

August 2023 ISSUE 58



AIR PILOT



INSIDE

STUDENT PILOTS LOSE OUT
ARMY AIR CORPS PROFILE
FAREWELL TO THE BLADES



THE HONOURABLE COMPANY OF AIR PILOTS incorporating Air Navigators

PATRON:

His Majesty The King

MASTER:

Capt Jonathan P Legat

CLERK:

Paul J Tacon BA FCIS

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

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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:

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FUNCTION PHOTOGRAPHY:

Gerald Sharp Photography
View images and order prints on-line
TELEPHONE: 020 8599 5070
EMAIL: info@sharpphoto.co.uk
WEBSITE: www.sharpphoto.co.uk

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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.

AUGUST 2023

1 st	APFC Fly-in	Popham
13 th	APFC Summer BBQ	White Waltham
23 rd	Promotions Team	Air Cadets camp, Syerston

SEPTEMBER 2023

6 th	APT/AST	APH
12 th	APFC fly-in	Oaksey Park
14 th	GP&F	APH
14 th	Court	Cutlers' Hall
19 th	Visit	Biggin Hill
20 th	Luncheon Club	RAF Club
20 th	Tymms Lecture	RAF Club
21 st	ITF	APH and online
27 th	APPL	APH
29 th	Election of Lord Mayor	Guildhall

OCTOBER 2023

3 rd	ACEC	APH
7/8 th	Visit, Italian AF	Gioia del Colle
11 th	GP&F	APH
15 th	APFC season-end lunch	White Waltham (1 st of 2)
16-17 th	Visit	RAF Benson
22 nd	APFC season-end lunch	White Waltham (2 nd of 2)
26 th	T&A	Guildhall

Cover photos: BAE Systems Typhoon of 29 Sqn, RAF Coningsby (RAF/SAC Graham Taylor); The final display by The Blades (2Excel)

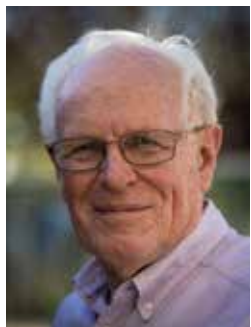
Guidelines for submissions to Air Pilot

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...



Pushing the boundaries has traditionally been a hallmark of aviation. 'Higher', 'faster', 'bigger', 'further' were the watchwords from the beginning – the words that described how a fledgling industry moved from the Wright Brothers' flimsy, underpowered Flyer to the supersonic Concorde in just 66 years, and how it moved

from the German V2 rocket to the Apollo mission's ability to put men on the moon – and return them safely to earth – in just 25. In recent years, especially in civil aviation, terms like 'more reliable' and 'more efficient' have superseded those watchwords, and some of the excitement and glamour of aviation have been lost in that change.

So those who hanker after aviation as a passion as much as a business might reasonably have been expected to be excited by the first "commercial" tourist flight into (near) space by Virgin Galactic on 29th June with another due in early August. Perhaps it was because this wasn't really into space (just 90km/295,000ft up) or into orbit, or perhaps because there have been so many false dawns and missed deadlines in the past 20 years, but it just didn't generate the universal excitement that a 72-minute flight now theoretically available to anyone with \$450,000 (£400,000) to spare might have been expected to.

Virgin Galactic promises more frequent flights in bigger craft – its initial launch rate is due to be just one a month – but it and competitors like Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin are never going to democratise space travel in even the loosest sense of the word as did jet airliners for international air travel in the 1960s and '70s. Neither will they contribute greatly to the advancement of aeronautical technology in the way that the pioneers of the last century did – rather, they travel largely on the back of the work of those pioneers and the advances in other high-tech industries.

There is a danger, therefore, that they become – if they have not already done so – an expensive diversion of resource (which could be used for important aerospace developments like hydrogen fuel or blended wing/body designs) in pandering to a tiny dilettante audience. As their promoters try to stretch with their own 'higher, faster, bigger, further' ambitions towards true orbital tourism, the associated risk that when something goes wrong (as it did recently so tragically with its deep-sea equivalent, the Titan submersible) even greater public resource may have to be expended to try to rescue such tourists, the question must be asked: "Is it worth it?"

Allan Winn - Editor

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NEWS ROUNDUP



THE 2023 LIVERY DINNER

By The Editor

The 2023 Livery Dinner was held on 1st June in the dignified surroundings of Drapers' Hall, with 148 members and their guests enjoying fine food and wine to the accompaniment of music by The London Banqueting Ensemble. A special feature of the Dinner was the welcome return of the ceremony of the loving cup, absent from Company dinners since the onset of Covid-19, to the apparent satisfaction of most of the diners.

The Principal Guest was Ms Angela Stubblefield, Senior Representative UK of the United States Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Previously an active-duty US Marine, Ms Stubblefield spoke of the resilience of the aviation sector post-Covid-19 and of: "...the awesome

power of aviation to bring people together." Reviewing the challenges and opportunities facing aviation which will: "...force us to think hard" on maintaining safety with innovation. The Company's other guests included: Dr Jonathan Holliday, the Master Apothecary; Peter Dove, the Master Fanmaker; Julian Leach, the Master Coachmaker; Sir Chris Harper, President of The Air League; and Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney.

At a Court meeting before the Dinner, six new Liverymen were invested: Ian Melia (the Company's Honorary Treasurer); Captains Paul Atkinson, Dheeraj Bhasin, Glen Fricker and Shaun Mayhew; Marcus Howes; and a Master Air Pilot certificate was awarded to Robin Barclay. □



The new Liverymen with The Master: (L to R) Dheeraj Bhasin, Shaun Mayhew, Paul Atkinson, Ian Melia, Marcus Howes, Glen Fricker



Robin Barclay receives his Master Air Pilot certificate from The Master



The Master and his Principal Guests: (L to R) The Master Fanmaker, The Master Apothecary, Angela Stubblefield, The Master Coachmaker, Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney



Pre-dinner reception in the splendid surroundings of Drapers' Hall



The new Liverymen are acknowledged by the diners



The London Banqueting Ensemble entertains

THE MASTER'S GARDEN PARTY

By The Editor

A fine but blustery Saturday 1st July saw 49 members and their guests enjoying the Master's Garden Party at Popham Airfield in Hampshire. Weather and serviceability issues put paid to most fly-in plans, but Freeman Charles Randall and his son George made it in from Spanhoe in their Van's RV-7. PM Wally Epton's weather-alternate transport for the day was the 1936 Morris 8 tourer driven

by his guest Derek Redfern. Scarcity of members' aircraft notwithstanding, the attendees enjoyed a splendid lunch to the gentle accompaniment of (recorded) jazz and the occasional flutter of Austers landing beyond the marquee. The event, as ever, was superbly organised by Liveryman David Curgiven. □



PM Wally Epton arrives in period style



Charles and George Randall with their Van's RV-7



The party in full swing



The Master's table enjoys its lunch



Ben Cussons, Chairman of the RAC, with Zara, Mack and the Segrave Trophy

RUTHERFORDS WIN THE RAC SEGRAVE TROPHY

Round-the-world solo siblings, Associates Zara and Mack Rutherford, have been awarded the Royal Automobile Club's Segrave Trophy for 2023. The Segrave Trophy is named after British pilot and pre-war racing driver Sir Henry Segrave, who was the first man to hold both land and water speed records, although the latter cost him his life in 1930. The Trophy is awarded for 'outstanding skill, courage and initiative on land, water and in the air – the Spirit of Adventure', and is only awarded in any year if the RAC considers there to have been an achievement of sufficient merit.

The first recipient of the Segrave Trophy was Air Commodore Sir Charles Kingsford Smith, for his transatlantic and England to Australia flights in 1930, and since then it has been awarded 23 times to aviators including Amy Johnson, Jean Batten, Bill Bedford, Neville Duke, Geoffrey de Havilland, Brian Trubshaw, Peter Twiss and (twice) Wg Cdr Ken Wallis. □



VISIT: RAF CONINGSBY

By Liveryman Vic Flintham

It is said that a pleasure deferred is a pleasure doubled, and for 24 members of the Company this was surely the case when they were able to visit RAF Coningsby on 15th June, a visit

postponed from March 2022. At that time the station was much involved in planning to react to a range of potential threats following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Those travelling by car arrived at the station from 09:30, where the welcome was drowned by the roar of a succession of some 20 Eurofighter Typhoons taking off. We didn't need to wait for the formal briefing for us to appreciate that with that number in the air, they had to be off to practise their formation flypast for the King's Birthday two days later.

With peace restored it was into the Station HQ to await those of our number who had opted to fly in and who had been held pending the aforementioned departure of the flypast aircraft. Once settled and having handed over our cellphones we were briefed by Station Engagement Officer Flt Lt Melissa Brown.

TYPHOON SQUADRONS

The base is host to five numbered RAF Typhoon FGR.4 squadrons, four wings (Engineering, Operations, Base Support and I2I Expeditionary) plus a range of support activities including maintenance, training and attached BAE Systems and Rolls Royce employees. Only two of



Members with a Typhoon

the squadrons, nos 3(F) and XI(F), are truly operational; 29 Sqn is the Typhoon operational conversion unit; 41(R) Sqn is the Fast Jet Test and Evaluation Squadron operating within the Air and Space Warfare Centre at RAF Waddington; and 12 Sqn has the peculiar distinction of being a primarily training unit shared with the Qatar Emiri Air Force.

In addition to the two (or three?!) operational units at Coningsby there are four at Lossiemouth, nos 1(F),



The Master gets to grip with a Typhoon cockpit

11(AC), 6 and IX(B) sqns. These units bear the brunt of the quick reaction alert (QRA) task, managing intercepts of Russian aircraft over the North Sea and up into the Arctic. Southern QRA tends to fly south in a hurry to escort airliners with drunk passengers banging on the aircrew door and thus squawking 7500. London is reached in seven minutes but at a speed that rattles windows below.

At the time of our visit the force was depleted. Six of XI Sqn's aircraft were detached to Kallax airbase (Luleå Airport) on the Gulf of Bothnia in northern Sweden for Exercise *Arctic Challenge* while an unspecified number of 3 Sqn aircraft were at Akrotiri in Cyprus for Operation *Shader*, this latter being the British element of support to Iraq in helping to eliminate any nascent Daesh/ISIL in that country or Syria.

SIMULATORS

From our initial briefing and recovery of mobile phones it was across to the simulator building where phones and cameras were deposited in lockers prior to admission to the sensitive simulator room. The simulators are operated by BAE Systems with Defence Equipment & Systems (DE&S) involvement.

We were conducted throughout by David 'Jabba' Hake, sporting a navigator brevet and 29 Sqn patch but now of BAE Systems. A number of members tried their hands and the Master probably hit the jackpot with a Heathrow landing which may well have been a Typhoon first. However his landing on 09L was his third attempt after trying 27L and 27R so air traffic must have got the wind wrong before waking up and switching runways!

We were privileged to be joined over lunch by Station Commander Grp Capt Billy Cooper, who was engaged in flypast rehearsals morning and afternoon. He gave us a genuine and hearty welcome and in return was presented with a Company plaque by the Master.

XI SQN OPS

Niceties completed, we were driven over to the XI Squadron operations area where we were met by Flt Lts Josh Summerfield and Jake Talbot. They explained the role

of the Typhoon and in broad terms the aircraft's capability, although were understandably coy about some aspects of weaponry, performance and deployments. What they did confirm was that all Typhoon squadrons are genuinely swing-role, able to handle the (QRA) function as well as attack, whether launching long-range weapons or providing close air support.

The aircraft now equipping the squadrons are designated Fighter; Ground attack, Reconnaissance (FGR) Mk 4,



The BBMF Lancaster poses with members

confirming the multi-role capability, and there are around 100 operational between all flying units out of 160 originally delivered. A handful of aircraft was delivered to 17 Sqn, the original Typhoon Operational Evaluation Unit based at Warton and two-seat T.1 and single-seat F.2 models soon followed to 29 Sqn - as noted, the OCU. These were replaced by T.3 and FGR.4 variants from 2007 onwards with some aircraft upgraded and, although the OCU retains a few two-seaters, these are not likely to be replaced when they begin to become tired. Future Conversion to the Typhoon will be straight on to the single-seater from the BAe Hawk T.2.

The FGR.4 is a fourth-generation fighter; comparable in many ways to the French Dassault Rafale or American Lockheed Martin F-22 Raptor. Powered by two Eurojet EJ200 turbofans each of 20,230lb (98KN) thrust, it has a maximum speed clean of around Mach 2 and rate of climb of 62,000ft/min taking it to a reported ceiling of 65,000ft. Range varies considerably depending on stores carried, from 325 nautical miles (600km) heavily laden for ground attack to 2,050 nautical miles ferry range, clean apart from external tanks.

EXTERNAL WEAPONS

Apart from the Mauser BK-27 27mm cannon, all its weaponry is carried externally and, depending on tasking, comprises a mix of air defence missiles and ordnance. The short-range (15 nautical mile) missile carried on underwing pylons is the infra-red homing AIM-132 ASRAAM produced by European consortium MBDA, while the longer-range Meteor active radar homing missile with a range of 110 nautical miles is carried in fuselage recesses.

Subject to tasking, fuel is carried in 1,000l (220gal) centreline tanks or up to 2,000l underwing tanks.

Offensive weapons available include laser guided 1,000lb (454kg) Paveway II or IV bombs, Brimstone anti-tank missile and Storm Shadow cruise missile, the latter with a 300 nautical mile range just subsonic. Targeting is by Litening III targeting pod and the turret to the left of the cockpit houses the PIRATE infra-red search and track system.

Members were able to inspect one of the squadron's aircraft at close quarters and check out the cockpit. The aircraft in question was fitted with 1,000l underwing fuel tanks and inert IR pods simulating ASRAAM lock-on. Of interest was the finish of the aircraft in light grey (camouflage grey BS 381c, hue 626 for those interested!) with just the serial as identification. Aircraft of 12 and 29 Squadrons seem to retain distinctive squadron markings but, as the remainder of the force goes in for maintenance unit, markings are removed so one contribution to unit *esprit de corps* disappears. However, XI Squadron obviously expects to be around RAF Coningsby for some time for it has its own uniquely marked gate guardian English Electric Lightning F.6 and the ops unit main doors have the squadron crest in etched glass.

MEMORIAL FLIGHT

As the aircraft were readied for flying, members were transferred across to the Battle of



Grp Capt Cooper receives a Company crest

Britain Memorial Flight where they were hosted by Flt Lt Adam Dyer. Trained as a multi-engine pilot, he is here on a temporary posting awaiting a slot to fly with the Airbus A400M Atlas fleet, no doubt at the back of a queue of newly redundant Lockheed Martin Hercules aircrew. With an obvious interest in aviation and RAF history, Adam introduced us to each aircraft, those at the time of our visit including two Hawker Hurricanes, five Supermarine Spitfires, the Avro Lancaster and two de Havilland Chipmunks, the latter to keep pilots tail-wheel current while conserving precious Rolls-Royce Merlin engine hours. Some 60 personnel work on maintaining the Flight's aircraft, four of which were due to take part in the King's Birthday flypast.

As is so often the case on these visits, the opportunity to talk informally to serving airmen and officers was invaluable. Thanks go to Grp Capt Cooper and to our genial guide for the day, Flt Lt Brown.

□

VISIT: JET AGE MUSEUM

By The Editor

On 24th May a group of 22 members and their guests visited the Jet Age Museum at Gloucestershire Airport near Cheltenham. The museum is tucked away in an industrial area long occupied by various parts of what used to be the Dowty Group on the southern side of the airport (previously known as Staverton). Air Pilots arriving by aeroplane could park tantalisingly close to the Museum, but separated from it by the boundary fence...

We were welcomed by Chris Campbell, Deputy Chair of Trustees and volunteer Visitor Services Manager of the Gloucestershire Aviation Collection, as the museum is formally known. Chris outlined the history



Ian Whittle expounds on the Gloster E28/39 and its Whittle engine (Chris McGee)

of the collection, which was founded in 1986 and housed at various sites before its current permanent home was built 10 years ago. It aims to celebrate the aviation history of the area – most notably that of the Gloster Aircraft Company which was based at nearby Hucclecote, and its antecedent, the local architectural engineering company H H Martyn. The latter started making aircraft components during World War One and then formed the Gloucestershire Aircraft Company in partnership with Airco to build complete aircraft, particularly the Bristol Fighter.

Gloster, which had made its independent name with aircraft such as the Gamecock, became part of the Hawker-Siddeley Group in 1934 and achieved further fame with the Gladiator – the RAF's last biplane fighter but its first with an enclosed cockpit. The museum has a beautiful full-scale replica of the Gamecock, presented only partially skinned so that visitors can appreciate the intricate detail of its construction. During World War Two Gloster first built Hawker Hurricanes (2,750 built up until 1942) and then the Hawker Typhoon, being responsible for almost all of the 3,300 built.

Its most high-profile contribution during the war was, however, the construction of Britain's first jet-powered aircraft, the Gloster-Whittle E.28/39, W 4041/G, which first flew from Cranwell on 15th May 1941. The Jet Age Museum has an accurate full-scale replica of this important machine (the original is in the Science Museum in London) and an example of its Whittle engine, the two forming the backdrop to an inspiring talk during our visit by Liveryman Capt Ian Whittle, son of the engine designer Sir Frank

Whittle and a Patron of the museum. The experience of building this pioneering aircraft led to Gloster building the RAF's first operational jet fighter (and the only jet aircraft to be used by the Allies during World War Two), the Meteor.



The museum's impressive Gamecock replica (A Winn)

The museum has four complete examples of the Meteor on display (T.7, F.8, NF.13 and NF.14), plus the cockpit section of an F.3 which is claimed to be the fourth-oldest surviving structure of a jet aircraft. The Meteor was followed by the huge delta-winged Javelin all-weather interceptor, of which the museum displays an example of the final variant, the FAW.9, which was also the last Gloster aircraft, the name being dropped by Hawker-Siddeley in 1963.

Gloucestershire's contribution to aviation did not stop there, however, and the museum proudly displays the cockpit and forward fuselage section of a Hawker-Siddeley Trident Three, the type which introduced the industry-leading Autoland "blind-landing" system, complete with moving-map display, developed locally by Smiths Industries. The aircraft on display, G-AWZU, was flown during its operational career by Liveryman Dacre Watson, who was delighted to be able to re-acquaint himself with his old "office". Near the Trident fuselage is the cockpit section of an Avro Vulcan B.2, also open to visitors.



Members airside with Pat Voigt's Grob (A Winn)

The museum tour finished with time in the workshops, where we saw amongst other restoration projects the almost-completed cockpit of an Airspeed Horsa combat glider and a much more complicated work-in-progress, the cockpit section of a Hawker Typhoon. Before the group retired for an excellent lunch in the airport's café, the Master thanked Chris Campbell and his team for an absorbing visit, and presented him with a Company crest. Following lunch a group of us was escorted airside to meet up with Assistant Pat Voigt, who had immaculately timed a stop on a training exercise in an RAF Grob Prefect T.1 to coincide with our visit. A walk round the Prefect was followed by an in-cockpit briefing for the Master before PV and his student flew back north and the rest of us returned to our cars. □



The Company is presented with Hawk memento by Wg Cdr Boning

supper. The spread was so extensive that on departure a good portion was liberated and returned to the Squadron to supplement the aircrew rations. The casual atmosphere of the pub restaurant and garden encouraged movement amongst the tables, affording even more opportunity for our members to quiz the pilots on all manner of topics. Our able coach driver returned us to RAF Valley, where a few final nightcaps were imbibed on the terrace.

We were honoured to be joined for an excellent early breakfast by the Station Commander, OC IV(AC) and, again, several pilots before heading back onto the base. From IV(AC) Sqn we were shuttled around the perimeter track to 202 Sqn, which is the RAF Search and Rescue (SAR) training unit, equipped with the Airbus Jupiter helicopter. A fascinating briefing was given by one of the pilots, Lt Cdr Alex Lockett (RN), and a very experienced winchman, Bungy (Ascent). Yet again the visit slightly overran due to the plethora of members' questions and also the 'lifting' of a Jupiter departing on a training sortie. From 202 Sqn we passed by 72 Sqn (or, for those of a certain era, '3 Beach Squadron') back to the IV(AC) Sqn



Search & Rescue explained at 202Sqn

Hangar where a couple of BAE Systems Hawk T.2 jets had been arranged for us to view and even the opportunity to sit in. The kit is certainly light years ahead of the rudimentary steam-driven dials from the original T.1 so, coupled with the augmented communications between jets on each sortie, the weapons effectiveness and air-to-air kills can be calculated very accurately.

Returning to the IV(AC) Sqn crew room for the last time, we were treated to an extremely enjoyable luncheon, with final briefings and opportunities to ask burning questions, prior to our members wending their various ways home. Some escaped by air, train or car and encountered various delays en route, the Master's being possibly the most tortuous.

Suffice to say that the Visit was a resounding success, with ties to our Affiliated Unit IV(AC) Sqn further strengthened and likewise with RAF Valley itself. Our thanks go to Grp Capt Hoare for allowing us to visit his Station; also Wg Cdr James Boning for so ably hosting us and Flt Lt Dan Curnow for his relentless organisation and communication in the preceding months, which ensured that everything ran on rails. □

INTER-LIVERY CLAY SHOOT 2023

By Liveryman Andy Bunn

It was a cool morning when the six intrepid shooters gathered on the lawn outside the clubhouse of West London Shooting School near Northolt. The day started early with a sausage or bacon roll, washed down by a mug of tea, and the weather continued to be glorious throughout the day.

Each year, for the last 28 years, there has been an inter-Livery clay shoot held for charity, organised by Chris Parr of the Environmental Cleaners Company. This year proved to be another roaring success, with over 450 people representing over 80 Livery Companies taking part over the two days.



The Air Pilots team: (L to R) Andy Bunn (team captain), Ian McKenzie, Pat Voigt, Jeff Cleary, Jamie Ferrand, and Paul Smiddy

The Honourable Company of Air Pilots managed to field two teams this year consisting of; Andy Bunn (team captain), Assistant Pat Voigt, Liverymen Ian McKenzie, Jeff Cleary and Paul Smiddy, and Upper Freeman Jamie Ferrand.

The day had a different format this year than previously, being held for the first time at West London Shooting School, of shooting 12 different stands with three, four or five pairs of targets (total 80 clays) on each stand plus a two-man and a team "Flurry" where the four members of each team stand in a line and 80 clays (up to eight at any one time!) are launched overhead for everyone to shoot at, which makes for some very exciting and fun shooting! We had mid-course elevenses; sausage roll and a chocolate brownie. Once we had finished shooting for the day, we all retired to the marquee for a barbecue lunch and some well-earned beers!

EXCELLENT RESULTS

Our teams came 39th out of 94, and our best shot on the day managed 107th out of 466 competitors! The winners

on the day with a team score of 341 out of 400 were the Pattenmakers A; highest individual score was an incredible 76 out of 80. The Ladies high gun (which we have won on a previous occasion) was 62, and the best Flurry score was 76 out of 80: our teams managed a very respectable 62 out of 80 on the flurry.

In the Flurry one of the clays was an orange one that if your team broke incurred a "penalty" of £10 per team member to be donated to the Gamekeepers Association to assist with all those who had suffered and lost jobs during Covid-19. Both teams managed to break that clay and raised £80 for the charities. Several thousand pounds were also raised for the Lord Mayor's Appeal and other charities, which makes a tremendous difference to people's lives across London and beyond.

If you would like to join us next year, please get in touch: the 2024 shoot will be held on Wednesday 15th of May. You do not have to be the best shot in the world, just have the desire to have an enjoyable day out in the countryside. □



LADIES' VISIT TO WHITCHURCH SILK MILL

By Linda Towell, Mistress Air Pilot 2020/21

On a lovely sunny June day, a group of ladies gathered at Whitchurch Silk Mill in Hampshire for a visit arranged by the Mistress Air Pilot, Dominique Legat. On arrival, we were impressed by the

picturesque setting beside the River Test.

The land the mill is built on was originally owned by the Dean and Chapter of Winchester. It was rented out to copyholders in much the same way as a modern lease. The first copyholder in 1813 was Henry Hayter who, with his son, William, had the mill built. Sadly, shortly after they started manufacturing items for their iron and hardware business the country went into recession and they were declared bankrupt. The property was put up for auction and the machinery sold as scrap.

In 1820 William Maddick, a London silk manufacturer, became the new owner. He converted the building into a silk throwing mill, the River Test again providing the power to run the machinery. This was the core business for Whitchurch until the 1860s.

From 1846 the business was owned by the Chappell family. Weaving and handlooms became part of their enterprise. Their workforce was predominantly women and children, some under the age of 13. The 1851 census

shows William Chappell employing 170 people, several working off site.

In 1886 John Hide bought the mill. He began the weaving of silk for Thomas Burberry, who was his brother-in-law. Descendants of the Hide family still live in the area. They tell of raw silk organza being made at the mill for the insulation of cables during World War Two.

Stephen Walters & Co took over the mill in 1956. They still wove silk for Burberry, and they also supplied silk to Ede & Ravenscroft for making legal and academic gowns. In 1971, Ede & Ravenscroft took over the business and ran it until 1985 when it was no longer viable. The mill was then taken over and restored by the Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust.

NOW IN TRUST

Nowadays, under the guidance of the Trust, training courses are held for apprentice weavers. There are also workshops for college students. The mill staff produces silk for small special commissions. Scarves and ties made from the silk are available for sale in the mill shop. However, the running of the mill depends heavily upon charitable donations together with revenue from visitors, the café and the shop.

Our guide, Martin, showed us around all of the building





The Mistress (6th from right) and Ladies at the mill

and explained the work done towards the production of the silk in each area of the mill. Much of the machinery has been restored and is in working order. The looms were not being used during our visit, but we did see two ladies working patiently at their spinning wheels.

Outside the mill, in the beautiful gardens beside the river, the interesting architecture of the building was pointed out to us. We also saw the turret clock which dates from 1815. It was recently restored, and the 200-year-old bell still strikes today.

The Mistress thanked Martin for giving us such an interesting and informative tour. We then enjoyed a lovely afternoon tea after which we had time to visit the mill shop. It was an excellent visit and Dominique must be thanked and congratulated for making it possible. □

GAZETTE

APPROVED BY THE COURT 26 JULY 2023

ADMISSIONS

As Upper Freeman

Daniel Alexander APPEL (NA)
Stuart BEVERIDGE (NA)
Richard Mark CROCKETT
John Richard Antony JAMES
Paula JOHNSON (OS)
Ron KARO (OS)
Silviu-Gabriel SAVOAIA (NA)
Paul Richard SENTES (NA)
Philip Edward SMITH
Raoul Martin VAN ZYL (OS)
James Alexander WATSON
Jordan Michael WESTERHUIS (AUS)

As Freeman

Jonathan Philip AGNEW
David Arthur ALEXANDER
Timothy James DAWSON
Philipp Alexander HASS (OS)

As Associate

Harvey BALL
James Matthew BERGIN
Sheng Chih Isaac CHENG (AUS)
Michael CHEUNG
Enzo DAGHINI
Arpan DAS
Adam James DURRELL
Liam Gallagher GEORGEAUX-HEALY
Joshua Andrew John GREY

Kayleigh KIRK
Martin James OAKES

ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE COURT 26 July 2023

REINSTATEMENT

As Upper Freeman

Robert SUMNER (AUS)

As Freeman

Ian James METHUEN

REGRAIDING

To Livery

Glen FRICKER
Ian GALE
Dhamseth PALLAWELA

RESIGNATIONS

Timothy BATEMAN (OS)
William BURGESS (HK)
James CRABBE
Michael DREGHORN (HK)
Wayne MANNING (NA)
Greg McDOUGALL (NA)
Alanis NAGEL (AUS)
Brett PARDOE-WHERTON
Anthony REALFF
Bruce SIMPSON (AUS)
Richard STROOKMAN
Amin VAFARDAR (OS)
William VOIGT (HK)

Emily WONG (HK)

FORFEIT ALL BENEFITS

Donald BROWN (AUS)
Jack COULTARD (AUS)
Mandam SRINIASAN (AUS)
Arni REGTIEN (AUS)
Matthew STEWART (AUS)
Kartik WALIA (AUS)

DECEASED

Colin APPS
Lord Charles CADOGAN
Merrick CHRUSCIEL
Hamish HARDING
Ian McLEAY (AUS)
Lawrence PENN (AUS)





THE MASTER'S MESSAGE

By The Master, Capt Jonathan P Legat

The last few months have been a whirlwind of activity, which shows that we really are getting back to normal or, at least, a new normal after Covid-19.

In spite of the demands of the Master's busy schedule I was able to find a free day to book the Fuji for a flight from Blackbushe to Compton Abbas for a sandwich lunch and then fly back. I had intended to tell you something about the Master actually going flying but, as Rabbie Burns said: "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men, Gang aft a-gley." On arrival at the aircraft my plans were thwarted

by a flat battery, which grounded the aircraft for 24 hours or so. Instead, I shall regale you with the tale of my first lesson in a light aircraft after a career of flying civil airliners, most notably the Boeing 747 Jumbo. I hadn't flown a light aircraft for decades, not since the last century: in fact, it was so long ago Pontius was still a co-pilot – yes, I've heard all the jokes before!

To land a Jumbo the pilot flares (for the non-technically minded: flaring is when the pilot raises the nose of the aircraft a couple of degrees to slow the rate of descent to ensure a smooth landing) when his/her eyes are just over 50ft above the ground. In a light aircraft this eye height is around 10ft.

My first approach was going well: around 50ft it all looked good, so I flared; with a hint of a chuckle in his voice my instructor said: "Keep it coming down". Realising my mistake, I bravely flew down another five feet or so and flared again, with the same reaction from my instructor. Having repeated this bobbing approach, with the feeling that the grass was well above my ears, I was finally rewarded with the gentle squeak of the tyres on the runway. Breathing a huge sigh of relief, I knew I had a lot

of practice to do. I am reassured that others making the transition from Jumbos to light aircraft experience exactly the same difficulties. Fortunately, it doesn't take too much practice to re-set the expected perspective and flare at the correct height.

Still on the subject of training, it is a matter of great concern that a number of Commercial Air Transport (CAT) Approved Training Organisations (ATOs) have recently ceased trading, resulting in many student pilots not only having their training curtailed but also being owed considerable sums as they had paid in advance for flying training. There is a more comprehensive discussion

of this in the DAA's article elsewhere in this edition of *Air Pilot*.

In my last message I said I was looking forward to the Coronation of our Patron King Charles III. What a magnificent spectacle this was, and as members of this Company you can be proud that we contributed to the Anointing Screen used in the



The Company contributed to the making of the Anointing Screen used during the coronation of the Patron, HM The King

most sacred moment of the ceremony.

In my speech at our Livery dinner, I said: "I do not wish to get into the debate surrounding that occasion [the Coronation] but I think the significance may have been missed by some. The ceremony goes back, almost unchanged, for over 1,000 years. It is this tradition that may appear archaic, but it provides a continuity and therefore a stability perhaps not present in other systems. "Similarly, the history of the City Livery Companies goes back some 900 years: the first record we have is in 1130 when the Weavers' Guild was recorded in the Pipe Roll of Henry I. Someone will no doubt correct me if I there is an earlier reference. This gives the Livery Companies a long tradition and therefore the continuity and stability we enjoy today. In our own case we, the Air Pilots, are now in our 95th year, being somewhat late in getting off the





Schools gliding opens up opportunities that many pupils might otherwise never have thought of

ground. And tonight, I am very pleased on behalf of the Air Pilots to congratulate the Nurses on being granted Livery last month. Rather appropriately, in the order of precedence their number is 111, which as many of you know is the NHS helpline phone number.

Our Livery Companies thrive on tradition, continuity and stability. Inevitably over time there will be change, especially in the last couple of centuries. I am not in favour of change for change's sake of change; however, I am very much in favour of change in pursuit of progress..."

Our principal guest was Angela Stubblefield, the first Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Senior Representative posted in the UK in nearly ten years. Her CV is impressive, to say the least: Angela began her national security career as an active-duty United States Marine, which she says is still her proudest achievement. She is clearly a high flyer and I feel sure her career will take her to even greater heights. She was a most welcome guest and gave an excellent speech for which I offer my sincere thanks and appreciation.

A few days after the Coronation the IPM and I, together with our Mistresses (Consorts), were guests at the Garden Party in the grounds of Buckingham Palace. We were honoured to find ourselves in the receiving line of the Duke of Edinburgh, and took the opportunity to tell him we both knew our Liveryman Pat Murray who had been the Duke's instructor at Cranwell. This broke the ice, and we enjoyed a friendly chat with His Highness about our Company.

I am sure you don't want to read a list of all the functions I have attended but I would like to congratulate the other Companies I have visited on the Awards they have given in their respective spheres, and the encouragement and opportunities they are making available to young people. For our part, once again as I said at our Livery dinner, we are not able to join the marvellous opportunities afforded

by the 'take your child to work' days: in our industry it is rather difficult to take your son or daughter into the cockpit. I was, however, pleased to celebrate what we can do and am proud to tell you this year the Air Pilots is awarding 26 Gliding Scholarships, some of which are provided by Corporate sponsors including Virgin Atlantic, the Red Arrows and 2Excel, as well as several personal sponsorships by very generous Company members. We are also awarding eight Private Pilot Scholarships and two Flying Instructor scholarships.

Additionally - and for me this is hugely important - we are expecting to take around 250 schoolchildren on our Air Pilots Youth Gliding Scheme days. These gliding days, as well as being tremendous fun will, I hope, open the eyes of these youngsters to some of the possibilities beyond school, to some of the opportunities they didn't know existed. They are taught how an aircraft flies; they help pull gliders out of the hangar; they see how the gliders are launched; they record the take-off and landing times of each flight; and each and every one of them - let me emphasise that, each and every one of them - gets a flight in a glider. I think you'll agree that's a great way to spend a school day. They won't all want to be pilots - it takes all sorts I suppose - but they will see that aviation also needs engineers, mechanics, designers, refuellers (perhaps not for gliding), air traffic controllers and myriad other jobs related to the industry.

I have had the privilege, as Master, of meeting many interesting people, which has given me the opportunity to make sure our Company name is known and to spread the message of what we do. Amongst them are Professor Michael Mainelli, who subject to confirmation, will be the next Lord Mayor of the City of London, and the two recently elected Sheriffs, Alderwoman Susan Langley and Alderman Bronek Masojada. Congratulations to them all.

Fly well, and happy landings.

□

REGIONAL REPORTS



Regional Report: North America

By Freeman Belinda Scott

Australia and North America have a common bush flying history. It started with World War One pilots returning home with new skills eagerly looking for ways to fly. They were the lucky few who made it:

the average World War One pilot had 17h of flight time before tragedy would strike. These new pilots were able to fly on instinct and luck, just the ingredients needed to venture into the wild with no runways. Australian pilots would fly into the scorched desert aided by locals who would sweep a stretch of dirt to clear a path. Canadian pilots began testing out skis landing on frozen lakes in the winter and floats in the summer; while Alaskan pilots pushed the boundaries of weather and terrain in the mountains. Some questionable techniques were born out of necessity. Jungle pilots were advised that in the event of an engine failure they should just aim between the trees: the wings would be shaved off, but pilot and passengers might survive.

Surplus World War One aircraft left barely functioning after the rigours of war were used to conquer the last

frontiers and begin the aviation industry. Biplanes slightly modified for civilian use included the Avro 504K, the standard trainer of Britain's Royal Flying Corps until the 1920s. The 400hp Curtis HS-2L originally used by the US Navy was slow but able to carry 2000lb (900kg) of goods for short hauls and was used in Canada and the USA. De Havilland's DH.50A, a conventional biplane, was a reliable passenger and cargo plane favoured by West Australian Airways.

LEAPING AT THE CHANCE

Inspired by the trailblazers who went before me, I leap at the opportunity to do any kind of bush flying. One recent adventure took me through the mountains from Pitt Meadows



Bob Reeve's Fairchild FC-51 on the Brevier Glacier in 1937

to Cache Creek, British Columbia. As I flew out on my adventure, I knew how lucky I was to have a radio, weather briefings, flight plans, GPS, and a well-maintained Piper Cherokee Warrior. My colleague and I were on a ferry flight mission to pick up a Cessna 172. We may have improved technology, but some things haven't changed. Bush pilots are still flying into inhospitable areas only accessible by aircraft for the same purpose such as delivering supplies, exploration, medical care, mapping, coastal patrol, and to fight forest fires.

En route I flew over Lytton: it looked like an old black and white photo. The town was completely destroyed by a wildfire in June 2021; only a pile of ash and black rubble remain. Canada's primary purpose for bush flying in the early days was forest patrol to fight fires and survey. Fortunately, the incredible skills and knowledge that were built back then have been brought forward to water bombers today who saved the surrounding areas.

I followed the river through a mountain range, until I found Cache Creek. The runway slides down the side of a mountain with a giant boulder to dodge before the threshold - such a tame adventure compared to those



Cache Creek's runway sits on the mountainside (Pics Belinda Scott)





The glaciers are still there to awe (and tempt) today's pilots

of the original bush pilots before me. In 1937 Bob Reeve, an Alaskan pilot, would take mountaineers up Mount Lucania in the Canadian Yukon, taking off from muddy flats in Valdez then landing on top of Brevier Glacier at 6,000ft ASL. One time he was stranded for days on the glacier until weather allowed him to do a daring take-off roll down a sheet of ice, plunging through the crust into a deep hole he managed to pick up enough speed on the fall to rise again and make it out. As I flew home, I couldn't resist flying up close to a glacier that was just a little higher than Brevier. Orbiting around the peak I got to see the snow and glaciers twisting down an incredible rock formation. I snapped a photo, but the awesome grandeur was minimised to a postage stamp. The colours faded and the shadows no longer danced. Bush flying is going to places rarely visited - a unique perspective only a lucky few will ever see. I gain new skills every time; however, I am yet to find a glacier I feel comfortable landing on. □



Regional Report: Australia

By Australia Region Chairman, Liveryman Spencer Ferrier

The Australian Region, presently in Winter Dress, is preparing to welcome the Master's visit in late October 2023, after the Trophies and Awards Banquet and his tour of New Zealand. We look forward to him joining our Members in Brisbane, Canberra, Adelaide and Melbourne. A highlight of the Adelaide visit will be the Spot Landing competition and outdoor BBQ, held the day after the more formal meetings. It is always fun and a great occasion to meet in a relaxed aviation environment.

We are pleased to acknowledge the award of Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) to our Upper Freeman Alan



Freeman Jim Whalley AO

James ("Jim") Whalley AO. Congratulations indeed for recognition of his distinguished and remarkable service to aviation, business, and the community. His active contribution to the history of aviation, particularly in South Australia, is justifiably recognized.

On behalf of the Honourable Company, I attended the memorial

service for one of Australia's great commercial Aviators, Max Hazelton, OBE AM, held in Orange, NSW. Max was inducted into the Australian Aviation Hall of Fame in 2012 and was one of the great aviation figures to emerge from rural Australia.

Max's name was a household word in rural and regional eastern Australia as the founder and Chair of Hazelton Airlines, the sounds of whose aircraft could be heard in the quiet morning and evening air as they connected Country Australia to the cities.

Always a canny but practical and adventurous man, Max pioneered night spraying of cotton,

used his aircraft to fight fires and brought safe and reliable air transport to Australia's eastern regions. Max was an outstanding pilot, businessman and aviator. His company eventually merged into Rex Airlines (Rex) to see that company become Australia's largest independent regional and domestic airline operating to 58 destinations throughout all states in Australia. □



The Late Max Hazelton connected outback Australia by air



Regional Report: Hong Kong

By Upper Freeman Mike Y Cheung

My journey into the aviation industry commenced with the Hong Kong Air Cadet Corps (HKACC), where I enrolled at the age of 11 and have been an active member ever since. Following my employment as a pilot for an airline, I assumed the role of officer-in-charge for the cadet aviation education curriculum, and volunteering for the air cadets continues to be a significant aspect of my life.

In Hong Kong, opportunities for flying are scarce. However, the Honourable Company of Air Pilots and the Air Cadet Corps offer overseas flying and gliding scholarships to the youth, enabling many young aspirants to realise their dream of becoming aviators, which they once thought was beyond their reach. As a recipient of the air cadet gliding scholarship, I underwent a gliding course at RAF Syerston, which was a life-changing experience for me.

Currently, the HKACC provides various levels of aviation programmes to its young members. Each cadet receives fundamental aviation theory lessons during their cadet career. For non-commissioned officers, the Qualified Aviation Instructor Course (QAIC) exposes them to a broader spectrum of aviation concepts and theories, equipping them with the aptitude to instruct in their squadrons. For more seasoned cadets and young adults, the Advanced Aviation Education Program (AAEP) offers a PPL ground school theory course that prepares them for future flight training. My duty with the HKACC involves planning, executing and teaching for these programmes.

AFFILIATED ORGANISATION

Earlier this year, the HKACC officially became an affiliated youth organisation of the Government Flying Service (GFS). This association has opened up more avenues for the cadets to partake in the daily operations of the distinguished search and rescue unit. Through a three-module exposure and mentorship program with the GFS, the cadets were given unparalleled opportunities to fly on the GFS's Airbus H175 helicopter, Bombardier Challenger 605 jet, and Diamond DA42 twin-engined training aircraft. During the programme, the cadets were paired with pilot, aircrew, and engineer mentors who provided them with valuable insights into careers at the GFS.

The support rendered by the Hong Kong Region has been a valuable source of aid to the air cadets. Numerous cadets have been beneficiaries of the Region's flying scholarship. Despite a brief spell of radio silence between

the two organisations, the Company has resumed its partnership with the Air Cadets. In 2022, members from the Hong Kong Region volunteered to conduct seminars for the cadets, motivating them to aspire to become aviation professionals themselves in the future. These sessions were very well received by the cadets and members of the general public.

Moving forward, as an air cadet officer and general committee member of the Region, I am dedicated to forging stronger ties between the two organisations. We share a common objective of inspiring the next generation to pursue careers in aviation. With the imminent opening of the third runway system at Hong Kong International Airport it is anticipated that the demand for a skilled workforce in the aviation industry will escalate. Our partnership is more crucial than ever before in nurturing young talents who will steer the future of aviation in Hong Kong.

A GRATIFYING EXPERIENCE

Although it can be demanding to dedicate our leisure time outside of our

daily commitments, volunteering to serve the community is an immensely gratifying experience, especially when we can utilise our professional skills. As a pilot, I have been fortunate enough to combine my passion for aviation with my desire to give back to society. Volunteering for the air cadets has been a fulfilling experience that has allowed me to make a positive impact on the younger generation. The sense of satisfaction that comes from seeing the cadets grow and develop into skilled and enthusiastic aviators is truly rewarding.

The experience of volunteering with the air cadets has been a valuable learning opportunity for me, and has taught me the importance of leadership and effective communication skills, as well as the ability to adapt to different learning styles and personalities. I have also gained valuable insights into the cadets' perspectives, aspirations, and challenges, to better understand their needs and tailor my approach to meet those needs more effectively. Overall, volunteering with the air cadets has been a humbling experience, reminding me of the importance of humility, respect, and a willingness to learn from others. □



A Company-supported seminar for the Air Cadets





REPORT: THE YOUNG AIR PILOTS

By Freeman Dominic Registe, Young Air Pilots Chair

With aviation activity ramping up over the summer period in typical fashion, it would ordinarily be a very easy place to start. Aviation can be far from easy at times however, and with a number of prominent flight schools having ceased trading in recent months, affecting a number of Young Air Pilots in the process, this is most definitely the only place to start.

Whilst the financial barrier to the cockpit is a significant challenge in itself, the broad premise of flight training has transitioned over the years to become an environment in which the cadet, as the unsecured lender at the bottom of the chain, inherits the largest proportion of the risk. In conditions of *sensible* accounting practices and favourable industry demand, the risk-to-reward ratio is often on the cadet's side, which not only masks, but directly fuels, the continuation of what can be a fundamentally flawed financial model.

Sadly, these flaws are apparent in their entirety when a flight school has no choice but to go into liquidation and a cadet has received only a fraction of the training paid for upfront, with little to no chance of recouping these costs in many cases.

As members would expect, The Honourable Company of Air Pilots is quietly working behind the scenes, alongside the relevant bodies, to facilitate change. Whilst enacting any changes in legislation or financial practice will indeed take time and substantial support from governing stakeholders, the Company remains well placed to positively contribute towards the ongoing aim of protecting cadet pilots.

I have been in contact with each of the Young Air Pilots affected by the aforementioned flight school closures and, unsurprisingly, resilience and determination have been common traits in conversation, alongside admirable quantities of good spirits. Needless to say, the entire membership wishes them well, and favourable summer conditions ahead.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Favourable conditions will also be high on the list of agendas for this year's cohort of company scholars. With nine PPL and 26 Gliding scholarships awarded, alongside two Flight Instructor scholarships, hundreds of flight-time hours will be carried out by Air Pilots scholars across the country in the coming months.

In what proved to be an incredibly competitive year, the Young Air Pilots were involved in the selection process

across all three scholarships and complimented what was already an incredibly diverse and experienced team. With both the PPL and FI scholarships to be completed by respective deadlines, each candidate is assessed not only on the core competencies required to be a pilot, but also on their ability to successfully navigate the rigours that small aircraft flying entails.

In addition to the Company's formal framework, an informal support network of Young Air Pilots and former PPL scholars exists to aid the current intake of PPL scholars during their training. A concept still very much in its infancy, it has already proved to be an invaluable mechanism in recent years and will no doubt continue for many more to come.

GETTING INVOLVED

We are incredibly fortunate to have an abundance of competent aviators operating across the world under the Young Air Pilots umbrella, and the demand for them to be involved in various company activities will never waiver. To that end, I endeavour to involve as many of you as possible.

Influencing aviation and supporting the next generation of aviators can transpire in a multitude of ways, whether it be supporting company events, forming part of the scholarship

selection team, contributing to one of several working groups, or simply visiting some of our scholars during training. Irrespective of your particular focus, it will always be a pleasure to incorporate you into the fold.

Given that busy work commitments and flying rosters are common practice among many of you, during the summer season in particular, it is only right that a number of informal socials are on hand to help balance the schedule. With an end-of-summer BBQ & Fly-in at White Waltham already scheduled, and a number of other socials close to being confirmed, do please keep an eye on your messages and emails for dates for your diary. It would of course be fantastic to see as many of you there as possible. □



Young Air Pilot, Associate Kristoff Ahlner completing his seaplane rating in Scotland

FROM THE DESK OF THE DAA



By the DAA, PM Nick Goodwyn

At the May Court meeting, the IPM highlighted the important issue of the financial oversight of Approved Training Organisations (ATOs). In recent months, a number of notable commercial air

transport (CAT) ATOs have ceased trading and entered receivership, resulting in many student pilots being owed large sums paid in advance for flying training.

The total amount owed to customers of these ATOs has been estimated in the order of £4million, with individual customers owed up to £80,000 each. These sums are unlikely to be recovered. In addition to the terrible impact this has had on the aspirations and future financial resilience of these potential commercial pilots, there is also the human cost to the flight instructors, operations staff and engineers of those flying schools.

The Air Pilots, from our membership and through the ACEC and Instructors sub-committee, has always been acutely aware of the challenging and, at times, marginal viability of this sector of the industry. However, in the context of the recovery of CAT post-pandemic, the continued forecast of future pilot shortages and the commentary, from some, of the opportunities in the UK of the withdrawal from the EU and EASA to enhance (or 'restore') our pilot training standards, the loss of these notable ATOs and, importantly, the lack of financial protection of their customers is deeply troubling. What, therefore, of the role of the Department of Transport (DfT) and the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) in the oversight of ATOs in this area?

CALL FOR ACTION

As reported by the BBC and other media, trainee pilots who have lost potentially tens of thousands of pounds are calling on the aviation regulator to take action and the Air Pilots agrees. This position is also supported by BALPA and other groups.

As example, one family re-mortgaged their house to raise the £90,000 needed for their daughter to train as an airline pilot. This young person signed up with a Shoreham-based flying school last year. She had to make a down-payment of £10,000, then pay a further £4,500 each month. But in late May the school went out of business, which left her parents with losses of £45,000. Another, who was a student at a Dundee-based flight school, said he had lost about £35,000 but that some students had lost upwards of £50,000.

He said: "There was a £10,000 deposit when I joined and as my parents weren't able to afford the massive fees of an upfront cost, we paid on a monthly basis - but you still had to keep the monthly payments up, even if you weren't actually using the money."

He commented that he only found out the company had collapsed after seeing an online news article and added that another student had messaged that he had lost £6,000 five hours before the flight school went under.



The training might be safe, but is the ATO? (iStock)

"The administrators made it very clear that it was very unlikely that any students would see any sort of funding coming back their way, which is disappointing. Without the funding, there's no government support that allows you to do this sort of job".

SCHOOLS STRUGGLING

The concern is that others could follow as schools burned through cash reserves during the pandemic, leaving them vulnerable and struggling to repay accumulated debts and have been using pressure for students to pay 'up front' to be used as working capital.

The UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is tasked by the Department for Transport (DfT) to investigate and prosecute breaches of aviation safety rules and, notably, some aviation-related *consumer protection* and health and safety requirements.

The CAA website states that its approval of an ATO means that the ATO complies with all safety requirements and is able to provide training to an agreed standard. It also states that the CAA *does not* regulate the financial viability of flying schools or clubs, so CAA approval to conduct flight training does not imply any certification of financial health or stability. For this reason, the CAA advises all prospective student pilots to take precautions to protect their financial investment.

CAA RESPONSIBILITY

For clarity, in relation to financial oversight of ATOs, somewhat erroneous suggestions have been made in some quarters that the CAA has a regulatory responsibility under retained EU Law to audit or inspect ATO finances to ensure they have sufficient operating capital:

- Annex to ED Decision 2012/006/SUB PART ATO – SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO APPROVED TRAINING ORGANISATIONS (ATOs) SECTION I – GENERAL

AMCI ARA.ATO.105 Oversight programme GENERAL

(b) In addition to the items required in AMCI ARA. GEN.310(a), such an audit or inspection should focus on:

(2) *evidence of sufficient funding*

However, this is part of the Aircrew Regulations and so relates to safety and not financial viability, and it does not state or mean that the CAA has to ensure that ATOs have sufficient operating capital. The CAA has clarified that it is neither mandated nor qualified to do so under this Regulation and that it is a common misinterpretation. What the CAA looks for is 'evidence of sufficient funding' for a safe operation: for example, enough people, facilities and maintained equipment.

So, importantly, it would be reasonable to urge the DfT and the CAA to reflect on this part of regulation as an opportunity to strengthen its oversight responsibilities and adapt this clause to mandate that ATOs can show evidence of sufficient working capital for financial viability and thus protection of their consumers.

Further, the CAA website advises clearly (and this is the view expressed anecdotally by CAA representatives) that student commercial pilots should avoid paying any training costs 'up front' as:

"Many flying schools may offer a discount if you pay more money 'up front'. Whilst you can make a saving, it should also be considered what will happen if the school or club ceases trading. If payments are made in advance, using a credit card will usually protect the payment up to a certain amount, whilst cheque or bank transfer payments may result in you losing your money.

"Some students may elect not to pay in full for the training in advance, but to control the flow of payments to the ATO/DTO. This can be done by means of setting up an escrow account. In such arrangements, the ATO/DTO and the student agree to a schedule of payments that ensure that funds are released from the account to the ATO/DTO only at certain pre-agreed points in the training programme. Payment is made only for

the training that has been provided.

"Alternatively, many people pay per lesson which limits their financial exposure and also gives added flexibility should they wish to call a halt to their training or want to change schools."



Should the CAA do more robust checks before handing these out?

The Company, through the lived experience of our members, is aware that some ATOs have threatened to deny training opportunities unless payment is made in advance and would not allow credit cards to be used for these advance payments, thus denying consumers the protection they would otherwise have under Section 75 of the Consumer Credit Act. Noting that the CAA suggests the setting up of an escrow account, it appears that these are not widely available and are not preferred by organisations despite the CAA advice. It is suggested that knowledge of this practice has been widely known by those involved in the industry, and thus there are concerns that the CAA risks being seen as complicit by inaction against this practice.

LETTER TO THE MINISTER

Through a letter from the Master to the Aviation Minister, the Company has strongly urged the DfT to ensure that the ongoing financial viability of ATOs is upheld through the CAA audit and inspection programmes, as required by retained EU law and that the CAA ensures that consumers seeking to undertake commercial flight training are protected from loss of their investment by committing to the CAA stated position that trainees should not be required to pay up front for flight training, or that ATOs offer a scheme that protects trainees' investment.

After the withdrawal from the EU, the government has stated that it: "...wants the UK to be the best place for aviation and this starts at the grass roots". The regulator has commented that withdrawal is an opportunity for the UK to re-establish itself as 'the best place to get the best in flight training'. The Air Pilots supports this intent and believes that protecting the next generation of pilots through proper oversight and consumer protection will achieve this, and has offered to meet with the Aviation Minister, DfT and the CAA to discuss, as an independent body, what we could do to facilitate support for future commercial pilots, ATOs and their instructors and other staff members. □

AFFILIATED UNIT PROFILE: THE ARMY AIR CORPS



By Capt Rhys Woodworth, AAC

Last year the Army Air Corps (AAC) celebrated 65 years of service. Founded in 1957, the AAC may operate vastly different and more capable aircraft than it did then, but it is still tasked to deliver

the same primary results: *Find & Attack*.

APACHE DEVELOPMENTS

One of the Corps' key platforms is the Boeing Apache helicopter. Currently, the 'E' model is building up to full operational capability (FOC) at 3 Regt AAC, whilst the earlier AgustaWestland-built 'D' model, or AH Mk I, is still being operated by 4 Regt AAC. This older model will remain operational until March 2024, when 4 Regiment will also transition to the 'E' model. These new aircraft, of which there are 50 in total, are split between Flying Station Wattisham, home of the Apache helicopter force, and Army Aviation Centre Middle Wallop, where conversion-to-type (CTT) and conversion-to-role (CTR) training is conducted by 7 Regt AAC.



AAC Wildcats have a role in designating targets for other RAF and Army platforms

As part of 3 Regt AAC's journey to FOC, 663 Sqn recently deployed to Scotland to conduct mountain flying, as well as operating around the UK on Exercise Wessex Storm. Here, it conducted a nine-ship strike mission; not an easy task when operating a new aircraft. Later in the year 662 Sqn will deploy overseas to conduct hot-and-high training in a desert environment with a live firing package. These new airframes, bought directly from Boeing, feature moving map displays and the ability to operate manned/unmanned teaming with UAS platforms and Link 16 technology. This allows Apache pilots to see targets identified by other platforms and to share battlefield information with other assets.



The AAC's Apache Model Ds are being phased out in favour of new Model Es

With 3 Regt AAC busy transitioning, 4 Regt AAC has maintained very high readiness (VHR) duties over the past 12 months, deploying to Bardufoss in Norway to maintain arctic maritime currencies and, in March of this year, it conducted deck landing training on RFA Argus. Additionally, 656 Sqn 4 Regt AAC has recently returned to the UK after a deployment to Estonia as part of the NATO Enhanced Forward Presence. Whilst there, the Apache was paired with the Leonardo Wildcat to form an aviation task force. This task force exercised with partner nations and took part in live firing packages alongside NATO assets, forming part of the UK Armed Forces Battle Group.

WILDCAT DEPLOYMENTS

The Wildcat helicopter is operated by 1 Regt AAC based at RNAS Yeovilton, whose 661 Sqn has just finished a stint of being a high readiness squadron, prepared to deploy anywhere in the world at short notice. This period saw it deploy to Oman to conduct environmental training, including how to conduct dust landings and operate in degraded visual environments. Meanwhile, 659 Sqn has been refining Air Observation Post (AOP) tactics, a role conducted regularly since the Corps' inception. As part of this role, the squadron has deployed alongside Royal Artillery light guns and howitzers, finding targets and correcting artillery fire. Earlier this year, 659 Sqn also deployed to Scotland to conduct aerial gunnery and to train in designating targets for other platforms. Both on this deployment and in Estonia, Wildcat crews have laser designated targets for Paveway guided bombs dropped from Eurofighter Typhoons. Although not flying there, 661

Sqn 1 Regt AAC has contributed to the UK's efforts to assist Ukraine by training its forces sent to the UK; aircrew have worked alongside the Royal Artillery to teach Ukrainian service personnel how to designate targets and call on artillery fire.

TRAINING REGIMENTS

Training for the AAC is delivered by 2 (Trg) Regt, 7 Regt and 9 Regt AAC. Of these, 9 Regt AAC is based at RAF Shawbury. Operating under No 1 Flight Training School, it trains aircrew on the Airbus Juno HTI in basic and advanced rotary flying. The regiment operates two squadrons: 660 Sqn delivers the basic helicopter flying syllabus, whilst 670 Sqn delivers the advanced helicopter flying syllabus. AAC pilots no longer undergo elementary flight training at RAF Cranwell and instead start on the Juno HTI with 660 Sqn.

The AAC's 2 (Trg) Regt is based at the Army Aviation Centre (AACen), Middle Wallop. Its main function is to deliver initial and subsequent trade training alongside mandatory career management and leadership courses, thereby enabling AAC personnel to be promoted. Soldiers receive specialist training from 668 Sqn, where groundcrew specialists learn to re-arm, refuel, marshal and package underslung loads for helicopters. Communications specialists are trained in a range of communications equipment, developing the ability to deploy with a minimal footprint whilst maintaining communications links between aircraft, ground stations and rear hubs when deployed. Aviation Officers receive specialist training on forward and arming refuel points, enabling helicopters to be deployed forward to provide greater flexibility and a longer reach if required, or the ability to stay in the battle and provide support to units for longer.

GAZELLE RETIREMENT

The AACen is also base to 7 Regt AAC. This year, the Westland Gazelle conversion flight celebrated the 50th birthday of that helicopter and trained its last student, as the AAC prepares for its out-of-service date next year. The flight remains busy supporting JHC taskings and is aiming to attend a variety of airshows this year before it disappears from UK skies. CTT training for the Apache is the responsibility of 673 Sqn, and it is halfway through delivery of its first E-model course. This initial course has seen a number of individuals complete an Aircraft Qualification Course at Fort Rucker, Alabama, but in the future personnel will receive all AH training in the UK.

CTR training is conducted by 653 Sqn, with pilots learning how to fight with the Apache and operate as a crew of mission commander and pilot. The training focuses on operating in two and four-ship formations to deliver strike packages, and culminates with a live firing package,

ensuring aircrew are front-line ready upon arriving at Wattisham. Wildcat CTT and CTR training is delivered 'in-house' by 652 Sqn, 1 Regt AAC at RNAS Yeovilton.

The AAC also has a reservist regiment, 6 Regt AAC, which frequently trains and mobilises alongside regular personnel. The regiment trains and maintains communications and groundcrew specialists, meaning a pool of qualified personnel is ready to assist when the need arises.

Last year the AAC made a significant change to its recruiting policy. The Army is the last service to have soldier aircrew and this is something the Corps remains proud of. Having personnel transfer from different parts of the Army brings a wealth of experience to our Corps and now, soldiers can apply to become aircrew at the rank of private. They still require a recommendation to promotion, but this change allows them to start the application process much earlier in their careers, thereby meaning



*The shortly-to-retire Gazelle served in the Balkans
(All photos Crown Copyright)*

they qualify earlier and, crucially, that they can stay in the cockpit for longer. This then affords more opportunities for them to progress into other roles such as Qualified Helicopter Instructors or Qualified Weapons Instructors.

The AAC on average loads around 30 personnel per year onto flying training courses. If readers are interested in joining the AAC, please email **AACHQ-RecruitingMailbox@mod.gov.uk** and the team will happily get back to you. Alternatively, AAC joining requirements are at: <https://jobs.army.mod.uk/roles/army-air-corps/officer-pilot/>

AAC activity can also be followed on social media: **Facebook**, https://www.facebook.com/TheArmyAirCorps/?locale=en_GB; **Instagram**, <https://www.instagram.com/armyaircorps/?hl=en>; **Twitter**, <https://twitter.com/armyaircorps/status/1509580554500464642>

□



THE FINAL *BLADES* SUMMER BALL

By the Master-Elect, Richie Piper

An English summer brings thoughts of Wimbledon, Henley, the Lords Test Match and Glyndebourne, with the essential accompaniments of

champagne, strawberries & cream and Pimm's! For a decade, this summer calendar has included *The Blades* Summer Ball, but sadly this year's instalment was the last and marks the conclusion of the career of *The Blades* display team.

For those not aware, *The Blades* display team was created as part of ex-Red Arrows pilot Andy Offer's 2Excel organisation. During his career with RAFAT there were many requests from the public to fly with the *Red Arrows*, which naturally was not possible. *The Blades* was created to satisfy that demand and provide a civilian display team whose pilots had previously flown with the *Red Arrows*. With an AOC to fly the public, it described itself as the world's only aerobatic airline.

The Blades was formed in 2006, initially led by Andy Offer and has featured 14 pilots over the years. Throughout that time one constant has been Andy Evans, who has led the team for many years through to its final display. Andy Offer recognised some time ago that the airshow circuit could not sustain such a display team financially, with the level of practice and equipment needed to maintain its high standards. He changed focus to embrace more of the corporate market by providing exclusive events based around flying with the team. It also utilised sponsorship,

with sponsors' branding appearing on the immaculately maintained Extra aircraft. However, the team remained true to its RAF roots by supporting RAF family days and charities such as the RAF Benevolent Fund. Sadly, though, with the continuing decline in air displays and the loss of shows together with the challenges of the economy, the decision was made in 2022 that this year would be the last season for the team.

The Blades Summer Ball was created from the corporate events as a way to thank families, friends, sponsors and good causes which *The Blades* supported. With the ball being held in summer, the long evenings provided the black-tie guests with opportunities to fly before the dinner. Guests were given "boarding passes" which allowed them to book times to fly in a variety of aircraft ranging from *The Blades* themselves, Beech King Air, Piper Navajo, Robinson R44 and R66 to a fleet of de Havilland Tiger Moths. The Tiger Moth flights are typical of the charitable support provided by 2Excel as they result in a donation to the Tom Castle Scholarship Fund. The sight of ladies in ball gowns getting into five Tiger Moths with engines running is surely part of the legend of an English summer!

The flying has always concluded with a display by *The Blades* and others such as Richard Grace's superb twilight display last year in the Grace Spitfire. However, this year was kicked off with a special display by five *Blades* Extras in arrow formation with Dave Puleston flying a Supermarine Spitfire as the 'shaft' of the arrow. By flying



Mike Ling and Geoffreys after the final display (R Piper)

the fifth Extra, Andy Offer could join the current *Blades* to bookend his flying with the team. The immaculate formation drew applause as they flew bends through the setting sun.

Then it was time for *The Blades* final public display after a brilliant 18-year career. To say that it was of their usual high standard goes without saying. However, the emotions of those who watched on the ground (guests plus onlookers who had appeared knowing the importance of the occasion) were bitter-sweet. Joni Mitchell's song *Big Yellow Taxi* includes the words: "You don't know what you've got till it's gone", but everyone present knew exactly what they had enjoyed over the years and were going to miss. It was reported that as Andy Evans taxied the team back in after the display, the emotion was clear in his voice as he called for the final shutdown, but not before the team saluted the crowd with final burst of smoke from all four aircraft. The memory of *The Blades* will truly live long but will be very much missed. Later at the dinner, the four pilots who had flown the display were applauded in and

12 of the 14 pilots who had flown with the team were welcomed to the stage to rapturous applause. Andy Offer presented each of them with a special leather-bound photo book recording the team's history.

However, the ethos of *The Blades* has not just been about flying the public in formation aerobatics and performing displays. The team has been a long and loyal supporter of charities such as Aerobility, the RAF Benevolent Fund and RAFA, along with a number of local community charities. The Ball was no exception, and the auction on the night raised an impressive sum for these charities.

One notable item was a flying lesson with Andy Evans.

It had reached £5,100 in the silent auction, but when it was moved to the public auction, conducted by the inimitable Upper Freeman Mike Ling



Sunset for *The Blades* (Ian Black)

(who had returned from the Far East to fly in the last *Blades* display) the winning bid rose to £30,000! That is a fitting measure of the affection for Andy and the support of the team's sponsors.

So, as the final *Blades* Summer Ball wound down in the early hours, everyone had enjoyed a fabulous evening, seen excellent formation flying and raised lots for charities, but knew the final chapter on *The Blades* had closed. Thank you, Andy Offer, for the idea and leadership to carry it through to execution, supported by the team of people that made *The Blades* what it was. □

YOUR VISITS TEAM NEEDS YOU!

Members' visits are a vital and vibrant feature of the Company's calendar, and are entirely organised and run by a volunteer team headed by Liveryman David Curgenvin. A combination of advancing age and changing responsibilities or circumstances of existing team members means that its numbers have been seriously depleted in the last few months, and David is urgently seeking new blood to rejuvenate his squad. No great qualifications other than enthusiasm and organisational ability are called for – individual team members take responsibility for liaising with prospective visits venues, but booking and other central administration is handled by David. If you are able to join the team – or would like to discuss the opportunity to help the Company in this important role – please contact David on visits@airpilots.org.





AN ATPL JOURNEY

By Associate Stephen Daly

Having lived vicariously through the contents of previous Company scholars' reports, I've been kindly asked to write a brief account of my integrated journey to date. I'm a past winner of the Company's Gliding & PPL (Air BP) Scholarships. These life-changing scholarships only re-affirmed my intentions of becoming a pilot, and my desire to become part of such a dynamic profession. Initially, I pursued studies in Aeronautical Engineering at the University of Limerick, while interning at aircraft lessors. However last year, I was successful in my application for an ATPL Scholarship with FTEJerez. Now, approximately halfway through my training, I'd like to take this opportunity to document my experience as an integrated student at this notable juncture in aviation history.



Stephen's flying so far has been on the PA-28

My training commenced in July 2022. This entailed five months of ground-school, completing our first sitting of six subjects. The class was a mixture of self-sponsored and airline cadets (Air Astana).

Some of us opted for both sets of EASAs and CAAs, to improve job prospects. FTE's ground school instructors specialise in a maximum of three subjects each, which compounds layers of expertise and depth to each lesson. Additionally, having a 9am-5pm schedule each week, and full board accommodation, enabled us to solely focus on passing the ATPLs. With a numerical background, I particularly enjoyed General Navigation and Principles of Flight! Retrospectively speaking, however, I think Meteorology was the most useful, as its applicability is most prevalent in day-to-day operations.

VISITING AIRLINES

Since commencing my studies, there has been more than a handful of airlines visiting and arranging seminars for us: Aer Lingus; Volotea; EasyJet; Wizz Air; Ryanair; and British Airways to name a few. This has been really positive, hearing first-hand how each operator is managing future expansion, and how we could potentially fit into those plans! These visits are not only a renewed source of motivation, but they also provide industry insights beyond what we could find elsewhere. For instance, one airline that presented recently didn't even exist when I started university just three years ago – a testament to how fast-moving this career is.

Before I knew it, my iPad (which by then had become an extension of my arm) was replaced with a checklist, kneeboard, and headset. The 13 ATPLs had now become a distant echo. It was comforting to know the gap between the flight-deck and myself was bridged a little closer upon the completion of the exams. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the immense support I received from peers, and also our instructors, throughout this period. There was great camaraderie amongst the group, and we knew we weren't alone in our struggles. The smell of Jet A1 every day on the apron brings me tangibly closer to an airliner! Though I keep longing for an aircraft whose nosewheel is positioned behind me, I've fallen in love with the Piper PA-28!

INITIAL PHASE ENDING

The initial phase of flying (which I am about to complete), is primarily conducted on the PA-28. Most of this flying is commensurate to the accreditation of a PPL(A) SEP, with the Commercial QCC addition and instrument flying time. We also complete some simulator time during this phase, in preparation for the instrument portion of flying on the PA-28, of which the remainder will conclude on the Diamond DA-42. Having dabbled with different standards of avionics in my flying journey to date, it's nice that FTE has struck a balance between the analogue instruments and the modern EFIS setup.

Reflecting on the last 80 hours of entries into my logbook, the experience has been nothing short of incredible. I'm really fortunate to be able to fly in a location that sees over 300 days of sunshine per year, so the hours have accumulated quite fast! That said, there are many intricacies related to Jerez operationally. Firstly, commercial traffic: I seldom found myself venturing to commercial



Instrument flying in the bright skies of Spain

airports back in Ireland (primarily due to landing fees!), but at our base, it's a big operational consideration. It's not only inside the CTR abiding with wake turbulence separation, but our training area airspace also often contains some IFR traffic taking up holds. Anticipating which runway affects the general handling area is a factor I frequently think about. Additionally, we have danger areas in close proximity to the airfield, and we must remain vigilant of those.

UNMATCHED VARIETY

The variety of flying that the south of Spain affords us is second to none. As the school owns an airfield (Trebujena) just eight miles north-west of LEJR, students can hone their radio-telephony practice for unmanned airfields. This narrower runway ensures that we do not become too complacent with our side picture in the transition to the flare. To date, the record number of touch-and-goes in a day at Trebujena stands at 140! Undoubtedly, the navigation portion of my flying so far has been most memorable. Venturing outside the comfort zone of our local training areas has been thoroughly enjoyable. I've had the opportunity to fly to Córdoba, Seville, and Granada. Each new airfield has been unique from a Threat and Error Management (TEM) perspective. In relation to Córdoba, I conformed to the ATZ just when the AFIS closed, so I had to maintain a high level of situational awareness. Seville, on the other hand, is the sixth busiest airfield in Spain. In that regard, being ahead of the aircraft is essential. This level of anticipation is also required for places like Granada, which is surrounded by unforgiving terrain. Consequently, I was constantly assessing MSAs, weather and a plethora of other variables as I began tracking closer. The navigation segment wasn't

only landaways. Jerez is located to the west of breathtaking mountains (Sierra del Pinar for example), and to the north of a vast photogenic coastline. Night flying sees this landscape in a different perspective. The urban lights sprawl out beneath the aircraft, painting a breathtaking panorama of human civilization.

FLIGHT SAFETY REP

Recently, I've been successful in an application for the position of Flight Safety Representative. In this role, I liaise with students and management on safety matters related to flying. Safety in our industry is of utmost significance. It's a real privilege to be able to contribute to safety matters, upholding the professionalism and integrity associated with being a pilot. Adding to the school's positive reputation of safety has been immensely rewarding, meeting professional expectations beyond the entries in my logbook. It has given me great context about the role of safety in a complex organisation. I look forward to continuing this position, and hope to apply myself in a similar capacity upon employment in a flying role.

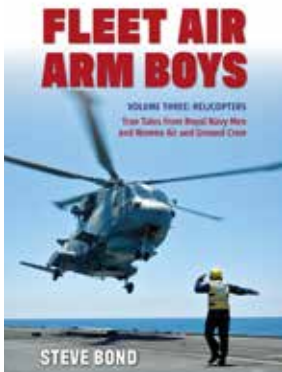
As the curtains begin to fall on the single engine, I eagerly anticipate the challenges of multi-engine flying. However, I keep reminding myself that this journey would remain a figment of my imagination without the immense support of so many. I couldn't have done this alone, and I'm constantly aware that this career is never a solitary pursuit. The saying: "It takes a village" is truly an understatement. There wasn't a magneto-turn that went by, where I wasn't cognizant of the immense support of the Honourable Company and Air BP, both financially and personally. I look forward to giving back what I've been so fortunate to receive, and hopefully this inspires another to pursue a career on the flight-deck. □

Properly tied! (All images S Daly)



BOOK REVIEW: *FLEET AIR ARM BOYS, VOLUMES THREE & FOUR*, BY STEVE BOND

Review by The Editor



Volume Three covers helicopter operations

Specialist publisher Grub Street has established a reliable and successful formula for these *Boys* books: gather the reminiscences of several dozen veterans of the subject in question, sort them into categories, add relevant photographs and hey presto, an enjoyable read appears. If the volume of subject matter warrants it, further categorise the content into separate volumes, and thus it is with these two volumes. Volume Three, published last year, covers FAA helicopter operations from their beginnings in 1945 up to the present day; while Volume Four, just published and destined to be the last of this particular series, centres on the people who served on the flight decks of Royal Navy aircraft carriers.

Author Dr Steve Bond is a Freeman of the Company, and with six previous *Boys* volumes (on the Gloster Meteor and Javelin, two on the Avro Shackleton and two previous ones on the FAA) under his keyboard, he has clearly mastered the Grub Street model. (Land-based aviators can rest assured that he understands them, too, having spent 22 years in the RAF as an aircraft propulsion technician and time on the MoD project team for the Eurofighter Typhoon. He understands the civilian world, too, having spent 13 years lecturing at City University London and developing the world's first MSc in Air Safety Management there.)

The structure of Volume Three (sub-titled *Helicopters, True Tales from Royal Navy Men and Women Air and Ground Crew*) is roughly chronological, as it is divided up mainly by helicopter type, starting with the Sikorsky Hoverfly and finishing with the Leonardo Wildcat, but with one significant chapter 'On Operations' covering multi-platform missions in four major conflicts: the Falklands, Gulfs One and Two, and Afghanistan. This includes the stories of some extremely marginal long-range over-water missions during the Falklands war, such as the ultimately unsuccessful incursion planned to land a Royal Marines sabotage team on the Argentine mainland and the more successful action

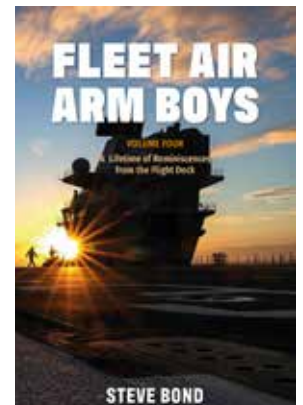
to secure the surrender of the Argentine trawler *Narwhal*. These individual type-specific chapters include stories from other crew such as Observers, engineering officers and armourers as well as those from pilots - amongst the type latter, Company members will be interested to be reminded of PM Chris Hodgkinson's account of ditching a Wessex on his first night sonar-dipping exercise (and on his 21st birthday to boot).

Volume Four (*A Lifetime of Reminiscences from the Flight Deck*) draws more heavily on the experiences of those charged with keeping the FAA's fixed and rotary-wing machines in the air, as well as on those of pilots and other aircrew. It has less of an obvious structure to it, more of an 'end of term' feeling of gathering all the remaining stories not used in the previous three volumes into theme-based chapters. They vary from the light-hearted to the unfortunately tragic, but considered all together seem to give a balanced account of naval aviation life. This volume does benefit from a foreword by Liveryman Rear Admiral Tom Cunningham.

The photographs in both volumes are predominantly black-and-white, of quality as varied as their sources, but each has a dedicated colour section printed on glossy paper, featuring examples of all the major types and themes from its content.

These are not serious reference works or dedicated histories, but more charming volumes with the distinction of being perfect for dipping in and out of, as most of the tales stand easily alone within their respective chapters and do not rely on the reader having read the preceding ones. They will make for very satisfying additions to the bookshelf, especially for those who contributed to the tales therein, and more widely for those who served with those contributors or elsewhere in the FAA.

Fleet Air Arm Boys, Volumes Three and Four, By Steve Bond: 288pp each, hard bound; published by Grub Street, www.grubstreet.co.uk; £25 (Vol 3) and £30 (Vol 4). □



Volume Four – tales from the Flight Deck

INTO THE OVERSHOOT

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

After a gap of some 78 years the shape of the world's first operational jet fighter has been seen again in British skies. One of the stars of the Royal International Air Tattoo at Fairford in mid-July was the Messerschmitt Me 262 replica operated by Flugmuseum Messerschmitt, on display courtesy of Airbus, whose heritage operation supports the aircraft. This replica is one of five built in the USA in the 1990s and fitted with General Electric CJ610 engines in place of the original Junkers Jumos.

Shortly after RIAT, Airbus hosted a flypast at RAF Coningsby, home of the Company's affiliated unit the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, when the Me 262 flew in formation with three of its piston-powered contemporaries – the BBMF's Supermarine Spitfire Mk Vb and Rolls-Royce's Spitfire Mk XIX and North American P-51D Mustang.

Following the flypast, a seminar (moderated in part by Liveryman Ben Griffiths) was held, looking at the Me 262's place in history and comparisons between it and its contemporaries, along with sessions on the challenges of flying aircraft like these now and in the future. The undoubted human star of the day was Liveryman Flt Lt Colin Bell (pictured with Sqn Ldr Mark Sugden, OC BBMF, and Geri Kraenbuehl, Me 262 pilot), at 102 years old the last surviving pilot who encountered the Me 262 in combat. His description of how to evade the German jet fighter in his de Havilland Mosquito by diving to outrun it at low level was memorable, as was his reaction to meeting the type again after 78 years: "I patted it on one side, and hope I never see the damned thing again!" Historian Paul Beaver put the Me 262 further into context by sharing the evaluations of it and its Allied adversaries by the late Liveryman Eric "Winkle" Brown, whose biography of Winkle has just been published and will be reviewed in *Air Pilot*. (Top: Darren Harbar Photography; Bottom: Editor) □



Amidst the pomp and finery of the Livery Dinner at Drapers' Hall, our photographer Richard Sharp caught The Clerk and Warden Denyer... playing Poohsticks? □



One very happy Liveryman on the recent Company visit to the Jet Age Museum in Gloucestershire was Dacre Watson (one of *Air Pilot's* stalwart team of proof-readers), who was re-united with the cockpit of Hawker-Siddeley Trident 3B G-AWZU, preserved at the museum since 2014. 'ZU was retired in 1985 and scrapped at Stansted airport in 2003, with its cockpit arriving at Jet Age in 2013. (Editor) □