December 2026 ISSUE 78

AIR PILOT

INSIDE

CENTENARY CONCORDE
TROPHIES & AWARDS
TYMMS LECTURE



THE HONOURABLE COMPANY OF AIR PILOTS
incorporating Air Navigators

PATRON:
His Majesty The King

MASTER:
Elizabeth Walkinshaw

CLERK:
Paul J Tacon BA FCIS

Incorporated by Royal Charter.
A Livery Company of the City of London.

PUBLISHED BY:
The Honourable Company of Air Pilots,
Air Pilots House, 52A Borough High Street,
London SE1 1XN
EMAIL: office@airpilots.org
www.airpilots.org

EDITOR:
Allan Winn BE(Mech) FRAeS EMAIL: editor@airpilots.org

DEPUTY EDITOR:
Chris Long FRAeS EMAIL deputyeditor@airpilots.org

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS:
THE **FINAL** COPY DEADLINE FOR THE FEBRUARY 2027 ISSUE IS **MONDAY 21st DECEMBER 2026**

FUNCTION PHOTOGRAPHY:
Gerald Sharp Photography
View images and order prints on-line
020 8599 5070 / info@sharpphoto.co.uk
www.sharpphoto.co.uk

PRINTED BY:
Printovation Ltd 01494 478870

Except where specifically stated, none of the material in this issue is to be taken as expressing the opinion of the Court of the Company.

Access the Company's website via this QR code, or follow us on X, @AirPilotsCo

DIARY

Applications for Visits and Events
Details and application forms for Company events and visits are now available only online – either on the website or via links in the electronic newsletter and events bulletins.

DECEMBER 2026

8th	APFC talk: Moonlight Crusaders	Zoom
9th	APT/AST	APH
16th	GP&F	APH
16th	Company Carol service	St Michael's Cornhill
16th	Carol supper	The Factory House

JANUARY 2027

12th	ACEC	APH
12th	APFC talk: Early lady Liverymen	Zoom
14th	T&A Committee	APH
21st	GP&F	APH
21st	Court	Cutlers' Hall
26th	APBF AGM	APH

FEBRUARY 2027

3rd	Luncheon Club	RAF Club
9th	Company visit	Red Arrows
9th	APFC talk: World War Two Airfields near White Waltham	Zoom
11th	GP&F	APH
16th	Company Visit	AAIB Farnborough

The Editors wish all Air Pilots a Merry Christmas, an enjoyable festive season and a prosperous 2027

Cover photos: Boeing CH-47 Chinook of 7Sqn RAF Training Flight, awarded the Central Flying School Trophy in the 2026 Trophies & Awards (John Dibbs); Percival Mew Gull and De Havilland DH.88 Comet of the Shuttleworth Collection, subject of the Tymms Lecture (Darren Harbar)

Guidelines for submissions to *Air Pilot*
Please submit contributions as follows:
- Text in word document, including your name below the title of the piece;
- Photos as separate attachments, not embedded in emails;
- All images to be sent as jpeg files with a file size of at least 2MB;
- Attachments totalling more than 15MB to be sent via WeTransfer only.

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDITOR...



Coming so shortly after the NATS ATC outage in the UK (*Air Pilot*, October) the "Ground Stop" implemented by the US Federal Aviation Administration for five hours on 13th November has focused attention once again on the need for modernising aviation infrastructure – and the potentially crippling cost of doing so. The US Transportation Secretary has demanded $US50billion in funding from Congress to upgrade an ATC system that apparently still handles data over copper wires and relies on the 50-year-old technology of floppy disks. (It is unclear how this number was arrived at, but even five years ago there was a budget provision of $5billion, so far apparently unused, towards this task.) Upgrading the UK ATC system will cost over £1billion over the next seven years.

These costs are paralleled by those of upgrading airports – building an extra runway at London Heathrow, including the costs of re-routeing a motorway and constructing a further terminal, could cost £49billion [see *p18 of this issue*]. Moving the standby runway/taxiway sideways by just 12m at the nominally single-runway London Gatwick to allow limited dual-runway operations will apparently cost £2.2billion.

The numbers are huge, and lead to the obvious question: how can such projects be paid for? Much of the world's ATC system has been privatised in recent decades and is usually paid for by direct charges on operators per flight, though paid ultimately by the passenger. The US system remains federally owned and operated, with its core funding coming from a 7.5% levy on passenger tickets, per-segment charges and other taxes. There, one billion passengers are delivering $15billion a year in fees, effectively just to keep the existing system running, not towards that $50billion upgrade… Funding for airports, with a mix of public and private ownership, usually derives from landing fees and commercial/retail activities. The fees from 300million passengers who use all of the UK's airports each year certainly won't pay for more than £50billion of airport improvements in the London area alone any time soon.

As none of these funding models, whether for ATC or airports, will pay in real time for the modernisation required, massive borrowings upfront and/or a big take from general taxation will have to. Not only will the improvements take years or even decades, operators and their customers probably will be repaying capital and interest through increased charges or taxation beyond the time when this round of newly modernised infrastructure is itself in need of replacement.

Allan Winn - Editor

IN THIS ISSUE...

NEWS

4 The Trophies & Awards Banquet
6 Luncheon Club
7 Company visit: Red Arrows
8 Company visit: Croydon Airport
9 The Ladies' Afternoon Tea
10 MAF Mission Aviation Academy
10 Promotions Team Report
11 *Gazette*



REPORTS

12 The Master's Message
14 Regional Reports
- 14 Hong Kong
- 15 North America
- 16 Australia

17 Young Air Pilots
18 From the Desk of the DAA



FEATURES

21 Book review
22 The 2026 Tymms Lecture
24 Trophies & Awards winners
34 Centenary aircraft: Concorde
38 A challenging year
40 Into the Overshoot

THE TROPHIES & AWARDS BANQUET 2026

The 2026 T&A Banquet, held at the Guildhall in the City of London on 22nd October, was enlivened by the last-minute arrival of The Lady Mayor Dame Susan Langley, hotfoot from a previous engagement to address the 460 members and their guests. The other Principal Guests for the evening were: Alderman & Sheriff Prem Goyal CBE; the Deputy Master Master Mariner; the Master Tobacco Pipe Maker and Tobacco Blender; and the Master Communicator. At a Court meeting before the Banquet 10 new Liverymen were clothed, and certificates presented to 13 Master Air Pilots, one Master Air Navigator and two Master Rearcrew.



Dr Catriona Lamb, Deputy Master Master Mariner Commodore Duncan Lamb, Alderman & Sheriff Prem Goyal CBE, The Master, Master Tobacco Pipe Maker and Tobacco Blender Jacqueline Burrows, Simon Burrows



The packed Great Hall



The new Liverymen: Capt Colin Donaldson, John Deecke, Amanda Harrison, Gp Capt Willy Hackett, Ian Mills, The Master, Dr Rob Edwards, Capt David Burns, Capt Hedley Tardrew, Capt David White, Wg Cdr Ron Thacker



New Certificate-holders: ***Master Air Pilots*** *Jurgen Kraus, Peter Allen, Gp Capt Roger Gault, Capt Ameen Budagher, Sqn Ldr Andrew Waldron cfs RAF, Lt Cdr Nicholas Bane cfs RN, Flt Lt Lee Southward cfs, Sqn Ldr Andrew Preece MBE cfs RAF, Master, Flt Lt Paul Hepburn cfs RAF, Lt Cdr Marc Cornford cfs RN, Lt Cdr Edwin Adams cfs RN, Janet Patton, Lucy Young;* ***Master Air Navigator*** *Lt Cdr Richard Walker RN;* ***Master Rearcrew*** *MAcr James Stewart, MAcr Jason Hollingsworth cfs*



The Prince Philip Helicopter Rescue Award (USCG 6553): Lt Ian Hopper, Lt Blair Ogujiofor (PPHRA), with The Master & Prem Goyal



Flt Lt Lucy Froome RAF, Col (Rtd) Dr Allison Eke (Sir James Martin Award)



Dave Southwood (Derry & Richards Memorial Medal)



Trevor Wright (Capt John Ashton Memorial Award)



Flt Lt John Lewin RAAF (Jim Cowan Memorial Award)



Mark Miller (Sword of Honour)



Robert Miller cfs (Pike Trophy)



Capt Esther Coblentz USAF (Grand Master's Medal)



Capt Zoë Gell (Sir Alan Cobham Memorial Award)



Ladies in charge: The Master Tobacco Pipe Maker Jacqueline Burrows (l) and Master Communicator Justine McGuinness (r) with the Master and Lady Mayor



The Loving Cup: (standing) Master Communicator Justine McGuinness, IPM John Denyer, Alderman & Sheriff Prem Goyal CBE, The Master, Deputy Master Master Mariner Commodore Duncan Lamb

NEWS ROUNDUP

LUNCHEON CLUB: MOONLIGHT CRUSADERS

By Liveryman Ruth Cundy

Seventy-eight members and guests attended the 74th Air Pilots Luncheon Club at the RAF Club and enjoyed an outstanding lunch of succulent roast beef and an autumnal pudding of apple and blackberry crumble with good old-fashioned custard. In a lively and bright atmosphere, PM Colin Cox offered an excellent grace and PM Rick Peacock-Edwards proposed the Loyal Toast.



Paul Smiddy celebrates the Crusaders (A Winn)

Liveryman Paul Smiddy gave the after-luncheon talk based on his recently published book, *Moonlight Crusaders* (review *Air Pilot*, June 2026). It examines the development of the Westland Lysander and the pilots who flew that aircraft and the Lockheed Hudson on extraordinary missions into occupied France. Paul gave us an insight into the military and political decisions which both aided and hindered the operations which formed such an important and iconic part of support to the French Resistance and the successful outcome of the liberation of Occupied France.

In 1934 the Air Ministry issued Specification A39/34 for an army co-operation aircraft to replace the Hawker Hector. Westland under Teddy Petter and designer Arthur Davenport responded to the specification, which included a wide field of view, short take-off and landing and low-speed handling, with the Lysander. A contract was issued by the Air Ministry in 1936 and the first aircraft entered service just over a year later in 1938. The aircraft always suffered from a design fault in its elevator controls which made it potentially lethal at low speeds.

The Lysander was first used for Army co-operation - message dropping, artillery spotting and photographic missions. Unfortunately, it was an easy target for the Luftwaffe and was withdrawn from France during the Dunkirk evacuation – although it continued to drop supplies. Well over 50% of the Lysanders operating over France and Belgium were lost during 1940.

Paul led us through the political machinations involved in the establishment of the Special Operations Executive (SOE) in 1940, the clash of political personalities and the resistance from the established military intelligence branches and the Army Special Investigation Branch (SIB). The secrecy involved in briefings inevitably led to an unhelpful lack of communication between the various individual organisations.

CLANDESTINE NETWORK

This secret agent network would only work if a similar clandestine transport infrastructure was established. The secrecy involved meant the recruitment of pilots was a major problem; recruitment was through word-of-mouth recommendations and via accounts of past endeavours. The pilots attached to these SD squadrons, initially flying out of RAF Tangmere, such as FMG Scotter, 'Sticky' Murphy, Guy Lockhart, and Charles Pickard inevitably were of strong personality.

Flying the Lysander, 419 (SD) Flight was a secret RAF unit formed in August 1940 to drop spies and supplies into occupied Europe, and helped lay the groundwork for later specialised units like 138 and 161 Sqns at RAF Tempsford. They developed an air taxi service to pick up agents, political leaders and special communications from occupied Europe. With the STOL capabilities the aircraft was ideal for landing agents into France rather than parachuting them in with the subsequent risk of injury.

RAF Tempsford in Bedfordshire was a 'secret' base right next to the railway line, the A1 and Sandy which could clearly be seen from the flight paths to several nearby airfields – very invisible! A photograph of 161 Sqn showed just how many ground crew it took to keep the aircraft going.

Landing in remote rural locations such as farm pastures and clearings in the Loire, Jura and central France, missions were scheduled around the full moon and time spent on the ground was minimal. Despite the risks involved, these Special Duties flights were remarkably successful – notably, just 43 pilots undertook 263 pick-up missions by Lysander.

It is impossible in this short report to cover the depth of Paul's research into the missions the Lysanders and their crews undertook into occupied France, nor to adequately recount the many fascinating anecdotes Paul has at his fingertips about the various missions, the personalities involved, and the character traits of the main players – politicians, engineers and pilots. It was a most interesting and informative afternoon.

The Master drew an end to proceedings by thanking Paul for his contribution to an exceptional lunchtime. □

COMPANY VISIT: THE RED ARROWS

By Associate Mary Stokely

On Friday 2nd October, 14 members had the opportunity to visit the Red Arrows team at RAF Waddington. After meeting outside the Officers' Mess and getting a much-needed early morning coffee, we were met by Sqn Ldr Doug Smith who escorted us to the team building, where we were met by Wg Cdr Sasha Nash, the Officer Commanding the team, who gave us a warm welcome in the briefing room.



The Air Pilots group (RAFAT)

Sqn Ldr Smith told us about the recruitment process for a pilot looking to join the Reds, the history of the team and the lifestyle should one be selected to fly with them for a three-year contract. The first requirement is quite a straightforward one, being that you must first be a currently serving RAF pilot. Secondly, you must have close to 1,500 fast jet flying hours. Third, you must have completed at least one frontline, operational tour flying fast jets and, finally, you must be assessed as "above average" in your current flying role.

Simple, right? In the past approximately 30 eligible pilots applied to the team each year (fewer now due to a shrinking gene pool to choose from) and from that pool, six or seven applicants will then be selected for a rigorous selection week which includes a flying test on the wing of Red 1, a formal interview, a media test (more often than not the pilots will be greeted by the press immediately after stepping out of the aircraft after a show) and peer assessment. The leader, Red 1, who at the time of our visit (and has now finished his record-breaking tour as leader) was Wg Cdr Jon Bond, is appointed through a separate selection process and must have previously completed a three-year tour as a team pilot.



A commemorative certificate for new Reds OC Wg Cdr Sasha Nash (RAFAT)

PRE-FLIGHT BRIEFING

Once we had finished, we were then joined by the Reds, who were flying in a formation of six that day to rehearse their display ahead of the following day's Duxford airshow. Watching their pre-flight brief was a fascinating experience. It was certainly not like any briefing I had experienced either during my PPL training or on the UAS! The Reds went through each stage of the flight, effectively 'armchair flying', by either calling out commands, their callsign, or saying what they would be doing in the aircraft. Of course, they were all speaking at once, whilst simultaneously making hand gestures to mimic what they would physically be doing in the aircraft.

It is a badge of honour that when in the post-flight debrief, the pilots own up to any mistakes or adjustments they needed to make before anyone else did so for them. In this fashion, the pilots would again go through each stage of the flight they had completed, watch the video footage taken and call out their own errors.



Reds doing what Reds do best (Angelique Ajala)

The Reds change their display based on the cloud level at the time of the display, having the potential to fly three different displays (full, rolling or flat), depending on whether they have a low, medium, or high cloud base. A low cloud base means they will have to fly a flat display, whereas a high cloud base allows them to do a full display with all the rolls and loops. The team can start from a low cloud base display and move up to a high should conditions allow, or vice versa. Furthermore, the red, white, and blue smoke we associate with the team is not just a visually impactful feature for viewers on the ground but is also a valuable visual positional reference for the pilots, helping to make their aerobatic manoeuvres not only precise, but safe!

After lunch we were taken into one of the hangars to have a seat in a decommissioned jet and were given a talk about the aircraft and its safety features, such as the Martin-Baker ejection seat.

It was special to see the relationship the Company has with the Reds and I am sure this will only grow stronger in the coming years. □

COMPANY VISIT: CROYDON AIRPORT

By Liveryman Glen Fricker

With perfect weather for flying, it seemed a shame that none of the 17 company members could fly into Croydon Airport for our visit on 24th September. Our tour began with an introductory talk in the neoclassical-styled terminal building (both it and the gate lodge outside are listed buildings), and took us through the origins of the airport, which stretch back to 1915 as RFC Beddington. At the time another airfield, Waddon, was built immediately adjacent to Beddington, and at the end of World War One the two airfields were merged to form Croydon Airport.



The radio room in the Control Tower

Some of our members on the visit had some form of personal connection with Croydon Airport: PM Jonathan Legat's mother worked in the terminal, Liveryman Hugh Dibley flew an Auster from there in 1959 and I flew the actual De Havilland Heron that is mounted on poles outside.

Beddington was a reserve aircraft and flying training aerodrome: during 1919 Prince Albert (later King George VI), the Prince of Wales (later to become Edward VIII) and Winston Churchill all learned to fly here.

In 1920 Croydon became London's official International Airport, following the closure of the previous London airport at Hounslow. It was further developed between 1926 and 1928, at a cost then of £267,000 (about £15 million in today's money). The hotel, terminal building and new control tower were all completed in 1928. The airfield itself was a large grass area, with no marked runway directions, the longest run available being around 1200m and oriented NW/SE.

Many notable flights of the era originated from Croydon, such as Sir Alan Cobham's trip to Cape Town and back in 1925-26, followed by Mary Bailey's solo flight to the same destination in 1928 and Bert Hinkler's and Charles Kingsford-Smith's competitive flights to Darwin, Australia in the same year.

In 1927 Charles Lindbergh flew into Croydon following his successful transatlantic solo flight between Newfoundland and Paris, and on 5th May 1930, Amy Johnson began her successful solo flight to Australia in DH 60 Moth G-AAAH.

The tour continued, taking us through the grand booking-hall, past the site of the check-in desks, now part of the café area. Behind the site of the check-in desks a mural depicts aircraft and people (quite a few of whom were founding members of the then-Guild) closely associated with the airport over the years.

From there we followed the path that a 1930s passenger would have followed, through customs and immigration (now ordinary offices), to the rear of the building where the airliners of the day would have been parked. Croydon also boasts of having had the first airport shop in the form of a news-stand in the terminal building. Most flights, as well as carrying passengers, would have been carrying air mail (a lucrative source of income), and some freight.

We then continued up to the control tower, past rooms filled with memorabilia and artefacts. Next to the staircase, further murals depicted the routes flown from Croydon in a similar manner to a railway route chart. The control tower, in addition to various memorabilia in display cabinets, has a "radio room" set out just as it had been in the 1930s.

Croydon was one of the first airfields to be equipped with radio both for communication and direction finding and, following the fatal mid-air crash in 1924 of an Imperial Airways DH.34 on the Paris-London route, helped to develop air traffic control procedures and techniques. It can therefore be considered as the birthplace of ATC. The "mayday" distress call was developed here too!

RAF TAKEOVER

During World War Two, the aerodrome became RAF Croydon, hosting a number of fighter squadrons tasked with the defence of London, along with some RAF Transport Command presence.

On 15th August 1940, it was attacked by Messerschmitt 109s and 110s, which had mistaken it for nearby RAF Kenley. Unfortunately, six airfield personnel were killed, the armoury and a hangar with 40 aircraft inside were destroyed and significant damage done to the terminal buildings and nearby factories. Eight of the attacking aircraft were shot down by Hawker Hurricanes of 32 and 111 squadrons, both being resident at Croydon at some point.



The DH Heron on display

In 1946 Croydon Airport was handed back to civil control, but nearby residential and commercial developments restricted any further growth. The incumbent airlines began to migrate to Blackbushe,

Heathrow and Northolt: weekly departures (to mainly European destinations) dropped from some 218 a week in 1946 to only 56 by just a year later.

In 1952 the decision was taken to close the airport for good, with Heathrow adopting the role of London's main Airport. The last scheduled flight from Croydon was a Morton Air Services De Havilland Heron, G-AOXL on 30th September 1959. I gave a brief talk about the Heron outside the terminal building, which although painted to represent G-AOXL is actually G-ANUO, which for many years was operated by Shell petroleum. Fittingly when I last flew G-ANUO on 30th July 1986 from East Midlands to Norwich, it was transporting mail, part of Croydon Airport's own heritage.

Our thanks again to our guides, Tony and Doug, Manager Micha, Anita for her fine cuisine and Liveryman David Curgenven for organising the visit which we hope to repeat next year! □

LADIES' AFTERNOON TEA AND TALK

By Liveryman Sue Hawkins

This year's event for the Company Ladies, on 19th October, was organised and hosted by Past Mistress 2020 Linda Towell on behalf of The Master Elizabeth Walkinshaw.



The ladies take tea

On arrival at the RAF Club, we were welcomed in the Battle of Britain Suite by Linda with a glass of Champagne and soft drinks. Nine past Mistresses and Consorts of the Air Pilots attended, and the invitation had been extended to current Consorts of other Livery Companies, making up a convivial party of 34. Nick Bloom, Consort of the Communicators was the sole male attending, with his guest Lady Master Communicator Justine McGuinness. Whilst invited in their roles as Consorts, many present revealed themselves in a show of hands to be Freemen and Liverymen of Companies in their own right.

Our guest speaker was Shrieval Consort Alexandra Hayward. This is the second time Alex has taken on this role, firstly in 2019 when her husband Christopher was Sheriff of the City and this year to assist the current Sheriff, their friend Prem Goyal. She was quick to confirm that whilst in 2019 she shared the official residence at the Old Bailey with her husband, this time she would not be moving there and will be living at her marital home.

Aside from her role as Consort, Alex makes a huge contribution to City life as a Freeman and Court Assistant to both the Nurses and the Feltmakers Companies together with her role as Clerk to the Actuaries. An entertaining talk followed giving us an idea of the role of the Sheriffs of the City of London and their work assisting the Lord Mayor and Judges at the Old Bailey.

Alex then went on to speak about her millinery business. Once a week, as a young Nurse at St Bartholomew's Hospital, she had to construct her cap from a freshly starched square of linen. From this, her interest in hat-making grew, eventually leading to a City and Guilds qualification in millinery.

She then showed us equipment and fabrics used to create hats, explaining the processes involved. Her millinery business has developed and, as well as bespoke creations for individual clients, Alex makes hats to be sold at Charity auctions including the British Red Cross event at The Guildhall. After the talk, we had great fun, trying on some of the hats Alex had brought along. This was followed by a bountiful and delicious afternoon tea with freshly baked scones provided by the staff at the RAF Club.



The Churchill 'cigar-box' violin gets a rare outing

Before we left, PM Rick Peacock-Edwards arranged an unexpected surprise. Violinist Paula Gorbanova joined us to play a piece by Bach on the Churchill Violin. The violin, which is usually on show in the Club's Churchill Bar, is constructed from J J Fox cigar boxes once owned by Sir Winston. The violin is rarely played, and Paula joins a small group of musicians including Sir Yehudi Menuhin who have performed on it.

The Consorts all enjoyed meeting with their counterparts in other Companies, together with the Air Pilots present, appreciating the efforts of Past Mistress Linda Towell in organising such a pleasant and interesting afternoon in illustrious surroundings. □

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

By Assistant Jo Salter

When someone offers me the chance to get back behind the controls of an aircraft, they never have to ask twice! On 19th September, I found myself flying a Diamond DA42 Twin Star at Cranfield with Sophie Jones, a young aircraft engineering trainee from Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF), in the back. It had been a long time since I'd flown a twin, but the familiar feeling came back quickly. And yes, I was smiling!



Jo Salter takes Sophie Jones for a flight

I was there to help launch MAF's new Mission Aviation Academy, on Girls in Aviation Day. It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate what aviation makes possible and reflect on the importance of encouraging the next generation to realise their potential.

It brings together three pathways: the Future Pilot Programme, the Pilot Progression Pathway and the Engineer Training Scheme. It's about developing the next generation of pilots and engineers, giving them the skills, experience and opportunities to put their passion for aviation to work.

When I joined the RAF at 18, women weren't allowed to fly. A few years later, I was flying the Panavia Tornado GR1 with 617 Squadron. I know from personal experience how much can change when someone opens a door that was previously closed.

Eighty years ago, Betty Greene was one of MAF's pioneering pilots. At a time when few women had opportunities in aviation, she helped establish an organisation that would use aircraft to reach some of the most isolated communities, bringing medical care, supplies and support to people who might otherwise go without.

Today, MAF operates in some of the most challenging flying environments imaginable. Its pilots fly into remote airstrips, often with limited infrastructure, carrying people and supplies that can make a life-changing difference. It's flying that demands considerable skill, sound judgement and a willingness to serve - and that's what makes the new Academy so important.

THE IMPORTANCE OF OPPORTUNITY

Meeting Sophie reminded me how important those opportunities are. We can talk about attracting more young people, particularly women, into aviation, but encouragement alone isn't enough. People need to see a way forward, have someone believe in their potential and be given the opportunity to develop it. That's something that resonates strongly with me as a member of the Honourable Company of Air Pilots. Through scholarships, mentoring and the support we offer aspiring aviators, we understand that the future of our profession depends on what we do today.

I've been fortunate to experience some extraordinary flying throughout my career, but I've also come to appreciate that what we achieve ourselves is only part of the story. There's enormous satisfaction in helping someone else realise what's possible. A career in aviation can take so many different forms, from flying fast jets or commanding an airliner to piloting a small aircraft into a remote community airstrip where your arrival can make all the difference.

Betty Greene understood that aviation could be a means of serving others. Eighty years later, MAF is continuing that legacy. And perhaps that's something for all of us in the Company to reflect on. We've each had opportunities that shaped our lives in aviation. The question now is about what opportunities we're helping to create for those who will follow. □

PROMOTIONS TEAM UPDATE

By Liveryman Glen Fricker

On 24th July Liverymen Chris McGee and Tony de Brett, Upper Freeman Chas Cook, PM Roger Gault and I gave our standard computer "game" orientated presentation to approximately 900 potential future pilots at the Farnborough Air Show *Pioneers* of the Sky event. Although we were fairly exhausted at the end of the day, we all felt that the event was extremely worthwhile, having precisely targeted the ideal audience for the Promotions team.

August 4th saw us with a slightly different "clientèle" at the British Airways fly-in at Wycombe Air Park. Once again, it was a fairly successful event in terms of new member sign-ups and reaching out to wannabe pilots, though the weather was challenging - our gazebo at one time deciding it was time to take off without clearance!

Later in August Wardens Steve Durrell and Pete Taylor, Liveryman Amanda Harrison, Upper Freeman Chris Veazey-Doucet and I were at Syerston for the annual Air and Space Camp careers event for some 1,700 ATC cadets. Again, the weather proved a challenge - this time for the associated air display participants. Throughout this

period, we also attended numerous schools as well as supporting the youth gliding schemes, estimated footfall for all the events was some 2,800!

The final event of this period was a new one for the promotions team; the LAA Rally at Leicester over three days at the beginning of September. Visitors to the stand - manned by Tony de Brett, Pete Taylor and me - were slow and steady, though we did manage a few sign-ups as well as raising our profile with the LAA members.

A strange thing happened to me there towards the end of the Saturday. I was talking to some potential members who between them owned one of the "stars" of the show, Druine Turbulent G-PHFR. This was the very first Turbulent built by Roger Druine himself, and was originally registered as F-PHFR. They asked if I'd like to join them for a beer later – they didn't have to ask twice!

I agreed to meet them by the Turbulent, and on reaching it, I noticed the attached photo displayed next to it. I said to the group standing near me: "That's my dad in the cockpit." Without a pause, the gentleman standing right next to me said: "Well, that's my dad on the wing next to him!" So, by pure coincidence, Igor Best-Devereux and Glen Fricker met by sharing a photograph of Harold Best-Devereux and John Fricker taken 56 years ago at Elstree. □



Glen Fricker takes his father's seat in the Turbulent

GAZETTE

APPROVED BY THE COURT 19 NOVEMBER 2026

ADMISSIONS

As Upper Freeman

Steven Maxwell ABBEY (HK)
James Albert BUSBY
Nicholas ERANDER
Andrew HOLLAND
Ross John LAVES AUS)
Colin Stanley LEGGETT (AUS)
Ben McCUTCHEON
Jayden MIELL (AUS)
Shivnesh SINGH (AUS)
Sze Ho Ricky TSO
Joel Scott WELCH (OS)
Russell WOODLAND
Matthew Alvin YEMM

As Freeman

Huw Lewis CARTER
Kerry Noel DeVOSS (AUS)
Eitan FAYNGERSH (NA)
Issac William LANGFORD (AUS)
Gareth Shaun RHODES (OS)
Geert VERELLEN

As Associate

Amy Louise BERRISFORD
Win Bong Conrad CHANG (HK)
Henry CHENG (NA)
Jonathan COATES
Seren Jennifer DONOHUE
Lorenzo FANTAPPIE
Hannah Rebecca HOCKIN
Gursharon KAUR
Harrison PHILLIPS
Murathan POLAT
Donnach Anthony SANTOS DE FREITAS GIBBONS
Robert James SAINT
Horia Mihai STANESCU (AUS)
Jack David PANGBOURN (AUS)
Jingzhou WANG

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS 2026

PPL Scholarship Winners

Henry BRETZ
Ruby Lou WOOD
Maximillion DODD
James DEEKE
Dominik MOTLIB
Thomas Edward SUTTON

FI Winners

Thomas HENNESSY-HONES
Manisha POTIWAL
Lucy REEVES
Chris EVANS

ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE COURT 19 November 2026

REINSTATEMENT

As Liveryman

David PELCHEN (OS)

As Upper Freeman

Timothy John BURNS (HK)
Samuel GERVAIS

As Associate

James JARMAN

REGRADE

As Liveryman

David BURNS
Hedley TARDREW
David WHITE
Ron THACKER

As Upper Freeman

Kyle Roberts (AUS)

RESIGNATIONS

Graeme BAGNALL
Thomas BARTON
Charlie COODE
Mark DAVIS
Sorcha DIDIER
Wolfgang FEHLHABER (OS)
Mark GRIFFITHS
Stephen HAYMAN
Peter JACKSON
Callum JOHNSON
Jack LANE
Molly LOVEMAN
Derek MAY (OS)
David MOORE
Gregg RAFTER
John WAIN
Connell WESTON (NZ)
Helen WILLIAMS

DECEASED

David BURTON EVANS
Nicholas CLUTTON
Paul LEDERMAN
Warwick RAYMONT (AUS)
Anthony RIDLEY



THE MASTER'S MESSAGE

By The Master, Elizabeth Walkinshaw

On my return from North America, in late August, I had the great pleasure of being invited to the wedding of the Master of the Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects, Chris Bicknell, and his Consort Sara at St Lawrence Jewry. It was a wonderful affair with so many gowned Masters processing, with the Company of Pikemen and Musketeers, from Temple Bar to Mansion House, where Chris and Sara had overnighted by kind invitation of the Lady Mayor, and then onwards to the Church. Following the service, we all then processed to Temple Bar where there was a Ceremonial Gate Opening and we enjoyed afternoon tea at Happenstance. A splendid day!

I then had a couple of non-Air Pilots events - attending the Village Parish Council Meeting and enjoying a lovely day at Salon Privé at Blenheim Palace with my son, who was displaying his car there. Then followed an ACEC meeting, and a meeting on progressing the Air Pilots contribution in the safety work of GASCo.

I was then invited to attend the Lady Mayor's Annual Defence and Security Lecture at the Mansion House with the guest speaker being Gen Sir James Everard KCB, CBE. He spoke extremely frankly about the current situation in our defence. It was extremely interesting but sobering.

I had my first visit to the National Memorial Arboretum for the Army Air Corps and Wider Army Aviation Service of Commemoration and Remembrance. This was the first time this kind of event has been held since this outstanding memorial was built. It was a poignant, but also memorable and enjoyable, day in such beautiful surroundings, with the laying of wreaths and a flypast.

Members of around 20 families who had lost their loved ones on operations or in service with the Army Air Corps were present, in addition to some 70 veterans. It was so good to have the time to spend chatting to some of them.

The following day, I journeyed into London again for another wonderful Assistants' Dinner at Rules restaurant. This was a splendid evening organised by Warden Pete Taylor, and a great time was had by all! The following Monday, I was invited to the Worshipful Company of Farmers' Lunch for Masters and Clerks, held at Farmers' and Fletchers' Hall - a busy, enjoyable day, chatting to the many who were there and enjoying their great hospitality.

MATHS LECTURE

The next meetings were the APT and AST meetings held at Air Pilots House followed by something completely different! The Worshipful Company of Actuaries' Livery Lecture *What's Wrong with Maths* was presented by Bobby Seagull MBE. It was an extremely entertaining and interesting lecture which covered his work on maths anxiety and maths education with many great stories inserted within the talk. We then enjoyed a lovely supper in the historic Staple Inn. The next day, I attended the GP&F meeting at APH followed by the Court meeting at Cutlers' Hall.

It was my first visit to Westminster Abbey on the Sunday for the Service of Thanksgiving and Rededication on Battle of Britain Sunday. It was a beautiful service in wonderful surroundings, attended by so many. Afterwards there was a reception in Church House where we watched two Eurofighter Typhoons fly over. My guest for the day was PM Tudor Owen and we chatted to many there including the Chief of the Air Staff, AM Sir Harv Smyth, who I had first met at the Battle of Britain 85th Anniversary Dinner at RAF Museum Hendon.

The following day was the six-monthly Modern Liveries Dinner, hosted this time by the Scientific Instrument Makers and held at Glaziers' Hall - this was a joyful occasion with Modern Livery Masters and Masters-Elect with a great view looking over the Thames and enjoying a lovely Dinner.



With the Pirate Masters for lunch

The Wednesday brought the Luncheon Club at the RAF Club with the talk by Paul Smiddy on *Moonlight Crusaders* and, in the evening, the Tymms Lecture was *Display Flying with the Shuttleworth Collection* with Upper Freeman Paul Stone, still in a neck brace after his recent accident. This was a great day with a bumper number of members and



What does a lady Master give a soon-to-retire Lady Mayor of London who rejoices in the nickname of 'Tigger'? An A A Milne-style Tigger, of course.

guests at the lunch and talk and, additionally, many Masters and Clerks enjoyed the Tymms Lecture.

EVERY SECOND COUNTS

The following morning, bright and early, I attended the London Air Ambulance's first charity event, *Every Second Counts*. It was fascinating hearing directly from those at the heart of it all: lead paramedic Jason Morris; pilot Capt Pete Driver; doctor Jason Ransley and Director of Fundraising Jayne Clarke. This was an immersive experience where we were given the opportunity to take part in a simulated mission from the control room to the landing site - a huge eye-opener on all the decisions that are made under pressure. That afternoon, I had a follow-up meeting with Max Coppin from Joby Aviation, a company I had visited on my tour. The DAA, Chairman of the UAS TG Ian Davies and I had a great chat with Max and we are hoping to keep up this interaction with Joby in the future.

The Monday brought a lunch with the 'Pirate Masters' at the City of London Club. Following on, I had the most special and privileged invitation by the Lady Mayor and her Consort, to a private dinner at the Mansion House. A small group of ten of us had a wonderful evening chatting away and being shown the private rooms used by the Lady Mayor and her Consort: I felt very honoured to have been invited.

It was the Church Service and Election of Lord Mayor on the following day, with the surprise election of Alderman Bronek Masojada, following the very recent withdrawal of Alderman Tim Hailes. I was again fortunate to process in my robe to and from St Lawrence Jewry and in the Guildhall. Our usual delicious lunch was held in Stationers' Hall with many in attendance.

RED ARROWS VISIT

The following day was our APPL meeting, and I then travelled to Lincolnshire to be in place for our wonderful annual Red Arrows visit. It did not disappoint! I was so pleased to be able to meet and chat to the new OC, Wg Cdr Sasha Nash, who I presented with a gift showing our Commemoration of Affiliation and I was presented with a signed print of the Red Arrows which was delightful and unexpected. As always we had a wonderful day at Waddington with the Team.

On returning from Lincolnshire, I was back to the RAF Club to attend the 601 Sqn Dinner which was held in the 601 Squadron room. It was such a lovely evening chatting to so many interesting and talented members. OC AM Malcolm Brecht will be standing down soon: we will miss him as he has been a great supporter of our affiliation.

A Candlewick Ward Club Meeting in the Royal Philatelic Society was the next stop where I was delighted and honoured to be elected as next Chairman of the Candlewick Ward Club, starting in December. The following day I attended the annual Musicians' Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral. This is always a fantastic evening of beautiful music with a reception hosted by the Worshipful Company of Musicians.

My next stop at Air Pilots House was for our monthly GP&F meeting and to meet a great selection of our new members at the New Members Briefing. The following day, I attended the IV(AC) Sqn Heritage and Affiliations Dinner - a lovely evening in the Battle of Britain Room at the RAF Club, with great conversation and great fun, and so interesting to learn so much about the Squadron.



The 601 Sqn dinner with the OC, AM Malcolm Brecht, and Liveryman Annalisa Russell-Smith

The Worshipful Company of Tobacco Pipe Makers and Tobacco Blenders Banquet started my week off at Trinity House, a most lovely evening - and that snuff!

My last event in London before winging off on my second Tour was our fabulous T&A Banquet. It was so wonderful to see so many of you enjoying the evening and a proud moment for me to hand out the Trophies and Awards. Then there was the excitement of the Lady Mayor arriving in time to share part of the evening with us: it was so special that she so wanted to be there with us all. We are certainly honoured! □

REGIONAL REPORTS



Regional Report: Hong Kong

By Upper Freeman Sam Quinn

I first joined Susi Air in Indonesia in 2011, with just enough hours in the Pilatus PC-6 Porter to apply. I'm a third-generation pilot in Papua; my grandfather flew in Papua during WWII and my dad flew in Papua New Guinea, consequently flying the Porter in Indonesia had been a childhood dream of mine.

I gained my initial flying experience in Thailand, flying for a skydive operation where I was the sole pilot. The owner of the company was named Jack Sparrow – he legally changed his name – who took me under his wing. During my breaks, I used to immerse myself watching YouTube videos of Sven Imsand, the Chief Pilot of the Susi Air Pilatus division.

One day, I worked up the courage to call Sven. After briefly introducing myself and my experience, he told me it was my lucky day—they needed a pilot and asked when I could come over for an interview! I was ecstatic. I jumped at the opportunity, took a week's holiday, and flew out bringing only the essentials—the most important item being a Swiss Army Knife.

I met Sven at the FBO and being Swiss he saw my Swiss army knife; I got the nod of approval, and just like that, my two-day interview began. My task was to fly the aircraft 45min to Nabire after maintenance. We put her to bed around 16:00 and chatted about what was in store for the next day.

Our first stop next morning was Mapenduma, a strip nestled in a basin between mountains. The approach required good visibility because we had to weave between peaks, leading into a blind left base for landing. The strip itself isn't particularly short at 1,000m, but the approach makes it challenging, especially with the prevailing afternoon winds, which is why we usually flew there in the mid-morning.

The rush I got from that approach was like no other. The grass strip was slightly damp from morning dew, and as soon as we landed and shut down people appeared out of nowhere from the bush, which caught me off guard. After a quick cigarette break we were airborne again, returning to Nabire to drop off passengers and fuel up for the next strip.

The following two strips were even more exciting: proper Porter strips, 350m unpaved with an 8% uphill slope, one-way in and out, so you had to watch your tailwind by early afternoon. Papua is one of those places with no roads connecting the villages, making flying the only option. One flight we'd be carrying 1,000Kg of instant noodles and the next, four drums of fuel.

In those two days I learned a lot from Sven, who gave me some invaluable advice for bush flying: "Push yourself slightly out of your comfort zone every day, but not too much, as that's the only way to learn here."

Little did I know this trip would change the rest of my life: I spent the next three years flying the Porter for Susi Air.

To be continued... □



PAST CHAIRMAN (HK REGION) IAN "FOGES" FOGARTY AFC, MID (1947-2026)

Born in Victoria, Ian Fogarty joined the RAAF in 1966. He flew Bell Iroquois helicopters in Canberra, and then in Vietnam where he was Mentioned in Dispatches. Instructing though, became his life's work.

After the Instructor's Course in 1970, Foges spent 23 years instructing. He earned A1 QFI status at 2FTS, the first in an extremely long time. He was awarded the AFC as a Flight Commander at Pearce, Western Australia. A loan posting to the Royal Saudi Air Force saw him help build its Standards Squadron, and seven years with BAe in Saudi Arabia followed.

Despite having no prior airline background, Foges spent 17 years as a Cathay Pacific simulator instructor and became one of its most requested.

He first became Chairman of the Hong Kong Region in 2004 and remained involved, including with the Youth Flying Scholarship, until its closure in 2024. Mentoring young local pilots was a lifelong passion.

ACM Sir Angus Houston AK, AFC (Ret'd), former Chief of the Australian Defence Force, was taught by him and called him "The best of the best".



Regional Report: North America

By Freeman Hal Adams, Chairman

As this report marks my two years as Regional Chairman, I thought a top-level activity review would be in order. The 2026 personal highlight for me was the selection and awarding of the first two HCAP North America Aerospace Scholarship Foundation (ASF) scholarships. The ASF was granted foundation tax status in 2025 and for the first scholarship selections ASF joined with the University of North Dakota (UND) John D Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences in Grand Forks, North Dakota.

I owe a very special "thank you" to the ASF leadership team of Assistant Mark Tousey, Chairman, and board members Liverymen Lucy Young and Dave White, Assistant Kat Hodge and Upper Freeman Peter Allen, for getting the scholarship up and running in the USA. Currently underway is the next challenge; setting up a similar structure in Canada, recognizing that the foundation requirements vary by country.

There is background information online at www.aero.und.edu. The selection and awarding of ASF scholarships to two UND aviation students was a key moment in the continuing growth of the North America region. I, as a UND Aerospace graduate, had the distinct honour of presenting the awards in person at UND. Adding new members to the region is a challenge; we are pleased to have recruited several in 2026.

CONSTANT CHANGE

The only given constant is change, and our North American aviation community deals with constant change in all sectors; commercial and military air transport, private, training operations, and of course continued pilot demand. Canada and the USA are no exception, such as the significant growth in private jet transport, pilot training and availability, continued new air transport aircraft delivery delays, and of course, the cost of aviation fuel for all segments, which in turn drives the cost of flight training and operations. General aviation is clearly in a boom cycle as is the emerging new area of unmanned aerial vehicles.

Just to illustrate the estimated aircraft operating cost increases stimulated by the current geopolitical situation in the Mid-East world region, jet fuel prices have surged from approximately $US1.50/ (US) gallon ($0.4/l or £0.54/l) in 2018 to around $4.08 per gallon ($1.10/l) in 2026, reflecting a dramatic increase influenced by global demand and supply issues. Avgas prices have also risen, with averages around $5.50 per gallon ($1.45/l or £1.07/l) in recent years, showing a steadier increase compared to jet fuel. The airline industry has faced greater volatility in fuel prices since 2000, impacting operational costs significantly. While a "workaround" for new sources of oil and refinement have emerged, it has proven difficult to make up for the deficit created by the regional issues.

Another key challenge is the demand for new pilots to operate the new aircraft. The generally accepted forecast of estimated global demand for new pilots is significant, with Boeing's estimates indicating a need for approximately 674,000 new commercial pilots globally between 2026 and 2045, a continuing and substantial need. This demand is driven by factors such as fleet growth, retirements, and increasing air travel worldwide.



The first North America scholarship winners: Omar Jozilan, Hal Adams, Jenna Westpfahl and Dr Mark Krause, Dean of Aerospace, UND

Mandatory retirements are contributing to a pilot shortage, with an anticipated need of around 24,000 replacement pilots by 2026. The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the training pipeline, with its effects still exacerbating pilot shortages. Overall, the aviation sector is estimated to require over 2.4 million new aviation professionals, including pilots, technicians, and cabin crew.

Latest available global civil aircraft production projections show significant forecast growth, with an estimated 16,000 new aircraft expected to enter service between 2019 and 2026. The primary manufacturing hubs are the United States, Europe, China, Canada, and Brazil, which together account for over 95% of global aircraft production by value and volume.

However, the delivery rates have suffered, falling short as a result of issues mainly associated with certification of new aircraft types, aggravated by technical challenges in developing and delivering new engines. Time will tell how well the industry handles the situation, but pilot demand is strong and expected to stay elevated for the foreseeable future. □



Regional Report: Australia

By Liveryman Adrian Young, Chairman

The past two months have been among the busiest in the Region's calendar. The 2026 Master's visit took place, the Company has had a strong presence at several national safety forums, and our engagement with regulators and industry continues to grow on the issues that matter most to our profession.

The Master's visit ran from 26th October to 12th November, taking in Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Canberra. Members in each city have enjoyed meeting the Master and showcasing local activity. The Canberra programme, including Remembrance Day commemorations and a dinner bringing together award recipients and senior aviation leaders, will have provided a fitting finale. To support the Master's meetings with the ATSB, CASA, the RAAF and the Department of Infrastructure, the Technical and Air Safety team prepared a detailed brief, reviewed by the Combined Committee-Council on 13th October. Topics include runway safety, GNSS jamming and spoofing, SouthPAN, the Australian Future Airspace Framework, training pathways and our partnership with the Air Cadets.

The Region was proud to be a major sponsor of PACDEFF 2026, the Pacific and Australasian CRM Developers' and Facilitators' Forum, held in Brisbane on 20th – 21st October. Liverymen Brian Greeves and Mike Cleaver represented the Company at the forum, organised by Liveryman Wayne Martin, which has grown from 34 to 440 participants over 19 years. A clear message emerged: safe operations depend on more than technical competence and compliance. Speakers highlighted effective communication, practical non-technical skills, fatigue management and a culture in which people can raise concerns, ensuring safety arrangements work in practice, not simply on paper.

In September, the Region also attended the Australian Aviation Wildlife Hazard Group conference, themed "Wildlife Hazard Management Jigsaw – bringing the pieces together". It brought regulators, operators, pilots, air traffic control, investigators, wildlife biologists and airports into one room, a reminder of how many stakeholders are needed to manage this risk well. The Region is very grateful for London's support in sponsoring Safeskies, AAWHG and PACDEFF this year.

Our Technical and Air Safety portfolio has been closely following several important developments. ATSB preliminary reports released in September into runway incursions and taxiing conflicts at Sydney Airport during July and August have reinforced the Region's support for stop bars on all active runways. We are also tracking CASA's post-implementation review of the Civil Aviation Order (CAO) 48.1 fatigue framework, consultation outcomes on drone operations above 400ft, the review of legacy airworthiness directives, and CASA's September decision to retain the Class 5 medical self-declaration scheme. With the bushfire season under way, members are encouraged to reinforce careful flight planning and avoidance of active fire areas.

SUPPORTING THE INDUSTRY

A key focus we are now exploring is the role the Region can play in supporting industry, as Australian general aviation has suffered numerous incidents over the past two years. Something has changed, and we are investigating the causes to understand how we can best support overall safety and standards across the sector.



The attentive audience at PACDEFF

The Region's voice in industry continues to strengthen. Upper Freeman Lucas Dowd has been appointed as our representative on the National Runway Safety Group and will have attended its next meeting in Brisbane on 22nd November. We also contribute to the Flight Instructor Technical Group's work on teaching partial engine failures, support safety cases at Western Sydney International, and participate in consultation on the Melbourne third runway and Perth new runway projects. We continue to seek membership of the General Aviation Advisory Network and the Aviation Safety Advisory Panel.

None of this happens without our members. Our membership base continues to grow, now with more than 310 members, which is a credit to our voice and visibility in the Region. The Technical and Air Safety working group continues to welcome members with experience across general, recreational, sport, gliding and military aviation, airspace management and human factors. We also encourage members to promote the Region's scholarships and Young Air Pilots Australia through their networks, so we keep reaching strong and diverse future aviators.

As the Master's Visit concludes and we look towards the year ahead, the Region remains focused on supporting members, contributing meaningfully to aviation safety and strengthening the profession across Australia. Thank you to everyone who has given their time, expertise and hospitality over these past two months. □



REPORT: THE YOUNG AIR PILOTS

By Associate Chris Barrott, Chairman

As we head towards the end of the year, we have had a busy calendar of networking, social and career development events, aiming to make the most of the quieter time for many of us.

At this time of year, we also start to think the future of the Young Air Pilots committee. As I come to the end of my second year in the role, I will be handing on the baton in March to a new Chairman. I would encourage all Young Members to think about whether you have something to offer the committee, especially if you feel your background or line of work is not well represented. Expressions of interest for the new committee will be shared in due course, and we hope that we will receive lots of responses. Over the past couple of years, thanks to the hard work of many, we have revived the Young Air Pilots, and I hope to see it flourish for many years to come – but that requires help.

FINANCE AND NETWORKING

Targeting our professional members, Rathbones Wealth Management supported a networking get-together at the RAF Club. In what proved to be a fascinating evening of talk on pensions and ISAs, and canapés, a lot of members learned a lot. The conversations continued in the bar upstairs deep into the evening. Many thanks to Liveryman Will Wright for putting the event together.

INTER-LIVERY MINI GOLF

Shortly before the T&A Banquet, a YAP team attended the inter-livery mini-golf tournament at Puttshack, in the City of London. Thirty teams from nearly as many Liveries were represented in what was a jovial evening of food, drink, golf and good company. The YAP team achieved a respectable mid-pack finish, especially considering the lack of golfing pedigree in the team. Can we get a senior team to join us next year?

TROPHIES & AWARDS BANQUET

What a wonderful evening we had at the Trophies and Awards Banquet. With 32 YAPs in attendance (a record) - we were forced to split over two tables at this year's dinner – a testament to our success! Thank you to Assistant Seb Pooley whose generous donation allowed us to subsidise tickets down to an achievable price for those who really needed it. The fun lasted well into the evening and, for some, the next morning!

PROMOTIONS TEAM: RAES AND PCL

Yet again, it was pleasing to see a strong level of YAP support at the Royal Aeronautical Society Careers Fair and Pilot Careers Live (PCL) in November. PCL is our flagship promotions event and having a strong YAP presence really livens up the stand and helps us engage the hundreds of aspiring pilots who attend. For the third year, we ran breakout group exercise sessions (for free) in a side room. These generate fantastic interest in Future Pilot Assessment Days (FPAD), scholarships and membership while providing great value to attendees. Thank you to Upper Freeman Craig Jardine for the effort in putting the sessions together.



Networking and discussing finance at the RAF Club

These events also saw the unveiling of the new laptop software for the stand. Many will be familiar with the dated aptitude testing suite we have used for many years. As part of our stand modernisation, new laptops now take pride of place with custom software built by Associate Finlay Ledger. Our thanks go out to Fin for a fantastic job in building a modern alternative with many new advantages, including a live scoreboard and customisation for our needs on the day, which certainly proved its worth at PCL.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Next up is our Christmas social at the RAF club on Friday 11th Dec at 19:00. All Company members are welcome, with further information shared via the Clerk's e-News. Also in December will be the second instalment of our winter Zoom talks, this time focussing on Integrated vs Modular flight training.

Finally, if I don't see you at one of the upcoming events, the committee and I wish you a very happy Christmas and new year. □



HEATHROW EXPANSION ON THE HORIZON

From the Desk of the DAA, PM Nick Goodwyn

For over half a century, the question of whether to expand London Heathrow Airport has stood as one of the most contentious, heavily litigated, and economically charged dilemmas in the history of British infrastructure. As the primary international gateway to the United Kingdom, Heathrow has long operated at the absolute limit of its physical capacity as the UK's only significant hub airport, with passengers, businesses and cargo flying to 230 destinations across more than 85 countries.



Heathrow's development has been problematic ever since its tented beginnings

Operating its two existing runways at a remarkable 98% capacity, it is simultaneously celebrated as the busiest dual-runway airport in the world and criticised as a bottleneck that threatens the UK's long-term global competitiveness.

In 2016, the government, after considering a number of options, confirmed that an additional third, 3,500m, runway, northwest of the existing Heathrow was the preferred modern blueprint for expansion, and was framed by its proponents as a critical lever for national economic growth and to deliver additional airport capacity in the southeast of England.

Other options had and have been proffered, such as Heathrow Hub, an independent and innovative proposal to expand capacity that was shortlisted in Sir Howard Davies' 2013 Airports Commission's interim report. This envisaged extending both of the existing runways up to a total length of about 7,000m and dividing them into four so that they each would provide two, full length, runways, allowing simultaneous take-offs and landings. More recently, Heathrow West, a privately financed, £23billion alternative expansion proposal for Heathrow Airport featured a phased northwest runway and a new Terminal 6 campus situated west of Terminal 5. Positioned as a direct competitor to Heathrow Airport Limited's (HAL) official blueprints and strongly supported by industry, its primary phase would introduce by 2035 a shorter 2,400m runway that purposely avoids initial construction over, or tunnelling under, the M25 motorway, thereby avoiding severe regional traffic disruption.

AN ENVIRONMENTAL CATASTROPHE?

Conversely, opponents to expansion of Heathrow view it as an environmental catastrophe that would undermine the nation's legally binding climate commitments. As the project navigates a shifting landscape of government blueprints, public consultations, regulatory hurdles, and evolving timelines extending into the 2030s and beyond, the debate over Heathrow encapsulates the profound friction between macroeconomic ambition and localised environmental survival. On 28th September the airport released plans regarding a further eight-week public consultation which will run to December 2026, with residents able to learn more about expansion plans before a planning application is submitted. This consultation is not about "if' but "how and when".

Recently, British Prime Minister Andy Burnham failed to back plans for a third runway during an interview with the BBC. On 27th September Burnham, when asked if he supported the extension at Heathrow, said: "I think principally, it's a matter for London and Londoners… I think you've got to hear the voice of people there first." The Mayor of London, Lord Sadiq Khan, is against expansion, and when Burnham was Manchester's Mayor, he expressed scepticism about the idea. The Prime Minister's comments came as there were reports circulating that HAL had said that its current 2035 deadline will not be met.

Burnham's indifferent approach stands in stark contrast to the one adopted by former Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer and former Chancellor Rachel Reeves, who cited expansion of Europe's second-largest hub as a central tenet of their pitch to grow the economy. Any U-turn would also risk irking the country's unions, airlines and manufacturers, all of whom have publicly backed the project. Proponents argue that the third runway, which is now not due to begin operations until 2039, will bring jobs and investment to the UK and allow Heathrow to retain its hub status. But critics say the expansion is impossible to reconcile with Britain's climate targets and that costs could run over Heathrow's £49billion budget. Incumbent operator HAL has argued that Britain could not realise the economic benefits of expansion without a full-length runway.

The aviation industry urgently needs clarity and decisiveness for which we, the Air Pilots, should be



The current two-runway airport is capacity limited

assiduously advocating. However, it is not a simple question to answer and invites extensive input to formulate a position where time is pressing.

THE ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE

At the core of the argument for expanding Heathrow is the concept of global connectivity as an engine for economic prosperity. In a post-Brexit landscape, where the UK seeks to redefine its trading relationships outside the European Union, the capacity of its primary hub airport takes on heightened strategic importance. Proponents argue that Heathrow is currently "…not punching its weight" against expanding continental rivals such as Paris Charles de Gaulle, Frankfurt and Amsterdam Schiphol, all of which boast four or more runways. This infrastructure deficit means that Heathrow is routinely forced to turn away applications for new routes, particularly to rapidly growing emerging markets in Asia and the Americas, leading airlines to establish connections through alternative European hubs instead.

The economic benefits of a third runway are projected to ripple across the entire UK economy, rather than being concentrated solely in London and the Southeast. Government and airport forecasts indicate that an expanded Heathrow could unlock between £40billion and £74billion in wider economic benefits by 2050. A significant portion of this growth, estimated at up to 40%, is expected to benefit regions outside the capital. This regional distribution is tied directly to domestic aviation infrastructure. By adding a third runway, the airport plans to allocate up to 15% of the newly created slot capacity specifically to facilitate domestic connections, many of which have been lost in recent years. This would reconnect cities in Scotland, Northern Ireland, the North of England, and the West Country to the global trading network via Heathrow, fostering domestic business links and supporting regional tourism.

Beyond passenger traffic, Heathrow plays an indispensable role in global logistics. It is the UK's largest port by value, handling more freight than all other British airports combined, and carrying a significant percentage of the country's non-EU exports within the bellies of passenger aircraft. A third runway would allow Heathrow to nearly double its current cargo capacity, enabling British exporters to access international markets with greater frequency and efficiency. Furthermore, increased airline competition on popular routes is expected to drive down airfares for passengers, offering greater choice and lowering the cost of international travel for millions of consumers.

THE ENGINEERING CHALLENGE

The physical reality of expanding Heathrow is a monumentally complex engineering and logistical undertaking, budgeted as part of a wider £49billion modernisation scheme for the airport. The preferred masterplan, put forward by HAL, outlines a phased transformation of the airfield and its surrounding infrastructure designed to scale capacity from the current cap of 480,000 flights per year to approximately 720,000 to 756,000 annual movements. This would ultimately allow the airport to accommodate up to 150million passengers annually.

Because Heathrow is bordered by dense residential areas and critical transport corridors, building a third northwest runway of this scale would require reshaping the local landscape, forcing the new runway directly across the



Expansion area extends the airport over and beyond the M25 orbital motorway

path of the M25 and involve an extraordinary civil works project constructing a massive multi-lane highway tunnel directly beneath the new runway.

In tandem with the extra runway, the airport's new layout will require adding an entirely new terminal complex to the west of the existing Terminal 5 as well as extensive taxiway networks capable of handling the world's largest commercial aircraft. To manage capital expenditure and align capacity with market demand, this masterplan is designed to be highly phased, with the runway opening initially, followed by the gradual build-out of terminal buildings, baggage systems, and supporting transport infrastructure in a project spanning several decades.



Vision of an ever-distant future (All pics London Heathrow Airport)

POLITICAL, LEGAL, AND REGULATORY EVOLUTION

The path toward breaking ground on the third runway has been characterised by political vacillation and dense regulatory frameworks. Over successive governments, the project has been greenlit, cancelled, paused, and resurrected.

Even if it were to have political momentum, the timeline for delivery remains highly volatile and realities of planning complexities and financing structures have forced substantial shifts. HAL has warned that the third runway project faces an additional delay of up to four years. Under the current realistic assessment, construction is estimated to take up to a decade following the receipt of formal planning permission, pushing the projected opening window beyond 2035 and making the government's original accelerated timelines increasingly difficult to meet. The UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) continues to oversee complex economic regulations regarding how early design and development costs incurred by airport promoters can be recovered, adding another layer of financial scrutiny to the pre-construction phase.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL COUNTER-ARGUMENTS

The environmental counter-arguments are rooted in the direct and severe local impacts of a three-runway airport, as well as the broader global implications for climate change. On a localised level, the physical expansion of the airport would require the compulsory purchase and total demolition of approximately 750 homes, erasing historic villages and displacing thousands of residents from communities that have existed for generations. For the communities that remain, it is contended that the addition of nearly 250,000 extra flights a year would introduce severe noise pollution and a continuous reduction in air quality. Critics argue that adding hundreds of thousands of daily passenger journeys will inevitably breach statutory air quality limits, posing direct risks to public health.

On a global scale, the project sits in direct conflict with the UK's climate targets, including the legal mandate to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. The government's independent climate advisers have repeatedly warned that any large-scale expansion of airport capacity must be met with stringent, corresponding measures to limit demand or enforce the use of expensive, cleaner aviation technologies. The argument that Heathrow can expand sustainably rests heavily on the future deployment of SAF and zero-emission aircraft, alongside carbon offsetting schemes. However, these technologies are not yet scalable at the volume required to offset the additional flights a year.

A GLOBAL DILEMMA

The debate over Heathrow is not unique; it reflects a broader global dilemma facing major hub airports worldwide. As cities grow and global trade expands, the physical constraints of historic airports clash directly with urban development and environmental boundaries. HAL's strategy relies on maintaining Heathrow's status as a single, highly integrated mega-hub, rather than distributing traffic across a network of smaller regional airports. This is why alternative proposals, such the Thames Estuary airport or expanding independent runways at Gatwick or Stansted, have repeatedly been sidelined in favour of the Heathrow masterplan. The concentration of infrastructure at Heathrow is viewed by the aviation industry as the only way to safeguard London's position as a premier global financial and transit hub.

The expansion of Heathrow Airport remains an unresolved battleground between two competing visions for the future of the UK. One vision prioritises international trade, economic growth, and the infrastructural capacity required to anchor a global trading nation in the 21st century. The other vision prioritises environmental preservation, public health, and the urgent necessity of restructuring the economy to help avert a climate crisis.

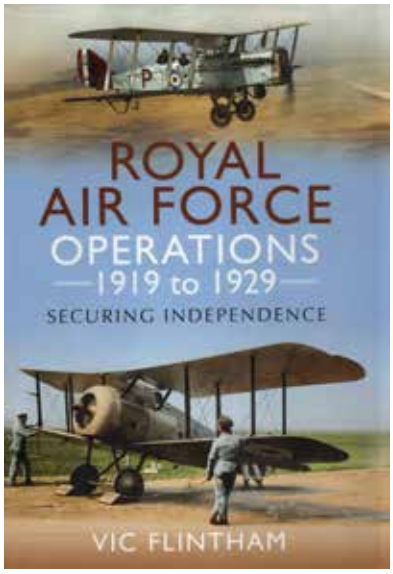
With the UK Government's national policy consultations laying the foundation for a definitive planning decision by 2029, the project stands at a critical juncture. Yet, with construction timelines stretching out beyond 2035, costs spiralling and hesitant conflicting messages from Government, the third runway is far from a certainty. Ultimately, the resolution of the Heathrow expansion debate will serve as a definitive statement on how the United Kingdom chooses to balance its economic ambitions with its environmental responsibilities in an increasingly carbon-constrained world.

As an industry and as a Livery, we are watching and waiting as the clock ticks. □

BOOK REVIEWS

ROYAL AIR FORCE OPERATIONS 1919 TO 1929 BY VIC FLINTHAM

Reviewed by The Editor



In the decade after the end of World War One the fledgling Royal Air Force found itself engaged in operations in vast swathes of the northern hemisphere components of what was still the British Empire, and other territories, ranging from Ireland in the west to Singapore in the east and into the north of Russia. With so many geographically far-flung, often contemporaneous, operations underway, it would have been difficult – if not impossible – to build a coherent and digestible history of the RAF in this decade on strictly chronological lines.

Prolific author Liveryman Vic Flintham, in another of his meticulously researched tomes, has avoided that pitfall by treating each of the major theatres of RAF operations to its own history of this decade. Starting with the status and make-up of the RAF on the Western Front at the end of the war, he heads off into chapters covering operations in areas such as north and south Russia, Ireland, Egypt, Somaliland, Sudan, Persia and Palestine, Singapore and Malaysia, China, the eastern Mediterranean and India. Other chapters cover the Cairo Conference, the development of aerial transport and airmail across the Empire, the use of controversial (including chemical) weapons and various rebellions in the Middle East. These chapters neatly place the widespread operations of the RAF into the global political context of the era.

Amongst the individual operations recorded is the pioneering aerial evacuation of Kabul beginning in December 1928: over two months in 86 flights largely by Vickers Victorias, 586 civilians with almost 25,600lb (11.6t) of baggage were flown from Kabul to Peshawar through mountains 10,000ft (3,000m) high via the Khyber pass. This was the first operation on this scale to be attempted, and involved bringing the Victorias in from Iraq, some 2,500 miles away – leading to the establishment of a permanent bomber/transport presence in India. That those bombers existed at all goes back to the early postwar debate over the role of the RAF and the desire of the War Office and the Admiralty to have the RAF disbanded altogether.

While much of the book concerns the RAF's activities across the Empire and beyond, action in the British Isles was also important. In Ireland there was the continuing battle against the separationist republicans, whilst on mainland Britain the focus is on the major role that the air service played alongside the civil airlines and flying clubs in maintaining communications and newspaper and mail distribution during the general strike of 1926.

As is usual with Flintham's researches, he draws extensively on Squadron Operations Record Books to produce extensive tables showing how operational strengths and establishments expanded and contracted over the years through lists of aircraft types and their bases, along with records of the fates of individual aircraft and their crews. Those lists emphasise not only how important were types such as the Airco DH.9A and Bristol F.2B in the aftermath of the war for which they were developed, but for how long large numbers of these by-now obsolete and worn-out aircraft staggered on in front-line service, often into the 1930s.

The narrative is backed up by large numbers of mainly excellent photographs, many of them said to have not previously been published, though the reproduction on the semi-matt paper of the book does not do justice in some cases to what must have been very high-quality glass-plate originals. The text is also laced with numerous purpose-drawn maps of the various theatres of operation, showing the locations of airfields and other notable sites, but in some cases the local nature of the maps loses the geographical context. Some wider-area maps identifying these locations would have been welcome.

Overall, however, this is another masterful history by Flintham, backed up by comprehensive background notes, a substantial bibliography and highly detailed index: a promised second volume covering the following decade is eagerly awaited.

Royal Air Force Operations 1919 to 1929 – Securing Independence, by Vic Flintham; published by Fonthill, an imprint of Pen & Sword Books; 423pp hardback; ISBN 978-1-03615-669-5; £35.00 □

THE 2026 TYMMS MEMORIAL LECTURE
PAUL STONE: FLYING WITH THE SHUTTLEWORTH COLLECTION

Report by The Editor

The 2026 Tymms Lecture was delivered on 23rd September by Liveryman Paul Stone in his capacity of Chief Pilot of the Shuttleworth Collection, describing how the Collection recruits its display pilots and the process by which they advance through increasingly complex and challenging historic aircraft types.

Originally, said Paul, the display pilots group was "…a test pilot mafia", but there was now a much more open and better recruiting policy. What was wanted was experience in formation, and display flying and tail-draggers, but what was really important was that a pilot has got "good hands" and is amongst the best pilots in the UK. The priority was about displaying the aircraft, not the pilot."



Paul Stone, complete with post-Comet-crash neck-brace

New pilots arrive for a training week in April, and no matter what experience they have, they start on the De Havilland Tiger Moth and the Blackburn B2: "You start at the vanilla end of the collection," he said. The new pilots get a display authorisation, and an aerobatic DA if minded to, and transition into the rest of the collection, both older and younger before spiralling off into various specialities.

Then you move to the Avro Tutor, where you learn new skills. The Tutor was, he said, "…one of my favourite aircraft, but a rubbish trainer – the reason is that it's got beautiful handling qualities." From there, pilots could do some more adventurous things, such as flying tied together. "How ridiculous is it to be tied together to another aircraft in formation?" he asked. Then there was the De Havilland DH60X, G-EBWD, the foundation of the collection, and Richard Shuttleworth's own plane.

"With 17 pilots for 40 aircraft, performing eight flying displays and a training week each year, you don't spend long on each," he said: "You don't get to be friends with it through hours." To learn a new aircraft, a pilot would spend time in the cockpit, reading the notes, talking with those who have flown on it and, importantly, the last person to convert to it. With rare exceptions there were no dual trips for conversion.

AN 'INTERESTING' AIRCRAFT

In the 'middle pack' were aircraft like the Miles Hawk Speed 6, which Stone fell in love with as a youngster, and the Comper Swift. This was "…an interesting aircraft and a bit of a handling handful with a very tight CG limit… I had to diet to fly it," he said. The Percival Piston Provost was a 'gateway' aircraft to the next stage. For some, it would be the first with boost, and possibly with an RPM lever. With a fixed undercart, it was "…incredibly draggy: after a loop you have to lower the nose quite aggressively before you can regain the speed." The Provost was used for pilots' periodic QFI checks.

The progression into warbirds traditionally is the Hawker Hind, Gloster Gladiator, Westland Lysander, Hawker Hurricane to the Supermarine Spitfire. "These aircraft can't be treated as a 'rental car', unlike some of the earlier biplanes which all use the same basic techniques," he said.

The Hind has a Rolls-Royce Kestrel engine for which preservation is the key: "If you break this engine it's really hard to get those parts, so you really have to handle it delicately. This aeroplane traditionally gets the most bollockings from the chief pilot – people tend to fly it a little bit lower, a bit faster than you should." With these aircraft, pilots also learn new ground skills. The Tutor is hand swung: a perilous job, and the preferred option for the larger engines is the Hucks starter, itself a piece of vintage history.

AN "ABSOLUTE PIG…"

The Gladiator, he said, has beautiful handling qualities in the air: "…one of those aircraft you queue up to fly – but



The Boxkite needs careful carb-heat management to stay aloft

an absolute pig on the ground," which has had two ground loops on takeoff. It also has hand-cranked flaps, taking about 50 pumps to get the flaps down, and a Bristol Mercury engine which has to be treated with absolute care: "You can't slam it, can't bunt, can't fly in carb icing.".

The rotary-engined aircraft, he said, are absolutely specialist machines, with a single magneto and a hand fuel pressure pump, whose pressure directly affects the performance of the engine. Their control levers "…look familiar but are scarily unfamiliar. The block tube – think of it as a throttle but basically moderating air - the 'fine adjust' has the most ridiculously inappropriate name as it does nothing finely and is a very coarse lever, a fuel tap. In the early rotaries as the pilot you are doing half the job of the carburettor – setting the fuel and the air mix."

Then, said Paul, there's the blip switch, cunningly positioned where in every other aircraft you have the transmit switch: all it does is remove ignition from the engine. "These engines overheat quickly, so you've only got a couple of minutes to adjust them. It's a pretty scary first trip – after warming up, you never touch the levers again until you land – having flown for 10min max, and never outside the cone of the airfield."

The Edwardians (Avro Triplane, Bristol Boxkite, Deperdussin, Blériot XI and Blackburn Monoplane) were completely different. "They are wing-warpers, and they have all sorts of weird ways of controlling the aircraft. You start with the Avro – traditionally considered the most passive of the group, but all are thrust-limited, and all have their own foibles. They all have very poor handling qualities: 'stability' and 'control' are not words you would use to describe them," he said.

They were flown only in incredibly light winds. "You fly the Avro first to build up confidence. The Boxkite has a modern engine –but it's susceptible to carb icing, and has only just enough thrust to get airborne. There's just one throttle position, and we use carb heat going straight ahead, cold in turns. It flies at only 35-45mph, so a 10kt crosswind is monumental."

THE OLDEST AIRCRAFT

Of the Blériot, he said: "You only fly this aircraft as high as you're willing to crash it. So we hop it at about 15ft. The only instrument is oil pressure, and there's an advance-retard control. You warm it up, advance the ignition, and the people on wings release it. You try to reduce the drag by lifting the tail, then sit waiting for flying speed and give it a nudge to get it airborne. You sit it in ground effect, fly it for a bit then retard the ignition to land it. The Blériot is the oldest airworthy aircraft in the world; the Blackburn is the oldest British airworthy aircraft in the world. It has a rotary engine and has better flying qualities so we're brave enough to fly it in a little pattern around the airfield. It has wing warping, controlled by a wheel, and a rudder, but no instruments, so it's all done by feel: if you want to climb you move the wheel down, if you want to descend you move the wheel up."

One of two racers in the collection, the Percival Mew Gull was built specifically for Alex Henshaw, who did a massive amount of range optimisation, with all gaps sealed. "You sit on the floor: after 20min your backside's sore, shoulders are bruised. It's quite a miserable aircraft ergonomically, but a beautiful aircraft to fly, and historically important."



The Mew Gull: "Miserable ergonomically... but a beautiful aircraft to fly" and the Comet "stalls very badly" (Darren Harbar)

Three pilots fly the De Havilland Comet, recently damaged in a crash-landing with Paul at the controls.. "You obviously need a twin rating, and tail dragger experience, and you might progress through the Avro Anson, Miles Gemini and Mew Gull to get to it. It has a beautiful tapered elliptical wing but stalls very badly, with very aggressive wing drop. So you land it at about 95mph and pin the mainwheels to the ground with about four notches of brake set. You hold the stick forward until you start to lose aerodynamic control and the tail drops. Then you're in a kind of no-man's land. If you pull back on the stick it will bounce into the air and then you get a tip stall. So you have to brave it out for the next few knots, hold the stick forward and convince yourself that it's firmly tail down, then you move the stick progressively back and apply the handbrake – which is like a car handbrake and stays on until you press the button to release it."

An AAIB report on the crash will emerge in due course, but Paul discussed some of the factors which influenced it. □

THE TROPHIES & AWARDS 2026

Many of the Company's 2026 Trophies and Awards were presented at The Guildhall on 22nd October, as shown in the spread on pages 4-5 of this issue. Not all recipients were able to be present at the Banquet. Below is a full list of all those honoured in this year's awards.



THE AWARD OF HONOUR

COL JEREMY HANSEN RCAF

Jeremy Hansen in 2026 became the first non-US astronaut 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.

Before them, no human had ever been launched on the SLS launch system or flown the Orion spacecraft, (each of which had only been flown on one prior unmanned test), and only 27 others in history had travelled on a flight to the Moon.

Growing up on a farm near London, Ontario, he joined the Royal Canadian Air Cadets at age 12, earning his glider wings at age 16 and his pilot licence at 17, subsequently becoming an officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force.

After qualifying on the Boeing CF-18 fighter, Hansen served in the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). Graduating from 410 Fighter Training Squadron in 2004, Hansen served as a front-line CF-18 fighter pilot as Combat Operations Officer at 4 Wing. Until 2009 he flew operations with 409 Tactical Fighter Squadron .

Hansen became one of two Canadians selected in the Canada Space Agency's (CSA) third astronaut recruitment in 2009, moving to Houston, Texas, to become one of 14 members of the 20th NASA astronaut class, of whom only four remain active.

Upon graduation he began working in Mission Control as a CAPCOM (capsule communicator) on ISS missions. He set his sights early on deep space exploration and lived underground with European astronauts for six days in an ESA cave-training program; a year later he spent a week underwater as an aquanaut in the *Aquarius* habitat off Key Largo, Florida. In 2017, he became the first non-American to lead a new NASA astronaut class through their two years of training. Col Hansen also continues to fly the RCAF CF-18 and, as a volunteer, has inspired young Canadians as an air display pilot, through flying the *Hawk One* Canadair F-86 Sabre operated by Vintage Wings of Canada.



THE MASTER'S COMMENDATION

MASTER AIRCREW ROBERT MAUCHLINE

Master Aircrew Mauchline has unrivalled operational experience as a Support Helicopter crewman, with exceptional service spanning five decades and over 6,000 flying hours. Applying RAF traditions and values to the modern environment, Mauchline has mentored hundreds of commissioned and non-commissioned aircrew throughout their careers.

Mauchline's aviation career began as a crewman on the Westland Puma. Over six years, he became an Arctic Warfare Instructor, Helicopter Abseil Instructor, deployed to Iraq on Operation *Granby*, and was selected as lead crewman for the Allied Command Europe Mobile Force. During a jungle deployment to Belize, he was mentioned in dispatches and earned parachute wings while serving as a liaison to the Air Assault Brigade before transferring to the Boeing Chinook Force.

While serving on 18(B) Sqn, he qualified as an Air Gunnery Instructor and deployed to Northern Ireland and the Balkans. In 2001, at the start of the Global War on Terrorism, he volunteered for 7 Sqn, involving counter-terrorism operations. During the first insertion into Afghanistan, he and five crews operated for 10 days without support from a remote desert camp. For 20 years, he deployed relentlessly to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya. He flew hundreds of helicopter assault missions, largely at night, to counter threats to UK national interests.

During this time, Mauchline was selected for special duties with Afghan National Security Forces. Under Operation *Emperor*, he trained in Eastern Europe on the Soviet Mi-17 Hip as a flight engineer and later became an instructor. Specialising in high-altitude operations, he frequently deployed to Afghanistan on counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism missions. He was deployed on a discrete European operation in 2022, Operation *Polar Bear* (Sudan) in 2023, and Operation *Leadproof* in 2026 to provide contingency options following the Iranian war.



THE MASTER'S MEDAL

CAPT JASON NEMES USAF

Capt Jason Nemes distinguished himself by exceptionally meritorious achievement during combat operations in East Africa. As Combat Systems Officer on a U-28A special operations intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance aircraft, his technical mastery and tactical acumen enable a successful rescue operation in a difficult combat situation.

Immediately after takeoff, *en route* to a planned routine mission, Nemes received notification that a partner nation had lost contact with a friendly helicopter over contested enemy territory. Nemes rapidly shifted his crew's mission to assist with search and rescue efforts. With no communication from the downed crew and only a broad area of probability, he assumed tactical control of the developing crisis and initiated a rapid, co-ordinated response with American and coalition forces.

Capt Nemes made the decisive tactical call to manoeuvre his aircraft above known enemy engagement envelopes. During the rapid transit to the search area, he orchestrated a complex, multi layered communication plan linking air and ground assets while simultaneously directing recovery preparations.

Upon arrival over a vast, dense jungle, Capt Nemes expertly employed advanced mission systems, establishing a sensor geofence to focus detection efforts and prevent wasted search time. Within minutes, he identified the heat signature of the crash site concealed beneath thick foliage and confirmed the survival of all eight occupants.

Recognizing the proximity of an assessed enemy stronghold only three miles away, Nemes immediately directed his second sensor to identify a safe ingress and egress route for the recovery convoy while personally maintaining defensive scans for hostile activity. His precise intelligence enabled friendly forces to launch a ground recovery within the hour and safely extract all personnel. Throughout the operation, Nemes provided continuous overwatch for more than 20 recovery personnel and the eight rescued crew members.



THE HUGH GORDON-BURGE MEMORIAL AWARD

STAFF SGT KYLE HILL USAF

On 10th March 2026, Staff Sgt Kyle Hill, Formal Training Unit Instructor Loadmaster of the 58th Airlift Sqn, Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma, distinguished himself during a Formal Airdrop Training Course sortie aboard a Boeing C-17A Globemaster III. While instructing a student on heavy equipment aerial delivery procedures involving a 2,700lb (1,225kg) platform, the extraction parachute failed to deploy, and the equipment sequence suffered a total malfunction. He immediately took control of the situation, guiding his student through the applicable emergency malfunction procedures. Despite their efforts, these standard actions proved ineffective.

As the situation evolved, Hill directed the last-resort measure: physically cutting the extraction parachute with a pole knife. Before they could act, the parachute was violently ripped from the platform, pulling the cargo from its rail system. The now-unsecured platform was free to move within the cargo bay, creating a grave threat to the aircraft's centre of gravity and the aircrew. The platform became dangerously lodged inside the cargo rail system, physically obstructing the cargo door and ramp from closing. This was compounded by a pre-existing aircraft maintenance issue which prevented the crew from configuring the flaps to enable them to land with the ramp and door open. This left the crew with no viable safe landing option and the aircraft in a state of extreme peril.

In an act of remarkable resourcefulness, he created and directed a high-risk recovery procedure. At Hill's direction, the pilots maintained the C-17 in a slight nose-high attitude. This was essential to maintain constant tension on the cargo winch cable as it was used to carefully pull the platform forward, preventing the equipment from sliding forward at a rapid, unsecured pace. Utilizing the winch in this manner, he successfully manoeuvered the heavy platform clear of the lodged obstruction, allowing the cargo door and ramp to be closed and secured.

Hill's decisive and innovative actions saved the seven-member crew and protected a vital $US340million national asset from certain loss.



THE BARRY MARSDEN MEMORIAL AWARD

FLT LT ALEX EVESON

Flt Lt Eveson was deployed to 1310 Flight Boeing Chinook aerial firefighting operations in the Republic of Cyprus, from 17th June to 6th August 2025, as detachment second in command and aircraft captain. From 16th to 28th July 2025, he took command of 1310 Flight in the absence of his OF3 detachment commander, during which time his team responded to the large-scale wildfires of 23rd and 24th July.

This period saw some of the most extensive fires to affect the Republic of Cyprus in 50 years. *Rescue 50*, captained by Eveson, was called to respond to a gradually worsening situation. Mile-long stretches of flame, smoke

and ash encroached on homes and farmland. Alongside 16 firefighting fixed and rotary-wing aircraft, and facing a highly dynamic and visually degraded operating environment, Eveson's calm and measured captaincy enabled his aircraft and crew to integrate seamlessly into the firefighting effort. Furthermore, his highly proficient flying of the Chinook guaranteed maximum precision and volume of water drops,

Despite best efforts, the dangers posed by further wildfires endured into the following day. Eveson's leadership ensured 1310 Flight could resume firefighting operations at first light. His pinpoint focus and determination saw him lead the team of aircrew, engineers, operations and support staff to sustain continuous firefighting up until nightfall. The crew remained on scene for a total of 18h, delivering an impressive and pivotal 450t of water over two days. Post event, Eveson was quick to ensure the welfare of the Flight and liaised with RAF Akrotiri and wider British Forces Cyprus HQ, whilst simultaneously expeditiously resetting the firefighting readiness.



THE SIR BARNES WALLIS MEDAL

CREW OF SKIER94

LT COL JOHN HUGHES (PILOT IN COMMAND)

LT COL CHRISTOPHER HUSHER

LT COL JESSES ENDRES

MSGT MICHAEL WALLACE

TSGT ERIC JUNQUERA

TSGT JOHN RYSEDORPH

TSGT BENJAMIN LAFOND

On 5th March 2025 the air crew of SKIER94, operating a ski-equipped Lockheed LC-130H of the 109th Airlift Wing, New York National Guard, pioneered a landmark capability for Arctic operations during Operation Nanook-Nunalivut (Op NA-NU25).

This was a Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) annual joint, combined, all-domain operation conducted in Canada's high arctic. The operation was staged in Inuvik, Northwest Territories with the main objective of demonstrating the ability to secure NORAD Northern Warning Sites.

The 109th Airlift Wing was tasked with establishing a critical sea-ice landing hub for a diverse, multinational force of military and scientific teams, but an exhaustive search over 25,000miles^2 of the Arctic Ocean revealed no ice capable of supporting a viable landing zone. Refusing to concede failure, they demonstrated exceptional initiative by undertaking an unprecedented operation: the first-ever landing of an LC-130H on semi-prepared freshwater ice, on Parsons Lake.

The distinct crystalline structure and lack of salinity in freshwater ice result in different mechanical strength and fracture behaviours from those of their usual sea-ice experience, introducing significant, unproven risks. To surmount this, the crew initiated a continuous, vital information exchange with the Polar Camp Skiway Team and partnering with the Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory (CRREL).

In close partnership with CRREL, they engaged in extensive pre-mission research to fully comprehend complex scientific data on freshwater ice bearing capacity, load distribution, and the physics of vehicle-induced resonance waves.

This led to a comprehensive risk assessment that justified a waiver from the 109th Operations Group Commander. To mitigate the catastrophic risk of aircraft-induced resonance waves shattering the underweight ice, the crew engineered and rigorously rehearsed innovative groundspeed avoidance procedures. In the days preceding the actual landing event, they conducted multiple low approaches, methodically inspecting the prepared surface for any hazards.

At 17:45Z on 5th March the crew of SKIER94 executed a flawless landing and subsequent take-off from the semi-prepared skiway. This sortie not only salvaged the multinational operation's objectives but also served as a full-scale validation of pioneering scientific analysis and aviation ingenuity, providing a crucial alternative when traditional runways or sea ice are unavailable.



THE GRAND MASTER'S MEDAL

CAPT ESTHER COBLENTZ USAF

Capt Esther Coblentz, assigned to the 374th Operations Group and the 374th Airlift Wing at Yokota Air Base, Japan, is a Lockheed C-130J Aircraft Commander in the 36th Airlift Sqn, the sole US tactical airlift squadron in the Pacific theatre.

Capt Coblentz's strong airmanship led her to being hand-selected to brief the US Ambassador to Bangladesh, and Bangladeshi General Officers, on aviation crew resource management. Her leadership was further demonstrated when she spearheaded the historic operation that successfully landed the first US C-130J at a small airstrip in Indonesia during SUPER GARUDA SHIELD, a

multinational joint exercise. Her efforts not only certified the airfield but also opened access for other aircraft to the area. She also led a 12-person team to Palau to conduct a critical airfield pavement evaluation, securing an additional 12 years of flying operations, enabling the continued viability of this strategic location.

Her meticulous planning was pivotal in the success of PACIFIC ANGEL's capstone mission, where Capt Coblentz planned and executed a complex dissimilar-aircraft, bilateral aeromedical evacuation exercise with a foreign partner, resulting in the disaster response certification of 103 partner airmen. Additionally, she was chosen to lead the mission planning cell for a mission in PACAF's premier combat simulation exercise, RED FLAG ALASKA 25-2.

As Protocol Officer for the US Department of War's longest-running humanitarian airlift operation, OPERATION CHRISTMAS DROP, she skilfully directed the movement of 33 multinational distinguished visitors and co-ordinated an effort to airdrop 75,500lb (34t) of aid to 42,000 islanders.

THE PRINCE PHILIP HELICOPTER RESCUE AWARD



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD CREW 6553

LT IAN HOPPER **LT BLAIR OGUJIOFOR**

AMT2 SETH REEVES **AST3 SCOTT RUSKAN**

On the morning of 4th July 2025, the Guadalupe River basin experienced a catastrophic flash flood, with the river surging over 26ft in 45min, leading to widespread devastation across Kerr County, Texas. The torrential waters inundated Camp Mystic, a summer camp for adolescent girls, sweeping away cabins, stranding over 700 campers and staff and leaving the area in devastation. The developing mass-casualty incident required a large-scale, multi-agency aviation response, which was severely hampered by extreme weather, low visibility, and the complex, congested airspace of the "Texas Hill Country." Federal, state, local, and Department of War (DoW) air assets converged on the scene with scant information.

The crew of Helicopter 6553, an Airbus MH-65E, was among the first launched to support a national-level response, where they battled extreme precipitation, poor visibility, and dangerous terrain en route, eventually losing all visibility and the ability to remain clear of obstacles. The crew attempted to turn back to regain visibility to no avail, forcing them to commit to IMC and activate an emergency instrument flight plan to land at San Antonio International Airport to reassess their options.

After refuelling, Hopper filed a flight plan to Kerrville Municipal Airport where storm cells over the field forced the crew to enter a hold pattern for an hour, waiting for an opportunity to land, ultimately necessitating a diversion for fuel once more. On the third attempt to breach the storm, they elected to follow roads to reach the embattled campground but were once again forced to divert for fuel because of weather conditions.

Finally, after six hours of battling weather, fuel planning, and reformulating plans, the crew used the radar capabilities of the MH-65E to valiantly lead a formation flight with two other helicopters with lesser capabilities to reach Camp Mystic and begin performing evacuations. Demonstrating extraordinary aeronautical skill, they navigated obscured terrain through tumultuous weather in congested airspace while operating the aircraft near the edge of the performance envelope throughout four sorties to reach survivors, saving 15 lives and assisting in the rescue of 165 more from Camp Mystic.

Hopper and crew became distinguished ambassadors for the Department and the Coast Guard. The crew participated in numerous media engagements and their humility, professionalism, and respect for mission amplified the Coast Guard's public profile. Their thoughtful reflections on teamwork, training, and preparedness inspired public confidence and support in the Service; highlighting the vital role of military aviators, all while maintaining full operational readiness at their units.

The extraordinary heroism and in-air professionalism of the crew of Coast Guard helicopter 6553 directly enabled the safe and rapid evacuation of from Camp Mystic. Their decisive actions and seamless co-ordination with joint partners were instrumental in establishing an evacuation "air bridge" for 180 juvenile girls and counsellors preventing further loss of life; rightly earning two Distinguished Flying Crosses and two Air Medals for the crew. Their subsequent role as public spokesmen enhanced the Coast Guard's national visibility and brand, inspiring future generations and reinforcing public trust in the Service's lifesaving mission and values.



THE BRACKLEY MEMORIAL TROPHY

RAAF OPERATION BEECH AIR MOBILITY DETACHMENT

The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) deployed on Operation BEECH in direct support of UK defensive operations in the eastern Mediterranean and broader Middle East following the outbreak of the US-Iran conflict. Working with 99Sqn RAF, the RAAF delivered considerable operational effect, enabling the UK's Boeing C17s to concentrate on delivering numerous additional complex operational missions over and above what would have been possible alone. Additionally, after years of hard work and exercises between the two nations to develop robust 'Interfly' procedures, where mixed-nationality crews fly each other's aircraft, the RAAF and RAF delivered the first-ever C-17 operational Interfly mission during Operation BEECH.

Having travelled halfway across the world, the Operation BEECH team arrived at RAF Brize Norton amid a rapidly evolving and unfamiliar operational environment. The Sovereign base of RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus had been attacked, and UK Defence was rapidly re-posturing to counter a number of evolving threats. The RAAF's presence was gratefully received, and between 16th March and 13th April, the Operation BEECH team (comprising one C-17 from 36Sqn and an Airbus KC-30A Multi-Role Tanker Transport from 33Sqn) amassed 162 flying hours, moved 752 people, delivered over 600,000lb (270t) of cargo and delivered in excess of 120,000lb (54t) of fuel in support of UK defensive operations.

They also concurrently worked to evolve interoperability between the RAF and RAAF C-17 Squadrons. When the RAF found itself with too few aircraft for the task at hand, and the RAAF was short of crew members, the team worked to rapidly achieve the first ever operational sortie of an RAAF C-17 with a mixed RAF and RAAF crew.



THE SWORD OF HONOUR

DR MARK MILLER

It is 25 years since Dr Mark Miller became Director and Chief Engineer of a new company, de Havilland Support Ltd (DHSL). The company was formed from a nucleus of licensed aircraft engineers, pilots and technical experts from the de Havilland Moth Club's Technical Support Group and, initially sponsored by British Aerospace (later BAE Systems), was to take formal technical responsibility for most of that company's heritage products, some 2,000 aircraft still active around the world.

In association with the founding CEO, the late Gp Capt Bill Taylor OBE, RAF (Rtd), Dr Miller was faced with establishing the new company's credentials, procuring appropriate staff and negotiating with the UK Civil Aviation Authority for all necessary approvals to allow DHSL to function as the world-wide technical authority.

At the same time, Dr Miller completed an over-20-year restoration, with his father, of a DH.89 Dragon Rapide, achieved a twin rating and a display authorisation on the type. In addition, Dr Miller restored his own Cirrus-powered Auster and a DH.87B Hornet Moth, and is currently rebuilding a DH.85 Leopard Moth.

For several years he was custodian and display pilot of a vintage Klemm Eagle operating on behalf of an owner based overseas, and for 10 years until 2025 maintained and demonstrated a DH.83 Fox Moth for her New Zealand-based owner. That required delicate negotiations with British and New Zealand Airworthiness Authorities to permit concessions for a foreign-registered aircraft to be certified, maintained and flown in the UK bearing British markings.



THE MYLES BICKERTON TROPHY

BARRY TEMPEST FRAeS

Barry Tempest has been a lifelong aviation enthusiast since childhood. He has had an extensive and varied flying career but is best known for his long participation in display flying. He learned to glide with the ATC in 1954 and, as a founder member of the Fakenham Flying Group, gained his PPL in 1957. He qualified as a flying instructor in 1960 and, along with examining and flying instructor course work, continued until health problems meant giving this up in 1999. He was appointed a member of the Flying Instructor Examining panel in 1973 as its youngest and first non-service pilot. As CFI he ran aero clubs at Little Snoring, Peterborough and Leicester between 1960 and 1984, gained a CPL in 1968 and an ATPL in 1984. He has logged over 13,000h of which 8,000 were as an instructor. He has flown over 350 types and variants from the Sopwith Tabloid to the Hunting Jet Provost.

Barry was a founder member of Barnstormers Flying Circus in 1963 and also flew with the iconic Rothmans Aerobatic Team in the 1972 season. He has logged over 2,000 displays in mainly light aircraft such as the De Havilland Tiger Moth and Pitts Special.

From 1984 to 1998 he was employed by the Civil

Aviation Authority regulating private, sporting and recreational aviation in all operational aspects, including all UK civil run air displays.

Some 10 years ago he was appointed a Vice President of the Historic Aircraft Association (HAA), where Barry worked to assist improvements in safety and sensible display regulation. For many years he provided a digest of global display flying incidents at the Annual Flying Forum run by the HAA, based on excellent research of Col Des Barker. Barry continues to own a Steen Skybolt.



THE HANNA TROPHY AND THE JEAN BATTEN MEMORIAL TROPHY

FRANK PARKER

Frank Parker had an extensive and varied career in aviation over more than 55 years, having started with the Royal New Zealand Air Force in 1970 and training as a helicopter pilot and later a flying instructor. He subsequently flew with several airlines, ultimately as a check and training captain on the Boeing 777.

In 1987, Frank started instructing in helicopters at Ardmore and qualified as a Cat A flight instructor and flight examiner. In 1996, he established Ardmore Helicopters, one of New Zealand's premier helicopter flying schools, and is still active there as a flight instructor and examiner.

Frank has had extensive involvement in the New Zealand Warbirds Association for over 40 years, serving as CFI for 10 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 Bell P-39 Aircobra, Curtiss P-40 Kittyhawk, North American P-51 Mustang, Vought FG-1 Corsair, Yak-3, Focke-Wulf FW190, Supermarine Spitfire, De Havilland Mosquito and LET L-39 Albatross.

Frank was also the leader of the 'Roaring 40s' North American Harvard Aerobatic team for 15 years, and has given many hours training pilots in conversions, aerobatics and formation flying. Frank is well known for his outstanding leadership and commitment to aviation safety, inspiring young pilots to transition to Warbird aircraft. His focus on safety gave rise to 'FAST', the Formation And Safety Team at NZ Warbirds.

Frank is now retired from airline flying and ever busy on the Ardmore scene with the management of New Zealand Warbirds, instructing and examining on Warbirds and helicopters, while also serving on the Ardmore Flying Operations and Risk Committee and New Zealand Aviation Trust.



THE DERRY AND RICHARDS MEMORIAL MEDAL

DAVE SOUTHWOOD

Dave Southwood joined the Royal Air Force in 1973 and in 1985 graduated from the Empire Test Pilots' School (ETPS) long course, winning the McKenna Trophy for the student who exhibited the best example of the spirit of aircraft test and evaluation.

On graduation from ETPS he was posted to A Sqn (now Fast Jet Test Sqn) at RAF Boscombe Down where he was project test pilot on the Panavia Tornado GR1, GR4 and F3 fighter variant for the RAF. He also led the test flying of numerous Urgent Operational Requirements modifications to the Hawker Siddeley Buccaneer and SEPECAT Jaguar for the first Gulf War and was selected as the test pilot on a classified UK team that previewed the Lockheed Martin F-117 Stealth Fighter while it was still a 'Black' programme.

From A Sqn, Dave moved to ETPS where he spent a large part of his test flying career as an instructor, including several spells as the course Principal instructor. During his spare time he flew and displayed classic aircraft including the Messerschmitt Bf109 and the Hawker Hunter.

Dave's command of flight test practice and theory, supported by his experience in a wide variety of types, made him seen increasingly as the 'go to' expert for flight test advice, both within and outside the UK military. This included assisting universities in the modelling of various prototypes and innovative aircraft designs' flying characteristics through clinical simulator evaluation and assessment and in advising on the characteristics and foibles of classic aircraft types.



THE ERIC 'WINKLE' BROWN MEMORIAL TROPHY

MAJ DUSTIN WEEKS USAF

Maj Weeks became the driving force behind critical modernization efforts of the supersonic Rockwell B-1B immediately upon joining the 337th Test & Evaluation Sqn. He is one of eight B-1B low-level Instructor Pilots in the USAF, and the only Evaluator Pilot in B-1B Operational Test.

He spearheaded the greatest leap in B-1B communications since 1984 by redesigning a novel Hybrid Satellite Communication (SATCOM) system to address critical beyond-line-of-sight (BLOS) limitations. In just two weeks, he cut through traditional acquisition bureaucracy to accelerate the system from mere concept to a production-ready solution integrating jet power, enabling BLOS datalink and encrypted-internet connectivity.

Building on this success, Maj Weeks defined requirements

for the next-generation Hybrid SATCOM system (PG) and secured the B-1B as the threshold platform for testing Air Force Research Laboratory's (AFRL) Hybrid SATCOM innovations. He built upon these successive successes to deliver a PG demonstration for flight testing during a premiere USAF Operational Test exercise providing invaluable input for new tactics, establishing the roadmap for continued USAF-wide Hybrid SATCOM development.

Furthermore, Maj Weeks was pivotal in modernizing the B-1B's line-of-sight communications by leading the integration of the $US90million ARC-210 Gen 6 radio. He synchronised efforts between Boeing, Air Force Materiel Command, and the B-1 System Program Office, making the B-1B the first USAF Bomber to achieve full National Security Agency compliance.

Finally, Major Weeks took over Director of Operations for the 337th and ensured mission continuity during a manning gap, enabling in the execution of a $600,000 ground test that improved all future B-1B defensive upgrades. During a 43-day government shutdown, he assumed project management duties, enabling the USAF's sole weapons test during that period. He co-ordinated the use of a partner unit's B-1B, generating ten months' worth of flight data in two months and closing out three test programmes worth $187 million.



THE SIR JAMES MARTIN AWARD

COL DR ALLISON EKE

Col Eke has made an exceptional and enduring contribution to military aviation across a distinguished 42-year career, shaping flying operations, aviation medicine, and safety across the United Kingdom Armed Forces while transforming opportunity and professional standards within the aerospace community. 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.

Alongside her operational flying roles, including service at Netheravon and overseas, Col Eke developed a distinguished parallel career in aviation medicine, qualifying as a consultant in 1997. Over subsequent decades, she has played a central and sustained role in safeguarding the health, safety, and operational effectiveness of Army aircrew. Through her work in accident investigation, aircrew medical policy, and equipment design, she has delivered enduring improvements to aviation safety, directly shaping how risk to aircrew is understood, managed, and mitigated.

While serving at the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency's Centre for Human Sciences at Farnborough, later QinetiQ, she played a pivotal role in the introduction of the AgustaWestland AH-64 Apache into UK service. Through rigorous human factors analysis, she identified and drove the resolution of critical man–machine interface issues, including aircrew harness and altimetry deficiencies, which would otherwise have presented significant safety risks to personnel.

As Chair of the QinetiQ Ethics Committee for eight years, she upheld the highest standards of scientific integrity and participant welfare in human research. As Deputy Responsible Officer for the Army, she operated at Army Board level, maintaining professional and ethical standards for Army doctors and reflecting national-level trust in her judgement and authority.



THE SIR JAMES MARTIN AWARD

FLT LT LUCY FROOME RAF

Flt Lt Froome is lead of the RAF's Enabling Female Aircrew project to improve the in-service experience of female military aircrew. As a former BAe Nimrod Navigator, since 2022 she has made a tangible difference in improving the safety of female military aircrew, with the bonus of related improvements to male Aircrew Equipment Assemblies (AEA).

The RAF has had female Aircrew since 1940, with Sergeant 'Silver Jane' Wynne-Eyton of the Kenyan Auxiliary Air Unit, the first to wear RAF wings before joining the ATA. Throughout these 86 years the AEA continued to be designed to fit males, with females having to conform, as 'small males'.

Collating a list of RAF female Aircrew, Flt Lt Froome organised full body scans at several RAF Stations for 60% of the cadre. This key data proved that females were not small males and led to a new design of flying suit that gives better burn protection to the female form. This new AEA should be available in late 2026. A mother herself, she was instrumental in analysing policy on flying whilst pregnant; working closely with medical/legal experts to fully understand the risks, she submitted a decision brief to the highest levels of the RAF, which was fully endorsed.

Her other key success is an in-flight urination and menstruation system, now in use on the Eurofighter Typhoon and soon to be on the Lockheed Martin F-35B. This is a gamechanger, stopping females from purposely dehydrating pre-flight; itself a flight safety risk. She is now researching female fit body armour and helmets. Whilst she cannot do the deep specialist aspects of the work herself, her interlocutor role is proving key to success.



THE CENTRAL FLYING SCHOOL TROPHY

7 SQN TRAINING FLIGHT

The RAF's 7 Sqn is a volunteer Boeing Chinook helicopter unit whose operational success depends on a continuous supply

of highly trained aircrew capable of executing complex missions under demanding conditions. Unlike other training establishments, Training Flight operates within this high-tempo environment, balancing rigorous instructional duties with immediate operational readiness.

Facing a challenging period of declining crew numbers and sustained high operational demand, the Squadron's deployable trained strength fell to just nine crews, just over half of its established position. This shortfall posed a significant risk to operational output and morale. Training Flight responded decisively, graduating 25 pilots and crewmen from the rigorous specialist Conversion-to-Role course into deployable frontline positions, restoring the Squadron's strength to 14.5 crews in just two years. This recovery was achieved while instructors maintained extreme readiness, deploying worldwide on short notice to support multiple operations and exercises.

The increase in trained crews enabled the formation of a third operational flight and the establishment of a robust three-cycle readiness system without compromising standards. This improvement eliminated previous vulnerabilities and laid the groundwork for 7 Sqn's future transition to the enhanced Chinook H47-ER.

In parallel, Training Flight completed seven B1 instructor upgrades and three A2 Central Flying School accredited instructor upgrades within two years, reflecting an unwavering commitment to professional development and instructional excellence on one of the Royal Air Force's most heavily tasked squadrons.



THE PIKE TROPHY

ROBERT MILLER

Robert Miller gained his PPL on an ATC flying scholarship and flew on a university air squadron before joining the RAF, where his first tour was on English Electric Canberras on 6 Sqn in Akrotiri. The majority of Robert's career has been instructing, on the Hunting Jet Provost and on an exchange tour on the SIAI-Marchetti SF.260 with the Singaporean Air Force. He has over 4,000h on the De Havilland Chipmunk and raced RAF Chipmunks. He was the standards pilot at EFTS, also the CFS agent there. After the RAF, Robert was a company pilot and, as a civilian instructor, also trained military pilots from all three services for 10 years. He also instructed for nine years at the Ultimate High Academy.

For nearly 30 years Robert has been perhaps best known and responsible for training hundreds of Chipmunk and Scottish Aviation Bulldog pilots in formation flying, in both individual training sessions and the big meetings known as Chipmeet in Europe and Chipfest in the UK.

Robert has masterminded many formation events with up to 25 aircraft for such as commemorating the Macpherson Race, the Annual Battle Formation tribute to D-Day and in 2022 a Diamond 9 flew a "Missing Lady" formation two days before the funeral of the late HRH Queen Elizabeth II.

This year being the 80th anniversary of the Chipmunk, Robert worked with two of his Chipmunk formation graduates, Upper Freeman Tony De Bruyn and Piet Luijken, to put up an "80" formation to fly over Hawarden airport where many Chipmunks were built, on the very day of the anniversary of the first flight.

Robert, at the age of 80, still is generous with his time and on many weekends during the summer, continues to pass on his formation skills and high standards to new formation pilots whilst supervising the many he has previously trained.



THE JOHN LANDYMORE TROPHY

ANTONI BAGROWSKI

Antoni Bagrowski won the Wigley BALPA Benevolent Fund PPL Scholarship and completed his training with Gamston Flying School.

From the initial impression that he made upon the scholarship selection committee to the approach he adopted during his flying training, Antoni was exemplary. His ground school results were top class and his whole approach to the learning process and personal application required to be a proficient and able pilot were present from the outset. Antoni's enthusiasm and determination to achieve his goal was evident to his ground and flying instructors. His attitude was always positive, and he was a pleasure to teach.



THE SIR ALAN COBHAM MEMORIAL AWARD

LIVERYMAN ZOË GELL

Zoë Gell started flying helicopters with the RAF, before gaining her ATPL(H), and moving into the North Sea offshore support role, initially with Babcock MCS flying the Leonardo AW.139. She joined the Company in 2014, and almost immediately got actively involved, mostly on the education and training side, and especially the vitally important role of introducing young people into the world of aviation. She started by helping to sift the many hundreds of applications that we receive annually for our PPL Scholarships.

In 2017 she joined the Aviation Careers and Education Committee (ACEC) and took on the role of the Air Pilots' Youth Gliding Scheme coordinator, matching school applications with funding and then finding and allocating the appropriate gliding schools for around 350 students each year.

During this period, Gell joined the small Air Pilots' team on the Livery Schools Link (LSL), a Livery-based charity that puts young people, mainly from underprivileged backgrounds, in touch with practitioners of the various Livery professions.

She was twice vice chair of the ACEC, and served as an Assistant to the Court, 2020-23. All of this work she did, whilst living in the North of Scotland, so that any in-person meeting was both a significant effort and financial cost to herself.

In 2023, Gell moved to CHC Helicopters, still based in Aberdeen, flying the bigger and more complex Sikorsky S.92, becoming a training captain. She sustained her Air Pilots work for some time, but eventually the combination of workload and distance meant that she had to progressively step back from her voluntary roles, finally giving up the gliding co-ordination role in early 2025 – replaced by three people!

THE GRAND MASTER'S AUSTRALIAN MEDAL

AMSL AERO



In November 2024 AMSL Aero completed the first free flight of its Vertiia, Australia's first passenger-capable, emission-free, long-range electric vertical take-off and landing aircraft (eVTOL) aircraft. The landmark flight is the first by an Australian-designed and built eVTOL and was operated by remote control in the Central West region of New South Wales. Since the first untethered flight, the Vertiia has taken off, flown and landed successfully more than 50 times. It is the most complex civil aircraft ever developed in Australia, and has been designed to fly up to 1,000km on hydrogen at a cruising speed of 300km/h with zero carbon emissions, while carrying up to four passengers and a pilot.

In May 2025 AMSL completed its first year of hydrogen fuel-cell testing at Bankstown Airport, positioning it for future emission-free flight testing of the Vertiia, which aims at certification by 2030. In August 2025, AMSL Aero secured $AUS3million in grant funding from the Federal Government to develop and demonstrate liquid hydrogen-powered aircraft for regional and remote parts of Australia.

AMSL says the Vertiia must be as light as possible to achieve its performance goals, and that liquid hydrogen is the lightest zero-emission method of storing energy for long-distance flight. Together with Fabrum (which designed and manufactured the advanced composite liquid-hydrogen tanks), it has demonstrated the key steps in that process: producing liquid hydrogen; filling the ground transport container and filling the tanks that will be installed in the aircraft before its first liquid hydrogen flights in 2027.



THE AUSTRALIAN BI-CENTENNIAL AWARD

ACM (RET'D) MARK BINSKIN AC

Mark Binskin AC joined the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) in May 1978, and on completion of flying training was posted to fly Douglas A-4G Skyhawks. In January 1982, he was selected as the first RAN pilot to undergo an exchange with the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), flying Dassault Mirage IIIs and, with the disbanding of the Navy's fixed wing capability, he transferred to the RAAF in 1984.

Binskin served as CO of No 77Sqn at Williamtown, 1998-99, and later Commander of Air Combat Group 2004-05. Additionally, he has served as the RAAF Boeing F/A-18 Hornet Demonstration Pilot and has over 3,500h in single-seat fighters.

During the Australian contribution to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, Binskin served as Chief of Staff at Headquarters, Australian Theatre. Following this, he served as the first dedicated non-United States Air Force Director of the US Central Air Force Combined Air and Space Operations Centre, where he was responsible for the conduct of all Coalition air operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Binskin was appointed to the position of Air Commander Australia in 2007, Chief of the Air Force (CAF) in 2008 and was promoted to Air Marshal. He was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in the 2010 Queen's Birthday Honours for distinguished service to the Australian Defence Force, and in 2011 he was appointed Vice Chief of the Defence Force (VCDF): for which he was advanced to become a Companion of the Order of Australia in 2014 .

In 2014 he became Chief of the Defence Force (CDF), being promoted to Air Chief Marshal and in 2024 he was re-appointed as Chair of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) Board for three years.



THE CAPT JOHN ASHTON MEMORIAL AWARD

TREVOR WRIGHT

Trevor Wright, founder and Managing Director of Wrights Air, has made an exceptional and enduring contribution to aviation safety and flight standards within Australia, particularly in relation

to some of the nation's most remote and operationally challenging environments.

Under his guidance, Wrights Air, based in William Creek, South Australia, has built a reputation for meticulous operational control, robust risk management, and a safety culture that empowers pilots and staff to prioritise sound judgement above all else. His approach reflects a deep understanding that in remote operations, safety is not a system alone, but a mindset consistently reinforced through leadership, training, and example.

Trevor has been instrumental in setting and maintaining high flight standards across aerial tourism, charter, and specialised operations over some of Australia's most iconic yet unforgiving terrain. His emphasis on terrain awareness, weather decision-making, fuel planning discipline, and passenger safety has directly influenced generations of pilots operating in similar environments. He has championed structured training, mentoring, and standardisation and has consistently supported industry collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the promotion of practical safety lessons which have been learned from real-world operations.

He leads with humility, credibility, and a clear sense of responsibility for those who fly under his command. His influence is evident not only in operational outcomes, but in the professionalism and safety-first mindset of those he has trained and mentored.



THE JIM COWAN MEMORIAL AWARD

FLT LT JOHN LEWIN RAAF

John Lewin's aviation career commenced through an undergraduate aviation degree at Griffith University and a competitive internship with QantasLink Safety, providing him with early exposure to contemporary safety management systems, risk-based decision-making, and the practical application of safety principles in a commercial aviation environment.

His leadership capability was also identified early during his university studies, where he was selected as an aviation student leader, responsible for supporting and mentoring peers within the aviation faculty.

Following his entry into the RAAF, Lewin completed the demanding pilot training continuum, where his performance was exceptional and he received five of the course's most prestigious awards. This rare sweep of awards reflects excellence across all facets of pilot training—academic, technical, and practical—and marked him as a pilot of the highest calibre.

Throughout his RAAF career, Flight Lieutenant Lewin has contributed to high-tempo training and mission-oriented flying environments, including joint-force exercises and operationally focused tasking. He has consistently demonstrated sound judgement, technical precision, and disciplined decision-making, underpinned by the strong safety foundation developed early in his career. His ability to integrate operational effectiveness with robust risk management has earned the respect of his peers and commanders alike.



THE HUGH FIELD MEMORIAL AWARD FOR AVIATION JOURNALISM

LIVERYMAN STEPHEN BRIDGEWATER

Steve Bridgewater has been actively involved with aviation journalism for over 25 years. He is currently Deputy Editor of the Royal Aeronautical Society Journal *Aerospace* and has a very high profile on social media channels such as Facebook and Instagram. He was briefly Deputy Editor of *Air Pilot* and has a very high profile at several air displays.

Steve began his aviation journalism career as the youngest ever launch editor in aviation publishing history. In 2000, at the age of 25, he was appointed to create and launch *Air Action*, a magazine aimed specifically at encouraging youth into aerospace. This passion for encouraging and inspiring a new generation of aviators led Steve to become a founding member of the then-Guild's Young Members committee in late 2007.

Since then, he has worked on many magazines including *Today's Pilot, Pilot, Go Flying! Loop, P1, Blades, Light Aviation, Jets* and written for many others including *Flypast, Aeroplane Monthly, Airliner World, Air International and Air Forces Monthly, Air Pilot,* and *Aerospace*. He has also edited - or contributed to - airshow programmes for events as diverse as the Mildenhall Air Fete, Farnborough and Kemble Air Days.

Steve was also the Commercial Director at Air Atlantique where he produced the Meteor magazine for the members of the Classic Flight Club and self-published the book *Aircraft of the Classic Flight*.

Having been given his 'big break' at the age of 25 Steve still does everything he can to encourage a new generation of writers; regularly publishing articles and news features from upcoming writers and mentoring them for a career in aviation publishing. □

THE MASTER'S REGIONAL AWARDS

These local awards are presented in the Regions during The Master's annual tour:

NEW ZEALAND REGION: EDWARD TAYLOR

AUSTRALIAN REGION: CAPT BRIAN GREEVES

HONG KONG REGION: MARTIN HARRIS

NORTH AMERICAN REGION: EMBRY-RIDDLE AERONAUTICAL UNIVERSITY



THE CENTENARY IN 20 ARTICLES
THE BAC/AÉROSPATIALE CONCORDE

By Assistant Seb Pooley with PMs Peter Benn, Mike Bannister, John Hutchinson and Jock Lowe

***Air Pilot's* series of Centenary-focussed profiles of the individuals and aircraft which exemplify the Company's first century continues with the story of the BAC/Aérospatiale Concorde.**



An early model of Concorde displayed at the T&A Banquet, 1964

In 1962, Britain and France agreed to develop a supersonic passenger aircraft together. The partnership brought together British Aircraft Corporation and France's Sud Aviation, with Rolls-Royce and SNECMA developing the engines. The name *Concorde* captured the spirit of the agreement: a shared effort to put Europe at the forefront of civil aviation.

During 1964, the Ministry of Aviation had invited the Guild to participate in discussions on the Concord (sic) and two visits were made by Guild representatives to Filton, Bristol, to inspect the Concorde flight deck mock-up, as a result of which several positive recommendations were made. The Ministry was advised of the Guild's concern that the environment in which the Concorde would fly would not be ready to receive it. It had been suggested, therefore, that experiments should be started as soon as possible to test the ability of a transport aircraft of this speed to operate with existing subsonic traffic. The need for the opinion of professional pilots to be consulted at the earliest possible stage of a project such as the Concorde was also stressed and the Ministry was informed of strong feelings within the Guild that one or more air pilots should be appointed as part of the Concorde project team without delay so that their advice could be used before the design was complete.[1]

The prototypes made their first flights in 1969. The French-built Concorde 001 flew from Toulouse on 2nd March; the British-built 002 followed from Filton on 9th April. On 1st October, Concorde 001 broke the sound barrier for the first time.

In 1972, our then Grand Master, Prince Philip, flew with Concorde Test Pilots Brian Trubshaw and John Cochrane, both Freemen of the Company, in Concorde 002.

Turning that early promise into a reliable passenger aircraft demanded years of testing. Engineers had to solve problems of speed, heat, fuel use and stability. The aircraft's slender shape was built for supersonic cruise, while its distinctive drooping nose gave pilots a better view of the runway during take-off and landing.

Concorde's four Olympus engines provided the thrust to reach Mach 2. At that speed, friction heated the airframe, and the changing distribution of fuel affected the aircraft's balance. The flight engineer monitored the engines and systems alongside the captain and first officer. Every member of the crew had a vital part to play.



Company connections from the very start: Founder Warden and Imperial Airways pilot Capt Arthur Wilkinson with models of the Short S8 (which he had flown) and Concorde

A SHORTER JOURNEY

Concorde entered commercial service on 21st January 1976. British Airways began flights from London to Bahrain; Air France launched a Paris to Rio de Janeiro service via Dakar. Transatlantic routes followed and the aircraft became synonymous with rapid travel between London, Paris and New York.

The speed was extraordinary. Concorde cruised at about 1,350mph, and a British Airways flight set a New York to London record of 2h 52min 59sec on 7th February 1996. In winter, passengers on a westbound evening flight would see the sun rise in the West.



Concorde performs for PM Robert Pooley's Master's Garden Party at Denham in 1987 (R Pooley)

For passengers, the flight offered a sense of occasion. They could watch the speed and outside temperature readings rise on the cabin bulkhead display, feel the aircraft accelerate beyond the sound barrier and look out from an altitude far above that of conventional airliners and admire the curvature of the Earth and black sky. The destination came sooner but the journey itself was part of the experience.

For the crew, speed brought responsibility. The aircraft's systems and performance changed across each phase of flight, and high speeds left less time to respond to developing conditions. Flying Concorde called for specialised training, sound judgement and disciplined teamwork from the crew.

Those demands are reflected in the careers of four Concorde pilots who are PMs of our Company: John Hutchinson, Mike Bannister, Jock Lowe and Peter Benn.

FOUR PILOTS, ONE FLEET



PM Hutchinson flew Concorde for British Airways from 1977 to 1992 and became one of the aircraft's best-known public spokespeople. In 2019, he proposed that BA's Concorde operation should be recognised for its record and teamwork, and PM Benn submitted the award nomination.

"Amongst my fondest memories of my 15 years on Concorde was flying the Bahrain-Singapore route. It was a very different operation from the North Atlantic one. Firstly, there was no noise abatement procedure on take-off out of Bahrain. You simply kept going and were supersonic within 8min of starting the take-off roll. The aeroplane then remained supersonic for the rest of the flight with the routeing taking Concorde in a southeasterly direction west of India and Sri Lanka. Once south of Sri Lanka we would turn east towards Aceh and then south easterly again down the Malacca Straits to Singapore.

"Secondly, the upper air temperatures were substantially colder than on the North Atlantic. On a flight to New York, a typical outside air temperature at 55,000ft was around -55°C and one rarely achieved 60,000ft cruise climbing before commencing descent and deceleration. At the same height out of Singapore the outside air temperature was about -85°C and, on reaching 50,000ft in that much colder air, there was no cruise climbing; the aircraft simply continued climbing at about 2,000ft/min straight up to 60,000ft and you then selected 'Alt hold' on the autopilot and 'Mach hold' on the auto throttles and remained there for the rest of the flight.

"Thirdly, I was privileged to do two Singapore postings, and we always flew those flights as a dedicated crew. For one glorious period, my co-pilot was Jock Lowe and Flight Engineer Bill Brown. We reached a level of Concorde flight management that surpassed anything I have ever known, before or since. Jock, of course went on to become BA Chief Pilot and Bill, after leaving the Concorde fleet, retrained at Prestwick as a pilot and went on to become a BA Training Captain. They were happy days which remain vividly imprinted on my mind."



PM Bannister became the youngest pilot on the Concorde fleet in 1977 and was appointed BA's Chief Concorde Pilot in 1995. He commanded the first modified Concorde flight in the return-to-service programme after the 2000 accident and flew the airline's final commercial Concorde service from New York to London in 2003.

"I've wanted to be a pilot ever since the age of seven. My dream came true and I ended up flying the aircraft that I have always utterly admired - Concorde. Through the years, I have also admired lots of other aviation icons, none more so than the Red Arrows. In my time as BA's Chief Concorde Pilot, I was fortunate enough to fly in formation with them on three separate occasions. Firstly, for the 50th anniversary of Heathrow Airport in 1996. Then for the 1999 State Opening of the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh and finally for the 2002 Golden Jubilee celebrations for HM Queen Elizabeth II. On that occasion, it was to be down The Mall at 1,000ft, 280kt (around 325mph), and over the heads of 1.5 million people!

"Having flown with them before I kind of guessed what flying with the Reds that day would be like. What I didn't appreciate was the sense of awe that I would encounter. There were so many people cheering and waving. From 1,000ft we could see individual faces, flags, arms, banners- all sorts of things.

"From the moment we passed over the Barbican, which

is right on the centre line of The Mall, we could see Her Majesty standing on the Buckingham Palace balcony. She was perfectly visible in a flame orange outfit, almost beckoning us to come and join her.

"Of course, it wasn't just a "let's do it on the day moment". It had been meticulously planned for over six months. The first four of those were spent getting all the relevant permissions, not the least from the BA Board. That involved all of the operational details, a highly detailed 'Safety Case' and the commercial justification. Plus, of course, BA's desire to celebrate Her Majesty's triumphant reign.

"We were at the rear of the formation, 'closing the show' if you like. All the preceding aircraft were current RAF types, ranging from the Boeing C-17 at the front to the brand-new Eurofighter Typhoon at the rear. We had, of course, practised intensely, both on the Concorde simulator in Bristol and in a full-dress rehearsal before the event. That dress rehearsal took us over the IP, the lighthouse at Southwold, but thereafter we deviated to fly over RAF Marham rather than Buckingham Palace.

"If that seven-year-old boy had told me that, in his flying career, he would be part of the team that thrilled so many people that day - and entertained HM The Queen - I'm pretty sure he wouldn't have believed it.

"The unexpected crowning glory was the subsequent invitation that I received to fly with 'Red One' in his rear seat during a full Red Arrows display on the Family Day at RAF Scampton. Although I was slightly trepidatious about pulling so much 'G', and being so close to other aircraft, I knew I was in the hands of the finest professionals in the world. After the display I disembarked feeling thoroughly exhausted, although I had only been an onboard spectator, but my wife Chris tells me that I had a smile as big as The Mall itself!!"



PM Lowe was a Concorde pilot and fleet manager and became one of the aircraft's longest-serving pilots. His career joined hands-on flying with leadership: he flew Concorde, trained crews and managed the fleet. He also spoke candidly about the aircraft's limits, describing it as a technical success and an icon while recognising the commercial challenges of supersonic passenger travel.

"Concorde always looked sleek, slim and elegant, as though it should be flown quickly. An essential starting point was understanding the aircraft's systems and aerodynamics in preparation for the first flight. That first take-off is something everyone who experienced it will remember forever. The engines were immensely powerful and the flying controls remarkably responsive, allowing the aircraft to cover its entire flight envelope, from slow speed to Mach 2.

"Combined, these qualities resulted in a fantastic flying machine that could be flown accurately throughout. Take-off and acceleration never ceased to be exciting, while the higher speeds of approach and landing certainly raised the heart rate. Cruise was pretty much routine - flying even at 22 miles/min - but the overall experience never became routine.

"There were, of course, some inconsistent idiosyncrasies. For instance, an engine failure at supersonic speed could result in a roll in the wrong direction, but these characteristics, and how to deal with them, were all covered by the training.

"Did flying Concorde match its elegant appearance? Most definitely. It was an extraordinary aircraft to fly: powerful, responsive and technically fascinating. But working on Concorde with such a dedicated team, drawn from so many different disciplines, was itself a thrill. Together, the aircraft and the people who operated it provided a lifetime of memories."



PM Benn flew Concorde as a senior first officer for British Airways. "Wednesday 17th February 1999 was grey, wet and windy with intermittent heavy showers pushing across Shannon airport beneath a 1,500ft cloud base. Concorde G-BOAF stood in the wind blowing from 300° at 15kt gusting up to 30, coming across Shannon's runway 24 and onto the stand where she waited in the rain, rocking slightly in the stronger gusts. "Shall we just go anyway", said Training Captain Les Brodie in the left-hand seat of Concorde's flight deck. I sat in the right-hand seat, a place I had hoped to reach for years. I said: 'Yes!' Start Up, (done by Senior Flight Engineer Ian Fellowes, Freeman), disconnect the start carts, (no APU), push back, taxi out the short distance to the runway and line up for take-off.

"We are here for Base Training, the first flight for each of us trainees on the Concorde course. Forty tonnes of fuel compared to the more usual 100 or so. A reheat take off. No passengers, no bags. Just the aircraft, the fuel, the three of us as crew and the four Rolls-Royce Olympus 593 afterburning engines.

"Three, Two, One, Now!" Timers started on the clocks, and the throttles fully forward in an arc. The stunning amount of power. Four green lights: all reheats lit. We scorched down the tarmac into the rain. "V1, Rotate" from Les. Back

on the column with the famous ram's horn controls atop it and scanning the artificial horizon and its preset Theta 2 pitch target like crazy. THE AWESOME POWER. Imagine standing on a diving board and diving straight up into the sky, accelerating all the while as you climb…. straight into cloud. I cannot remember where I levelled off, but it was definitely not at 1,500ft. Descent downwind on a radar-assisted right-hand circuit, breaking out abeam the threshold of the runway.

"Sweeping round the base to finals turn, marvelling at the stunning handling quality of the aircraft. Fingertip precision. Finals, nose fully down now, the PAPIs glowing in the rain, aiming at the touchdown zone. I am flying Concorde. It felt like I'd waited a lifetime to do this, to have the immense privilege of flying the synthesis of genius that is this superb, beautiful aircraft. Four touch-and-goes and one full-stop landing, the logbook says. The best day's flying of my life to date - and this was just the start…"



Painting by Leo Stevenson of PM Mike Bannister leading the Red Arrows over Buckingham Palace for HM The Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002 (Brooklands Museum)

HONOURING THE WHOLE FLEET

In 2019, marking the 50th anniversary of Concorde's first flight, we awarded our Brackley Memorial Trophy to the British Airways Concorde fleet at our annual Trophies and Awards Banquet at Guildhall.

The award recognised the fleet's operational record and the dedication of flight and cabin crew, engineers, and marketing and sales staff. From the start of flight operations in January 1976 to the end of service, BA Concordes accumulated 148,595h, completed 52,070 flights and carried more than 2.5million passengers. (Air France Concordes flew 90,115h on 32,415 flights and carried over 1.3million passengers). The trophy recognised the people behind Concorde's glamorous image: the skilled teams whose work kept her flying.

A DIFFICULT FINAL CHAPTER

On 25th July 2000, Air France Flight 4590 crashed shortly after take-off from Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport. All 109 people on board and four people on the ground were killed. Investigators found that a metal strip on the runway had damaged a tyre. Debris from the tyre struck and burst a fuel tank, leading to a fire and loss of thrust.

Concorde was grounded while modifications were made to reduce its vulnerability through new Michelin 'Zero Growth' tyres and carbon-fibre-reinforced fuel tank liners.



The half-Singapore-Airlines-liveried G-BOAD as flown by PM John Hutchinson (Wiki Commons/ Steven Fitzgerald)

It returned to service in 2001, but the commercial outlook had changed. The crash had affected public confidence, while the downturn in air travel after the 11th September 2001 attacks reduced demand for premium journeys. The ageing fleet also faced rising maintenance costs, as Airbus, the type-certificate-holder, sought to recover the cost of providing engineering support.

British Airways and Air France announced Concorde's retirement in April 2003. BA's final commercial flight landed at Heathrow on 24th October, and the last-ever Concorde flight was on 26th November, when BA's G-BOAF returned to Filton. □

CONCORDE: TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Length	61.66m (202ft 4in)
Wingspan	25.6m (83ft 10in)
Height	12.2m (40ft)
MTOW	185,070kg (408,000lb)
Max payload	13,150kg (29,000lb)
Engines	Four Rolls-Royce/SNECMA Olympus 593 turbojets
Thrust	38,000lb (169KN) per engine with reheat
Max cruising speed	M2.04 (about 1,350mph/2,180km/h)
Typical cruise altitude	55,000–60,000ft
Typical passenger capacity	100
Flight crew	Two pilots and one flight engineer
First commercial flights	21st January 1976
Retired from service	2003

[1] Extract from The History of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators 1929 – 1964 by Liveryman David Brown. Published in 1967.



A RECORD GA YEAR

By Assistant Mark Grigg

At the end of the general aviation flying season, I thought I would reflect on my flying this year and how I managed to get a focus for my GA flying. Last year was busy professionally. At work I swapped the left-hand seat of an Airbus A320 for the same seat on the Boeing 787. As ever it was GA flying that kept me 'grounded' and I found time to renew my FI rating too!

Most of my flying has been with the MP Flying Club at Biggin Hill. My relationship with this club really started on an Air Pilots visit to Biggin Hill organised by Liveryman Jeff Cleary. We were privileged to tour around several operators and organisations at the airport, but the place that resonated most immediately with me was the wonderful Shipping and Airlines, owned by Liveryman Peter Greenyer. Not only is it a light aircraft maintenance facility but it also operates a collection of rare and vintage aircraft: De Havilland Dragonfly, Civilian Coupe, De Havilland Hornet Moth, Miles Falcon, Miles Messenger, Piper J4 Cub and De Havilland Canada Chipmunk.



The Hornet Moth displaying its habitual nose-down tendency

The latter two are available to fly under the auspices of MP Flying Club along with a 'non-vintage' Grumman AA-5B Tiger. Who doesn't like a hanger full of gleaming, well maintained historic aircraft? Personally, my eyes lit up when I saw 'Chippy'. I first soloed one as a newly minted RAF pilot, awaiting my next course, at 6 Air Experience Flight in 1991. The opportunity to fly this wonderful aircraft again was a very definite pull factor towards subsequently joining MP Flying Club where I now instruct. Additionally, just down the road is Damyn's Hall, the latest location for The Tiger Club and a great place to get to grips with the De Havilland Tiger Moth.

THE CHALLENGE

Back in 2010 I wrote an article for *Flyer* magazine on why aerobatics were a good thing for pilots to do post-PPL. This started the relationship with *Flyer* and Ian Seager and it was to them that I turned for inspiration. The magazine had an annual challenge: #Fly2025 Challenge was to fly 20h (GA of course), fly to five new airfields and fly two new types.

Despite a period on the ground for me and some of my aircraft, plus a busy year professionally, I managed a creditable 25h, flew to six new airfields (Shoreham, Lydd, Henstridge, Headcorn, Stapleford and Southend). I converted to the Grumman AA-5B Tiger, on which I do most of my teaching, and managed to solo the Tiger Moth. For 2026 the challenge was a partial repeat: fly 20h, fly two new types OR introduce two new people to general aviation and additionally visit any of Popham Microlight Trade Fair, AERO Friedrichshafen, Sleapkosh, Oshkosh, the 80th LAA Rally or the Flyer headquarters at Wadswick. I will still track new airfields!

The year started slowly with a hop to Damyn's Hall in the Chippy to get rid of the post-Christmas period rustiness. In fact, this year was going to be Chipmunk-focussed because of the 80th anniversary of the first flight of this amazing aircraft in Downsview, Canada. In March I bagged my first new airfield: Earls Colne, a lovely place with a friendly cafe and great welcome from Anglian Flight Centre. My second was a trip to the seaside at Lee-on-the-Solent. Then one afternoon Peter suggested a bit of formation practice as it was a nice day, thus I got to see the lovely Hornet Moth and its interesting nose down attitude close at hand.

In amongst all the instructional trips in the AA5, I popped down to Henstridge on a windy and bumpy day with Jeff to the APFC Fly-in. This was unfortunately the only one I could make this year. May was a busy month, firstly getting checked out on the Hornet Moth, a new aircraft for me. You might describe it as a side-by-side, enclosed cabin Tiger Moth. In 1936 it was sold as a 'gentleman's touring aeroplane', with space for golf clubs or fishing rods between the two seats. It is a quite marvellous tourer, and at Shipping and Airlines we have the old journey logs recording trips to Barcelona and the like. It flies nicely, nose down, with good range and is fun to land.

My next adventure was in Las Vegas. I hired a newish Cirrus SR22 G7 with an instructor and flew from a new airfield, Henderson Executive, via the Grand Canyon

to Sedona, another new airfield, on a hot bumpy day. Luckily this aircraft had air conditioning! Sedona is a most beautiful airfield and a great place for lunch.

Finally, towards the end of the month, I was fortunate to join almost 60 Chippies for a couple of days of formation flying at Halfpenny Green, another new airfield, for the Chipmunk 80th. I was in the same piece of sky as PM Richie Piper and several Liverymen and Freemen. It was a wonderful celebration of an aircraft that was for many their first flying experience as an ATC cadet. Of course, a lot of the thanks for the formation on show go to Upper Freeman Robert Miller who was awarded the 2026 Pike Trophy for his passion and expertise in formation flying.

Later in July, was another adventure when we launched again from Halfpenny Green in the Chippy to rendezvous with the Dragonfly, Falcon and Messenger and proceeded to Sleap in a gaggle to enjoy Sleapkosh, another new airfield. This was a superb event, enjoyed by all and it was on the list of challenge events.



Landing the SR22 at Henderson Executive (Stefanie Hott)

CHIPS CANADIAN-STYLE

On a short break in Toronto later in July, I visited Downsview, where the Chipmunk was conceived and first flew in 1946, then a few days later I was able to fly a Canadian Chippy at the Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum at Hamilton, another new airfield. It was interesting to compare the ostensibly similar versions of the Chipmunk. The cockpit was different, with different throttle, stick, brakes and flap controls. What seems most noticeable is the bubble canopy. Reassuringly, both aircraft seemed to me to be delightfully similar to fly.

August saw me taking the Chippy to the British Airways Fly-in at Booker. This was a great event; however, with over 4,000 pilots in BA and, having been in the company 20 years, I could barely walk 100m without bumping into



The Shipping & Airlines fleet at Sywell, Dragonfly in the foreground

a long-lost colleague! I guess the highlight of the year was when I took the Hornet Moth to Old Warden (new airfield) for the Vintage Aircraft Club Fly-in and then with the Dragonfly, Messenger, another Hornet Moth and a gorgeous Travel Air, flew to Sywell (new airfield) and parked up on the grass outside the The Aviator Hotel for a sociable night. This was a great opportunity to get to know the Hornet Moth and, I guess, experience aviation how it used to be.

On a beautiful day in September, I flew over to Croydon in the Chippy with our Cub for an aerial view of this historic former airport before a very interesting Company ground visit a few days later.

Things started to slow down in October. I have started to get to grips with the Miles Falcon, a very rare 1930s touring/racing aircraft. As it has only one pilot's seat but, interestingly, two passenger seats behind, it will be for me the first aircraft that I will fly without an airborne check-out. I have taxied the aircraft and will wait for a lovely day before taking the next step.

So as far as the #FLY2026 Challenge goes:

- Fly 20h: achieved 67h (but some as FI, teaching my partner to fly!)
- Fly two new types: achieved one
- OR introduce two new people to flying: achieved three, all trial lessons.
- Attend specified event: achieved one
- New airfields: achieved seven

I really enjoyed this task, the opportunity to build a database of desirable destinations which was certainly a great topic of conversation and the challenge of flying new aircraft. My skills have been enhanced and my pilot network has expanded. I commend this type of challenge to fellow GA pilots and look forward to the 2027 version of Challenge. □

OVERSHOOT

A round-up of less-formal items which have caught the Editor's eye



LORDING IT UP

"Not every day do you get to walk through the historic streets of the City of London as part of a tradition that has endured for over 800 years! It was a privilege to take part in the Lord Mayor's Show which brings together the rich heritage, pageantry and ceremonial splendour of the City", *writes Assistant Sam Waller.* "Being part of the magnificent procession and seeing the enthusiastic crowds was a wonderful experience. It was a day of fellowship and camaraderie and a wonderful reminder of the importance of preserving tradition while looking towards the future and inspiring future generations of aviators." Sam was joined by IPM John Denyer, Warden Pete Taylor and Assistant Glen Fricker, seen here with the Master Firefighter, Peter Holland. □



PMs ON LINE

The first of a series of Centenary build-up interviews of Past Masters, with PM Roger Gault, is now 'live' at **https://www.airpilots.org/members/centenary/past-masters/**. Another 11 interviews are currently in production and will be posted as they are completed.

LADY MASTERY

Upper Freeman Capt Janet Patton, the recipient of the Master Air Pilot certificate in October, is not only the 14th woman ever to receive the award (a tiny percentage of the over 1,300 so far issued) but the first ever to be nominated by a woman (PM Dorothy Saul-Pooley) and to be awarded the certificate by a woman, Master Elizabeth Walkinshaw. Those numbers increased by a further 7% minutes later when Liveryman Capt Lucy Young became the 15th (and current Master's second) lady to be awarded the coveted certificate. PM Saul-Pooley (centre) is on a mission to raise the profile of ladies in the Livery, and will be giving an APFC Zoom talk on the early lady Liverymen on 12th January. □



FLYING CONNECTIONS

Aviation chases you even when you're not aviating… W O Bentley first earned recognition for his work in World War One on rotary aircraft engines, culminating in the mighty 250hp Bentley BR.2. It has been said that his 1920s 3-litre car is the equivalent of a DH Tiger Moth without wings. This fine 3-litre 100mph Supersports was first owned by Southampton garage proprietor R F Seward, whose premises built Supermarine Spitfire fuselages during World War Two, and is now owned by marque specialist William Medcalf. Now 101 years old, and with its original body by flying-boat manufacturer Short Bros of Rochester still bearing the scars of a German incendiary bomb attack, the Bentley provided the Editor and his co-driver Quirina Louwman with a fine drive in the Benjafields Racing Club's 500-mile race at Estoril in Portugal in October. Twenty-seven pre-1931 Bentleys started the race; 26 were still running after eight hours of racing. □