



TROPHIES AND AWARDS 2026

Astronaut and aviators recognised for their bravery, outstanding contributions and achievements in the Honourable Company of Air Pilots' annual Trophies and Awards

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Astronaut Colonel Jeremy Hansen is this year's recipient of the prestigious **Award of Honour** from City Livery Company the Honourable Company of Air Pilots. In 2026 he became the first astronaut from a country other than the United States ever to fly in deep space and travel around the far side of the Moon. As a member of the Artemis II Mission, he and his colleagues flew farther from Earth than any previous astronauts and became the first crew to travel around the Moon since the last Apollo mission in 1972. The perils of the mission were staggering - no human had ever been launched on the Space Launch System (SLS) or flown the Orion spacecraft, and no human had ever flown so far from Earth.

Hansen graduated in 1999 from the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ontario as the top Air Force graduate and went on to serve as a front-line CF-18 fighter pilot. In 2009 he became one of two Canadians selected in the Canada Space Agency's (CSA) third astronaut recruitment and moved to Houston, Texas. Upon graduation he began working in Mission Control on ISS missions and then led a new NASA astronaut class through their two years of training, before being picked for the first manned flight of the SLS.

Hansen was nominated for the Award of Honour not only to recognise his very significant and history making achievements, but also his tireless commitment to guiding young Canadians toward careers in engineering, aviation and astronautics.

The Air Pilots' Trophies and Awards are among the industry's most prestigious because recipients are selected by their peers, who have decades of experience in military and civil aviation around the world. The awards are traditionally presented at London's Guildhall on the last Thursday of October.

Another extensive and varied career in aviation has led to Frank Parker being awarded not one but two awards this year. The **Hanna Trophy** named in memory of distinguished father and son display pilots Ray and Mark Hanna and the **Jean Batten Memorial Trophy**. The **Hanna Trophy** recognizes Parker's outstanding performance as a display pilot on a wide variety of aircraft types. The **Jean Batten Memorial Trophy** honours his wide-ranging contribution to New Zealand aviation.

Parker was heavily involved in the New Zealand Warbirds Association for over forty years, serving as Chief Flying Instructor for ten years, then more recently as President. He is recognised as one of New Zealand's most proficient warbird pilots and instructors, being a test and display pilot on numerous vintage aeroplanes including P-39 Aircobra, P-40 Kittyhawk, P-51 Mustang, FG-1 Corsair, Yak-3, FW190, Spitfire, Mosquito and L-39 Albatross. Very few pilots globally have flown such an array of historic aircraft. His displays dynamically and safely showcase the unique performance profile of each aircraft with exceptional flair. Frank is well

known for his outstanding leadership and commitment to aviation safety, inspiring young pilots to transition to Warbird aircraft.

The eagerly anticipated **Prince Philip Helicopter Rescue Award** goes to United States Coastguard Crew 6553, Lieutenant Ian Hopper, Lieutenant Blair Ogujiofor, AMT2 Seth Reeves and AST3 Scott Ruskan. On the morning of 4 July 2025, the Guadalupe River basin experienced a catastrophic flash flood, with the river surging over 26 feet in 45 minutes, leading to widespread devastation across Kerr County, Texas. The torrential waters inundated Camp Mystic, a summer camp for teenage girls, sweeping away cabins, stranding over 700 campers and staff and leaving the area devastated. The crew battled extreme weather, poor visibility, and challenging terrain, eventually losing sight of the ground. After six hours of battling the weather, and refuelling three times, the crew finally led a formation of three helicopters to Camp Mystic and began evacuations. Demonstrating exceptional flying skills, they navigated demanding terrain in extremely difficult weather, operating the aircraft close to the limits of its performance across four sorties. Their skill and determination enabled them to reach those in need, saving 15 lives and helping to rescue a further 165 people from Camp Mystic.

UK based pilots are also very well represented among this year's recipients.

The **Barry Marsden Memorial Award** recognizes the professionalism and leadership of Flight Lieutenant Alex Eveson who was deployed to 1310 Flight Chinook aerial firefighting operations in the Republic of Cyprus, on 17 June to 6 August 2025, as detachment second in command and aircraft captain. Mile-long stretches of flame, smoke and ash encroached homes and farmland, posing a direct threat to residents and infrastructure. Alongside 16 firefighting fixed and rotary wing aircraft, and facing a dangerous operating environment with very poor visibility, Eveson's calm and steady leadership enabled his aircraft and crew to integrate seamlessly into the firefighting operation. Furthermore, his highly proficient flying of the Chinook ensured optimal precision and water delivery, effectively helping to control the spread of the fire.

Flight Lieutenant Eveson played a key role in 1310 Flight's successful efforts to tackle the largest wildfire to hit the Republic of Cyprus in recent memory. His leadership and commitment ensured the UK's military aerial firefighting capability remained fully effective throughout, upholding the excellent reputations of the RAF and British Forces Cyprus and further strengthening our relationship with a vital strategic partner.

The **St James Martin Award** is being shared by Colonel (Retired) Dr Allison J. Eke and Flight Lieutenant Lucy Froome.

Colonel (Rtd) Dr Allison Eke has made a remarkable contribution to military aviation over an impressive 42-year career, helping to shape flying operations, aviation medicine and safety across the UK Armed Forces. In 1990, she became the first woman to qualify as a helicopter pilot in the British Army, and the first female full-time pilot in any UK Service since 1948. This was an important milestone that helped open the door to greater opportunities for women in military aviation, with her influence still felt today.

Alongside her operational flying career, including time at Netheravon and overseas, Colonel Eke qualified as a consultant in aviation medicine in 1997. Since then, she has played a leading role in supporting the health, safety and effectiveness of Army aircrew. Through accident investigation, medical policy and equipment development, her work has helped improve how we understand and manage risk — making military flying safer for those operating in some of the most demanding environments.

Flight Lieutenant Lucy Froome shares the **Sir James Martin Award** in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the RAF's Enabling Female Aircrew project, which aims to make life safer and more supportive for women serving as military aircrew. As a former Nimrod Navigator, Lucy has been making a real difference since 2022 — particularly in improving the

safety and equipment provided to female aircrew, which in turn has also led to improvements for male Aircrew Equipment Assemblies.

A key part of Lucy's work was to make a comprehensive list of RAF female aircrew and organise full-body scans at several RAF stations. This provided valuable data covering around 60% of the female aircrew cadre. The results clearly demonstrated that women are not simply smaller versions of men when it comes to aviation equipment. The findings helped shape the design of a new flying suit, specifically designed around the female form and providing improved protection against burns. The new Aircrew Equipment Assembly is expected to be available from late 2026 — a tangible example of how Lucy's work is helping to make flying safer and better for future generations of RAF aircrew.

For further information please contact the Honourable Company of Air Pilots at:

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A full list of awards recipients is available at: <https://www.airpilots.org/what-we-do/trophies-and-awards/>

Notes to editors:

1. The Honourable Company of Air Pilots 'The Air Pilots' was established as the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators in 1929. It is based in London but has an internationally based membership of professional and private pilots. The principal activities of the organisation are centred on developing action and activities to ensure that aircraft are piloted and navigated safely by aviators who are highly competent, self-reliant, dependable and respected.

2. The Air Pilots support the education and training of pilots from the initial instruction of young pilots to specialist training at the highest levels. Through its charitable activities, education and training, technical committees, aircrew selection, scholarships and sponsorships, advice and recognition of the achievements of fellow aviators worldwide, the Honourable Company keeps itself at the forefront of the aviation world.

3. The Air Pilots also provides expert, impartial input to regulators, government and media on areas including aviation and the environment, airport capacity in South East England, aircrew flight time limitations and the maintenance of piloting skills in increasingly automated aircraft. Air Pilots experts are also available to all media on request, to ensure accurate and fully informed reporting of any aviation events. If you need our assistance, please contact us on the number or e-mail addresses above.

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