problem George Bolt designed and crafted new laminated-wood propellers. His inventive manner often brought solutions to problems that baffled others.

While with the New Zealand Flying School he learned to fly and subsequently became one of its flying instructors. He eventually took on the role of chief flying instructor as well as that of chief engineer and so played a central part in the contribution that the New Zealand Flying School made to early flying training in New Zealand and for the Royal Flying Corps. During this period he established a number of flying records. Later he was to bring this same inventive and capable manner to the airlines, aero clubs and the air force and played a notable role in the development of each. George Bolt had a significant and acknowledged role in pioneering New Zealand air services during the 1920s and 1930s as pilot and engineer. While he had short roles with the Goodwin-Chichester Aviation Co and Dominion Airlines and then longer service with the Wellington Aero Club, it was his role as Chief Pilot and Technical Director for the newly formed Cook Strait Airways (established in 1934 and operating from late 1935) that marked him an especially influential figure in the years before the Second World War.

Cook Strait Airways (CSA) secured one of the first licenses under the new 1934 air transport legislation. Bolt went to England and tested a number of aircraft before selecting the DH89 Rapide as the ideal aircraft for the arduous Cook Strait conditions. He directed and helped set up CSA’s workshops at Nelson (including a pioneering instrument shop that was later taken over by the RNZAF) and flew all the inaugural flights, including the first airmails in March 1936. Under his direction CSA was the first scheduled airline to serve Nelson, Wellington and Blenheim and the first to link the West Coast with other regions. Largely due to his professionalism and experience the airline achieved a remarkable efficiency and safety record - carrying 80,358 passengers on 19,821 scheduled service flights by October 1939 - with not one record of an engine failure.

Cook Strait Airways was one of the constituent airlines in the foundation of National Airways Corporation in 1946. At the outbreak of the Second World War George Bolt was appointed engineering officer at RNZAF Station Ohakea before becoming chief engineer at the RNZAF’s major repair and assembly facility at Auckland. In 1943 he returned to civil aviation and was appointed Chief Engineer for Tasman Empire Airways Limited. Over the following sixteen years he supervised the development of a new engineering base at Mechanics Bay, Auckland and the introduction into service with engineering facilities and support for four Short S25 Sandringham IV ‘Tasman Class’ flying boats (1946-49), two Consolidated Boeing PB2B-1 Catalinas (1946-49), four Short S45 Solent IV flying boats (1949-60) and later three Douglas DC-6 aircraft (1954-61) followed by three Lockheed Electra L188C aircraft (1959-72) a year before his retirement.

He was innovative and influential in a number of remarkably diverse spheres, including early gliding, technical innovation, technical training and management, flight training, pioneering flights, aircraft engineering and instrumentation, and air transport operations. He was a patron, technical advisor, mentor and friend to many people in aviation. In 1953 he was made an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (Civil). He was a founding member of the Museum of Transport and Technology and a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society.

In summary, George Bolt’s all-embracing theoretical and practical knowledge of aircraft operations and air transport services acquired during his 45 year career in aviation singles him out as one of the most distinguished and exceptional persons in the development of commercial aviation in New Zealand, from its origins with the New Zealand Flying School to the successful expansion of international air services serving New Zealand after the Second World War.

For his outstanding innovation, leadership and achievement in New Zealand aviation in the spirit of the Walsh brothers’ pioneering legacy George Bruce Bolt is awarded the Walsh Centennial Medal.
Following a successful AGM and Dinner attended by The Master, Captain Wally Epton and his lovely wife Jan, a group from the Guild (North America) joined the Master on a VIP visit to the Boeing factory located at Mukilteo, Everett, Washington State, about 25 miles north of Seattle. The Everett facility is home to the 747, 767, 777, and the new Boeing 787 ‘Dreamliner’ production lines. The tour was kindly arranged by Cmdr USN (R) Patricia Beckman, who is a Flight Navigator with the Boeing Commercial Airlines Group. I am sure the Guild would wish me to congratulate Patricia as our new Chair of the Guild in North America.

During our escorted tour inside the world’s largest building by volume (472,000,000 Cubic Feet), we were able to see the aforementioned aircraft types being built for several world airlines including a British Airways 777-300; Boeing 767 tankers for the US Air Force, the all new composite constructed Boeing 787 Dreamliner for ANA, a Japanese airline and of course the very impressive and latest model of the Boeing 747-8F for Cargolux.

The main production building is one of many on site and functions in many respects as would a large town or city for the thousands of workers employed in constructing those beautiful flying machines. There are banks, drycleaners shops, child-minding services, restaurants and coffee shops to name but a few. The plant works a three shift cycle 24/7 and the above amenities, provided by outside businesses, helps to reduce the stress of doing everyday chores and allowing the Boeing workers to focus on the job while at work.

Our most knowledgeable and entertaining escort, Melanie, informed us that she had worked for Boeing for thirty years. I can only conclude that Melanie must have started work for Boeing at very early age! After Melanie’s welcome and short introduction to Boeing plant, along with the expected safety briefing, we were escorted to the shop floor where two Boeing 747 - 8 Freighters were in the final stages of assembly. This is also the part of the factory where Boeing build the new 747-8 Intercontinental Jumbo Jet. Both aircraft are basically the same airframe. These aircraft have been stretched by 18.3 feet from the previous 400 model and will seat 467 passengers in a three class configuration. Scalloped edges to the aft engine cowls reduce engine noise and lower emissions. Boeing claims that the new 747-8 is expected to reduce sea mile costs by 13% and increase cargo volume by 26%. Operating economics will allow this new Queen of the Skies to offer a significant improvement over the Airbus A380. Being 10% lighter per seat than the A380, it will consume 11% less fuel per passenger and allow a trip cost reduction of 21%. The Boeing 747-8 is 6,000,000 parts flying together in tight formation and it takes about three months to build one of these mammoth aircraft from scratch.

The cruise speed of the new 747-8 is a respectable Mach 0.85 and the Intercontinental version has a range of 8,000 nautical miles. The wing span is 224 feet 7 inches and the height of the tail is 63 feet 6 inches. The Maximum Take-Off Weight is 795,000 pounds and each of the four engines generates 66,500 pounds of thrust. A most impressive aircraft indeed! So impressive indeed, that Boeing has just sold a 747-8 to a private owner as a business jet.

Continuing our tour we passed by the tail sections of two Boeing 767 aircraft that were being constructed as air to air refueling tankers for the United States Air Force. While the occasional 767 is built for the airlines, the 767, which has been in production since 1982 is probably nearing the end of its production life as a civil airliner. This tried and trustworthy aircraft has recently been chosen to replace the ancient Boeing 707 K135 tanker fleet serving the American Air Force, therefore we can expect to see the 767 in its existing and new role for many years to come.

The 767 was the first wide-body jetliner to be stretched twice - by 21 feet on both occasions. Since 1982 the 767s have flown 7.7 million flights and many more millions of passengers. It takes 60 gallons of jet fuel to carry one passenger from New York to London, which is twice as efficient as a small economy car. The 767 is actually the favourite aircraft on Trans-Atlantic routes and flies this route more frequently than any other aircraft. If one of the 767 GE engines were fitted to a typical motor car, the car would accelerate from zero to 60 mph in half a second. It normally takes about 28 minutes to fill the 23,900 gallon fuel tanks. The engines will power the B767 up to a cruise altitude of 43,000 feet. Air flowing through a 767 at take-off power could fill the Goodyear Blimp in 7 seconds.

Moving on we arrived at the Boeing 777 ‘production line’, which forms a “U” shape and where the aircraft is constantly moving forward during assembly, although very slowly at about 2 inches per minute. As with the other aircraft, Boeing arrange to have “just on time deliveries” of the 3.1 million parts needed to build the 777. Plain to see were two aircraft probably close to 75 to 80% complete; a 300 model for British Airways had just had the landing gear attached and was waiting for the engines to be fitted. First class seats were all sitting out on the floor still in their dust covers before being hoisted on board. The Boeing 777 was the first jetliner to be designed wholly by computer and did not require the usual proto-types to be produced and test flown prior to production. Boeing have now built and sold over 1000 B777s and recently Emirates ordered 50 of the 300 series aircraft to add to their existing fleet. I remember as a young pilot based in Dubai in the 1970s, when Emirates or its predecessor had one Twin Otter and a Cessna 172! The range of the 777-200ER is around 7,725 nautical miles and typical city pairs are London - Los Angeles, Chicago, Seoul, just a wee bit further than the Twin Otter or C172 could fly in one hop.

Melanie was on a very strict time schedule and we were falling behind. The next and final stop was at the production line of the new Boeing 787 Dreamliner. This has to be one of the most beautiful airliners built since the days of the DH Comet and Vickers VC10. Not only does this airplane look good, it has demonstrated exceptional performance, due to a suite of new technologies applied to this airliner.

Composite materials make up 50% of the primary structure of the B787 including the fuselage and the wing. Four sections of this aircraft are delivered from supplier partners in various parts of the world on the 4 purpose built Boeing 747 Dream-lifters, and are fitted together at the Everett plant in just three to four days! Using a one piece composite material fuselage has eliminated 1500 sheets of Aluminum and 40,000 fasteners. The lighter weight composite aircraft combined with new quiet engines from Rolls Royce and General Electric allow a 20% reduction in fuel consumption over similar sized aircraft and at the same time fly at a speed of Mach 0.85.

The Rolls Royce & GE engines are fully interchangeable, which might be an attractive selling feature to a new owner. The aircraft is equipped with a health monitoring system that will self-monitor and report systems data back to ground-based computers.

Creature comforts have not been forgotten by Boeing. The 787 Dreamliner has 30% larger windows, thanks to the strength of the composite fuselage. Also the onboard lighting and environmental systems are designed to reduce jet lag on longer voyages.

On behalf of the Master and the Guild Members who attended this event, I would like to thank Patricia, Sarah White, Steve Stewart and others for their kind efforts at arranging this tour. I also would take this opportunity of thanking Melanie and the Boeing Aircraft Company for this very enjoyable and informative visit.

**Technical Information supplied by Boeing.**
Report to the Court of the meeting on 6th December 2011 of the Education and Training Committee

WARDEN DOROTHY POOLEY

A very well attended meeting heard a presentation by Alexander Fox on his views on “Expensive Professional Pilot Training”. Alexander drew attention to the travesty of “Pay2Fly” schemes. The fear is that new pilots are enticed into these schemes with promises of building airline experience and gaining jet time in the hope of improving their employability prospects, but the reality is that they may well be hindering their prospects since the standards of training are very variable and many European airlines are unwilling to employ pilots trained this way who have (perhaps) been gaining their experience in poorly regulated locations such as Indonesia.

The debate following this presentation highlighted, inter alia, the facts that both the airlines and the NAAs have abrogated their responsibilities in the areas of provision of training and maintaining standards.

The Guild’s aptitude assessment scheme continues to receive good press, although its viability is often in question, given variable levels of interest and issues over the charging structure. We are currently reviewing the actual tests in use, to ensure that our test battery stays relevant.

The Instructor sub-committee guide to teaching stalling and spinning is now available on the Guild website at https://www.gapan.org/aviation-matters/.

Encouraged by the endorsement of CFS, CAA and the Guild, the Instructor sub-committee has been working hard on the next module on Navigation and once this is complete, they will commence work on the module on Forced Landings. As previously reported, it is envisaged that these modules will form a guide which could be the definitive “syllabus” of teaching for instructors to adopt within the ATOs (Authorised Training Organisations - which will replace RTFs under EASA FCL).

The Instructor sub-committee has also announced that the fifth joint Forum with CFS will be held at RAF Cranwell on 9th May. Patricia Nelmes has now taken over from Past Master Felix as Chairman of the scholarship programme and although we have to report a much abridged scholarship programme for 2012, we have been bolstered by an unexpected windfall which will permit at least three more scholarships than originally thought. The exact split of numbers between PPLs and FIs is not finalised yet. There is an added and welcome scholarship in the programme this year in the form of a complete ATPL ground school course on offer.

An area of great concern which led to debate at the last meeting was the subject of “casualisation of labour”, which concerns the proliferation of airlines employing pilots on short-term contracts and casual arrangements. This potentially lead to a drop in standards of pilots, since those who just “scrape” through checks will not benefit from a proper career path or development if they are continually changing airlines. Also, there are inherently detrimental safety concerns to those airlines. Whilst the committee felt that this was a matter in which the CAA should have concern, we reluctantly concluded that it was unlikely that the CAA would take any substantive action at this time. The matter will be kept under review as an agenda item.

The committee is keeping a close eye on the preparations for the Olympics and various members of the committee have attended the profusion of NATS briefings which are designed to ensure that all concerned understand the complexity of the proposed restrictions on airspace during the two month period of the Olympic games. We have made clear our concerns on the safety issues in addition to the very considerable disruption and potential for commercial damage to flying training organisations within and near to the restricted airspace promulgated.

With the implementation of the EASA FCL proposals imminent, briefings on these changes are also increasing, but there are still many issues to resolve and time limits originally proposed will not be met. There is still a lot of work to be done on the proposals concerning the future of instrument flying regulation in Europe and these are unlikely to be finalised before the second half of 2012.

Past Master Gault’s work on the Apprenticeship scheme in tandem with the City and Guilds has been prodigious and is to be welcomed. The scheme is still being worked on and we are grateful for all the work that Past Master Gault has put into the project.

We previously reported that we would welcome some new blood on the committee and I am delighted to report that we have had an enthusiastic surge in new members from a varied background. This has coincided happily with the retirement of a couple of very long-serving committee and as I will shortly be stepping aside to allow my vice-chairman, Lloyd Watson, to take the tiller, I am pleased to note that the committee is in good health!

Clerk’s Column

PAUL TACON Learned Clerk

Director of Aviation Affairs

The Guild’s current Technical Director (TD), Past Master Captain Chris Hodgkinson, has recently confirmed his intention to retire from the post. Chris has kindly agreed not to leave immediately but to remain until the ‘right person’ is found to fulfil the role. This will permit a gradual handover from TD to Director of Aviation Affairs (DAA) - the new post ensuring that Chris’s wealth of experience will not be lost and that the detail of what is involved in the role and the commitment required can be made available to the new DAA.

As identified in the Strategic Review (2009), enhancement of the current TD role is envisaged, and progress towards that development will form part of the longer-term remit for the new DAA.

While Chris is quite content to remain in post in order to enable a smooth transition of tenure, the search for a successor is now underway. Accordingly, expressions of interest in the new post of DAA are requested.

In outline:

• The post is a part-time, consultancy position - remunerated at a rate of £12k per annum
• The time commitment is (on average) one day per week - working remotely from the office, but with requirement to be available at the office for committee, or other, meetings
• Ideally, would suit somebody on a freelance/self-employed basis
• Requires appropriate relevant experience/contacts within the aviation industry (commercial and/or military)

If interested, a more detailed description of the role can be obtained by email from the Clerk on request.

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In 1991 I was serving as a Governor on the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division USAAF in Norwich which looks after their unique Memorial library in the Forum, when the Trust was approached by the East Anglia Tourist Board to see if we would be willing to help with the “Friendly Invasion” celebrations in 1992 to mark the Fiftieth Anniversary of the arrival in Great Britain of the American 8th Army Air Force. We were delighted to assist but it soon became obvious that unless we had a B-24 Liberator flying in the UK, then the B-17 Flying Fortress would get all the credit, so the Trust Chairman, the late Tom Eaton, instructed me as the only pilot Governor to find a B-24 and bring it to Great Britain. I tried to explain that this would not be easy, but you do not argue with your Chairman so the work began. This was a huge challenge and after several trips across the Atlantic and a false start with The Collings Foundation we found that the Confederate Air Force (now Commmemorative Air Force) were willing to help us with their famous Liberator “Diamond Lil” as long as I would be part of the crew. My wife thought I was mad at sixty-one to fly a fifty year old wartime bomber across the Atlantic but for me it was the chance of a lifetime, especially as I had known the 2nd Air Division and their B-24s as a schoolboy during the war. The planning for the six week tour was immense and we had to raise £100,000 but it all worked out well in the end and the support we received from the Royal Air Force and the Deputy Commander-In-Chief of Strike Command, Air Marshal Sir John Kemball was tremendous. Late May 1992 saw me at Meacham Field at Fort Worth in Texas to meet up with the great American CAF crew, get checked out on the B-24 and become a Colonel in the Confederate Air Force at the beginning of this exciting adventure. We had a wonderful crew of nine, four pilots three engineers and two girl scanners plus a BBC television crew and two sponsors so there...
was not much spare room and I was proud to be the only Guild pilot in the crew. The huge group of 2nd Air Division USAF Veterans that saw us off on June 1st brought tears to our eyes and reminded us all of the tribute that we were paying to them with this unique once in a lifetime flight.

Our first nightstop was at Minneapolis and the home of one of our main sponsors NorthWest Airlines. Here we met my old wartime USAF pilot Lt Al Dexter of the 389th Bomb Group at Hethel near Norwich who with his crew had adopted me as a schoolboy in the war, so the links with history began. Also there was his wife Pat who gave her name to his B-24 “Pugnacious Princess Pat”. The head of the Airline asked what we were eating the next day on our flight into the Arctic and when he saw our tiny lunch boxes he said he would send a catering truck over to us before we left early the next morning. Our departure certainly caused a stir among the many airline passengers as they saw a wartime B-24 taxiing past them. We made our first max weight take-off at 58,000lbs with a full fuel load of 3,000 gallons on board and crossing over Lake Superior I had to endure the standard CAF joke on all new pilots, with the flight engineers all running aft to upset the trim. Then we entered the stunning scenery of the Arctic which was certainly new for me, before we finally landed at the tiny airport of Iqaluit in Frobisher Bay after nine hours of flying. After a comfortable night at a very expensive airport hotel and an even more expensive two hours warm up in a heated hangar for “Diamond Lil”, we were off again early the next day with another max weight take-off for the most challenging part of our 4,500 mile journey, the crossing of the Arctic icecap over Greenland and a Canadian Air Traffic controller summed it up so well when he said “you guys are on your own now” as he said goodbye. Our position reports were passed on through the airliners high above us and at one point I was in full flow about us being a US Liberator bomber coming back to England when Ray Krottinger reminded me that I was talking to a Lufthansa 747!

The mountains of Greenland were absolutely stunning from 9,000ft but then suddenly our enjoyment was shattered when we noticed that our No.1 engine was shedding oil which meant in the end we had to shut it down and feather the propellor. Next we had to make a decision, do we turn around and fight the headwinds all the way back to Iqaluit or continue on three engines for another five hours to land at the NATO base at Keflavik in Iceland. We decided that the safest bet was to carry on although I am not sure that the BBC television crew we had on board felt the same way. En-route we enjoyed more of the superb NorthWest lunch boxes and coffee as well as a beautiful Arctic sunset, before in the late evening we were cleared to descend for a landing at the NATO base at Keflavik and were greeted by an array of television crews and radio reporters after an exciting day. The US Navy were superb and “Diamond Lil” was soon towed into a warm Orion squadron hangar where we found out that the problem with our No.1 engine was major and we would need to get a replacement engine flown out - but that is another story. We worked through the nights helped by the US Navy and it was embarrassing to

The crew of ‘Diamond Lil’ at Fort Worth, Texas prior to take-off.
L to R David Hughes, Ray Krottinger, Starr Stone, Al Stricklin, Kathy Martin, Henry Brudn, Sam Mangrum and David Hastings kneeling.
discover that I was the only pilot who was not also a qualified engineer, but in three days the new engine was on, checked and we were ready to start on the Atlantic crossing, escorted by an RAF Nimrod from No.120 Squadron at RAF Kinloss.

The sun shone as the Base turned out in force to see us depart and our Nimrod escort closed up to starboard. I could not believe that I was actually flying a B-24 Liberator across the Atlantic, a real pilot’s dream. Half way across the second Nimrod joined us with the world press on board and they asked him to get closer which was impressive to say the least and we were still enjoying the North West snacks. Finally after five hours the coast of Scotland came into view and we did a low level formation fly-past over the station to thank the Squadron before landing and it was amazing to think that if our Liberator AM927 had not had the landing accident on her delivery flight, she would have flown and fought with the Squadron in 1941 - another unique link with history. We were greeted by a piper and cleared customs before taking off for the final three hour leg of our 4,500 mile flight to Norwich, beginning with a low fly-past at RAF Lossiemouth. Over Lincolnshire in a perfect evening, the final gift from Air Marshal Sir John Kemball appeared, when three Jaguars from RAF Coltishall climbed up to formate on each wing and the tail to relive the famous painting “Welcome Home Yank” which the 2nd Air Division USAAF had presented to the Royal Air Force several years before. Landing at Norwich International airport after a low formation fly-past at RAF Coltishall we were amazed to see the huge crowds waiting to greet us and we were all deeply touched by the welcome from Tom Eaton, the Trust Chairman. We could not believe that we had achieved the dream of bringing a B-24 back to Norfolk as a tribute to the bravery, sacrifice and friendship of the 2nd Air Division USAAF. NorthWest Airlines had also flown over my wartime pilot Lt.Al Dexter and his wife Pat and if you had said in 1944 that I would be a pilot, fly a B-24 across the Atlantic and then fly with him again in 1992 I would have laughed at you. So many people wanted to see over “Diamond Lil” including youngsters who just wanted “to touch a B-24” that a tired crew stayed on until it was dark before we all retired to the Norwich Sport Village with our duty done.

During her six week stay in the UK we flew flights at low level over all the old fourteen bases of the 2nd Air Division as well as attending the major air shows before “Diamond Lil” returned home to Fort Worth. Just seems impossible now that this never to be repeated flight of a lifetime happened twenty years ago.