



JUNE 2020 ISSUE 39

# AIR PILOT

## INSIDE

**BENSON PUMAS DEPLOY  
TO SCOTLAND**

**2EXCEL - A PROFILE**

**NEWS FROM THE REGIONS**

**THE NORMANDY MEMORIAL**





## THE HONOURABLE COMPANY OF AIR PILOTS

incorporating Air Navigators

### PATRON:

His Royal Highness  
The Prince Philip  
Duke of Edinburgh KG KT

### GRAND MASTER:

His Royal Highness  
The Prince Andrew  
Duke of York KG GCVO

### MASTER:

Captain John P Towell FRAeS

### CLERK:

Paul J Tacon BA FCIS

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

### PUBLISHED BY:

The Honourable Company of Air Pilots,  
Air Pilots House, 52A Borough High Street,  
London SE1 1XN  
EMAIL: [office@airpilots.org](mailto:office@airpilots.org)  
[www.airpilots.org](http://www.airpilots.org)

### EDITOR:

Paul Smiddy BA (Econ), FCA  
EMAIL: [editor@airpilots.org](mailto:editor@airpilots.org)

### EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS:

The copy deadline for the August 2020 edition of Air Pilot  
is 1 July 2020.

### FUNCTION PHOTOGRAPHY:

Gerald Sharp Photography  
View images and order prints on-line.  
TELEPHONE: 020 8599 5070  
EMAIL: [info@sharpphoto.co.uk](mailto:info@sharpphoto.co.uk)  
WEBSITE: [www.sharpphoto.co.uk](http://www.sharpphoto.co.uk)

### PRINTED BY:

Printovation Ltd 01494 478870

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

# DIARY

All physical events have been postponed until further notice. Some meetings will take place through video-conferencing. For the latest situation please visit the calendar page of the Company's website:

<https://www.airpilots.org/members-pages/company-calendar/>

### Guidelines for submissions to Air Pilot

*Please submit contributions as follows:*

- Text in word document, including your name below the title of the piece;
- No embedded photos;
- All images to be sent as jpeg files with a file size of at least 2 MB;
- More than 2 images to be sent via a Dropbox file, rather than an e-mail attachment.

**Cover photo:** The Extra 300s of the Blades, part of 2Excel. See the article on page 29



# A MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDITOR...

Since our last issue, much has occurred, yet in a sense much remains the same. Military aviation is still very busy. This is certainly true in the UK, where the armed forces have come to the aid of the civil authorities in impressive fashion. I asked our friends at RAF Benson to produce an account of how the Puma Force has been involved: I am delighted with their efforts (and indeed proud of their work), and hope you will be too. The Royal Air Force's AT fleet has been involved in both repatriation flights and well-publicised shipments of PPE. RAF Typhoons from 6 Sqn (RAF Lossiemouth) have been operating in Lithuania for Op Azotize (the NATO's Baltic Air Policing). And let us not forget khaki flying, where the British Army's recent creation of 1st Aviation Brigade is gathering steam.

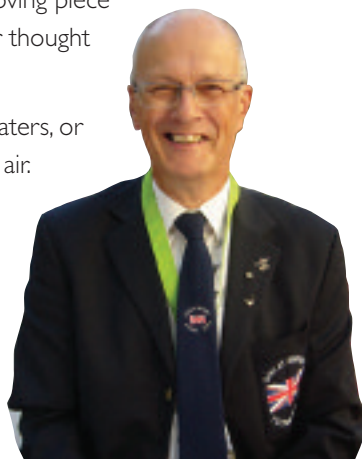
To say the world of civil aviation is in flux, seems a great understatement. Managements of airlines, airports, aircraft manufacturers, and their whole supply chain down to fastener producers, are grappling with a demand outlook that is almost unknowable. In the News section I make reference to IATA forecasts. Their Head has indicated they expect that, of the January 2020 global Commercial Air Transport (CAT) fleet, between 12 and 35% would be "surplus to requirements" by the year's end. The implications for ongoing staffing levels in airlines – or the flight training pipeline – do not need underlining.

Unions and pressure groups in the UK are maintaining that it is inappropriate to make large-scale redundancies when the Government's generous furlough scheme is being prolonged. But this looks like simply delaying the inevitable. CAT is a cyclical industry, and the cycle has turned down in an evil and severe manner, almost beyond comprehension.

Our Company is evolving too. Some recent initiatives are covered in this issue. Moreover, by the time you read this, we shall have held our first online Court meeting. Who knows what clothes and bookshelves will be revealed?!

Whilst Covid-19 strikes in ways we have yet to fully understand, skin cancers are more avoidable. Past Master Chris Spurrier has written a moving piece that should give us all pause for thought in summer sunshine.

We are indeed in uncharted waters, or perhaps in our case, uncharted air.



# IN THIS ISSUE...

## REGULARS

- 4 News Round Up & Gazette
- 7 Master's Message
- 10 From the Desk of the DAA
- 13 Regional Report
- 15 Gazette

*The Recent Court Meeting on Zoom*



## VISITS & EVENTS

- 9 AGM and Installation Part II



## FEATURES

- 11 Rear Admiral Colin Cooke-Priest - A Tribute
- 16 33 Sqn on Op Rescript
- 20 Project Wingman Foundation Ltd
- 21 Building the British Normandy Memorial
- 24 The Very Beginning
- 26 The Gimli Glider
- 29 2Excel - The Aviation Company evolves in new directions
- 32 Learning and Teaching Lookout
- 33 Sun-bronzed and Beautiful?
- 36 The Air Pilots Peer Support Initiative
- 40 Mentoring
- 43 Young Air Pilots Engagement Survey 2020



# NEWS ROUNDUP



## PEOPLE AND PLACES

Past Master Cliff Spink has been appointed the new Patron of the Hawker Typhoon Restoration Group – this seeks to raise the funds required to oversee the rebuild and return to flight of the sole surviving combat veteran Hawker Typhoon Mk1b, RB396.

The Light Aircraft Association, under the management of Liveryman Steve Slater, is continuing to plan its annual Rally, still scheduled to be held at Sywell September 4-6. The LAA has now created its own YouTube channel, accessed via a button the LAA website, or by searching 'Light Aircraft Association' on the YouTube video platform. A direct link to the Light Aircraft Association channel is at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQ8Ytam8IS5PEjyJemdxMiQ>

The British Microlight Aircraft Association (which recently called off merger talks with the LAA) intends to hold a rally at Popham, as soon as movement restrictions are lifted. Both organisations report strong demand from exhibitors for such events to proceed.

## AIR PILOTS VISITS PROGRAMME

Members received several flyers with their last copy of this magazine. The Yeovilton and Williams F1 events have been cancelled. The visit to the BGA at Lasham has also recently been cancelled. A decision on the Summer Supper on July 14 will be made on or near the closing date for applications of June 26, so please express your interest at this stage.

The current situation regarding visits will be communicated via the Clerk's regular e-newsletters and the status of a particular event will be shown on the Company's website.

## MILITARY AVIATION

Putting the RAF's experiences with the F22 into context, the USAF has recently abandoned its mission capability rate goals for its Lockheed Martin F-22s, F-35s and F-16s, after none of the fighters hit the target of 80% success by September 2019. A year earlier former US Secretary of Defense, James Mattis, had ordered the USAF and US Navy (USN) to increase mission capable rates for those aircraft and Boeing F/A-18s to achieve more than 80% by the end of September 2019. (The mission capability rate is the percentage of aircraft that are able to perform at least one mission over a period of time).



## AN UNUSUAL MAP CERTIFICATE PRESENTATION

Derek Clarke has now finished a career in commercial air transport having reached an age when he can no longer fly single pilot commercial. He has been a member of the Guild/Company since his days at Oxford in 1989/90. He was awarded Master Air Pilot Certificate number 1091 on 23rd August 2012.

It was always his intention to attend one of a Company functions to collect his certificate. Unfortunately working in the Southern Hemisphere most such functions coincided with his busiest time. With the co-operation of our London office, it was arranged for the Governor of the Falkland Islands (as the Queen's representative) to present the certificate. The certificate had been transported to the Falklands by Mr Clarke's son who was attending college in the UK.

The picture below shows His Excellency the Governor of the Falkland Islands, Mr Nigel Phillips CBE, (at left) presenting the certificate. Derek Clarke is in his uniform as a Captain in the Army Reserves, and serves as the Governor's ADC!

## VE DAY CELEBRATIONS

The RAF Museum, the National Army Museum and the National Museum of the Royal Navy did a good job in hosting a virtual day of commemorations.

The programme from Hendon can be seen at:

[https://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/about-us/virtual-ve-day-75.aspx?fbclid=IwAR00BW5Bs1hAkV4a6Eag\\_eLacQMaL7IK6aZ4pUcSRc8IA9FbmST4c\\_3K06o](https://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/about-us/virtual-ve-day-75.aspx?fbclid=IwAR00BW5Bs1hAkV4a6Eag_eLacQMaL7IK6aZ4pUcSRc8IA9FbmST4c_3K06o)

The quaintly named Arsenal of Democracy has produced an excellent video tribute, which can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DC6VBnh86CQ&feature=youtu.be>



## COVID-19: THE FALL OUT

### IATA

As ever this organisation produces some excellent data, forecasts, and reports. At the time of writing they have two scenarios: a v-shaped (first sign of recovery in late May) or a u-shaped dip and recovery (ditto in Q3 or later). These indicate the following for 2020:

	V-shaped	U-shaped
International Air Passenger Traffic	-44%	-80%
Airport revenues		-45%
Airlines RPK		-48%
International Tourism Receipts	-\$300bn	-\$450bn
World GDP		-3%

Its director general, Alexandre de Juniac, said *"We are not expecting to restart the same industry that we closed a few weeks ago."* It anticipates that between 12 and 35% of the 20,150 global CAT fleet in service at the beginning of 2020 would be surplus to requirements by the end of the year.

### Boeing

On May 4 the journalist Dominic Gates and his team, of the Seattle Times, won the Pulitzer Prize for their work uncovering the scandal of the 737 Max.

A week later the company's CEO, Dave Calhoun, said he thought it was "most likely" one major US carrier would go out of business. It has been reported that 62% of all Boeing passenger jets worldwide were grounded (as at mid-April). Of the 12 commercial aircraft delivered in March, only one is now in service carrying passengers; another is in temporary freight use. The company's production facility at Puget Sound restarted work in late April, focusing on defence work (such as P8 Poseidons for the RAF).

### Airbus

Delivered only 14 aircraft in April (down 80% on 2019). At the beginning of April the group cut its aircraft production rates by a third. Goldman Sachs anticipates that whilst Airbus will regain 2019 delivery numbers (in terms of airframes) by 2023, Boeing will not do so by the end of their forecast timeframe of 2025 (when Boeing is anticipated to deliver 691 aircraft, against 806 in 2018, 2019 being depressed by 737 Max issues).

### The aircraft manufacturing supply chain

Rolls Royce is laying off 8,000 workers in the UK, GE is looking to remove 25% of jobs from its global aero engine business. Major UK suppliers such as Senior and Meggitt have furloughed swathes of staff; and so it percolates down the supply chain.

### Airlines

IAG is looking at accelerated retirement of some 67 of its stored fleet such as BA 747s, Iberia A340s, and Aer Lingus A330s. It has reduced passenger capacity by 94% from late March, and has stated it does not expect overall demand



*Aircraft in storage on the apron at Southend, March 2020 (photo by the Editor)*

to recover before 2023. Liveryman Chris Tarry has pointed out that demand did not recover until 2016 after the 2008 financial crisis. He concludes that, on the most reasonable assumptions, by the end of 2021 traffic will still be materially below the number reported in 2019.

Ryanair announced on 12th May it intended to restore activity to 40% capacity from July 1 *"subject to government restrictions on intra-EU flights being lifted"* – subtle pressure; it would thereby restore 90% of its pre-pandemic route network. Presumably there are some worried managements of minor airports worrying whether they fall into the 10%. Ryanair appears to have created a well-considered structure of hygiene, passenger and cabin management. However given there remains a substantial backlog of refunds to be made for hitherto cancelled flights one wonders whether this will limit consumers' desires to make bookings much in advance.

Lufthansa expects that, even on a best case scenario, it will be operating no more than 25% of group capacity by the end of September, and 75% by the end of the year.

Virgin Atlantic announced in early May that it was cutting 3150 jobs, and closing its Gatwick operation. It continues to look for additional external finance.

Sir Brian Burridge, chief executive of the Royal Aeronautical Society, pithily says *"We believe the airline ecosystem will be 50 per cent smaller (in due course) Many airlines will shrink and others collapse. Out of the world's nearly 1,000 airlines a lot are just bubbles of debt with wings."*

### Looking ahead - The consumer standpoint

A US survey by CBS News (mid-April) showed that 85% of respondents would not want to board an airliner (71% would not be comfortable going to a bar or restaurant, even if lockdown restrictions were lifted, and 87% would not want to go to a large event).

In Chris Tarry's view *"As things currently stand it is likely to take even longer (than the end of June) before passengers are confident that their risk of catching the virus associated with travelling is acceptable and when airport and airline managers are also satisfied, and able to demonstrate, that they are not in effect creating infection hot spots as*



*Airliners in storage at Norwich Airport, March 2020  
– photo by the Editor*

passengers come together, let alone “meeters and greeters”. Against this background it is not surprising that airport and airline managers are calling for testing and also proposing how they might introduce testing. However, in our opinion the missing element at the moment is the need for the intending passenger to be able to demonstrate that they are virus free, and for such information to be known before they leave for the airport. It is not only the requirement that they are virus-free that is important but also that others know this too as it is this that will provide the necessary confidence.”

(Emirates became the first airline to conduct rapid onsite Covid-19 tests (at Dubai) in mid-April).

As Ed Bastian, CEO of Delta Air Lines, recently said “We simply don’t know how long it will take before the virus is contained and customers are ready to fly again”.

## THE PANDEMIC AND RPAS

The Covid-19 crisis has spurred the use of UAVs in new ways. A trial in delivering medicines from Lee-on-Solent (in the UK) to the Isle of Wight received a lot of publicity (and created a Notam or two).

The police in Westport, Connecticut, initiated a trial using a Draganfly drone to monitor social distancing in public places. The UAV concerned is reportedly also capable of monitoring human temperature, and heart and respiratory rates. However there was an outcry on the issue of civil liberties, and the trial was dropped within 48 hours. There was a similar backlash when drones were used for social distancing monitoring in New Jersey.

In San Pablo, California, the police acquired three Impossible Aerospace US-1 drones last Autumn. In April the police began to use these to discover the locations of homeless people in inhospitable terrain, that would otherwise have taken agents days to cover. These UAVs were also used to broadcast information (in both English and Spanish).

## GENERAL AVIATION

Pilots, airfield operators, and aircraft owners were subject to a torrent of directives from the CAA in April. The APPG-GA was quick to draw attention that these could have been better drafted:

*“Whilst we applaud the CAA’s quick response to the [Covid-19] crisis in making these much-needed exemptions, the way the information was distributed has been unhelpful. It is clear that many GA pilots were left confused by the official documents.*

*In our opinion, if pilots are left unsure of what they can and cannot do, then the CAA has failed in its mission to promote safety.*

*Members of the APPG are concerned that this is not the first time that the CAA has poorly communicated rule changes to the GA community. Our latest letter calls on the CAA to do better next time.”*

It should be added that the subsequent communications from the CAA’s GA unit showed some improvement!

Aircraft and parts manufacturers, indeed the whole aviation supply chain appears to have done its bit in manufacturing and distributing PPE and other medical equipment at short notice. The GA sector is of course effectively grounded, but an esoteric organisation, Sky Watch, has made an effective contribution in moving ventilator parts at short notice around the UK.



# MASTER'S MESSAGE

## *Captain John Towell*

The impact of the Covid19 pandemic is massive and dominates our lives and, as I write this on May 1st, we are past the peak of infection. So many have been affected by the disease, and workers in the health and support services have been under enormous pressure. Captain Tom Moore is a national treasure having raised an incredible £30m for the NHS; his 100th birthday was saluted in great style by the BBMF Spitfire and Hurricane. Measures to control the spread of the virus have affected many aspects of our lives. In the UK social distancing has been effective at reducing the rate of infection, but there is no clarity on how people and businesses across the nation will be able to return to anything like normality.

The aviation industry is being challenged in ways never seen before, the implications are profound. Guillaume Faury, CEO of Airbus, states "This is the gravest crisis the aerospace industry has ever known". Airbus has cut aircraft production by a third with 6,000 workers placed on government furlough schemes, further cuts and thousands more job losses are likely in June. The effect is similar across the whole commercial aircraft industry with Boeing reducing staff numbers and seeking US government bailout. Every UK airline is affected; even those that have been profitable and have good cash reserves will struggle if unable to generate cash for extended periods.

A strong UK airline sector supports many other sectors and is vital for the UK economy. Governments worldwide have been called on to bail out the airline industry; IATA sees losses of more than \$300 bn for an industry that rarely makes a profit. The UK government, on behalf of taxpayers, has the unenviable challenge of protecting businesses and jobs across many sectors without bankrupting the country. The scope of the announcement from BA this week has been a surprise. Along with reductions to capacity and 12,000 job losses, there is the possibility of ceasing Gatwick operations. BA are also proposing significant changes to working practices and agreements, many are asking why similar arrangements have not been announced by other less profitable IAG airlines. Airlines and travel companies are so desperate to conserve cash that they are acting outside of the law and are not refunding cash to customers with tickets for cancelled flights. The government is being urged to provide some form of guarantee to solve this dilemma. In these extremely worrying and difficult times so many pilots have



*Young Members Development Group Zoom call*

been adversely affected, our thoughts are with them, the support of friends, family and company members is very important.

There are signs of recovery emerging in areas like Eastern Asia, Australia and New Zealand, but overcoming fear and winning passenger confidence will be a big challenge. Business travellers who were used to jumping on an aeroplane to get to meetings might stick with video conferencing. Many families will have less disposable money for holidays, recovery will take time. Against this backdrop I am 7 weeks into my new role as Master of the Air Pilots, and have not attended any functions or meetings since the AGM and Installation on March 16th which must be a record! All Company events and visits planned for April and May were cancelled, those scheduled in the next few months are doubtful as social isolation looks likely to continue for an extended period.

In the last edition I mentioned my aims and objectives and that work would start soon after the installation. The young members development group had planned to meet in Air Pilots House but as social distancing has prevented this, we meet on Zoom video conferencing. The group includes Will Wright and Becky Kwo representing the young members, Kat Hodge and Seb Pooley former young member leaders, along with experienced trainers with a wide range of experiences. The first meeting was incredibly positive with great energy and ideas flowing, which was very encouraging and overcame any initial reservations

that the dynamics might not work online. What was very clear is that the young members are keen to contribute to the company, and more established members are looking to be as effective as possible when supporting the development of those who are less experienced.

Following the initial meeting the young members leadership team met and arranged to survey their membership on a wide range of questions. This survey has been very helpful and highlights areas to focus on where the young members can make the best contribution to the company and where company members can be most effective in supporting their development. The leaders of the young members then identified their "Four Pillars", areas where there is the potential to make positive change - Mentoring, Skills Training, Scholarships, and Events and Visits. Work is in progress developing these areas and we will be sharing detail throughout the year. Will Wright has written an excellent article about the survey in this edition of Air Pilot.

The positive experience of using Zoom led me to hold "coffee" meetings with several groups within the company including the GP&F, Assistants, Past Masters, Secretariat and Visits team as well as "coffee" with other groups. It was soon apparent that I was meeting some members who I would not normally have met and that some of them are keen to engage with and contribute to the company. We were also reconnecting and catching up with old friends who had been out of contact for years. Will Wright joined me on several Zoom calls around the company to give updates on the survey which led to interesting discussions on a wide range of topics and positive ideas to improve the Honourable Company. Overall the Zoom experience has been very positive, and there has been a very cooperative "can do" approach.

The young members have developed the "coffee morning" format to invite guests speaking on a range of subjects. These have included Mike Ling talking about his career in aviation including the Red Arrows, and Crispin Orr speaking about the AAIB. I anticipate opening up this idea developed by the young members to other areas of the company. As a Company we can be very proud of our young members and especially their leadership, they set an excellent example.

As a snapshot of activity in the last week I have attended a Zoom call with the senior wardens of about 40 Livery Companies and it was interesting to hear their stories. There were several different perspectives and ideas for Livery Companies in the current situation, some negative, some very passive, and I am pleased to report that we are

seen to be one of the Companies leading the way with our approach. I was invited to join the Hong Kong general committee meeting to get to meet the members. I am especially interested in the program they run for young members. I attended a presentation by Master Elect Nick Goodwyn to the mentoring development group. The discussions around this group looked at other ways that Air Pilots might improve support for our members including relevant up to date careers advice, interview skills, CV writing. Nick has written an excellent article about mentoring as well as a timely article about Peer Support in this issue of Air Pilot. Assistant Rick Thomas ran a presentation on airline safety culture which will be offered as one of the skills training modules.

I have attended meetings of the three Company charities, the Benevolent Fund, Air Safety Trust and Air Pilots Trust. Our charities do great work supporting those in need and helping those who aspire to develop careers in aviation as well as promoting air safety. The Benevolent Fund are this week helping a pilot with serious health issues living in very difficult conditions. The ability to be able to respond quickly to significant issues can make a real difference. Just this week the Trusts have responded to an appeal to help the Mission Aviation Fellowship install protective screens between passengers and air crew to shield pilots from Covid 19 whilst taking part in vital operations. Supporting research into crew safety is an important AST aim. All of our charities have been affected by lower fund values from the impact of the pandemic on the financial markets and will face reduced dividend income in the immediate future. It is several years since the last charitable appeal to members and with falling donations, it is timely that we launch a new appeal, especially with the increased requests the charities are receiving as a result of the current crisis. Not everyone will be in a position to help but for those that can, it is a key aspect of the Company. Donations can be one off or a regular monthly contribution, which with gift aid, will help support the charitable work of the Company. Members may wish to consider a legacy longer term to continue the work of the charities after their final departure. So look out for the new appeal and case histories illustrating the work of the charities.



# AGM & INSTALLATION PART II

*By the Editor*

The AGM & Installation was, in retrospect, exquisitely timed. It was possibly the last livery company event in the City before the Great Lockdown. It is likely to be the last formal gathering of the Company for a few weeks. It is therefore a good opportunity to see some more photos of the occasion.



*The service at St. Michael's before the AGM*



*The Master & his Mistress after the installation*



*Vanessa White presents Linda Towell with the Mistress's badge*



*How many Pooleys can you squeeze into one shot? From the left: Past Master Robert, Son Assistant Seb, the Master, Past Master Dorothy (Saul-Pooley), Ed (no relation!)*

# FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR AVIATION AFFAIRS

*Liveryman John Turner*

## LIFE IS WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU WHEN YOU ARE BUSY MAKING PLANS<sup>1</sup>

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic makes it difficult even to glimpse the future with any confidence. Arguably, it is even more difficult to judge when that future might begin. Unprecedented infection countermeasures in many countries also raise the spectre that, rather than returning to normal, we will enter a transformed 'new normal.' In the meantime, our thoughts go out to all whose health has been affected by the virus and especially to the families and friends of those who have lost loved ones at this most difficult time.

Covid-19 seemed to surprise and shock the whole world. We may think of pandemics as 'once in a lifetime' events. They are not. Without including the devastating outbreaks of Zika, Ebola and AIDS, this is the **fourth** global pandemic in my lifetime<sup>2</sup> and the second for every ten-year-old. Furthermore, the first comprehensive assessment of global health security capabilities of 195 countries, the 2019 Global Health Security Index<sup>3</sup>, warned: "*The average overall GHS Index score is 40.2 out of a possible 100. While high-income countries report an average score of 51.9, the Index shows that collectively, international preparedness for epidemics and pandemics remains very weak.*" Nonetheless, Covid-19 has exposed the fragility of our modern-world assumptions about travel, holidays, education, work, retail therapy, and wider family and social life.

Different countries have adopted a range of different measures with varying emphasis on aspects such as sealed borders, enforced quarantine, self-isolation, social distancing, face covering, tracking, testing etc., and some have achieved much lower reported rates of Covid-19 cases and deaths. Ironically, some of the best performing countries in the GHS Index have been the most severely affected. However, this is not a competition. If everyone's lessons are shared, the diversity of approach should provide all the information we need to know how best to deal with the next event.

In aviation, we endeavour always to learn - and remember

- lessons from the past. (Writing as many countries start to ease their initial Covid-19 countermeasures, I wonder if all will avoid a second, higher, peak in infection rates as occurred with Spanish Flu.) Following an aviation accident, we examine in detail what happened to work out what is needed to prevent a recurrence; then we implement the changes needed. A similar approach, including the determination and commitment to see through potentially expensive remedial actions, will be necessary to achieve long term national and global resilience.

Economically, aviation is one of the hardest hit sectors and may well be the sector that suffers longest. Despite government financial support for furloughed employees, mass flight crew redundancies have already been announced by several airlines, airports will face severe challenges and any down-turn in activity will feed down into the extensive supply chain. Airlines and aircraft manufacturers already talk of a two to four year hiatus before aviation is likely to return to 'normal.' This assumes the public will want to return to air travel in pre-pandemic numbers.

## A GLOBAL OPPORTUNITY?

On the positive side, we have learnt that remote working and virtual meetings can be really effective. The UK Technical Committee in May will be conducted entirely on Zoom, opening it up to more participants, including nominated representatives from the Regions and new volunteers who are forming a Drone Focus Group and a Space Focus Group. As well as Space and Drones, the meeting will touch on Aptitude testing, Environment – advocating against the 'Great Polluter' paradigm, Airspace and Aviation during and after Covid-19. We will also consider whether continuing entirely with Zoom after Covid-19 improves international representation.

Membership of any of our Focus and Working Groups is not restricted to those on the Technical Committee. If you are languishing in lock-down or simply awaiting a return to gainful employment with time on your hands, this could be an opportunity for you. I would be delighted to hear from

anyone interested in joining the Drone or Space Focus Groups (or our Working Groups on Airspace, Emergency Brief, Fatigue, GNSS Vulnerability and Mag2Tru); the only requirement is a willingness to contribute. Additionally, if you feel a Focus Group would be helpful on any other topic - and you'd be willing to participate – please let me know at [daa@airpilots.org](mailto:daa@airpilots.org).

If you'd simply like to exercise your aviation expertise, it would be really helpful if you could review any of more than 50 articles on the SKYbrary website for which we are responsible. Please let me know (again at [daa@airpilots.org](mailto:daa@airpilots.org)) of any amendments that would bring

them up to date. Even if you've read an article and you think it is fine as is, it would be good to hear from you!

### AVIATION SKILLS SHORTAGE

Finally, the time will come when the world again faces a shortage of pilots. I've not forgotten my promise to feed back the results of my request for information on what made people decide to take up a career/become closely involved with aviation. I hope to start analysis this month so please email [daa@airpilots.org](mailto:daa@airpilots.org) using the title INTERESTED IN AVIATION if you've not already submitted your own story.

1 Readers Digest, January 1957, attributed to Allan Saunders, Publishers Syndicate

2 2009-2010 H1N1 Swine Flu (150,000-575,000), 1968 H3N3 (~1,000,000), 1957-1958 H2N2 Asian Flu (~1,100,000),

1918-1920 Spanish Flu (at least 50,000,000), 1889-1890 Flu (1,000,000), (deaths) reported by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

3 <https://www.ghsindex.org>

# REAR ADMIRAL COLIN COOKE-PRIEST

## CB CVO, FRAES (1939-2020)

### A Tribute

*By Past Master Chris Hodgkinson*

My link with Colin began in the Fleet Air Arm in Aug 1963 as HMS VICTORIOUS arrived off Aden to replace HMS HERMES, which a few of us had left when she set off for Blighty. Less than a month later he 'joined' the Goldfish Club after a night ditching in a Wessex I, and a further six years later he ditched in a Wessex 31B once again, while serving on exchange with the Royal Australian Navy in HMAS Melbourne.

Around a year later Colin arrived on the same squadron as me once again, this time at Portland. It was during his time here that he went to HMS Vernon's Ball and proposed to Sue (Hobler), a Communications Wren he had met when she was serving at the Observer School in Malta. Evidently upon hearing her golden voice over the air while under training, he said 'I will marry her'. Coincidentally she had made a bet with a colleague that as the next cohort of young trainee aviators arrived in Malta, she would marry the one with the brownest knees - the rest is history! Their wedding was at St Clement Dane's since her father was a retired Air Vice Marshal, and they had the largest guard of honour I have ever witnessed – 44 swords from all 3 services.



Colin had entered the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth in 1957, direct from Marlborough College. After service worldwide, he joined the Observer School at the Naval Air Station Hal Far in Malta, in 1962 and gained his 'wings' the following year, then joined 814 Sqn in VICTORIOUS flying anti-submarine helicopters.

On return from Australia, he was appointed Senior Observer of 824 Squadron in HMS ARK ROYAL and then as Senior Instructor at the Naval Observer School.

Colin was promoted to Commander in 1973 and commanded the frigates HMS PLYMOUTH and HMS BERWICK, before taking over the Future Helicopter desk in the Directorate of Naval Air Warfare, where he wrote





the first specification for the Sea King replacement - later the Merlin.

In 1979 he had been selected for another sea command, but the ship had a serious fire while in refit. Initially this seemed like a cruel stroke of fate, but fortunately the new Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Admiral Sir Jim Eberle was seeking a Naval Assistant with both sea command and MOD experience. Colin was promoted Captain during this appointment and then returned to the Ministry of Defence as Assistant Director of Naval Air Warfare. His subsequent appointments included Director of the Maritime Tactical School and command of the Type 22 frigates HMS BOXER - bringing her out of build - and HMS BRILLIANT as Captain Second Frigate Squadron and during which, as Senior Naval Officer Middle East, he commanded the Royal Naval 'Armillar' Task Force in the Gulf.

Colin was promoted Rear Admiral in 1989 on his appointment to SHAPE, Belgium as Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff (Operations) and Maritime Advisor to Supreme Allied Commander Europe. He became Flag Officer Naval Aviation in December 1990 and served in this appointment until his retirement from the Navy in 1993, having been appointed CB earlier that year.

He was the Inspecting Officer at his son Nick's Passing Out Parade from Dartmouth, and on inspecting him said 'Good Lord, I think I know your Mother' - the chap to Nick's left nearly dropped his sword! His last official function in the RN was to present Nick with his Wings.

On arriving for his Service discharge medical, a rather absent minded and inexperienced Junior Medical Assistant asked his name without looking up or noticing his

Admiral's rank; he replied 'Cooke-Priest', to which she responded, 'Great - sit down Chef, he's 10 minutes behind schedule'; the Admiral was rather amused both by this and the faces of those all around, took a seat, and had a sly giggle with the awaiting hordes!

After leaving the RN, a chance meeting led to his appointment for five years as the National Director (CEO) of the Trident Trust, an educational charity whose principal activity was placing over 150,000 young people in work experience annually. At about the same time he was asked if he was willing and able to be appointed a Gentleman Usher to the Queen. Luckily, he was able to undertake both 'jobs', and 14 years, 134 investitures, 53 Garden parties, five Royal Funerals, two Royal weddings, and many anniversaries later he stood down as Senior Gentleman Usher.

I had been pressing Colin to join the then Guild for many years, but he had decided that he would only join once he had left the Navy. Taking the Livery in 1999, he became an Assistant in 2002. He was elected Master in 2009 - the year when the Fleet Air Arm celebrated its 100th anniversary. In addition, he was a Liveryman of the Coachmakers and Coach Harness Makers.

For many years he was Chairman of the Fleet Air Arm Officers' Association, then a Life Vice President; a former Trustee of the Aviation Scholarship Trust, the Fleet Air Arm Museum, the RN Historic Flight and Canine Partners (an Assistance Dog charity). Colin was appointed CVO and an Extra Gentleman Usher to HM The Queen in 2009.

He and Sue lived in Havant and have two sons and two daughters, all of whom survive him.



*Photos via Nick Cooke-Priest*

# REGIONAL REPORT

## *Hong Kong Region*

*By the Regional Chairman,  
Assistant Captain Pat Voigt*



I am extremely honoured to have recently been elected to serve as the Hong Kong Regional Chairman.

Unfortunately as I start my tenure, I can but echo Master John Towell's sentiments that the year ahead is not the one that I had anticipated; however I shall attempt to avoid recently overused words such as 'unprecedented' and the like. That being said, considering the extensive impact of COVID-19 on those of us employed as professional pilots, it would be remiss of me not to touch on the resultant effect on the Hong Kong Region.

Due to a combination of its unique geographical location as a natural hub for centuries old trading, we are very lucky to enjoy a Regional Membership formed of hugely diverse aviation disciplines, not to mention cultural backgrounds. Therefore, it is extremely saddening to see our airport currently being used simply as tarmac on which to park jets. Some of us are lucky enough to retain currency not only with the scant passenger flights operating but also through some ingenious freight operations being devised, whilst the actual 'heavy lifting' is expanding hugely to ensure essential supplies continue to be delivered worldwide.

One of my initial concerns when this current issue reared its head, was that communications with London and even within our own Region would be problematic. I have to confess that not only were these fears unfounded, I actually believe that overall comms have been dramatically

increased through more personal calls and of course virtual conferences such as Zoom which, in addition to increasing attendance, dare I say has added a certain degree of discipline? For example, we held our first GC (General Committee) Meeting towards the end of April and for the first time in most Members living memory, the whole GC were in attendance from around the globe. In my alternative role as Court Assistant, I recently attended a Zoom Meeting which gave the Young Air Pilots the opportunity to explain their aspirations, which in turn provided us with an insight that I am sure would not have been so easily transmitted in normal times.

The past two years of restructuring and financial reorganisation has been extensive and could not have been achieved without Locky's guidance and his strong team that I am lucky enough to inherit.

Following consultation with our embryonic Editorial Team, the consensus is that pages of words do not make for enticing reading and certainly not recruitment of younger pilots. Therefore interspersed within a couple of articles, we hope that you enjoy browsing a small selection from the highlights of the past year of the Hong Kong Region.

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

### Captain Peter Taylor

As a result of personal experience from the 'other side of the interview desk', I realised that there are significant gaps in some interviewees preparation techniques and it was the desire to assist potential pilots with simple skills that led me to develop our YDP (Youth Development Programme).

The YDP is aimed at 16-25 year olds and consists of a one day seminar/workshop and whilst not aviation oriented and definitely not a 'how to pass specific airline selection', it is designed to improve overall generic interview skills.

The first event was held on December 1st, twenty students attended the historic Hong Kong Aviation Club, with the morning comprising basic interview preparation skills ranging from arriving on time, attire to social etiquette. Following a casual lunch, Val Stait facilitated two very 'constructive' group exercises, which led onto our guest presentations.



*The Youth Development Programme*

Captain Rebecca Chiu, a Senior Airbus Captain with Cathay Pacific, talked about her journey from being selected for cadet training through to completion of her command course. This was followed by Captain Greg Perilleux, who spoke about his career in the RAF flying Jaguars and also about his time with the Red Arrows.

The day naturally culminated with a well earned beer at happy hour; where Rebecca in particular was a very popular source of information. As mentioned in his Regional Visit Article, our surprise guests Master Malcolm White and Mistress V flew in just in time to conclude the debrief.

The subsequent feedback was very positive, indeed half of the attendees have now applied for the Regional Youth Flying Scholarship Programme, to be continued...

## TECHNICAL - Ms Valerie Stait

As Director of Technical and Safety, part of my role involves creating and maintaining relationships with industry bodies and offering our wide base of expertise, which is one of the Air Pilots' objectives. We have spent the last couple of years focusing on regenerating lost ties and forging new ones, which have included the Civil Aviation Department, the Accident Investigation Authority, the Government Flying Service and the Asian Business Aviation Association.

We also continue to enjoy a very close relationship with the Hong Kong Observatory, who kindly invite us to attend meetings such as the High Impact Weather Panel to provide a pilot's perspective on the incredible work they do.



*At the HK Observatory*



*The Battle of Britain dinner*

My current priority is addressing the multilayered issues for aircrew surrounding COVID-19, specifically its impact on health and wellbeing, with reference to the latest industry advice, such as Master Elect Nick Goodwin's excellent work on Peer Support.



*The end of the Master's banquet*

I shall leave you with a brief quote from my first missive to the HK Membership after our recent AGM:

*"My closing plea is that you do not allow this temporary lull in social events and general engagement to wane your enthusiasm for our Region. Instead as I have stated to my GC Team, let us capitalise on this enforced free time to clean out the deadwood and put into place some great initiatives for the future."*





*Presentation of MAP certificate*



*Family BBQ at the HK Aviation Club*



*Master's Cocktail Party: Alan Wrigley, Peter Taylor & Valerie Stait*



*Master & Mistress in the Cathay sim*



*Master & Vanessa with Liveryman Sir Michael Kadoorie*



*Master at the GFS*



*Cathay visit - Happy Hour*

# GAZETTE

## APPROVED BY THE COURT

### 14 MAY 2020

#### ADMISSIONS

##### As Upper Freeman

Corey Jon VANELLI BSc (HK)  
Timothy William WALSH (NZ)

##### As Freeman

Fiona Katherine SMITH  
Stephen WILLIAMS

##### As Associate

Sorcha DIDIER  
Dominic John EARNSHAW  
Toby James EDEN  
Brett PARDOE-WHERTON

#### ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE COURT

### 14 MAY 2020

##### REGRADE

To Upper Freeman  
Benjamin AKHURST (HK)

##### To Freeman

Liam BENNETT

##### REINSTATEMENT

As Upper Freeman  
Christopher Hamar CHAMBERS

##### As Associate

Fahim AHMED

##### DECEASED

Walter BLANCHARD  
Anthony BLYTH  
Colin COOKE-PRIEST  
Edward COVENTRY

Peter HORTON  
Derek LEGGETT  
Christopher PUDDY  
Senja ROBEY (AUS)

##### RESIGNATIONS

Jennifer BAKER-CARR  
David CASHEL (HK)  
Robin d'ERLANGER  
Mark ESTERHUIZEN (HK)  
Nicholas HOWARD  
Peter LEGG  
Steven MLLS (AUS)  
Christopher SEAL  
Keith SIVELL  
Ben WHITWORTH  
Adam WINTER  
David WOOD

##### FORFEIT ALL BENEFITS

Hillary PANG (AUS)



# 33 SQN ON OP RESCRIPT

*By Flt Lt Dave Rawson (2 i/c A Flight, 33 Sqn)*

*Photos Crown Copyright 2020*

The Defence of the Realm is always a nation's military primary objective. For those members of the RAF's Puma Force, the normal location of this duty is currently in Kabul, Afghanistan, providing aviation support to the NATO-led mission. Owing to the unforeseen circumstances surrounding the world's COVID-19 crisis, a new operational theatre emerged: home.

As part of Op RESCRIPT (the military COVID Support Force) an Aviation Task Force was established, commanded by Group Captain Adam Wardrope DFC, the Station Commander of RAF Benson. Aviation assets from across the Joint Helicopter Command would be deployed to locations around the UK to provide Military Aid to the Civilian Authorities.

Owing to the isolated nature of the northern and western Scottish Isles, Kinloss Barracks (formerly RAF Kinloss) near

Forres was nominated as the Forward Operating Base for an element of the Aviation Task Force.

On 27th March 2020, three RAF Puma HC2 helicopters from 33 Squadron 'A Flight' departed RAF Benson to travel the 545 miles to Kinloss Barracks. The mission was clear: provide an assured 24/7 medical evacuation capability to NHS Scotland as well as providing lift capability to the NHS and other government departments.

Whilst short-notice deployments are something that the Force prepares for regularly, the nature of this operation was uncharted territory. We have all seen the footage of the Chinook providing support to the Whaley Bridge floods, or soldiers assisting with flood defences. Never in recent times have we seen a full headquarters with multiple assets deployed at various locations around the UK providing lift capability.

*Arrival briefing*



*Pensive rear crew in transit over Scotland*





*EpiShuttle training*

As well as the aircraft, our team of engineers and support staff had already left via road convoy two days beforehand. By the time the aircraft arrived they were ready to receive us, turn the aircraft around, and be able to declare Initial Operating Capability to allow us to be on standby to conduct medical evacuation missions immediately.

The transit to Scotland would last around six hours of which four and a half were spent flying. We departed RAF Benson on a very warm sunny day and proceeded in Vic formation to Carlisle via the Manchester corridor. Following a brief refuelling stop, the second leg saw us cross the border into Scotland for a second refuel at Prestwick.

The final leg saw us begin to understand the environment of the Scottish Highlands, and its variety of both topography and meteorological conditions. Within 30 minutes of departing Prestwick, we found ourselves flying by the summit of a very snowy Ben Nevis, the peak of which almost looked glacial. As we proceeded up the Great Glen, we began to descend to low level for the final transit up Loch Ness before arriving at Kinloss Barracks shortly after 1600hrs. The views were truly breath-taking but left no doubts in our minds as to the potential challenges we would face whilst operating here day or night in the inclement weather conditions.

Upon arrival, our immediate task was to establish our working areas. We had kindly been given access to the Northern dispersal and the Moray Flying Club building, with accommodation being provided by 39 Engineer Regiment at Kinloss Barracks. With strict social distancing policies in force, aircrew, engineers and support staff had to learn to adapt to these conditions without jeopardising the safe operation of aircraft. Within a few hours of arrival, all working areas were allocated and were operational.



*Ft Lt Warlock in PPE following the successful patient transfer*

For the aircrew, it was ensuring the operating area was known, potential landing sites were established, and our bad weather routes chosen. We also got to work in liaising with our civilian Search and Rescue and Scottish Air Ambulance counterparts to share local knowledge of locations of interest, procedures and potential hours of operation. This seamless liaison between agencies really showed the common goal of all parties striving to protect the NHS in Scotland and promote an open and safe operating culture.

Within an hour of arrival, a meeting took place between the detachment, the RAF Regional Liaison Officer, Scottish Air Ambulance, Medical Emergency Retrieval Service and some senior doctors and paramedics from NHS Scotland. Here the risks associated with moving certain COVID patients and what protection was available to both medical staff and crews were discussed.

Over the course of the next two days crews flew down to both Aberdeen and Glasgow airports to conduct aircraft familiarisation training with the Scottish Air Ambulance critical care teams. Operating out of the GAMA aviation sites, crews were able to introduce the differences and potential hazards of operating inside a military aircraft in a practical environment. This also gave a fantastic insight into the amazing work that our NHS colleagues do day in, day out. In return, we were able to offer to them the Puma 2's capability in terms of cabin space, operating environment and crew skills. These were the people who we were likely to be operating with on any potential patient transfer.

The timing of this training was perfect. The Scottish Ambulance Service were about to introduce their new EpiShuttle transportation system. EpiShuttle allows for COVID positive patients to be transported in a sealable unit, providing protection to medical staff and crews alike.





*Kilmarnock Hospital  
following successful  
patient transfer*

*Offshore Landing  
Areas Training*



*Puma HC2 at Kinloss*

*Navigating through Scotland*



Crews were able to capitalise on this and conduct a rapid integration trial of the system to the aircraft which received an operational emergency clearance authorised from the Release to Service Authority within a matter of days.

Flight Sergeant Steven Cassidy, the senior crewman on the detachment explained:

"We are used to working with a different type of passenger; normally someone who comes with helmets and weapons and not necessarily someone with surgical gowns and medical equipment. That has been the principal problem to solve. How we integrate their equipment with our own and allow them to treat the patient whilst maintaining aircraft safety."

Over the course of the next two weeks, the 24hr Medevac cover was held, with crews carrying out a 48hr rotation between primary, secondary and routine crews. For those on the routine crew, it was a fantastic opportunity to conduct essential training by both day and night. The terrain in the Scottish Highlands is spectacular to see but offers some significant challenges for operating. The vast mountainous terrain, sparsely populated for many miles, combined with changeable and unpredictable weather and extremely cold sea temperatures certainly focusses the mind.

Crews took the opportunity to refresh mountain flying techniques and operating at some of the more remote landing sites and refuel locations. In addition to this, crews were trained in Offshore Landing Areas, a skill that is rarely practised from our home base in Oxfordshire. Over the course of a few sorties, all of the aircraft captains were trained in landing on offshore rigs. Not only did this provide a new skill to some of our crews, but it also allowed us to offer that capability to Standing Joint Command should the need for a patient transfer from an offshore facility be required.

Major Richard Schanda, a USAF HH-60 Pavehawk pilot on exchange with 33 Squadron, comments on experience of flying in Scotland.

"The flying in Scotland has been absolutely amazing. It's super scenic, but also challenging. The mountains combined with the weather can force us down to operate at very low level, down to 50ft AGL. Also dealing with the low illumination at night whilst on Night Vision Goggles presents its own challenges. That being said, it has been extremely rewarding for me to be a part of Op RESCRIPT in supporting the NHS in Scotland."

On 17 April, crews travelled to Stornoway, Benbecula and Barra, to conduct further integration training and reassurance activity with NHS Western Isles staff. The

crews were able to provide the front-line NHS staff with vital information on the capabilities that they can offer to ensure that patients can be transported to critical care facilities on the mainland as quickly and safely as possible. After some basic familiarisation, more specific training was undertaken for potential medical evacuations including loading and unloading stretchers, patient care in the cabin during flight and emergency procedures. The crew also familiarised themselves with the landing sites that they may be required to use, which can save vital minutes during a medical evacuation. This face-to-face engagement between us and the NHS staff at these locations was vital, as it demonstrated our reach and ability to help those members of the British public, who may live in the more remote areas of the British Isles.

As the month-long detachment was drawing to a close, with our sister squadron, the 230 "Tigers" arriving imminently, we prepared our handover. At this moment our tasking had been fairly routine and no emergency medical sorties had been conducted.

However, in the early hours of 22nd April, the call came in. At 0050hrs I was woken up by a telephone call to say that there was a critically ill patient on the Isle of Arran that needed to be transferred to a hospital on the mainland. Owing to a potential coronavirus risk that could not be ruled out and lack of Epi-Shuttle availability the Aviation Task Force was tasked with the job. Within 15 minutes myself, FS Cassidy as crewman, and Sqn Ldr Longland, the aircraft captain, reported to work.

Within 90 minutes of the call being received, we were airborne, transiting the 140 miles to a small HLS on the Isle of Arran. In fair weather but low ambient light conditions, we flew over the Cairngorms and the mountains surrounding Loch Lomond before coasting out at West Kilbride. We landed in a small field on the Eastern side of Arran opposite Whiting Bay Beach, where we were met by

an ambulance. Inside, medical staff in full PPE and a critically ill patient were ready for transport.

Following a brief shutdown to allow the safe transfer of the patient onto our aircraft, we then lifted from Arran and made another over-water transit east bound to the University Hospital Crosshouse in Kilmarnock where the patient was transferred to another ambulance and onward to the ICU.

We then shut down for around an hour and, as the sun rose, transported the medical team back to their base at Glasgow. After a rotors-turning refuel with our Tactical Supply Wing team at Oban Airfield, we then made the journey back to Kinloss, arriving just after 0730hrs.

As it could not be confirmed whether the patient would test positive for coronavirus, we were required to wear PPE whilst flying and carry out a full crew and aircraft decontamination on arrival back at Kinloss. This procedure was developed over the course of our detachment by our deployed personnel in order to minimise the risk of any cross contamination. Within a few hours, the aircraft was back on the line, ready to task.

Sqn Ldr Johnny Longland, the aircraft captain and Detachment Commander said:

"Just over 3 hours after the crew received the call, the aircraft had flown 162 nautical miles and the patient was in the Intensive Care Unit.

The training that we conducted with the emergency medical teams across Scotland ensured that, when the time came, we were all ready for a quick and smooth transfer of a patient. The whole team pulled together really well, a great effort by all."

33 Squadron has now returned to RAF Benson and has been replaced by 230 Squadron 'B Flight'. 33 Squadron will now operate from their home base in Oxfordshire, conducting UK National Standby duties and mandatory currency training, before re-deploying back to Kinloss.

*Left to right:  
Sqn Ldr Johnny Longland  
Flt Lt Dave Rawson  
Major Richard Schanda USAF*





# PROJECT WINGMAN FOUNDATION LTD AIRCREW SUPPORTING NHS STAFF WELLBEING

*By Captain Emma Henderson*

In a light-hearted nod to Top Gun, the concept of Project Wingman is rooted in the famous camaraderie of aircrew which this organisation is mobilising to help support the NHS through this tough time.

In late March 2020, Professor Robert Bor, Captain Dave Fielding and Captain Emma Henderson came together to explore how grounded aircrew could support NHS staff during the current health crisis. Professor Bor, a clinical psychologist for the Royal Free Foundation NHS Trust, could see that those working in hospitals would benefit from some additional practical support and through overseeing peer support programmes at airlines, he also recognised that crew had skills that would work for this project thanks to the peer support skills learned through aircrew training and working in a safety focussed environment.

Emma and Dave reached out to the airline community with this idea: taking airline crew into NHS hospital settings to give NHS staff a real morale boost, by being looked after during their breaks in dedicated lounges. They named this Project Wingman.

Already, a team of over 4,000 airline crew answered their call from across every UK airline to volunteer for the project. They have offered their time, knowledge and skills to serve and support NHS staff during the COVID-19 crisis.

Once a "Wingman" request is agreed with a hospital, the project team launch into action: contacting local volunteers to set up a roster of airline crew, sufficient for a 24/7 operation, and sourcing equipment and donations that are then delivered by volunteers directly to the lounge. The hospital has only to provide a "support area" with sufficient space to maintain social distancing, which Project Wingman's community of volunteers converts into a 'first-class' Wingman Lounge. The team work closely with the hospitals to ensure all of the Trust requirements to operate safely are met.

Once launched, the airline crew volunteers operate the Wingman Lounge. It's a very simple concept in that Wingman teams are providing service with a smile, but feedback from staff is that support from a team of like-minded, uniformed professionals is a welcome boost to morale. Whether it's talking about experiences on the job, travelling or simply being handed a cup of tea, Project Wingman's exceptional airline crew are proud to be



putting smiles on the faces of NHS workers across the country.

To enable Project Wingman to remain self-sufficient the project receives tremendous support and generous



donations from an ever-increasing number of businesses and organisations that enable the team to create that first class lounge feel such as food, drink, sound systems and decorations like plants. The project has consequently provided a very straightforward vehicle for business to directly support our NHS frontline staff at their place of work.

After the project's initial launch at the Whittington Hospital in North London on 2nd April 2020, the team has rolled out first class Wingman Lounges in a further 23 hospitals. With another 23 hospitals in our implementation phase and discussions ongoing with more than 30 further hospitals, covering a large number of cities in England and Scotland.

Some humbling quotes from Wingman Lounges:

*"This is one of the most heart-warming gestures. You guys are stars and should be so proud. Thank you for the rest from our busy ward."*

*"What a lovely idea! A real morale booster."*

*"Wonderful space. A good place to unwind and re-group, before continuing the days' work"*

*"Thank you for this sanctuary, it's perfect."*

*"Don't stop we need this and you"*

For further information and to make donations see the website [www.projectwingman.co.uk](http://www.projectwingman.co.uk)



# BUILDING THE BRITISH NORMANDY MEMORIAL

*By Liveryman Steven Dean*

I am a former RAF Tornado pilot who is now working with a veteran's charity to deliver a British national memorial in Normandy; having discovered that whilst the Americans and Canadians have memorials there, the British do not.

***'Our landings in the Cherbourg-Havre area have failed to gain a satisfactory foothold and I have withdrawn the troops. My decision to attack at this time and place was based on the best information available. The troops, the air, and the navy did all that bravery and devotion to duty could do. If any blame or fault attaches to the attempt it is mine alone.'***

These are the words of a letter penned by General Eisenhower on the eve of D-Day in June 1944. The letter was never needed and it was rediscovered a month after the successful invasion, neatly folded in his trouser pocket. Eisenhower tossed the letter in a waste bin, but it was retrieved by his aide and diarist, Captain Harry Butcher USN. The words in this letter reveals the true scale of risk associated with the invasion of France in the commander's eyes.

The invasion of Normandy may not have been the largest military operation in history, more troops were involved during the invasion of Italy in 1943 and in Operation Desert Storm in 1991; but it still ranks as one of the most audacious and complex military actions ever - to invade and liberate Europe.

On the 6th June 1944, over 156,000 allied troops landed in Normandy of which over 73,000 were British. After the initial breakout from the beaches, many thousands more personnel and tonnes of equipment and supplies were landed in France to sustain the battle for Normandy. Historians disagree on the exact end date for this battle, but we have taken the crossing of the Seine on 31st August 1944 as the end of the Normandy campaign and the start of the liberation of Paris.

George Batts MBE was an 18-year old sapper when he landed on Gold Beach, one of the five allied landing beaches, that June morning. He was tasked with clearing many of the mines and booby-traps installed at the behest of General Erwin Rommel, who was charged with defending the Atlantic coast against an allied invasion, and George witnessed the terrible carnage of the operation

*Site model showing the Union Jack layout*



*The author fundraising with Normandy veteran Joe Cattini*



*Normandy Veteran and fundraiser Harry Billinge MBE with trustee David McDonough OBE on 6th June 2019*



first hand. In later life he became the National Secretary of the Normandy Veterans' Association, but he also maintained a desire to build a permanent memorial to his friends and colleagues who made the ultimate sacrifice in Normandy. His cause was taken up by the BBC newscaster Nicholas Witchell and, together with other trustees, they set up the Normandy Memorial Trust charity.

The architect Liam O'Connor, who designed the Bomber Command memorial on Piccadilly, was commissioned to design the memorial, and in early 2017 the Trust was awarded an initial grant of £20m from LIBOR banking fines by the Government. They also identified a perfect piece of land at Ver-sur-Mer on rising ground just inland from Gold Beach, and with commanding views of the beach. To the west, one can see the remains of the Mulberry Harbour at Arromanches. It was around this time, just as I was leaving the RAF, that I was approached and recruited to help manage the project.

Whilst the local commune was keen on the idea of a memorial in Ver-sur-Mer, the peculiarities of French planning permissions took almost 2 years to overcome. To prevent the construction of great monstrosities spoiling views of the Côte d'Azur, the French introduced the Loi Littoral which prohibits new construction within sight of the sea unless it is contiguous with an existing urban development. Of course, the point of a memorial is that it is a place for quiet contemplation and remembrance, and so joining it onto a village was not appropriate.

Additionally, the farmland on which our site is located was also designated a protected ecological area, and this was

another impediment to construction. It took several environmental studies, a huge dossier of reports, a programme of public meetings and a full public inquiry before planning permission was finally granted in early 2019, when we completed the purchase of almost 55 acres (22 hectares) of land.

Throughout the venture, our imperative has been focused on the veterans. Our task is to build a worthy and fitting national memorial, with the added pressure of completing the project whilst there are still Normandy veterans alive to come and see the finished work.

Over 3000 tonnes of stone will be used to complete the memorial, which faces North towards the sea, and which is centred on the Memorial Court. This is a paved open area surrounded on three sides by 7m tall stone walls bearing inscriptions which tell the story of D-Day as well as quotes from King George, and political and military leaders. In front of the court, there is a bronze sculpture of three soldiers assaulting the beach. Each of these soldiers is 9ft tall and they are mounted on a single 27 tonne block of granite.

Around the Memorial Court, and covering an area roughly equivalent to two football pitches, there will be an oak pergola supported by 160 stone piers. The piers will in turn be inscribed, in chronological order, with the names of the 22,442 soldiers, sailors, and airmen under British command who perished during the Normandy campaign. Although the memorial only records the names of those who died whilst directly under British command, there are

*The author in front of the sculpture and foundation stone at the inauguration on 6th June 2019*



*PM Theresa May speaks at the memorial inauguration on 6th June 2019*



*Almost half of the memorial stonework ready for shipping from our stonemasons in Northern Ireland, August 2019*





*Progress onsite in December 2019*

still 38 nationalities represented.

When the project started, our aim was to have the memorial opened on the 75th anniversary of D-Day, in June last year; but after our first meeting with French planners it was clear that this would not be possible. That said, we have received comprehensive support and assistance from the French establishment throughout the venture. Our plans were scaled back, and instead the memorial was inaugurated and the sculpture unveiled by Prime Minister May and Président Macron on 6th June 2019. Everything was on track for completion in summer 2020 until the intervention of the COVID-19 pandemic across Europe. Over the past couple of months, we have been trying to juggle the logistic complexities of a building site in France, stonemasons from Northern Ireland, and pavers from Italy, without even considering the multinational sourcing of materials, including two 60ft flagpoles coming from America. Our veterans are also in a high-risk group considering the risk of COVID-19 infection, and so we have deferred any thoughts of opening until summer 2021 and that is what we are now focused on achieving.

During the course of my work on this project I have been privileged to meet a number of extraordinary people, and one such character is D-Day veteran Harry Billinge, who was appointed an MBE because of his fundraising work for the Normandy Memorial Trust. The 94-year old has raised in excess of £40,000 in the past 2 years with nothing more than a collection tin outside his local shopping centre in St Austell, Cornwall, and with just the odd cup of tea for support. He became a national treasure after he was interviewed on BBC Breakfast during the commemorations last June, and has featured several times since.

The support for construction of this memorial from the general public has been incredible, thanks in part to a fundraising campaign run by the Daily Mail newspaper. We

have received many letters of support and donations, often in small amounts from pensioners with direct family links to the campaign; including one from the daughter of Lt Den Brotheridge, who was the first British soldier to be killed on D-Day. She was born 2 weeks after his death and so never met her father. Fundraising now continues for Phase 2 of the project, which will deliver an education centre to ensure that future generations never forget the lessons of the past.

Eisenhower's letter still has relevance today. Even after two years of planning in the most meticulous detail, extraordinary problem solving (exemplified by the Mulberry Harbour logistics solution), and thorough training and rehearsal, no plan survives contact with the enemy. It also demonstrates the need to prepare for the consequences if a strategy does not go to plan, something which is also essential advice for aviators. These are all elements we have had to deal with whilst working to deliver the British Normandy Memorial.



*The Normandy Memorial Sculpture © Julie Verne*

For more information about the Normandy Memorial, or if you wish to make a donation, please visit our website:

<https://www.normandymemorialtrust.org/>

You can see the memorial progress on the site webcam:

[https://www.devisubox.com/dv/dv.php5?pgl=Project/interface&dv\\_pjv\\_sPjvName=british\\_normandy\\_memorial](https://www.devisubox.com/dv/dv.php5?pgl=Project/interface&dv_pjv_sPjvName=british_normandy_memorial)

And Harry Billinge:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-48543293/d-day-veteran-harry-billinge-i-m-no-hero-i-was-lucky>



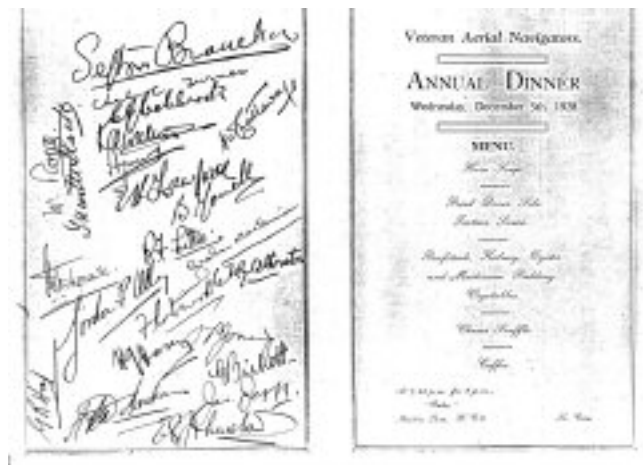
# THE VERY BEGINNING

*By Hon. Archivist Past Master Peter Buggé*

The Honourable Company of Air Pilots, which has about two thousand members, is the largest of the Livery Companies of the City of London and there must be many members who have joined fairly recently who would like to know how it all began and who was involved. We are fortunate to have a comprehensive record of the founding and growth of our Company from 1928 to the present day; it has been suggested that I should write a series of articles covering the first year or two of the Company's existence. Although with the coronavirus restrictions in place at the time of writing I have to rely on the archive material which has been digitally recorded and accessible on my PC at home, this will give plenty to work with as it includes every page from seven bundles of office correspondence and the first two minute books.

The earliest document in the archives is in the first bundle covering the period 21st March 1928 to 27th June 1929. Dated 22nd March 1928 it is a copy of a letter written by LA Wingfield to the President of the Royal Aeronautical Society, Lord Sempill, suggesting the formation of 'a Company of Airmen' along the lines of the City Livery Companies and asking for his support - which was not forthcoming, although he did later join the Guild. Lawrie Wingfield was a solicitor in his father's firm, Wingfields Halse and Trustram, at 61 Cheapside, London. He had flown in the RFC with 12 Sqn during the Great War, with whom he had carried out a bombing mission to St Quentin railway station from Avesnes-le-Comte on 1 July 1916, the first day of the Somme offensive. Shot down after blowing up a train he was a prisoner of war until he escaped and returned to England in the autumn of 1917; he was awarded the MC for his escape and the DFC for his bombing mission. Past Master Arthur Thorning has written about Lawrie's early life (Air Pilot October 2016), and we hold some items of memorabilia in the archives including an interview recorded on VHS tape in the 1970s in which he comes across as an intelligent man with a strong sense of humour who enjoys life. Lawrie Wingfield was to become our first Clerk.

At the time of his letter to the President, Wingfield was honorary solicitor to the RAeS. It is worth bearing in mind that the Past President was Sir Sefton Brancker, the Director of Civil Aviation, and that the four influential aviation societies at the time were the RAeS, the Royal Aero Club (RAeC), the Air League and the Society of British Aircraft Constructors (SBAC), so Lawrie will have known a good number of people involved in the early days



of civil aviation. These would have included Captain AG Lamplugh who had also flown during the Great War, and was a member of the Society (and soon to be elected to its Council). An aviation insurance underwriter, Lamplugh is also credited with the idea of a 'Company of Airmen' by EA Johnston in Airship Navigator, his biography of his father EL Johnston, so perhaps it was an idea that came from informal discussion among friends in the RAeS with enough support to give Lawrie cause to write the letter to Lord Sempill.

There is now a gap in the records from 24th May 1928, when Lord Sempill's final letter on the subject is acknowledged, until Monday 4th February 1929 when Wingfield writes to Squadron Leader EL Johnston with minutes that he had taken of a meeting held the previous Friday 1st February, and to understand the significance of this we need to follow another thread of the story.

It had been decided in 1925 that from, I think, 1928 all Captains of commercial aircraft should not only hold a commercial 'B' licence, but also a second class navigator's certificate, known as a '2nd N', and have a minimum of 300 hours flying time. There were no facilities generally available to teach the syllabus for the 2nd N, so an interim arrangement was made for Squadron Leader EL Johnston to conduct classes at the Royal Aero Club, the first course completing in December 1926. Ernest Johnston had joined the RNAS airship section in 1916, and had served as navigator in a number of airships before becoming the Air Ministry's Chief Examiner for navigation licences. He was appointed to be navigator on both R100 and R101 airships, and lived at Harrowden close to the Cardington airship sheds where R101 was being built. The students on that first course included many aviation luminaries such as

EH 'Bill' Lawford, the pilot of the first commercial flight from London to Paris on 25th August 1919, Walter Hope, twice winner of the King's Cup air race, and OP Jones, of Imperial Airways; all passed the exam. In the archives we have a silver cigarette box presented to EL Johnston by the students engraved with their signatures and with the words:

**To EL Johnston Esq  
6th & 7th December 1926  
IT'S SELF EXPLANATORY**

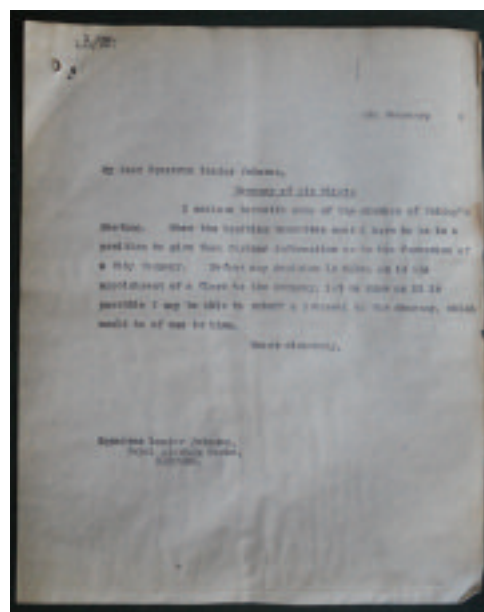
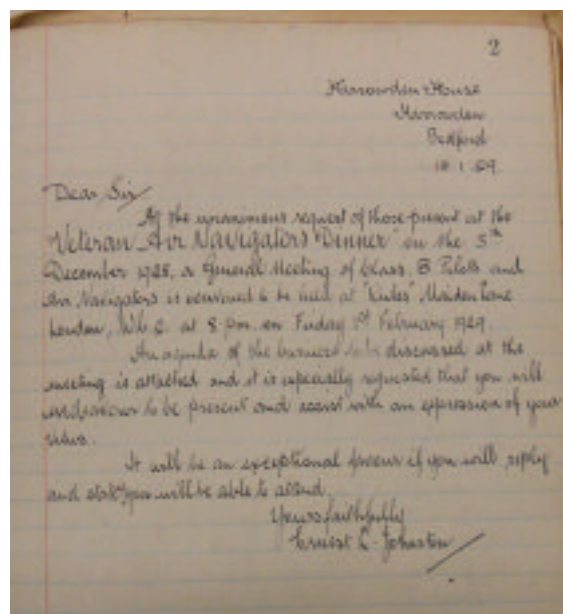
That last line suggests it was a phrase that Johnston often used although perhaps the subject was not 'self explanatory' to the students!

Two years later it was decided to mark the anniversary of the completion of the first course for the 2nd N, and invitations were sent out for what was called a Veteran Air Navigators Dinner to be held at Rules restaurant in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden on 5th December 1928. A copy of the menu is in our EH Lawford archive. The guest of honour was the Director of Civil Aviation, Sir Sefton Brancker; and it is part of his speech that evening that set in motion the work that would see the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators of the British Empire, now the Honourable Company of Air Pilots, come into being. Press cuttings recording the speech are also in the Lawford archive. Sir Sefton Brancker must have been aware of the idea of a City Company for pilots as must Ernest Johnston, but in any case there was apparently a discussion after the dinner which showed there was strong support for the idea, and a meeting for all holders of a B licence and a 2nd N was arranged for 1st February 1929 to take the matter further. Although Lawrie Wingfield would probably not have been at the dinner on 5th December he must have been asked to attend the meeting on 1st February and take the minutes: he was a great supporter of the idea of a pilot Livery Company, he had a legal background which might come in useful, and he knew many of those who had been at the dinner and were going to attend the meeting. The first page of the first minute book in the archives is a copy of the invitation and agenda sent out for the meeting held on 1st February 1929. By this point it is clear that Ernest Johnston was leading the efforts to form a Livery Company; he was in the chair for the dinner and for the meeting, even though Sir Sefton Brancker was present, and it was to him that the minutes were sent on 4th February by Lawrie Wingfield.

The minutes of that first meeting record approval to form a Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators, and the setting up of a Drafting Committee to finalise the Memorandum and Articles of Association, in particular the qualifications for membership of the proposed Guild and whether or not it should be restricted to those engaged in Air Transport. It

would be too difficult to summarise here the sequence of meetings that took place during 1929, but they culminated in the Installation of the first Court on 19th October 1929 and the first Court meeting on 28th October 1929. The first Master was Sir Sefton Brancker; and the Deputy Master was Ernest Johnston. Lawrie Wingfield was elected Clerk.

In my next article I'll cover some of the correspondence between Lawrie Wingfield and Ernest Johnston and look at some of those who joined the Guild when it was formed.



# THE GIMLI GLIDER LECTURES IN NEW ZEALAND

*By Liveryman Mike Zaytsoff*

*Photos courtesy of Freeman John King,  
Editor of New Zealand Aviation News*

In early March the New Zealand Region was fortunate enough to have Captain Bob Pearson, captain of the Gimli Glider, share his remarkable story to our members and guests. In 1983 his Boeing 767-200 suffered fuel starvation due to a refuelling error. Captain Pearson was able successfully to glide the aircraft to the decommissioned Royal Canadian Air Force Base at Gimli, Manitoba. Henceforth the event and aircraft became known as the Gimli Glider.

After taking a cruise ship over from Sydney, Captain Pearson arrived in Auckland a day before. He was kind enough to give 2 presentations to our members and guests, which worked out well because both nights it was a full house. The venue for the first night was the Sir Keith Park Aviation Hall of the Museum of Transport & Technology (MOTAT), where we had an audience of approximately 60. The next night he spoke at the hall of the New Zealand Air Cadets 4th Squadron at Ardmore Airport (Auckland's training airport), where 77 people attended.

Overall, the Gimli Glider story continues to be a good lesson for every pilot of how all the holes in the Swiss Cheese accident causation model lined up that day. Fortunately, Captain Pearson's superb aircraft handling skills, and First Officer Maurice Quintal's exceptional support as Pilot Monitoring, prevented any loss of life. This included putting the aircraft into a sideslip maneuver, normally reserved for single engine training aircraft, to lose excess altitude and land the 767 within the runway's normal touchdown zone. At the time, CRM was in its infancy, but here was a successful example of a crew working together to achieve the best possible outcome.

On a personal level, the Gimli Glider story never stops being interesting. I still find myself picking up new details even after hearing the narrative four times in person, plus watching the Air Crash Investigation television show. (Which for some reason this is marketed differently in



Canada (the "Mayday" show), and the USA (as "Air Emergency"). Yet the episode is called "The Gimli Glider," the same for each program). I did not realize the flight had passed Gimli Airport whilst diverting to Winnipeg, then turned around 180 degrees to proceed back to Gimli. Another new detail I picked up this time around was regarding the Ram Air Turbine (RAT). It provided minimal electrical and hydraulic power after the loss of the engines and the APU. During the design phase of the 767, some engineers wanted to discard the RAT because they felt the chances of it ever being called upon were so remote. Thankfully they were talked out of it because the RAT was required less than 1 year after 767s entered airline service! If anyone would like to see what a 767's RAT looks like, there is one on display at the Gimli Glider Museum. More about that museum later. There are documentaries and books available online so I won't get into details of the story too much more. Suffice to say, if you can, see the presentation live. It's the best way.

An extra bonus for the audience was that Captain Pearson's partner Pearl Dion accompanied him. She happened to be a passenger on the Gimli Glider on that fateful day. Some audience members were flight attendants and benefited from hearing Pearl's perspective





about how the cabin was prepared for the emergency landing and the ensuing evacuation.

The evenings concluded with a Meet & Greet social, complete with food generously provided by our venue hosts. To me, there are many great attributes to joining our Honourable Company. But the best one is being able to connect junior pilots with senior pilots so they can turn to an experienced source of advice for their careers. Sadly, that career advice channel is more important now than ever with the temporary collapse of our industry on a global scale. (And it WILL BE temporary! There's no way aircraft and pilots are even close to going extinct.)

Of Captain Pearson's many characteristics, the one I admire most is how down-to-earth he is, despite pulling off this incredible feat against improbable odds. A co-worker of mine, and his father, both pilots, wanted to attend the lectures but could not because of a scheduling conflict. They were even willing to fly up from Christchurch for the night (Christchurch-Auckland is a similar distance to Aberdeen-Shoreham). Captain Pearson kindly agreed to have lunch with them on a different day and give them their own personal rendition of the fateful flight. They thanked him profusely while he said to me later "I'm retired. I don't have too much else on my agenda."

There were 2 pleasant surprises that came up during Captain Pearson's visit to New Zealand, courtesy of big-hearted Kiwi hospitality. The first was that the volunteers at the MOTAT gave him a personal tour of the interior of

their Lancaster Bomber. Museum conservation rules only allow 50 people in the aircraft each year, so to get such an invitation is a rare and special occurrence. Even some top level managers have not been inside their own Lancaster.

The second pleasant surprise was an invitation from TV New Zealand for Captain Pearson and Pearl to go on their live breakfast show. A producer from the network found one of our social media posts and contacted me to see if they would like to do an interview. They happily obliged. Captain Pearson has done multiple television and radio interviews throughout his life, but this was Pearl's first time. In the end, they both looked like natural pros in front of the cameras. Judging by their reactions afterwards, I think the experience was the icing on the cake for their Australasian vacation.

No disrespect is intended to TV New Zealand, but their invitation does serve as a reminder to all of us regarding social media. Be careful what you post online – it may be viewed by people you never expected! In this case it was for the better because TVNZ has kindly offered to publicise HCAP events in the future. It's great to get assistance from a supporter you never knew you had.

Both of our NZ Region's events went off without a hitch. However, it was definitely not looking that way 3 weeks earlier when one of our venues cancelled on us. Within New Zealand, our sisters and brothers at the Royal Aeronautical Society have branches in most of the larger cities, except for Auckland. With the Air Pilots, it is the opposite. We have a strong presence in Auckland, but not so much in other parts of the country. (Although we are of course grateful to all our members outside of Auckland). The RAeS expressed interest in setting up an Auckland Branch, to which it was suggested we could collaborate on joint events for both our organizations. The RAeS engineer I was interacting with had a presentation room lined up for





us in his firm's headquarters. However he was unexpectedly sent on a contract overseas and had to cancel. Thus begat some anxious moments as we worked frantically to secure another venue to prevent one of the events from being scuttled. I like to start advertising 3- 4 weeks ahead, and here we were at the 3 week mark without even a venue to advertise. The worst part was when Captain Pearson emailed me, inquiring about where the second lecture was going to be held. I cringed as I had to reply that I did not know, followed with the famous last words of "...but don't worry, everything will be okay."

After an intense back and forth by email, text, and phone with several possible alternates, our NZ Region Secretary Ben Chamberlain offered the presentation room in his family's business. Ben and my employer Air New Zealand also offered one of their presentation rooms. It was an

enormous relief to know that the second presentation would go ahead after all. But then we had word we had been approved to use a more aviation-themed venue.

On my days off I volunteer as a conductor on the heritage trams that shuttle back and forth between the 2 sites that make up the MOTAT. (Some find it strange that being a pilot, I volunteer on the trams and not with the museum's aircraft collection. My first love IS aircraft, but I have affection for all forms of transportation). I asked the Tram Boss, Louis Eaton, if the MOTAT had anything suitable. After consulting his superiors, he came back with the excellent news that we had been approved to use the Sir Keith Park Aviation Hall! As you can see from the pictures, we could not have had a more perfect location if we tried. In fact the site was so perfect, I had to fend off questions about why on earth did I have a different location lined up in the first place?

On that note, multiple people and organizations are owed recognition for their contributions to our successful evenings. The first is to MOTAT Tram Boss Louis Eaton for all his efforts to make the Sir Keith Park Aviation Hall available to us. Next I would like to thank my co-worker Captain Mike Greig, former Deputy Commanding Officer of the New Zealand Air Cadets, for helping make the hall of the Air Cadets 4th Squadron available to us. Also with the 4th Squadron, I'd like to thank Flying Officer Neville Keen and his volunteers for preparing their hall for us and the refreshments they provided. Finally a big thank you to the staff at the MOTAT for all their efforts to prepare their hall for us and the refreshments they provided.

How did we end up being so lucky having Captain Pearson as a guest speaker? Before moving to New Zealand from Canada, I served on the Executive Committee of the Company's North America region. Our Chairman at the time was Liveryman Jeremy Tracy, who taught me how to organize an effective event such as this one. He was instrumental in setting up a similar event in Ottawa where Past Master John Hutchinson gave us his fascinating talk about the Concorde. Ever since moving to New Zealand I had been thinking about how I could put on an event for our members that would link my former country to my new one. After making the connection with Captain Pearson a few years beforehand, I had been checking with him on and off if he would be interested in venturing down this way and giving his captivating talk to our members. I'm just so eternally grateful that he and Pearl were able to make the 19 hour trek from where they live in between Ottawa and Montréal.

On a closing note, the Gimli Glider story is of such a strong personal interest to me that I paid a visit to the site in 2002. For history aficionados, Gimli's airport was built during World War 2 as part of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, to train pilots of the Allied air forces. To my dismay, the airport was bereft of any kind of commemoration of Captain Pearson and crew's great feat of airmanship. To say I was bewildered would be an understatement. But fear not, this oversight has since been corrected. Captain Pearson and Pearl have informed me, and I am happy to share with you: there is now a museum in Gimli dedicated to the event and aircraft! The nearest airport with airline service is James A. Richardson International Airport in Winnipeg. From there it is an easy 100 km drive north via Manitoba Highway 9 to Gimli and the museum. Just remember, if you are visiting during the lovely minus 30°C Canadian winter, make sure to plug your car's engine heater in. Otherwise it won't start.

There are 2 main highlights to the museum. The first is a flight simulator so you too can try to glide the aircraft to a (hopefully) successful landing. The second is an actual Ram Air Turbine (RAT) from a Boeing 767, the vital component that provided the Gimli Glider with just enough hydraulic

and electrical power. As pilots, we learn how the RAT in our aircraft operates, but it's just not something we would likely ever see in our careers. More information about the Gimli Glider Museum can be found at:

[www.gimliglider.com](http://www.gimliglider.com). They are currently working towards having the flight deck transported from what is left of the aircraft in its final resting place in the Mojave Desert. Any donations for that project or the rest of the museum are graciously accepted.

A final request from the New Zealand Region: We're always looking for guest speakers for our events. Of particular interest to our members are aircraft carrier pilots and fighter pilots. Strike aircraft were removed from the Royal New Zealand Air Force's fleet in the early 2000s, so pilots of these aircraft are especially interesting to our members and guests. If you are vacationing in this part of the world and can spare the time to share stories of your adventures with our members, it would be greatly appreciated. Feel free to look up my contact details in the Member's Directory of our HCAP website and send me a note.

I wish you all the best day possible, given the global circumstances. Hang in there, we will all get through this.

---

## 2EXCEL – THE AVIATION COMPANY EVOLVES IN NEW DIRECTIONS

*By Liveryman Ben Griffiths*

WHEN HM Coastguard King Air 200 G-HMGA launched from Doncaster-Sheffield Airport for its maiden Search and Rescue flight on 19 November last year, the tasking represented the culmination of many thousands of hours of hard work at 2Excel Aviation. This UK-based company had taken the requirements issued by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and turned the initial concept into a capability in just eight months. The second contracted aircraft (G-HMGB) followed soon after to provide a back-up for the 24/7 service – which is on call to get airborne within 45 minutes during the day, and one hour at night. 2Excel's motto is to do difficult things well, a claim it has been making since diversifying away from its origins as The Blades aerobatic team at the height of the 2008/09 global financial crisis. Founded by two former Royal Air Force Harrier pilots (and squadron bosses) – Liveryman Chris

Norton and Andy Offer, the business model was suddenly challenged when the market for executives seeking adrenaline flights dried up almost overnight. The pair decided to put their military experience as ground attack pilots to good use by pitching to help train Forward Air Controllers for the British Army. The team's bright orange Extra 300 aircraft were soon put to use above military ranges, with a sensor operator occupying the front seat and acting as a fast jet or unmanned aerial vehicle being called onto a target by the Army controller on the ground. This led to 2Excel training the last six brigades to deploy to Afghanistan.

The savings to the taxpayer impressed the Ministry of Defence – flying a light aircraft simulating the fast air was roughly one-tenth the cost of employing a combat jet – and 2Excel was soon asked what else it could do. Trials





*King Air & Navajo on Coastguard duty*



*Coastguard King Air*



*OPS 727*

work using converted Piper Navajo twins soon followed, with several aerospace and defence contractors jumping at the chance to test their equipment on flying laboratories piloted by experienced ex-military aircrews. Both of these services continue to this day, although Navajos equipped with sensor turrets have replaced Extras for the Army training.

Today 2Excel comprises more than 450 people and 32 aircraft within two businesses - 2Excel Aviation (2EA) and 2Excel Engineering (2EE). The former operates aeroplanes to deliver complex services; 2EE is a large aircraft Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul organisation focused on

Boeing 727, 737 and 757, as well as the Airbus A320 family and some lighter types operated by 2EA, predominantly the Beech King Air and Piper Navajo.

Within 2Excel Aviation are three main divisions, underpinned by a Support division housing essential functions such as Finance, Human Resources, continuing airworthiness and audit/compliance as well as Communications – the department I head, which deals with the whole business.

The Charter division flies King Airs as well as two Boeing 737s fitted out for VIP transport. It holds some retained contracts such as Aircraft on the Ground services for the like of easyJet and Jet2. Other work arrives via charter brokers, and includes flying sports teams and musicians on their tours and overseas matches.

Besides the Search and Rescue work, the Special Missions division also holds a global capability to provide counter-pollution and surveillance services to the oil industry, using two former FedEx 727 freighters converted with our own designed and built 'Tersus' spray system. The on-call jet is at readiness to launch and fly to anywhere in world at just four hours' notice. They have never been used in anger but train regularly to retain currency for the crews, who are expected to fly at just 150 feet over the sea to spray an oil slick in the event of another Gulf of Mexico-style spill. They are paired with a Navajo spotter aircraft, which is regularly launched to check for offshore pollution.

The highly-skilled Capability Development division sets 2Excel Aviation apart from its competitors, featuring DOA, MOA and POA operations, so can take an initial concept through the design and development phases to manufacturing, certification, installation, test and evaluation, training of crews and delivery of the service to the end user such as the Coastguard. The final piece of the 'concept to capability' journey is data exploitation, an area the company is beginning to develop further. Within this division sits 2Excelgeo – for geospatial – which operates Navajo aircraft fitted with hyperspectral cameras. They are currently specialising in tree health, working with forestry organisations and others to capture data from the air that is then interpreted on the ground for analysis.

As an example, Geo are currently working with Network Rail to assess tree health alongside the UK's railway tracks, which would allow only those diseased trees at risk of falling to be identified from the images taken and then removed. They can justifiably claim to be saving the trees – what other aviation company can say that?



every to fly for the Reds, has been appointed as an aviation ambassador by Transport Secretary Grant Shapps. Kirsty's passion for encouraging young women and girls to consider a career in aviation is to be applauded.

Coronavirus notwithstanding, it's clear the business has a bright future. One of the many exciting projects currently under way is 'Excalibur', our name for the Team Tempest Flight Test Aircraft. We have been sub-contracted by defence prime

contractor Leonardo to undertake a feasibility study for this machine, based on a Boeing 757, which will be the flying testbed for the electronics, radar and systems that will eventually go into the new sixth generation combat jet for the Royal Air Force. Expect to hear more about this very soon.

While some operations have been grounded by the virus and subsequent travel restrictions, 2Excel has continued to fly missions of critical national importance, such as Search and Rescue. Many of our crews, support staff and engineers have been classed as 'key workers' and played a key role keeping vital transport systems going. We are also proud to have played a role in bringing Britons back home on repatriation flights organised by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Safe to say, there is never a dull day and our calm, committed team have gone about their business professionally.

*Ben Griffiths is Head of Communications at 2Excel. Before joining the business last year, he was an advisor to Airbus and Malaysia Airlines following a 20-year career as a business and financial journalist. A keen private pilot and co-owner of a de Havilland Chipmunk, he is also a member of the CAA's 'Aviation Futures' thinktank and a member of the Royal Aeronautical Society's Policy Committee.*

And of course, the legacy of 2Excel – The Blades – continue to fly, providing both passenger experience days for those keen to taste the thrill of close formation aerobatics flown by former RAF Red Arrows pilots, as well as corporate days, events and airshows. At the end of 2019 the team deployed to the Middle East, appearing in the Dubai Airshow but also providing some passenger flying in what has become the home of adrenaline sports. The plan is to return to the region soon to take advantage of an untapped market with huge potential.

It's important to note that all of this is underpinned by an AOC. 2Excel is an airline, a decision that was taken at the outset and which has helped build and maintain confidence with the regulator in the company's abilities – although projects such as turning a 727 into an oil spill aircraft with a purpose built system have given the CAA some challenging work to do!

For me, just eight months into a newly-created role at the company, the mission is to take 2Excel out of the shadows and begin to tell our story to a wider audience, outside the tight-knit aerospace and defence market. Having previously worked with much larger organisations such as Airbus, Malaysia Airlines and lessor SMBC Aviation Capital, the excitement of aviation still hits me every single day. The caliber of 2Excel's people is also apparent at every encounter. Blades pilot Kirsty Murphy, the only woman



*Special Missions pilot Thomas Chan pre-flights one of the Special Missions Panther aircraft*



*Charter VIP 737. It is shown at 2Excel Engineering at Lasham*



*Maintenance at Lasham*

# LEARNING AND TEACHING LOOKOUT

*By Freeman Flt Lt Matthew Winwood*

You don't have to 'look' far to find myriad articles on a good lookout. From the very first trial lesson guide, to the detailed ATPL-level human factors analysis and, inevitably, the AIRPROX and accident reports; there is plenty of commentary and guidance. All I offer here are a few items and observations that I have found useful in both learning and teaching an effective lookout.

The first one of those learning experiences happened as a University Air Squadron cadet. Unduly worrying about the sheer volume of checks and equipment on the Grob Tutor (quite a bit for what is after all, a single-engine-piston), I spent far too much time 'looking in'. This very much irked my instructors, many of which were Falklands or Gulf War veterans who had plenty of experience of looking out for all sort of different threats. One day, this was once too often for this instructor. Climbing through 1,500', and still not looking out – the instructor grabbed the controls, banked 90° right into a max rate turn, and shouted "Did you see that!". Shocked, and unable to reply with anything, all I could do was to belatedly look around for this aircraft which must have nearly ruined our day.

Returning us back to straight and level, he said: "There was nothing there, but you didn't know that, did you? You weren't looking out at all!". The point was made. Even in many close calls in the years to follow, nothing had shocked me as much as that.

Fast forward many years. Now I'm instructing a qualifying cross-country check, on the quiet mid-sector. The student

has been staring at the map and the plog for several minutes. Yes, you guessed it; and the 'training point' had the desired effect! Whilst this certainly wouldn't be suitable for every stage of training, and could risk putting a nervous trainee off flying permanently, it certainly reinforces the theoretical point (without the student actually having the experience of an Airprox, which we are trying to avoid)!

Other factors in the current GA flying environment make maintaining lookout skills more pressing. A PPL, who rarely flew in UK airspace, had been doing an intensive fortnight of summer flying in the South East. Unquestionably deft with an iPad, he easily navigated and managed the plog with it. At the end of the outbound leg, of course, I 'failed' the iPad for the way home (face down on the back seats). The panic was perceptible, but as he settled in, spotted some landmarks and dug out the chart, it started to come together. Unsurprisingly, he started noting other aircraft too! I felt the need to state that I wasn't just 'that sort of chap' for swiping his iPad, there was a training point to it. I needn't have bothered; the next week on a solo landaway, the very same iPad overheated in the hot summer conditions, a story the pilot gratefully recounted to me, when safely back home!

The South East of England is rather difficult to navigate through controlled airspace (CAS), difficulties compounded by the recent introduction of Farnborough airspace. Whilst there are some significant potential advantages of controlled airspace for GA, I have witnessed

*A King Air B200 at sunrise being prepared for aeromedical tasking.*



*Low-level special clearance over London on Cat-A medical tasking.*





this causes increases in two unhealthy trends. Firstly, the confusion of Basic air traffic service provision (outside CAS). Most summer days, an indignant light aircraft pilot can be heard remarking to LARS at “how close they just were” to another aircraft, seemingly surprised that no warning was given. I strive to point out that, even when units may offer Traffic Information, they are not obliged to do so. It seems this is still a very common misconception. Finally, the increase in skirting CAS, usually using GPS moving maps to do so, often not talking to the unit, or using the listening frequency. The CAA guidance is quite clear: Take 2 – meaning to keep 2nm from the edge, or 200ft from the base of CAS. Whilst the aircraft may indeed just stay clear of CAS, the additional unnecessary workload imposed on the controller and IFR traffic using the CAS is significant. I have heard many frustrated controllers, and indeed I have been that frustrated



*Cessna 152 - my instructional office for most of 2017!*

transport pilot with a delayed air traffic slot, as a result of this. And of course, to labour earlier points, all the time the light aircraft pilot is staring at the moving map... they aren't looking outside!

## SUN-BRONZED AND BEAUTIFUL?

*By Past Master Chris Spurrier*

Firstly, I write this with some reticence. There are many members of the Company who have lost close relatives to cancers and I don't wish to revive their sufferings. But every year we read warnings about the dangers of melanoma cancer. Very few know or understand how dangerous it is. This was written about twenty years ago for the BALPA magazine, mostly because I had been watching crews sunbathing with little or no protection. I know - believe me, I know - how dangerous this is. You cannot understand how aggressive the disease can be unless you come close to it. I didn't understand - I do now.

It was on 10th June that I checked my e-mail and found a message from my son Tristan. He was in his second year at Bristol, reading Electrical and Electronic Engineering so e-mail had always been the easiest way to keep in touch. He said he hadn't been feeling too well and was going to the doctor. My wife was slightly concerned – T was never ill – but we agreed that it probably wasn't serious and next morning I went off to Atlanta. I called home the following day just before pickup. T wasn't at all well and was coming home by train, but he had to go back to Bristol for a biopsy on a lump in his groin. Not good news – the aeroplane came home rather more quickly than usual. The

date was Friday 13th.

The weekend wasn't too good. We asked when he had started feeling ill. It seemed he had found a small lump in his groin at about Easter, but had put it down to a pulled muscle. By mid May he was feeling quite ill but assumed that was stress from his second year revision. Once his exams finished, things didn't get much better, but he'd thought he was just run down after all that work. Finally he went to see the doctor. He was complaining of dizziness, shortness of breath, aching legs, slight pain from the lump, short sightedness and some nausea. T now told us that his pain had become worse since yesterday and he had lost the use of some muscles on the right side of his face. I was very worried. On Monday we drove to Bristol for his biopsy. It was obvious that he wasn't well – he had lost the hearing in his right ear, his balance was lacking, and he staggered around as though he'd been drinking. I left him with visiting friends from the University and came home. Next day my wife and I drove down to see what was going on. He was recovering well although the doctors offered no diagnosis, and we brought him home that afternoon. The biopsy result would be sent to our GP later that week.

By Wednesday the facial paralysis was worsening.

T couldn't smile and couldn't properly close his mouth. Eating and drinking were very difficult, and his pain and loss of balance were also much worse. The biopsy results were due on Thursday, but our GP asked us to wait until Friday for further tests to be done and then to come in as a family - an omen of bad news. And so it proved. Our son had melanoma cancer.

We had been on beach holidays of course, but T had never been a sun-worshipper. He'd never had obvious moles or skin marks and had only really been sunburned once, on a skiing trip with friends. Whatever, he had the disease. The GP said that with modern treatment things weren't all black. He had already contacted an oncologist at Reading, and we should arrange a consultation with him directly for early next week. Things didn't work out like that. The GP was so concerned with T's loss of balance as we left the surgery that he arranged for an immediate admission to the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading. Things were moving very quickly.

On Saturday morning T was taken for an MRI scan of the brain. It showed three small tumours. I'm not going to bother with technicalities in this article. Names don't matter, just the results. Right now, the results were that the swellings around these tumours were pressing on nerves which controlled the balance, facial muscles and hearing. To make matters worse he was now losing his hearing in the other ear.

The oncologist was not optimistic but neither was he final. His words were that there was a very small light at the end of a very dark tunnel. He hoped that a combination of chemo- and radio-therapies would prove effective as the tumours were inoperable. The idea was to begin radiotherapy early in the coming week. This would affect the blood cell count but, once the cell count recovered, chemotherapy could begin. Meantime T was to have steroids, pain killers and blood transfusions, since he had become anaemic. We are now at Saturday, 21st June. By Sunday T had lost the hearing in his other ear and the use of the other side of his face. He still couldn't smile or close his lips properly but now he couldn't close his eyes either, neither to blink nor to sleep.

For reasons various I had him transferred to the local BUPA hospital, although still under the care of the same consultant. We had thought of changing to a doctor at the Royal Marsden but since T's consultant at Reading was in contact with the other chap, they had discussed the case together and agreed the same treatment, it seemed sensible for him to remain locally.

T received four rapid doses of radiotherapy together with various tests and blood transfusions. It had taken just three days to get the therapy planning completed and to manufacture a mask to hold his head in place, so this was very good going. He came home from hospital on that Friday and received most of the rest of his treatment as an outpatient. On the Monday, 30th June, a whole body scan showed all T's major body organs free of tumours. Good news, and we were beginning to have some hope. All the while, of course, we were communicating by written notes. T was by now completely deaf.

Throughout this time T was pretty tired and in some pain, although the pain was mostly controlled by drugs. He wasn't ever - then or later - concerned about the cancer. He was convinced that he would beat it. What most amazed us and the medical staff who dealt with him was that he never once complained. He just had to get through the treatment. Which continued with more radiotherapy. The doctors had been monitoring T's blood throughout and felt that the radiotherapy had gone well enough for them to risk beginning chemotherapy very quickly, so this started on the Friday, 4th July. We had been warned of the many possible side effects but, apart from tiredness, T felt fine. His main worry was that his hair was falling out so he staggered to the shops with me, and we bought a panama hat. I bought a hammock so he could sleep in the garden. The summer was gorgeous. I also bought him a television and video recorder which would show subtitles, and put them in his room.

T had one day of vomiting, we thought due to the chemotherapy, and our GP prescribed drugs to control it. Otherwise he got on with life as best he could. The results of his exams arrived, not quite as good as he had hoped but still a pass. I thought that was excellent considering his brain had been under attack at the time and we agreed he might get the marks moderated up to a 2.1 when he returned to Bristol. He said that he really didn't want to take a year out if he could avoid it. The airline was being very good. I was only flying short trips and then only when they fitted in with what was happening at home. T installed garden lighting whilst I was away on one trip. Interesting, because he couldn't walk so he crawled around digging trenches for the cable. Our local village show was to have a class for "A Completely Useless Gadget", so T designed a machine which blew bubbles, made noises and shot ping-pong balls in the air. We staggered in to Reading and bought the parts to make it. He had always been a gadget king so this was meat and drink to him - his nickname was Q. He had once, for a James Bond evening,

designed a rocket firing ghetto blaster which so terrified the band that they stopped playing for a time.

By 12th July T was well into the chemotherapy regime. The pain in his legs was markedly worse and he was on stronger painkillers. His hair was falling out quite quickly. Lots of his friends were visiting from all over the country, which was super. We also received an invitation to a hospitality tent at the Fairford air display. A wonderful day but T was absolutely exhausted by the time we got him home.

The tiredness was to remain with T. He was becoming anaemic again – the result of the therapies, so he was given another transfusion. Then, on 27th July, he found another swollen lymph node, this time in the armpit. A serious setback which was quickly treated with a single, large dose of radiotherapy. His pain was now quite serious and he was on morphine. He was also starting to vomit quite a bit, we assumed due to the chemo drugs. By 7th August he was having trouble holding food down and not feeling at all good. He was very tired and sleeping a lot, either not getting up at all or going to his hammock in the garden. We were still going in to the BUPA hospital for regular blood checks. The GP prescribed a pump with anti-sickness medication in an attempt to control his nausea. On the 8th August T complained that his sight was failing in one eye. A huge panic. We took him to the doctors and thence to hospital for checks, culminating in another scan. The swelling round one tumour had increased and was now pressing on the optic nerve. It is also thought that the swellings are responsible for the vomiting, not the drugs. More radiotherapy to try and zap this. Tristan's diary ends here.

The next two weeks were fairly quiet. T slept a lot and had regular blood tests. He was to start another course of chemotherapy soon, but first he was due in to hospital on Wednesday 20th August for another dose of radiotherapy. I was away on a trip. Paula couldn't get him up and into the car so, when I got home on the Thursday, I found the visiting nurse organising an ambulance to take him in to the hospital. He was obviously very ill – the problem was that any movement to his head seemed to cause pain and disorientation. The ambulance journey was no fun. T had a slight blackout on the way, but we eventually got him there. He was put on a cocktail of drugs and on the Friday he had another dose of radiotherapy. He was put on a drip of steroids to try to reduce the swellings round the tumours. Some time that night he got out of bed to go to the lavatory, became entangled in the drip stand and fell.

The blow shook his head and he lost all vision.

On Saturday morning we were woken by a telephone call telling us what had happened. I became really angry in the shower, crying, shouting and railing against a God who could let this happen to my son. We drove to the hospital and found T deaf and blind. We had a long conference with the consultant and nursing staff. It seemed nothing more could be done. The consultant wanted us to agree to stop further treatment and just to address T's pain. This meant he would probably die in less than a week. The alternative was to continue on the steroids, in which case he might linger for two or three weeks. There really was no choice. The last few days were dreadful, mainly because we could not communicate, and T was so drugged up that he was mostly sleeping and could barely talk. One of us would arrive at the hospital each morning at about seven and we would change over at lunchtime, staying until ten. We could have stayed at the hospital but we thought we needed to try for some real rest each night. Every morning, the drive was thirty minutes of fear, wondering what new horror we should find. Tristan died on Wednesday, 27th August, exactly one month before his 21st birthday and roughly ten weeks after he first went to his doctor. His mother was with him. It was very peaceful.

I don't write this as a horror story or as a plea for sympathy, but to try and make you understand something about melanoma. It is an awful, a dreadful, a horrible disease. Please, please be very aware of any suspicious marks on your skin. Ask your doctor. Brief your children. And never let a lump go undiagnosed, even if it is the middle of something important. T's younger brother was super. He was very understanding and always there helping to support Paula when I wasn't around. T was very unlucky, but his case is not as rare as one would hope. While this was going on we became aware of two similar cases nearby. The disease is uncommon, but not that uncommon. I can't offer advice – I'm not a doctor. For what it's worth one article I've read suggests that any suntan creams with a protection factor of less than 15 are not effective. Which is why I worry when I see crews lying in the sun with factor 5 lotion and feeling safe. They're not. When I wrote this I said I was dreaming about T most nights. People said it would get better. I certainly think about it less often but it's still with us. For yourselves, be vigilant, be careful and try to avoid anything similar happening to you or to your family.

That was all written twenty years back. And yes, I still dream of T sometimes.



# THE AIR PILOTS PEER SUPPORT INITIATIVE (APPSI)

## WHAT IS PEER SUPPORT FOR FLIGHTCREW?

*By Master Elect Nick Goodwyn*

*“I fly because it releases me from  
the tyranny of petty things”*

(Antoine de Saint-Exupéry 1926)

*“Sometimes, things that are right in front of  
our noses are not truly noticed until someone  
else calls them to our attention. Sometimes,  
courage is about more than choosing a brave  
course of action.....it may involve embarking  
on a conversation that feels very  
uncomfortable, and yet enables someone to feel  
accompanied in their darkness.”*

(Mannix 2017)

*“If you were anxious; it’s because you were  
weak. If you couldn’t cope with whatever life  
threw at you, it’s because you were failing.  
Successful, strong people don’t suffer like that,  
do they? But of course - we all do... There  
may be a time and a place for the ‘Stiff upper  
lip’, but not at the expense of your health”*

(Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, military and air  
ambulance pilot, April 2017. MIND.org)

There have been a number of events in aviation recently that have focused and exposed the need for more attention to be given to the mental welfare of commercial pilots and flight crew and none more so than the tragic accident of the Germanwings flight on 24 March 2015.

The psychological well being and mental health of commercial pilots (indeed all pilots, flight crew, crew managers and operators) is clearly essential to safe air operations.

You may have seen in the recent Air Pilots’ newsletters that the Air Pilots Peer Support Initiative (APPSI) has been launched to offer support to our members. What is Peer

Support and why now?

We are all experiencing extraordinary and unprecedented times. The effect of the current health crisis is being felt professionally through our work and no doubt personally as well. We are also faced with high levels of uncertainty of what the near and long term future holds for many of us. Aircrew are generally perceived as intelligent and strong characters who are independent problem solvers and set high personal standards. We are accustomed to very high workloads and occupational stress situations, and indeed train regularly in techniques to stay proficient and calm in pressured and unexpected scenarios. Thus, the common narrative is that as pilots, flight and air crew, we can and should be able to cope with whatever life throws at us because that is what we are trained to do.

The reality, however, is often quite different. After all, pilots and air crew are only human! Problems and stressors in the flight deck are time-limited (or gravity-limited), and the professional skills, procedures and knowledge that we use to deal with them do not necessarily work with the stresses that personal life may place on us as normal human beings. Air crew are high-achieving professionals used to success, and any perceived failure to cope can have dramatic effects on our health and mental wellbeing, and can negatively impair our professional performance.

A Peer Support Initiative can be defined as a structure whereby a pilot, flight, or air crew can get confidential help with mental wellbeing or life stress issues, either for themselves or for a colleague. The confidentiality of the process is absolute, except for certain clearly defined circumstances (which are standard medical practice). At the heart of the initiative are Aircrew Peers: ordinary line pilots, flight or aircrew who are trained in basic listening and coaching skills, and can assist the pilot, flight or air crew in addressing their problems. These Peers are trained, mentored and supported by a suitably qualified Mental Health Professional (MHP), who is ideally a clinical (aviation) psychologist.

The idea of being able to contact a fellow aviator peer for support evolved from a simple premise that pilots or aircrew are reluctant to talk about their health and wellbeing, especially mental health, to anyone.....doctors, flight managers perhaps even their own partners for fear of loss of license and livelihood perhaps even loss of prestige...but then who might they talk to? The answer was each other; fellow aviators who have shared the same experience, stressors and who understand life in the cockpit....their peers.

The APPSI has been established, during this current health pandemic, with a small number of current, trained pilot peers, who themselves are supported by an outstanding MHP, all Air Pilots. Other members of the Air Pilots, with complementary support backgrounds have also volunteered to be available where and when appropriate. These principles have now been enshrined in EASA regulation, due to be implemented in the near future, for commercial air transport operations.

## BACKGROUND & REGULATION

Germanwings airline Airbus A320-211 registered D-AIPX was programmed to undertake a scheduled flight (4U9525) on Tuesday 24 March 2015 between Barcelona (Spain) and Düsseldorf (Germany), with the callsign GW118G. The aircraft took off from Barcelona at 0900 with the co-pilot flying the aircraft. At 0941, the aircraft crashed 100 kilometres north-west of Nice in the French Alps. All 144 passengers and six flight crew were killed. The crash was caused by the deliberate actions of the co-pilot, who had been under treatment for mental health issues, including suicidal tendencies, and who had been declared as unfit for work by his doctor. However, both the co-pilot and (assumed as entitled under German law) his doctor had kept this assessment from his employer, and instead he carried on flying. Shortly after reaching cruise altitude and while the captain was out of the cockpit, he locked the cockpit door and initiated a controlled descent that continued until the aircraft impacted a mountainside. (BEA, 2016)

As a result of the Germanwings accident, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) formed a task force to examine the safety issues surrounding the accident and make recommendations (Ky et al, July 2015).

One of the significant recommendations was the requirement for all operators to create a pilot support and reporting system in relation to psychological well-being.

As a key component of this systemic approach, EASA published an Opinion (EASA, 2016) that required all operators to have what was termed a Support Programmes (SP) to be introduced and be fully implemented for flight crew, designed to inform and educate pilots on their wellbeing and health. A key feature of the SP is a facility for flight crew to contact a trained peer on a confidential basis when they require help, advice or assistance with a developing social, personal or a mental health or welfare issue.

EASA developed an amendment to Commission Regulation (EU) No 965/2012, the Air Operations Regulation, which entered into force on 14 August 2018. The updated regulation, EU 2018/1042, requires all Commercial Air Transport (CAT) operators to have a SP in place by 14 August 2020. EASA published, on 22 November 2018, acceptable means of compliance (AMC) and guidance material (GM) under AMC1 CAT.GEN.MPA.215 - Support Programme:

### GM1 CAT.GEN.MPA.215 Support Programme SUPPORT PROGRAMME

- a. A support programme is a proactive programme applying the principles of 'just culture' as defined in Regulation (EU) No 376/2014, whereby the senior management of the operator, mental health professionals, trained peers, and in many cases representative organisations of crew members work together to enable self-declaration, referral, advice, counselling and/or treatment, where necessary, in case of a decrease in medical fitness.
- b. The support programme should be easily accessible for flight crew and should provide adequate means of support at the earliest stages.



## AIM OF PEER SUPPORT

Therefore, the concept of using peers is a key element within the SP, providing a facility for flight crew to contact the trained peer on a confidential and independent basis when they require help, advice or assistance with a developing social, personal or health related issue. This concept is not new, having existed for many years such as Project Wingman in American Airlines, which was founded in 2011 and covers the 15,000 or so pilots in that company and handles thousands of calls a year. The AIPA/Qantas PAN, which is the daddy of pilot support programmes, was founded in 1991 to handle the emotional fallout of the 1989 industrial action.

The aim is to provide flight crew with an opportunity to discuss, resolve or maintain their wellbeing in a confidential and trusted environment. Evidence from pre-existing peer support programmes has demonstrated that when such a programme is effectively engaged with, aircrew seeking support have less chance of deleterious outcomes when dealing with the stressors and anxiety of life influencing events. This has the beneficial outcomes of swifter returns to active duty work, enhancing organisational safety management systems by earlier identification and assistance of issues and, when appropriate, dissuasion from active duty when flight safety is at risk.



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Primarily, the support programme, with access to trained peers, is established so that a pilot or air crew who needs help is able to self refer for assistance. There are also instances where concerned family, friend or a colleague for support might refer that individual. Having established that initial contact, the flight crew who seeks peer support would be contacted by a peer volunteer; normally a fellow pilot, flight or aircrew, who has been trained to listen, support and empower them. The peer will understand

their working environment and the stresses and challenges that they face in their day to day job, and will walk alongside them in dealing with their concerns. The conversation takes place within a 'safe zone' created to ensure complete confidentiality and trust, independent of the flight crew's organization, and with anonymity if desired. These peer volunteers are not themselves medical or clinical professionals, but they have access to that support for their own self management and wellbeing. If a pilot or air crew should signpost that they have need for further support to help with longer term or more complex health and wellbeing needs, then that would be enabled through the peer assistant and engagement with the relevant health professional bodies.

## RATIONALE OF PEER SUPPORT

The rationale behind Peer Assistance can be outlined as:

- Stress is regarded as a normal consequence of the professional demands in aviation and busy personal modern lives.
- Occasionally, cumulative stressors can lead to low mood, anxiety or compromised wellbeing as a natural outcome of the human response.
- Low mood, anxiety or compromised mental wellbeing can be safely managed. However, when left unidentified and unmanaged they can develop to present an unacceptable risk to personal health and/or flight safety.
- Achieving a peer assisted pathway to wellness is a desirable and safety focused goal.
- Assistance given by peers, support and if required, referral to professional health providers is an effective way of normalising recovery and improving the chance of success.
- It is axiomatic to the programme that peers have the trust and confidence that their confidentiality will be maintained. However, when flight safety or harm to self or others is at risk, strategies to contain the risk are of paramount importance.
- Successful harmonisation of these two fundamental requisites is achieved by the use of transparent escalation protocols.
- Significant importance is placed in achieving high quality peer selection, training and currency.
- Providing a pathway of peer assistance and support for individuals with stress, anxiety, low mood or compromised mental wellbeing, with referral or



escalation options best serves the combined interests of individual health and wellbeing, aviation safety and organisational performance and engagement.

- Successful models of managing wellbeing effectively rely on a collaborative approach among employees, aviation operators, employee representatives, regulators and medical professionals.

## TRAINING

Peer support volunteers undergo a selection procedure to ensure they are suited to the role. They should be approachable, trustworthy, non-judgemental and have good listening skills. There should be representation from all areas of the flying community with diversity of characteristics, e.g., age, fleet, gender, background. The aim is to train a cohort of pilots across the CAT operators proportionate to the task. EASA defines a peer:

In the context of a support programme, a 'peer' is a trained person who shares common professional qualifications and experience, and has encountered similar situations, problems or conditions with the person seeking assistance from a support programme. This may or may not be a person working in the same organisation as the person seeking assistance from the support programme.

A peer's involvement in a support programme can be beneficial due to similar professional backgrounds between the peer and the person seeking support. However, a mental health professional should support the peer when required, e.g. in cases where intervention is required to prevent endangering safety.

On completion of their initial training and qualification and as they gain experience, volunteer peer assistants should always have access to direct supervision and support from a qualified MHP namely a clinical psychologist, who is preferably aviation 'savvy'. As experience is developed, it is likely that this requirement will diminish, but should always be available on request by the peer assistant. As part of their recurrent training and Continuous Personal Development (CPD), groups of peer assistants should also have the opportunity to collectively discuss anonymised case studies (within the context of the confidential safe zone principles).

Any personal data of flight crew who have been referred to a support programme must be handled in a confidential, non-stigmatising, and safe environment as a culture of mutual trust and cooperation should be maintained to ensure that the flight crew is less likely to hide a condition



and more likely to report and seek help. Any data must only be collated in an anonymised manner such as in the form of aggregated statistical data and only for purposes of safety management so as not to compromise the voluntary participation in a support programme, thereby compromising flight safety. That might only be the number of referrals per year by percentage of flightcrew population and generalised reasons for requests for support should be collated e.g. relationships, financial worries, work related stress such as sim or check anxiety, fatigue (note not necessarily FTL issues) or domestic related stress.

Global experience from existing programmes has shown that an appropriate number of Peers is between 0.5% and 1% of the pilot population served by the programme.

The exact numbers will always be a balance between:

- a. the case workload, which is likely to be light in the early stages of the programme's existence until trust in it grows amongst the population and more pilots utilise it; and
- b. having a minimum number of peers available to ensure availability and coverage.

Experience from existing programmes, in UK and abroad, has shown that up to 5% of the pilot population at any given time are likely to require some form of assistance with their mental wellbeing. Of this 5%, around 85-95% of them will get their issues addressed satisfactorily within a peer assistance programme without the need for further help. The other cases require signposting to appropriate pathways to help and hence the need for the MHP (Clinical Psychologist).

## SUMMARY

The use of air crew peers to support the health and wellbeing of flight crew, particularly their mental health and resilience, represents an enticing opportunity for cultural and behavioral change in our industry and away from bias and stigma that should be buried in the past. Peer Support

programmes have already demonstrated their worth both abroad and in the UK where some programmes have been in existence for over three years now. Whilst the EASA regulation has emerged from tragedy and mental ill health,

the real intent is to benefit and support flightcrew. Arguably, there has never been a time than now for this and the Air Pilots Peer Support Initiative (APPSI) is one way of supporting our members.

#### Links:

<http://lepsi.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/EPSI-Guide-v8.1.pdf>

<https://www.ifalpa.org/media/2271/pilot-assistance-manual-march-2018.pdf>

<https://www.speedbirdpan.com>

<https://www.ezybsp.com>

**Photo Credits:** Christiaan Van Heijst <https://jpcvanheijst.com> or I-Stock <https://www.istockphoto.com/gb>

#### References:

Bureau d'Enquêtes et d'Analyses pour la sécurité de l'aviation civile (BEA) (March 2016) Final Report D-AIPX GermanWings

European Aviation Safety Agency Opinion No 14/2016. (December 2016).

European Aviation Safety Agency

European Aviation Safety Agency Task Force on Measures Following the Accident of Germanwings Flight 9525

Final Report (July 2016). European Aviation Safety Agency

Ky, P et al. (2015) Task Force on Measures Following the Accident of Germanwings Flight 9525 Final Report (July 2015). EASA

Mannix, K. (2017) With the end in mind. pp15 and pp275 Williams Collins, London UK

# MENTORING

*By Master Elect Nick Goodwyn*

## INTRODUCTION

The Air Pilots Young Members Group has identified mentoring as one of the four pillars on which to build their development framework, which is detailed elsewhere in this edition and highlighted in the Master's message. Air Pilots have for many years taken it upon themselves to mentor and in turn be mentored, mostly informally, in many guises. The Air Pilots have published mentoring guidelines that have been integral to our business for some time. The work of the young members group has been a catalyst to do more. The following article is a personal reflection on what is mentoring and how to mentor and to empower and re-assure those who are considering mentoring or how to become a mentor that it is a valuable and enriching experience. This article is also an invite to those Air Pilots who consider that you might benefit from being mentored to encourage you to contact the mentoring team and start that journey.

## WHAT IS MENTORING?

In Greek mythology, there is the story of Telemachus, son of Ulysses, who learned as he travelled with his tutor;



Mentor. Later, Mentor is found to be the goddess of wisdom, Minerva, in disguise. So although a mentor, in these more modern times should perhaps not be considered godlike, it is a good analogy of mentoring being the imparting of wisdom in disguise.

In essence a mentor is an individual who has experienced the pitfalls as well as the successes of professional and personal life, and who is a companion, sounding board, advisor or counsel to another through their professional or personal journey. Mentoring, be it formal or more informal, general, more targeted or specific and the relationship between mentor and mentee can be a catalyst to achievement.

## WHY BE A MENTOR?

There is something elemental in the human psyche to becoming a mentor....nurturing others...which lies deep within many of us. Think of parenting, teaching, instructing through to leading and managing others. That is why becoming a mentor should not be seen as exclusive or being better than or elevated above others (or godlike!) rather that we may all bring something of us to the benefit of others. Equally, we all may or have benefited from mentoring by others to expand our own horizons.

Becoming a mentor is a hugely enjoyable and enriching privilege but it also comes with equivalent responsibility. To be asked by an individual (or team) to be their mentor will be because they value and appreciate your experience, your skills, and your knowledge, and in turn want to appreciate your perspectives and views. The burden of your responsibility is to respect that challenge, hold their confidence and be diligent in your response as you would any other aspect of your professional or personal life. Hold the mirror to yourself and ask the question why you would like to be a mentor?



## HOW TO BE A MENTOR?

A mentor should be a good listener who questions thoroughly to find the real core of what the mentee is seeking. They should be a catalyst, rather than the sole provider of advice and information. They should help the mentee build relationships with others, provide constructive feedback and help the mentee believe in their full potential. They may advise and encourage the mentee to proactively manage the combination of personal and interpersonal and professional goals. They should encourage the widest possible use of appropriate

resources to develop skills, knowledge and good behaviours, offer their own network of contacts if appropriate and challenge the mentee's thinking and assumptions by offering different perspectives. Ideally, they should empower the mentee with confidence to use their own judgment and to take responsibility for their own actions rather than solutionise for them.

## WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A MENTOR?

Be yourself, be honest with yourself and demonstrate that honesty and transparency to the mentee. You will, by the very nature of being an Air Pilot, be able to be introspective, and will have come to know your own strengths and fallibilities. Confidentiality, honesty and transparency are watchwords of being a good mentor. Likewise, the ability to challenge respectfully (and be pushed back), to look for the mentee to discover rather than offer the answer, to recognise when you might be wrong yourself, all lead to productive mentoring relationships. Importantly, it might mean being able to say that you are not the best fit as a mentor for that individual, but willing to help find the mentor who is.

### *Listen, really listen, pause, think and then respond.*

We can all do that naturally.... Can't we? By our nature we want to help as mentors, give that wisdom, the pearl of advice gleaned from our own experience however good or bittersweet. Deep, active listening, without judgment, prejudice or bias is a learnt skill and behavior. It is not easy. As a good mentor, you will 'sit on your hands', listen, really listen, pause, think and respond. Ask the intuitive question and the question that uncovers the core of the request and give that deep understanding of the mentees' needs and the context of those needs. Offer objective guidance and advice and impart what knowledge you have that is relevant. And if you do not know being brave enough to say so but then offer to find out who or what might gain that clarity.

## BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND

Mentoring can be about a general question, an overview or more specific or targeted professional or personal advice and guidance. It can be formal or informal. The mentee may not yet know themselves what the outcome might be. So it is important to have the end in mind.



defining objectives, goals or outcomes would be beneficial. What is the timescale if that is relevant?

## BE CONSCIOUS OF YOUR OWN TIME AND RESOURCES

Mentoring is a privilege, humbling but also exciting. It is also a responsibility as already mentioned and it takes your time, effort and your own internal and external resources if you want to make a real difference for the mentee. If you do, ensure that you have those precious commodities in place and available. Keep your own wellbeing and balance in credit before offering to others.

## EMBRACE THE LEARNING

As a mentor, you will learn more about yourself and others through offering mentoring and through your own continuous professional development that will result. Much will also be gained from interaction with fellow mentors.

The skills of a mentor are many, but may be summarised as follows:

- Be a good listener
- Have the ability to inspire
- Have the ability to suspend judgment and prejudice
- Be able to give constructive feedback without being patronising
- Know how and where to get information or advise on skills the mentee does not yet have
- Understand that each relationship is unique
- Be honest, transparent and engender confidence

Be aware that some mentees face enormous difficulties in their personal and professional lives, and that sometimes it may be critical that the mentee should be empowered to seek additional support from another appropriate relevant professional or from other support mechanisms or organisations. The Air Pilots mentoring guidelines are a valuable reference point for mentoring within the company and there is no better time to consider offering to be a mentor for your fellow aviators.



Icarus was the son of the famous craftsman Daedalus in Greek mythology. His father was the creator of the Labyrinth, a huge maze located under the court of King Minos of Crete, where the Minotaur, a half-man/half-bull creature lived. In order for the secret of the Labyrinth to be kept, Minos had then imprisoned Daedalus and Icarus in a tower above his palace. Daedalus managed to create two sets of wings for himself and his son, that were made of feathers glued together with wax. He taught Icarus how to fly and warned him not to fly too high, which would cause the wax to melt, nor too low, which would cause the feathers to get wet with sea water. Together, they flew out of the tower towards freedom. However, Icarus soon forgot his father's warnings, and started flying higher and higher, until the wax started melting under the scorching sun. His wings dissolved and he fell into the sea and drowned.

If only he had followed the guidance of his mentor!

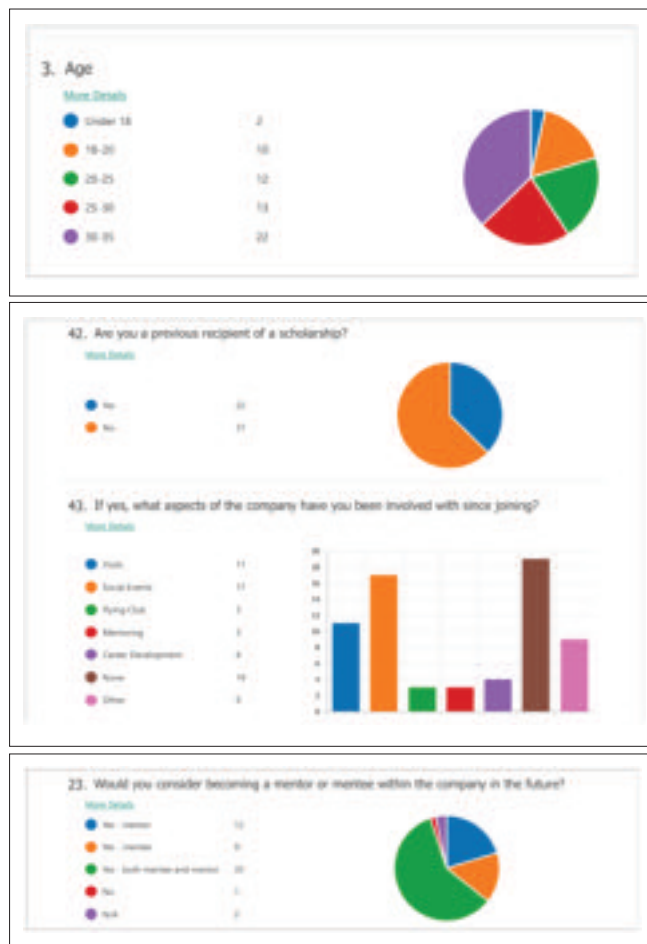
# YOUNG AIR PILOTS ENGAGEMENT SURVEY 2020

*By Associate Will Wright*

It would like to start by thanking the Master for the opportunity to address the Court, Past Masters, and other committees, on the work we have been doing on behalf the younger members over the past months. It is a pleasure to be a part of the development process, and I wholeheartedly agree with his sentiment that an active young members section is a good indication of the current and future health of the Company. I also welcome the Master's comments on the "opportunity to improve and bind the company together by members sharing knowledge, skills and understanding" and feel that the young members have a great deal to offer the company in their own right. I certainly see the next few years, with particular focus on the next few months, as a great opportunity to lay the foundations for an active and engaged young membership population that is fully integrated into all facets of Air Pilot life.

As the Master indicated in his most recent message, enacting change takes time and requires the buy-in of many different stakeholders. The fact that we have already achieved that buy-in is a great start. The opportunity presented to us in this unprecedented period of 'down time' represents an outstanding chance to get the wheels off the ground. To that end, the Master chaired a development meeting to collate 'blue-sky thinking' development ideas one week after the Installation. With the government social distancing restrictions this had to be held via the medium of Zoom online conferencing; although a relatively foreign tool to most of us, the general consensus was that it was an effective method to connect remotely company members - perhaps an insight into the future? Alongside all the idea generation, the upshot of this meeting was that we had answered at least one very important question. Unfortunately, the answer was not implicitly useful. That question was: "What do young members of the Air Pilots want to engage with?" The answer: "We don't know!" In fact, we didn't really fully understand our demographic of young members either. This would be our first objective.

As a young membership committee, we set out to ask some key questions of those who qualify for young membership (under 35s):



- who are you?
- where are you?
- what are you involved in currently, and
- what do you want to be involved in in the future?

These questions were broken down further into more specific questions on an array of subjects including; mentoring, training, events, career development, social occasions and scholarships. In total, we sent out our survey to the 238 qualifying members across all regions and received 59 responses (correct as of 30th April). For those gifted in mathematics (which I am not), that is a response rate of just under 25% which I am led to believe is a very good return for a survey of this nature, which represents a very positive start. As far as gauging our demographic, there were very few surprises here and our young member composition certainly mirrors that of the company as a whole. The vast majority of our young members are male (90%), live in the UK (71%) and are active across a range of aviation related activities. The survey also shows most to be associates of the company (68%) and the length of membership highly variable with no specific time frame more notable than any other. The one perhaps surprising response, at least to me, was the age distribution of the young members. I expected to see a heavier weighting towards the younger end of the spectrum than the older; however, from the graph we can see a higher proportion at the older end. This is perhaps an indication of those who are more willing to fill in the survey than others

but I feel that this is a slightly cynical viewpoint. I am far more inclined to interpret this as an indication that we are not encouraging those young people who are starting out in their aviation lives into the company. My view has been reinforced by the number of individuals who come to us through the very successful scholarship programmes (27% of those surveyed). More often than not flying scholarships are awarded to those under the age of 22, therefore, one can deduce that there is a high attrition rate following the successful completion of the scholarships. Across all scholarships we have approximately 500-600 applications and engaging that youth could be a very rewarding exercise for the company. We have started to do that with the introduction of free membership for all scholarship winners for a period of 5 years, a step I wholeheartedly endorse. The next hurdle is to encourage and empower scholarship winners to actively engage with the company as, currently, of those surveyed, 32% had been involved in no company activity at all. This is a startling number but not one exclusive to scholarship winners. When we asked the question around attendance of company events and visits we had not anticipated that there would be a proportion of the membership that had never attended one, equating to 30% of all respondents. That is not to say there are no events applicable to young members, there are plenty, for example The Young Aviators Dinner and the Trophies and Awards nights both scored well but overall across the board there was a lack of attendance. This led to some hypothesising about why this is the case - a subject which I will discuss a little later in the article. This engagement issue, for lack of a better descriptor, also presents itself in the mentoring offering within the company where 97% of respondents said they were not participating in the programme. Mentoring in itself is a highly dynamic and incredibly powerful tool that, I believe, does not age discriminate and could be so beneficial to so many from within The Company. The fact that 95% of the young members stated in the survey that they wished to be a part of the mentoring programme only exemplifies that. The issue that I think we face is reducing the barriers to entry and partially removing the stigma about what mentoring is (and perhaps what it is not) to enlighten some people as to the benefit of being a part of mentoring as a whole. Up to now I appreciate this segment has had a slightly negative tone, this is partially due to the hard statistics and partly due to the way in which I have written it, however, I am actually incredibly encouraged by what we have been able to learn from our respondents. That is because it creates a fantastic opportunity in which we can all grow and improve as a company. Each data point creates an interesting 'nugget' of information that we can analyse and be introspective with. One such nugget is the way we develop individually through training and career development. An overwhelming proportion (97%) of young members wanted to attend future training days/sessions across a variety of topics inclusive, but not limited to the likes

of safety culture, CV writing, CRM, interview skills and leadership development. The company has an abundance of these skills, knowledge and understanding and I believe it will be a major string to the bow of the Air Pilots if we can be more effective tapping into this experience. A small example of how we can do this was born from the survey question on the use of 'Coffee Mornings'. We have connected young members with some experienced 'heads' through the medium of the aforementioned Zoom Conferencing platform. At the time of writing we have had Court Assistant Steve Durrell talk to uncertainty in the aviation industry, its cyclical nature and its impact over his career (highly topical in today's current operating environment) as well as Court Assistant Chris McGee, who enthusiastically shed some light on the Corporate/Business Jet world and its intricacies. Both were fascinating discussions that brought together members in a relaxed, interactive setting to enhance knowledge and support the development of young aviators (links to recordings of these videos will be available on the website in due course).

Once we had cogitated the results of this survey as a group, we felt that we were ready to feedback into the young air pilots development group the answers to the question: 'What do young members of the Air Pilots want to engage with?' This led to another Zoom call where I presented the results and introduced the 4 key pillars that we felt, as a Young Air Pilot Committee, would encompass the requirements of young members most effectively. These are 1) Mentoring, 2) Scholarships, 3) Training and Career Development and 4) Events and Visits. Each of these pillars now has an associated subgroup attached to it to help create and develop ideas that will hopefully benefit all members in time.

Overall, this exercise has been incredibly valuable to us a fledgling group and we feel really encouraged by the support we have received thus far. I believe that if we can continue this work through the 4 pillars, then we will raise awareness of the Air Pilots and help to reduce the barriers to entry in the industry. Ultimately, a population of highly engaged young members who feel a sense of community and belonging will be empowered to positively contribute to the Honourable Company of Air Pilots and in doing so will also more likely pass down their newly acquired knowledge and skills to the next generation of Air Pilots and therein create a virtuous progression cycle for the company.

If anyone wants further information on any of the data presented here then visit the link:

or please don't hesitate to contact me for any further questions on [ww@youngairpilots.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:ww@youngairpilots.onmicrosoft.com) I would welcome the opportunity to discuss any feedback or comments that you may have.