



AIR PILOT



INSIDE
TROPHIES & AWARDS
WOODEN WONDER
TYMMS LECTURE



THE HONOURABLE COMPANY OF AIR PILOTS

incorporating Air Navigators

PATRON:

His Majesty The King

MASTER:

John Denyer Esq BSc(Hons) FlntP FRAeS

CLERK:

Paul J Tacon BA FCIS

Incorporated by Royal Charter.

A Livery Company of the City of London.

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DIARY



Applications for Visits and Events

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

DECEMBER 2025

9 th	APT/AST	APH
9 th	APFC Zoom Talk	Lt Cdr Chris Goetke
17 th	GP&F	APH
17 th	Carol Service	St Michael Cornhill
17 th	Carol Supper	The Factory House

JANUARY 2026

13 th	ACEC	APH
13 th	APFC Zoom talk	Steve Jones
14 th	T&A Committee	APH
22 nd	GP&F	APH
22 nd	Court	Cutlers' Hall
27 th	APBF AGM	APH
28 th	Luncheon Club/Andy Richardson	RAF Club

FEBRUARY 2026

12 th	GP&F	APH
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Cover photos: De Havilland Mosquito at East Kirkby (Glen
Fricker); T&A Sword of Honour presentation
(www.sharpphoto.co.uk)

Guidelines for submissions to Air Pilot

Please submit contributions as follows:

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



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDITOR...



It will come as no surprise to Air Pilots that the pressure on UK airfields from the demands for more housing and industrial growth is constantly increasing, as is the number of airfields actually closing. Typical of the pressure – and the attitudes within the planning system which help to drive

it – is this response from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council to objections to its proposal that Popham Airfield be redeveloped as the site for 4,250 new homes. *“Whilst the Airfield makes a contribution to aviation in the wider area, it is not considered that it is such a significant part of the national network of general aviation airfields that its loss should be resisted... The loss of employment and community and sporting events associated with the Airfield are recognised but are not considered significant enough to justify the prevention of the loss of the Airfield: these uses are expected to relocate.”*

This is an airfield which is home to dozens of based aircraft and gliders, a flying club and a maintenance organisation, hosts major flying gatherings and is a hugely important open community space. The cavalier dismissal of its significance within the community, and the equally cavalier assumption that all its activities could magically relocate somewhere else underline the scope of the challenge facing the whole of the aviation community.

There is a current online petition to the UK Government, being supported by the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Aviation and the General Aviation Awareness Council (GAAC) which calls for public consultation before airfields and aerodromes can be closed. It states: *“Airfields and aerodromes play a vital role in the UK’s transportation network, economic growth, emergency services, and heritage. However, some sites may be closed and redeveloped, often without sufficient public consultation or long-term strategic consideration.”*

“We urge Parliament to legislate or amend laws such that no airfield/aerodrome is closed & redeveloped without formal consultation involving public, industry, and government. Each site’s strategic value should be assessed, with DfT input required. We think airfields should be recognised as critical infrastructure supporting aviation, emergency services, military, and economic growth. We think preserving them is vital for the UK’s role in the Advanced Air Mobility Revolution and emerging sustainable air transport.”

One petition will not change government policy or developers’ minds on its own, but signing the petition and urging others to do so is at least to put down a marker that the aviation sector cannot afford to see its vital infrastructure destroyed: see it at <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/732869>

Allan Winn - Editor

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THE TROPHIES & AWARDS BANQUET

Over 500 Members and their guests filled Guildhall on 23rd October for the 2025 Trophies and Awards Banquet, at which the Company's Principal Guests were The Right Hon The Lord Mayor, Alderman Alastair King DL and Corinne Lee representing the Lady Mayoress. Other guests included the Master Fueller, the Master Chartered Secretary and Administrator and the Master Security Professional. At a special Court meeting before the Banquet, 11 new Liverymen were clothed and 12 Master Air Pilot and one Master Rear Crew certificates were awarded. During the Banquet, 24 trophies and awards were presented. (See also pp20-31)



New Liverymen: (L-R) Capt Neil Pollard, Flt Lt Christopher Stradling MBE, Ian Davies, Dr Kelvin Roberts, Susan Hawkins, David Harris, Master John Denyer, Air Cdre Peter Round, Flt Lt Tom Keable RAF, Lord Byron Davies of Gower, Samantha Lewis, Capt Tony de Brett



Master Air Pilots: (L-R) Cdr Steven Cheyne, Lt Cdr Glenn Allison, Gp Capt Peter Allan, Air Cdre Rick Peacock-Edwards, Capt Dacre Watson, Maj Philip Wilkinson, Lt Cdr David Thomas, Master John Denyer, Sqn Ldr David Wilson, Flt Lt Simon Shirley, Sqn Ldr Paul Wise, Air Cdre Ken McCann, Flt Lt Duncan Read **Master Rear Crew:** Alec Aspden, WO2 Sam Parkin



PM Capt David Mauleverer receives the Sir Alan Cobham Memorial Award



Jackie Dujmovic is given the Grand Master's Australian Medal



Allan Boyce earns the Jean Batten Memorial Award



Lt Cdr Phil Barron cfs* RN wins the Central Flying School Trophy



The Great Hall was packed



The Top Table is in the front row for the Posthorn Gallop



Jon Gowdy collects the Hanna Trophy



The Company's guests: (L-R) PM Sqn Ldr Chris Ford MBE, Master Fueller Ashutosh Shastri, Master Air Pilot's Consort Kate Denyer, Master Air Pilot John Denyer, The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor, Rep Lady Mayoress Corinne Lee, Master Chartered Secretary & Administrator Shirley Creed, Prof Jean Murray, Master Security Professional Sue Jones



George Bacon celebrates the award of the Sword of Honour – and the Master-Elect tries to avoid decapitation



RAF Flight 1312 and Rescue 1 are awarded the Master's Medal: (L-R) Flt Lt Martyn Davies [Voyager], Flt Lt Charlie Ramsden [Atlas], ASI (T) Ethan Masters [Atlas], Sgt Adrian Willis [Voyager], Flt Lt Stephen Watson [Voyager], Flt Lt Mike Howell [Atlas], Marcus Wigfull [Rescue 1]



The Lord Mayor sells some tartan to The Master



The Prince Philip Helicopter Rescue Award is collected by Charlie Brown and Neil Cooper of Rescue 936



Capt Hyronimus (Ronnie) Jansen collects the Johnston Memorial Trophy



Mark Greenfield receives the Cumberbatch Trophy



Recently-promoted Maj Christian Maude USAF is presented with the Brackley Memorial Trophy

All photos www.sharpphoto.co.uk

NEWS ROUNDUP



CONSORT'S VISIT: ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA

By Gill Piper



A day at the opera for the Air Pilots ladies

On Wednesday 3rd September eight ladies had a wonderful visit, organised by the Master's Consort Kate Denyer, to the English National Opera Costume Department in Clapham.

Our guide for the visit was Sarah, Head of Costume, who explained that the ENO usually has eight shows during its season and the Costume Department works on several shows at the same time. Shows for which costumes were being worked on during our visit include *La Cenerentola* (Cinderella), *Dead Man Walking* and *HMS Pinafore*. Details for individual costumes for members of the cast are stored in 'Bibles', which include all accessories for each costume, including wigs, footwear etc.

A designer draws initial sketches of their ideas for costumes that are discussed with the supervisor to work out all the details (including budgets and fabrics, etc). Fabrics can be sourced from existing costumes which are stored in various warehouses, from charity shops, purchased new or even from other theatres.

We then went to talk to Maddy, the Head Cutter. It was absolutely fascinating to see her at work. She is responsible for turning the designers' sketches into actual costumes. Initially she will use calico to work out how to create the costume before fitting this to the cast member to produce the pattern. This is then used with the actual fabric to ensure the costume fits - there are usually three

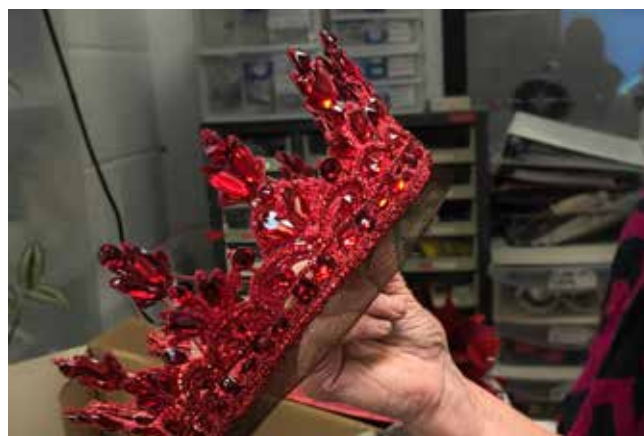
ittings altogether. One particular costume was for *Henry VIII*, which Maddy said had taken about two weeks from initial sketch, through to completion. An incredible feat!

TO THE DYER

Maddy explained that very often before the fabric is worked on by the Cutter it must be dyed or stencilled in the area we visited next. The dyer is responsible for the finishing look of the costumes, such as 'distressing' them or adding dust or mud. She applies all the final touches, including stencils applied to costumes, even dyeing boots and shoes to match colour palettes. Her work area is covered with vats of dyes and other paints, as well as the various accessories and costumes

waiting to be treated.

Our final stop was to see the Milliner. Megan had worked at the costume department for 20 years and she showed us an incredible display of hats, masks and jewellery. She is responsible for all headgear (except wigs, which come from a different department) and was working on mouse heads to be worn by children in the performance of *La Cenerentola*. She showed us many of the different types of mesh, lace, wire and other materials which go into making the headgear.



An example of the milliner's work

It was a most fascinating tour for all eight of us and we were enthralled and amazed at the work which goes into making the costumes for a performance. □



Cary Crawley inside the Converse balloon

LUNCHEON CLUB

Report by Liveryman Ruth Cundy, Chairman

The 71st meeting of the Air Pilots Luncheon Club, held at the RAF Club on 24th September, was well attended. Sixty members sat down to a lunch of roast cutlet of pork followed by a peach melba and raspberry dessert; grace was ably given by Assistant Chris McGee.

After luncheon, Upper Freeman Cary Crawley spoke of his exploits flying hot air balloons around the world. He has held a Commercial Balloon Pilot licence for over 40 years, with associated ratings in many countries including the UK, Europe, Chile, USA and New Zealand. He is a UK CAA-appointed Senior Examiner for all groups and categories of hot air balloons.

Cary spoke of flying advertising balloons in publicity campaigns around the world, training pilots and setting up commercial passenger ride businesses in countries as diverse as Egypt, Dubai, Fiji, Spain, New Zealand, Bulgaria, Chile, Myanmar and Jordan. In 1990 he trained the first balloon pilots in Pakistan. His chat was well illustrated with slides of many interesting and diverse special-shape balloons including the Converse Basketball Boot, the Forbes Harley Davidson and the Forbes Maccaw.

He gave an interesting perspective about the various challenges confronting the pilot of special shapes as well as an insight into balloons such as the Roziere – a hybrid

balloon with separate chambers for a non-heated lifting gas (eg hydrogen or helium) and the heated lifting gas of a hot air balloon. Cary was recently part of the formation of a new company in Jordan, Balloons over Rum, which is providing work for approximately 60 families. Currently he is commuting between the UK, Jordan and Chile – and is not considering retirement!



With the Huicholi people in Mexico

The next meeting of the Luncheon Club will be on 28th January 2026 when the speaker will be Andy Richardson: "From Spitfire to TSR-2 in 28 years". □

FLYING INSTRUCTOR SCHOLARS REPORT

Two recipients of the Company's Flying Instructor scholarships, Freeman George Coe and Jan Erbil, have reported recently on their progress.

GEORGE COE

Like many, I caught the flying bug early—but for a long time, flying remained something I did in the margins, privately and part-time, while building a ground-based career in aviation. I worked in airport operations, eventually managing airside operations at Gatwick, and later supported ATCO and FISO training with NATS. It was a career I was proud of - but deep down, I always wanted more. I wanted to teach, and I wanted to fly professionally.



George Coe with 2025 PPL scholar Shinji Dennison

In 2021, that dream finally gained altitude thanks to the Honourable Company of Air Pilots. Being awarded the Flying Instructor Scholarship was the turning point. It gave me the chance - and the motivation - to push through the final stages of my flight training and achieve my FI rating. I threw everything into it, and what followed has been the most fulfilling chapter of my aviation journey so far.

Today, I'm the General Manager and full-time instructor at Euro Flight Training (EFT), a busy DTO and ATO based at Lee-on-Solent. I instruct across the spectrum—from *ab initio* to Instrument Rating and Multi-Engine training (as both an IRI and MEP CRI). I now spend my days doing what I love most: flying, teaching, and helping others achieve their own aviation goals.

One of the most rewarding parts of this journey is being able to give something back. This year, I've had the privilege of helping train Shinji, one of the Company's current PPL Scholars. Supporting him reminds me of my own journey

not so long ago—full of hope, hard work, and opportunity. I will always be grateful to the Air Pilots for the belief they placed in me. Their support allowed me to take a leap few are fortunate enough to make: turning a private passion into a professional purpose. Now, as an instructor, mentor, and manager, I'm committed to paying that forward—helping guide the next generation of pilots from their first hour to their first licence, and beyond.

JAN ERBIL

I recently had the amazing opportunity to undertake the Instrument Rating Instructor (IRI) course with the support of a bursary from the Honourable Company of Air Pilots. The Instrument Rating Instructor course is a challenging and



Jan Erbil

intense period of training. It's not just about perfecting your own flying skills, but also about learning how to effectively teach complex instrument procedures to others. This requires a different level of understanding—not only of the regulations and theory but also of human factors and instructional techniques. The bursary was a game-changer, removing the financial barrier and allowing me to fully immerse myself in the training without the added stress. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the OnTrack Aviation team at Tatenhill Airfield and the wonderful Craig Padfield, whose instructional technique was second to none and whose expertise helped me complete my AoC.

Now, as a qualified Instrument Rating Instructor, I look forward to guiding the next generation of pilots. This bursary has not only helped me achieve a personal goal but has also set me on a path to contribute to the aviation community. My deepest gratitude goes to the Air Pilots and my Company mentor, Liveryman Phil Mathews, for their invaluable support in making this journey possible. □



The Company continues to contribute to UK air ambulance trusts, as shown by three recent presentations. PM Richie Piper presented a cheque for £1,000 from his Master's Year appeal to the London Air Ambulance; Master-Elect Elizabeth Walkinshaw presented one for £3,000 from the Air Pilots Benevolent Fund, also to the London Air Ambulance (see also APBF article on p18); and Liveryman Ian Murning presented a £1,000 cheque on behalf of the APBF to the Scottish Air Ambulance.



REPORT: THE PROMOTIONS TEAM

By Assistant Glen Fricker

Since my last report, the promotions team has been fairly busy. On 31st July, Warden Steve Durrell, Assistants Sam Waller, and Pete Taylor were joined by Upper Freeman Rob McKenzie and Craig Jardine and me at a promotional event at a new venue - the British Airways fly-in at Wycombe Air Park. It was a great success for both BA and ourselves.

On the 20th of August, Warden Steve Durrell, Assistants Chris McGee and Pete Taylor, Upper Freeman Chas Cook

and I were the team for the National Air and Space camp at RAF Syerston, which was once again a successful promotions event.

Wednesday 1st October saw us at a new event - a careers fair run as part of the Brooklands Innovation Academy at Brooklands Museum. We were only invited to the evening session, which focused on students of secondary school age. The footfall for this part of the event was very disappointing: maybe a lesson to be learned for next year

for the organisers? As well as the above we have been carrying out numerous schools visits, both online and in person, with schools from places as far apart as Plymouth and Derbyshire!

The Pilot Aptitude testing has been relatively quiet, some of the recent candidates having been redirected to the FPAD event as reported in the last issue of *Air Pilot*. Hopefully interest in the Aptitude testing will be significantly increased following our next couple of events: Pilot Careers Live at London Heathrow on November 1st and a careers fair hosted by the Royal Aeronautical Society on November 5th.

□



The Promotions team at RAF Syerston: Chas Cook, Steve Durrell, Chris McGee and Glen Flicker (Pete Taylor)

GAZETTE

APPROVED BY THE COURT 20 NOVEMBER 2025

ADMISSIONS

As Upper Freeman

Herwin BONGERS (NZ)
Andreas CHIMONIDES
Gabrielle CRAWFORD (AUS)
Peter James EVANS (HK)
Owen James HINTON
Timothy James HOLLAND (AUS)
Maurice John RITCHIE (AUS)
Nathaniel John ROBERTS (AUS)
Gary David THOMAS (AUS)
Neal Francis TOMS
Michael Andrew QUE HEE (AUS)

As Freeman

Sean CASEY
Hamish Dougal FINDLAY
David Paul HOSKINS
Paul Ian OLIVER (AUS)
David RAWLINGS
Simon TILLING
John William WATES
John Kenelm ZEALLEY

As Associate

James Edward BLAIR-HICKMAN
Thomas BUTCHER

Jack Rupert Meadows CLUTTERBUCK
Joshua DAVIDSON
Eva Gonzalez GOLUBINSKA
Philip Benjamin GRANT
Callum JOHNSON
James William JOHNSON
Adam LAIDOUCCI
Joseph Anthony McKERNAN
Joel Carter NOBLE (AUS)
Jack TATTERSALL
Andre Bajic WILLIAMS (NZ)

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS 2025

Alex James Cornish
Shinji Robert Dennison
Annabelle Dowse
Aaron George
Basel Hammond
Hayley Jackson
Frederick Peter Kingsland
Andrew James Power
Faith Anne Riches
Kane James Stanislas
Mary Ellen Elizabeth Stokely
Matthew Adam Thomas
Isabelle Wong
James David Marshall
Priyanka Gandhi

ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE COURT 20 November 2025

RESIGNATIONS

Jonathan AGNEW
Michael BISHOP
Ronika CHOWDHURY
Andrew CLARK (NZ)
Florent COLOMBINI (OS)
Tom CUNNINGHAM
Robert DEACON ELLIOTT
Nathan DELORME-CRABB
Toby EDEN
Vincent FERGUSON
Stelios GOULES
Nathan GRAY
Daniel HEAD
Tim HENNESSEY
Samuel HOOD
Ethan LE CHEVALIER
Angus MACKAY (NZ)
Andrew MONK

Robert NORRIS
Richard PAINTER
Scott PENDRY
Steven POTTER
Dale SHAKESHAFT
Tim SIMPSON
Andrew STUART
Andrew TAYLOR
Christopher TAYLOR
Jeff TURNER
Samuel VENABLES
Lloyd WATSON
Julie WESTHORN
James WHEELER (NZ)
DECEASED
Benjamin BATHURST
Brent HENRY
Kent JOHNSON (NA)
Gavin KEEGAN
Charles SIMPSON (NA)





MASTER'S MESSAGE

By The Master, John Denyer

Master's Messages are rather like birthdays: they seem to come round with increasing frequency. The challenge is never finding something to say but deciding what to leave out! So here are a few highlights from the 28 events which I have attended in the last two months!

Our Young Members invited Kate and me to their BBQ at White Waltham, which was a real pleasure. It was great to meet new faces, catch up with familiar ones, and hear how the jobs market is picking up. We are fortunate to have such an active and enthusiastic group of young pilots, as attracting young members is not always easy for Livery Companies.

Another thing we do particularly well is our lectures. The Company's reputation for engaging and well-presented talks continues to grow. There was a palpable sense of anticipation before September's Tymms Lecture, when PM Dr Michael Fopp delivered a gripping account of the men who fought in the Battle of Britain, 85 years ago. Using audio clips from the pilots and subtly coloured photographs, Michael brought those events vividly to life. The audience, which included 30 Masters from other Companies, was captivated and the letters of appreciation are still arriving! The video of Michael's talk will appear shortly on the Company website and will be well worth watching for all.

While on the Battle of Britain, we were privileged to represent the Air Pilots at the 85th anniversary commemoration in Westminster Abbey, joined by Past Masters Rick Peacock-Edwards and Cliff Spink. The service was both moving and beautifully choreographed, with stirring music from the RAF Central Band with the Westminster Abbey choir and organist. After the service, members of the King's Colour Squadron paraded in Dean's Yard, perfectly timed with a flypast by the Lancaster, before we gathered in Church House for a reception.

LADY MAYOR

The Election of the Lord Mayor is one of the great occasions of the City year. I joined fellow Air Pilots Liverymen to cast my vote, surrounded, as always, by pageantry and centuries of tradition. If you are a Liveryman and have never attended, I strongly recommend it; and if you are not yet one, here is another good reason to consider standing for the Livery! The day begins with a procession from Guildhall to St Lawrence Jewry for a service, where our own Honorary Chaplain,

The Venerable Ray Pentland, preached in his role as Chaplain to the current Lord Mayor. We then processed back to the Great Hall for the election itself, at which Alderwoman Dame Susan Langley was chosen as Lady Mayor, the first to adopt that new styling of the title. She was sworn in as the 697th Lord Mayor of London at the Silent Ceremony in early November. True to City tradition, the Air Pilots contingent, together with our Learned Clerk, joined friends from other Companies at Stationers' Hall afterwards for an excellent lunch.



Robing up at Guildhall for the Mayoral election

One of the, perhaps, lesser-known Company activities is our Youth in Aviation Project, initiated by Liveryman Alasdair Beaton in 2022. Its aim is to share the joy of flight with young people who, because of their circumstances, might otherwise never experience it. Young carers were soon identified as deserving acknowledgment and reward, since their contribution to society so often goes unrecognised. Following its launch, the project has flown 88 young carers from centres in Inverness, Newcastle, Leeds, Rochdale, Bristol, Cambridge and Reading. Another 15 from Belfast are due to take to the air shortly, bringing the total to 103. It is a wonderful initiative and a credit to all involved. There will be an update from Alasdair in a future issue.

At the time of writing, we were preparing for the T&A Banquet: with more than 500 tickets sold and 27 awards listed to be presented, it promised to be a memorable evening. Kate and I then will have had two precious days to pack before heading off on our tour to Australia, New Zealand, and Hong Kong.

Finally, I hope to see many of you at the Carol Service on 17th December. Until then, my warmest thanks for your support during the year, and our best wishes to you for a Merry Christmas and a peaceful and successful New Year. □



REGIONAL REPORTS



Regional Report: Australia

By Liveryman Adrian Young, Chairman

The Australian Region continues to thrive, with membership now surpassing 310 members - a milestone that reflects the growing engagement and influence of our community. This achievement underscores our commitment to fostering professional excellence and camaraderie among air pilots across Australia.

EXPANDING DIGITAL PRESENCE

Our social media footprint is stronger than ever. The Australian Region maintains an active presence on LinkedIn, while our Young Air Pilots (YAP) lead vibrant conversations on Facebook and Instagram. These platforms have become hubs for sharing insights, celebrating achievements, and connecting with members globally. If you haven't already, we invite you to follow us and join the dialogue - whether you're in Australia or part of another region, your voice matters.



The Australia Region team at PACDEFF - Mike Cleaver, Holly Macrae, John Deecke and Brian Greeves

PACDEFF 2025: HUMAN FACTORS AT THE FOREFRONT

October also saw strong representation from the Australian Region at PACDEFF 2025, Australia's largest conference dedicated to Crew Resource Management (CRM), Non-Technical Skills (NTS), and Aviation Human Factors. Held in Sydney, the event attracted nearly 400 delegates, a testament to its growing influence since its humble beginnings.

Our representatives - including Associate Holly MacRae, Liverymen Brian Greeves and Mike Cleaver and Upper Freeman John Deecke - ensured the Company maintained a visible and active presence. Key themes resonating throughout the conference included psychological safety, resilience, and the importance of learning from success as well as failure. Highlights ranged from Upper Freeman Dr

Pete McCarthy's framework for adaptive safety learning to Sam Fielder's moving account of managing PTSD after industry accidents. These sessions reinforced a vital truth: aviation safety is not just about technology - it's about people, culture, and trust.

For Young Air Pilots, PACDEFF offered a unique opportunity to engage with cutting-edge research and network with industry leaders. Holly's reflections captured the spirit of the event perfectly: "Gratitude for the chance to learn and represent the Honourable Company at a forum that champions the human side of aviation."

SCHOLARSHIPS UPDATE

We are excited to announce that the second round of scholarships for 2025 is under way. The team has received numerous applications from aspiring aviators, reflecting the strong interest in this programme. Selection will have been finalised by the end of November, and successful candidates will be announced shortly thereafter. These scholarships continue to play a vital role in supporting the next generation of pilots and advancing our mission to promote excellence in aviation.

TECHNICAL AND AIR SAFETY UPDATES

The Australian Region remains deeply involved in shaping the future of aviation safety through participation in Technical Working Groups (TWGs) and advisory panels. Recent developments include:

- **Obstacle Limitation Surfaces Modernisation (OLSM):** Work is underway to implement new ICAO SARPs by 2030.
- **ADS-B mandate:** Recommendations propose staged introduction for all capable aircraft, with VFR and IFR compliance timelines extending to 2033. This includes provisions for RPAS and Advanced Air Mobility platforms.
- **SouthPAN Advisory Group:** Australia's forthcoming satellite-based Southern Positioning Augmentation Network promises enhanced navigational accuracy and safety, particularly for regional and remote operations.
- **Runway safety initiatives:** The National Runway Safety Group continues to address critical issues such as stop bar usage and displaced thresholds, ensuring operational clarity and reducing risk.

These initiatives reflect our proactive stance on regulatory affairs and our commitment to influencing policy leading to safer skies.

LOOKING AHEAD

Planning is already underway for an Australian Regional Dinner for members, to be held following the 2026 Annual General Meeting. This event will mark the launch of the inaugural Jim Cowan Memorial Talk, featuring a distinguished guest speaker. This talk honours the late Liveryman Jim Cowan, the visionary founder of the

Australian Region in 1969, and will celebrate his enduring legacy within our community.

The tour by Master John Denyer and his wife Kate began in Perth on 28th October: a comprehensive tour report will feature in our next update. As we close out another successful year, we wish all our members a joyous festive season and every success in 2026. □



Rob Jones and new Liveryman Samantha Lewis

Regional Report: Hong Kong

By Liveryman Rob Jones, Chairman

Despite a relentless schedule of flying, Command courses, Training Captain courses, conversion courses and some new parents, the regional committee and our members have still found time to let our hair down and catch up at

some varied and fun social events.

In June we took to the high seas of Victoria Harbour on *Adela*, a yacht owned by one of our members, to enjoy sundowners and nibbles. Mercifully, despite one of the more active typhoon years here in Hong Kong, the waters were calm and smooth, and the sun shone along with a light breeze which was perfect for moving about the harbour under full sail.



All aboard the good ship Adela for regional relaxation

September saw us collaborating with the Royal British Legion Hong Kong and China Branch at a small wine library in Central to enjoy a variety of wines. Whilst it's great to get pilots together to talk shop, it was mentioned by several attendees how enjoyable it was to speak with people from different backgrounds and professions - not to

mention, for them to ask us about certain aspects of our job. Many questions start with: "This may be a stupid question but..." I find it important to share and alleviate concerns with those that have questions - there's no such thing as a stupid question!

We could easily have achieved a committee meeting at the Trophies and Awards Dinner this October, with such a very good turn out from the Hong Kong Region! We congratulated and welcomed our own Capt Samantha Lewis to the Livery. I'm certainly curious to know how

many other couples like Samantha and me in the Air Pilots are both Liverymen? We rounded a thoroughly enjoyable evening off at the Royal Air Force Club before playing staff travel roulette back to Hong Kong. A special thanks from the Hong Kong Region to those at the Air Pilots working behind the scenes to ensure this event of over 500 attendees went off without a hitch.

MASTER'S VISIT

As I write this we are gearing up for the busiest week in our social calendar, the annual Master's Visit. We look forward to welcoming back to Hong Kong Master Denyer, whose visit thankfully takes part during Hong Kong's much needed transition into winter. We in Hong Kong are looking forward to seeing the back of this year's weather which has broken quite a few records with five 'Black' rainstorm warnings issued in 2025, the highest number since the system was introduced in 1992.

A Black warning indicates that very heavy rain - exceeding 70mm in an hour - has fallen or is expected to fall, and is likely to continue. A record daily rainfall of 368.9mm was recorded at the Hong Kong Observatory Headquarters on 5th August, the highest for that month since records began in 1884.

The month of October 2025 was the hottest on record, with a record number of "very hot" days. We faced a record-breaking typhoon season in 2025, with an unusually high number of tropical cyclones. As of early October, the city had been affected by 12 storms that required the issuance of a tropical cyclone warning signal, setting a new annual record since the system was introduced in 1917, and finally we experienced Hurricane Signal No 10 twice in 2025, a rare event last recorded in 1964.

Unfortunately, I must finish this article with a message of condolence for two Aviation Security Company (AVSECO) staff who lost their lives when an Air ACT Boeing 747 departed the runway here in Hong Kong on 20th October. AVSECO has welcomed Air Pilots Hong Kong as friends and shared with us how they keep us safe. We mourn their loss and endeavour to strive forward in ensuring ever higher standards of flight safety. □



Listen up! Regional Report: North America

By Freeman Hal Adams, Chairman

The axiom is relatable to pretty much *all* interpersonal relationships: "Turn off your transmitter and turn on your receiver". It's particularly critical in the cockpit/ flight deck environment with interpersonal exchange being crucially important in all phases of flight.

As pilots, we all can nod our heads and think: "Of course." The simple communication principle is: "Listen - and in an emergency, stop, think, collect your wits. Then communicate and navigate."

Critical *listening*, as in, hearing and understanding feedback should be a common, recurring experience and practice for all pilots and flight crew. That is why we use such comm shorthand as, "Roger" or "Wilco" and why we verbally read back clearances..



I have heard more than one clearance, or air traffic control/ ATC instruction, read-back that was in error and quickly corrected by ATC.

Are you listening, and paying attention?

I often wonder if the pilot needed a hearing test, or had task saturation, was pre-occupied by a dropped writing instrument, an issue with a computer tablet, co-opted by cockpit chatter, or worse.

My first flight instructor, a crusty, senior USAF Lt Col, advised that paying attention to flying is the number-one task, or suffer the consequences! It was excellent advice from a senior pilot who was flying "heavies" and teaching GA pilots at our USAF base aero club, and clearly survived dealing with new pilots. This lesson was taught, again, during my US FAA flight instructor training and commercial/ instrument ratings.

My neighbour is an Airbus A320 series captain for a major USA commercial carrier, and I often have "hangar flying" discussions with him and the subject of safety often features. This captain, and check airman was one of his airline's few select captains qualified to operate into and out of TGU/ MHTG - Toncontin International Airport, serving Tegucigalpa, Honduras (now replaced by Palmerola International Airport). TGU is an ALPA "high risk" airport, and well known for challenging ops (just look at the list of accidents) and even with modern training aids such as high-fidelity simulators the captain still got new first officers who were ill-prepared.

While TGU is an extreme example, paying attention to flight deck tasks and communications are key paths to continued safe flight. While operations at TGU are extreme, even at an

apparently normal, mundane airport, anything can become a "TGU moment".

Training for a flight instructor role can, and should be, a great learning lesson in effective communications. My instructor for my flight instructor certificate was a high-time senior GA pilot/instructor on both fixed and rotary-wing aircraft. He did a great job of playing the uninformed, inexperienced student pilot. He provided many tips and lessons in dealing with a new flight student for example, the student not listening or the instructor overestimating the level of the student's knowledge.

The lessons learned during my flight instructor training provided an excellent foundation for dealing with other people in general, regardless of their discipline or focus, such as general business operations, engineering, finance, administration, and even dealing with aviation regulators, for that matter.

An instance, which I still recall with chagrin, involved combat operations in notoriously dangerous airspace, *several* decades in the past. Our crew was on a mission over contested air space and our EWO (Electronics Warfare Officer) was listening and jamming the opposition's tracking and targeting ground radars. I made some rather inane comment on intercom and immediately received a curt short response from our Aircraft Commander - something close to: "Cut the chatter!" While we were not actively targeted, just tracked, it could have been much different. After many post-flight apologies to fellow crew members, EWO in particular, I never, never forgot that lesson. Keep it relevant to flight deck ops, whether flying solo pilot or with a crew member, civil, government or military ops.

My captain neighbour says he had similar experience, too much chatter, while flying on US Navy helicopter flight crew in South China Sea. Communicate when needed, as appropriate, and be concise, precise. I am still surprised sometimes by the lack of pilot communications discipline. Unfortunately, time and time again such behaviour often is a key issue in the "accident chain".

When there is an opportunity to participate in formal communications skills training, do so. If aviation oriented, so much the better. Many aviation organizations offer communications training. Of course, airlines have flight deck communications management training and inspections, simulator training and checks, as well as comprehensive Crew Resource Management, the overarching key initial, recurring, training element. Remember: all pilots must communicate, effectively, and demand the same from their non-pilot colleagues.

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REPORT: THE YOUNG AIR PILOTS

By Associate Chris Barrott, Chairman

As the winter season approaches, it's time to reflect on a busy summer of Young Air Pilots activities. We've enjoyed serious aviation events and casual socials, trying hard to engage everybody; well aware that we have a very diverse membership ranging from aspiring pilots to experienced military flyers. If you haven't joined us this year, we have plenty more events continuing into winter and spring, so please do come along. We're always keen to welcome new members to our events, and you are always welcome to get in touch with any of the committee on WhatsApp if you'd like a soft introduction to any event.

TROPHIES AND AWARDS BANQUET

It was fantastic to see the exceptionally strong YAP representation at this year's T&A Banquet in October. The YAP table extended deep into the back of the Guildhall, with 28 seated together, and many more around the hall. We started early, as is now traditional, in The Old Doctor Butlers Head around the corner, and finished in the RAF Club nearly 12 hours later. Stories of missing last trains home reinforce the excellence of the evening!

We're particularly proud of supporting more young members, many being sub-200h aspiring pilots, to be able to attend with bursaries to offset the ticket cost. Many thanks to the many generous YAPs who elected to take a full price ticket to enable a greater subsidy to those who needed it. If anybody reading would have the means to support us in providing bursaries to enable greater young person attendance, rather than the funds having to come from our limited annual budget, please do get in touch. It would be great to support an even stronger contingent at next year's event.

PILOT CAREERS LIVE (PCL)

PCL at Heathrow is always a major event for the promotions team and YAP. With over a dozen young members volunteering, it's a great opportunity for

networking, and to demonstrate the fantastic work we do for aspiring pilots. We love to provide unbiased guidance that cuts through the noise of the corporate flight schools.

As part of the Future Pilot Assessment Day (FPAD) that we are helping to develop, we ran interview group exercise workshops for those attending PCL, free of charge. This once again highlights the brilliant work that we do to provide support and opportunities that many commercial providers charge for.

NETWORKING NIGHT

The YAP and the Air League teamed up to provide a networking night at the University of West London on 6th November. With many young members attending, it proved to be a valuable evening for all involved. Many thanks to Will Wright for his effort in putting the event together on behalf of the YAP committee.

MENTORING

I am pleased to give another reminder that the new YAP-led mentoring scheme is now up and running. All that is required is a simple email to mentoring@airpilots.org with a description of your background and what you are looking to achieve. We can then pair you with a mentor, pulling on the vast experience of those within the whole Company, not just the YAP. This isn't just for aspiring pilots wanting help for their first job. For example, serious mentoring for command courses or military progression is also available.

Finally, welcome to our newest cohort of PPL scholars who officially joined the Company and the Young Air Pilots in the November Court meeting. We look forward to seeing you at our next events and welcoming you into the community.

All of us in the Young Air Pilots committee hope to see you at our Christmas Social at the RAF Club on 15th December, and wish you all a fantastic festive period, and a very happy new year. □



A record turnout of YAPs at the Guildhall for the T&A Banquet





UK GENERAL AVIATION DEVELOPMENTS

From the Desk of the DAA, PM Nick Goodwyn

"The GA sector is an important part of the wider UK aviation industry that drives innovation, supports business, and provides a crucial entry point for individuals seeking a career in aviation. As such, promoting a safe, sustainable, and thriving GA sector is beneficial to the UK's wider interests." The UK CAA states this in its 'General Aviation Strategy' published in October 2025. It goes on to state:

"The GA sector faces some notable challenges including declining flying hours, a stagnating number of recreational pilot licence holders, as well as an ageing fleet of aircraft. Additionally, transitioning to new technologies – such as advanced avionics, electric propulsion, sustainable fuel – presents challenges in terms of investment, training, and changes to regulation. However, these also present significant opportunities, including enhanced operational efficiency, improved safety, and greater sustainability, all of which could help to rejuvenate the sector."

There are also additional challenges to GA and to training for aspiring PPL and ATPL Students as well as changes to licensing to which the ITF and associated Working Groups are paying particular interest.

GA AND IR TRAINING IN UK

We have received a number of communications from members with increasing concerns on the costs and availability of training for both PPL and subsequent ATPL and IR training. This year, our scholarships programme has seen a very significant rise in basic costs for a PPL (A) and likewise PPL (H) training costs are astronomical. Reports have been received of the threat of closure of a number of well-established and well-known Approved Training Organisations (ATO) or Declared Training Organisations (DTO) because of economic pressures, and that the numbers of students enrolling for training courses has declined markedly.

There is also a noticeable shortage of Air Traffic Controllers in both the civil and military worlds. This, combined with an increasingly cautious approach to risk especially post-2020 with concerns about rebuilding ATCO currency and competencies, has led to many airfields to either refuse all training traffic on the grounds of complexity or restrict availability. For instance, Leeds will only accept training traffic before midday and irrespective of training requirements, book hour long slots for each activity such that it will only get a few aircraft a day at most.

This often combines with airfields taking jet training in

preference to GA to block off more capacity. It is hard to get training at Newcastle and even harder at East Midlands when either EasyJet (Newcastle) or Ryanair (East Midlands) are doing base training, since ATC does not want the complexity of squeezing a relatively slow light aircraft into the radar pattern safely between wide jet airliner circuits. Newquay is an honourable exception to this with willingness and capacity to handle multiple jet training circuits as well as other inbounds.

When training organisations are based under the auspices of a MoD sponsor, both the airfields and ATCs are unfailingly helpful with both planning and instrument approach availability - indeed ATCs recognise our value to give them variety for their own training and currencies. Having more capacity available as routine at MoD airfields would both enhance training value on both sides and increase capacity for the system as a whole. From the point of view of the initial IR course it would also give scope to cover the instrument approach types that are less common at UK civilian airfields, for example Surveillance Radar Approaches - these are in the IR syllabus but rarely trained by schools because they will not be covered in the initial IR Test.



Oxford is one of the airports with a friendly welcome for training aircraft (Oxford Airport)

There are those airfields that welcome training. Oxford, for instance, operates 15min training slots rather than 1h ones, and integrates training flights extremely well. On the downside, it has no RNP approaches (now a mandatory element of most training and testing) and only a southerly ILS. Gloucester has, over the years, become so busy with training traffic that it accepts bookings up to two weeks in advance. Cardiff accepts some training but, again exclusively with prebooking and is extremely strict with its slot times because it will work only one training aircraft

at a time. Liverpool welcomes some training but is trying to move more into the jet circuit training world with an inevitable effect on availability for other training.

GENERAL AVIATION PILOT LICENSING REVIEW

The outcomes of the CAA's GA Licensing Review have significance if you are a general aviation pilot, instructor, examiner or training organisation.

The fixed-wing PPL, NPPL and LAPL licences and the associated flying ratings are all affected. There are also changes for sailplane and balloon licences. Most changes came into force on 1st October.

NO MORE NEW LAPL (A)S

From 1st October the CAA will only issue NPPL(A) and Part-FCL PPL(A) licences. Any UK-issued Part-FCL LAPL(A) licences already issued will remain valid. The LAPL(H) will continue to be issued. For those on an existing LAPL(A) course, all training completed so far will be credited. The CAA is shortly to publish the NPPL(A) CAP which will be communicated directly to training organisations.

The NPPL(A) requires at least 32h flight time which must include at least 10h of supervised solo. A pilot medical declaration will be acceptable for the initial issue of the NPPL. For the NPPL(A), either the Part-FCL exams or Microlight NPPL exams may be taken. Where the Microlight NPPL Exams have been passed, if an NPPL(A) holder subsequently wishes to upgrade to the PPL(A) licence, a set of five bridging exams will need to be successfully completed.

SSEA/SLMG TO SEP/TMG

The SSEA (Simple Single Engine Aeroplane) rating on the NPPL(A) will be replaced by the SEP (Single Engine Piston) rating to align with other UK-issued licences. While the privileges remain the same (2,000 kg MTOW), holders of the new SEP rating will now also be allowed to fly microlight aeroplanes after completing appropriate differences training, without needing a separate microlight rating. Those who obtained an SSEA rating before 1st October will automatically be deemed to hold the SEP rating, with no need to update their licence. Training completed before that date will still count towards gaining SEP privileges afterwards. The Self Launched Motor Glider rating will also become the Touring Motor Glider rating.

FLYING ABROAD

Remember that both the NPPL and the LAPL are sub-ICAO licences, meaning they are not automatically valid for flight outside the UK. The same goes for pilots operating on a Pilot Medical Declaration for any licence, as this is a sub-ICAO medical. Pilots must check the acceptance of any sub-ICAO qualifications with the states

they plan to fly in (or over).

CHANGES TO THE PART-FCL PPL(A)

The Part-FCL PPL(A) will require at least 40h of flight time as pilot of aeroplanes.

This will include 10h of supervised solo flight time and a qualifying cross-country flight, as per existing requirements. The CAA is permitting more flight time to

be credited from three-axis-control microlights. However, the supervised solo flight time and the licence skill test must still be completed in an SEP or TMG. The practical syllabus also sees the introduction of training in partial engine power loss scenarios and the use of VFR moving-map devices.

REVALIDATION REQUIREMENTS

Minor changes will apply to revalidating class ratings for SEP, TMG and microlights, and ratings endorsed as SEP or TMG. For Part-FCL ratings, up to six of the required 12 flight hours may now be flown in the first year of validity, and a standard minimum of 6h as pilot-in-command now applies to both PPL and NPPL holders; the requirement for 12 take-offs and landings remains unchanged. LAPL holders (aeroplane category) will move to a fixed validity system by October 2026, in line with the Part-FCL PPL. New guidance will also apply to help pilots make the most of biennial refresher training to maintain skills and knowledge when revalidating by experience.

For licences issued under the Air Navigation Order (including NPPL) after 30th September 2025, it will be a requirement to hold an aerobatic rating before conducting aerobatic manoeuvres.

Where a non-Part 21 aircraft has a Certificate of Airworthiness, or a permit to fly accompanied by permission for commercial operations under Article 42 of the Air Navigation Order, there will not be a requirement for a separate CAA safety assessment of the aircraft before use at an ATO or DTO. The Head of Training at the ATO or DTO is still required to assess the aircraft as being suitable for flight training.

<https://www.caa.co.uk/general-aviation/the-ga-unit/our-general-aviation-strategy/>

<https://www.caa.co.uk/publication/download/25752> □



Changes are happening for UK pilot licences (Pooleys)



THE AIR PILOTS BENEVOLENT FUND

By Liveryman Capt Adrian Keenan

The Benevolent Fund is the Company's charity whose primary object is to help current or former commercial pilots or navigators, company members and their dependents who are facing hardship. The APBF works closely with the RAF Benevolent Fund, the BALPA Benevolent Fund and SSAFA (The Armed Forces Charity).

Help from the Benevolent Fund can take many forms but often involves helping to fund items that can improve the quality of life of the applicant, such as necessary house maintenance, hearing aids or mobility equipment. As an example, recently we have helped with the installation of a new central heating boiler for a former commercial pilot who had been without hot water or heating throughout the last winter. The board received a letter of thanks which said: "The difference this has made is truly significant. Having hot water again has brought such comfort and knowing that I won't be freezing this winter is an incredible relief."

Another case involved funding a riser-recliner chair for a retired pilot living at home but struggling with mobility issues. This case was brought to our attention through our liaison with SSAFA. The board continues to provide support for a 96-year-old former pilot who lives alone and is in ill health; the fund has been involved with this case since 2014.

Often applicants come to us rather late in the day and, had we known of the need, we could have provided help earlier. ***If you know of any current or former commercial pilots or Honourable Company members who are in difficulties please encourage them to contact us. Every case is sympathetically treated with discretion by our Almoner Capt Robert Owens and applications can be directed to the Company office or via forms which can be found on the Company website under the 'Air Pilots Benevolent Fund'.***

DISCRETIONARY SUPPORT

Having fulfilled our primary aim of individual benevolence the board has the discretion to support other charitable objectives involving aviation. This year that has involved supporting a research project into pilot mental health conducted by PM Nick Goodwyn. This is recognised as an increasingly important area of study, and the issue has unfortunately featured in a number of high-profile accidents. This research has further raised the profile of the Company among operators, regulators and academic institutions and the resulting paper should be published next year.

We have also made donations to three air ambulance

charities, the Scottish, Devon and Dorset and London air ambulances. These are contributions towards funding new helicopters and, for the Scottish Air Ambulance, the donation will be directed towards the maintenance of a new thermal imaging system.



As well as supporting deserving individuals, the ABPF also donates to worthy causes such as the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance

This year we have also donated to one of the Master's selected charities, the Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF). MAF provides aviation support to many charities and NGOs throughout the Third World, where a lack of infrastructure means that aircraft are often the only way to deliver aid to isolated and impoverished communities.

The Benevolent Fund continues to support the other company charities who provide PPL and gliding scholarships and also the schools gliding programme. These activities all serve to bring aviation and its career potential to young people who otherwise might have no exposure to the industry. Although the current industry conditions are relatively benign, the Benevolent Fund also has a specific fund to help UK pilots encountering hardship as a result of redundancy.

Needless to say, support and donations are most gratefully received by our beneficiaries. The Trustees are all volunteers and include the current Master and Master-elect, who enthusiastically support our work. The Company can be justifiably proud of the results of its philanthropy. Of the London Livery Companies the Air Pilots is one of the few to offer individual benevolence which can really make an impact on people's lives.

None of this would be possible without the donations of many company members so the trustees would like to thank you all for your continuing generosity. If you are not already supporting the Benevolent Fund and you would like to make a donation or a regular contribution, no matter how small, see the donation form in this copy of the Air Pilot or on the Company website. □

AN INDIAN TALE OF MOTHS

By The Editor

In 1959 a 19-year-old girl spotted an advertisement in her local newspaper in rural Assam in India, stating:

The youth of the region are invited to apply
for 6 fully funded training scholarships
to become pilots within two years.

Apply for interview.

Assam Flying Club, Gauhati Airport, Jalukbari

Although it was not the sort of thing a girl was expected to do in those days, her father agreed to her applying (against the wishes of her mother) and within two weeks, against the odds, she was accepted for a scholarship. Twice a week for the next two years she was taken to the local airfield for flying lessons starting at sunrise and finishing in time for her to go to school, having had to sneak out of the house after her mother locked the front door to stop her from going.



Dhira Chaliha as north-east India's first female pilot, with Pushpak

The lessons were taken on De Havilland Tiger Moths and the indigenous Hindustan HAL-26 Pushpak. Once she had gone solo, she was able to explore the many small airstrips which had been built in Assam during World War Two, flying without radio and no ATC other than a control-tower green light giving permission to a circling aircraft to land. Apparently a free spirit, she flew at one point in this period between the pillars for a new bridge being built over the Brahmaputra River at Saraighat in Gauhati Province.

After 60 hours of training, in March 1961 this young lady, Dhira Chaliha, had become the first qualified female pilot in north-east India, but two years later, she and her husband moved to the UK, where she continued to fly from Biggin Hill. Eventually family priorities stopped her from flying, and she now lives back in India.



With PM Towell after the flight at White Waltham

Recently, however, she was back in the UK visiting her family, and her London-based son, via PM John Towell's son-in-law James, asked if she might be re-united with a Tiger Moth. John agreed to show her round his Moth at White Waltham and, despite her having arrived wearing traditional formal Indian dress, suggested that they should go flying.

John says: "Getting into and out of the cockpit was a bit tricky, but she absolutely loved the experience – she was very quiet, lost in her memories." The story of this reunion has apparently gone viral in India, where she still works to inspire young women to achieve greater things, and on her return, she was wheeled through Delhi airport by Harpreet Singh, a retired Air India executive who was India's first female commercial airliner pilot.

The full story of Dhira Chaliha's flying adventures is told in a blog by her son Loona, which can be found at <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DOtDsrrgDUt/?gsh=MWhtcnRmb2Fmdm9pMQ==>

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A reminder of the Moth Centenary: Liveryman Phil Mathews aloft in DH.60M, in mid-October weather better than that endured by those at the official Centenary rally (Lyndon Griffith)

THE TROPHIES & AWARDS 2025

Most of the Company's Trophies and Awards for 2025 were presented during the T&A Banquet at the Guildhall in London on 23rd October: recipients who were unable to be at the Guildhall will receive their awards later – including some during the Master's Tour of Australasia and Hong Kong in November.



THE AWARD OF HONOUR 2025

TIM PEAKE

Tim Peake, who was the first official British astronaut to walk in space, grew up in West Sussex. At the age of 13, Peake joined the army section of the Combined Cadet Force, but he was allowed to fly with the air

force section on weekends. By the time he was 16, he had decided to become an army pilot.

Upon graduating (1992) from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Peake joined the British Army Air Corps and was awarded his Army Flying Wings in 1994. He qualified as a helicopter flying instructor in 1998 and then served (1999–2002) with the US Army at Fort Hood, Texas, piloting Boeing Apache helicopters.

After he returned home, Peake worked (2002–05) as an Apache helicopter instructor prior to test-pilot training at the Empire Test Pilots' School, Boscombe Down, earning the Westland Trophy for best rotary-wing pilot student. The following year he received a BSc in Flight Dynamics and Evaluation from the University of Portsmouth. From 2006 to 2009, he served with Rotary Wing Test Squadron, Boscombe Down, at the end of which he retired from the British army as a major. During 18 years of military service, he logged more than 3,000h flying helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft.

Following his acceptance in May 2009 into the European Space Agency (ESA) programme, Peake moved to Cologne, Germany, to enter basic training at the European Astronaut Centre. On 15th December 2015 Peake, alongside American astronaut Col Tim Kopra and Russian cosmonaut Yuri Malenchenko became the first British ESA astronaut to travel in space, on SoyuzTMA-19M, reaching the ISS three days later. On 15th January 2016, he and Kopra performed a 4h 45min spacewalk, Peake thus became the first official British spacewalker - British-born Michael Foale had walked in space in 1995 but as a NASA astronaut. Peake also became the first British subject to be honoured by the queen - as Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George - while in space. He is now an ambassador for the Prince's Trust and the Scout Association in the UK, and for STEM Learning.

THE GRAND MASTER'S AWARD 2025

MAJ BENJAMIN J COFFEY II USAF AND

CAPT LACIE E HESTER USAF

Maj Benjamin Coffey and Capt Lacie Hester distinguished themselves by gallantry in action against an opposing armed force of over 200 low-altitude threats and 100 ballistic missiles, as Mission Commanders deployed with the 494th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing on 13 and 14 April 2024.

They took tactical control of eight Lockheed Martin F-16s and Boeing F-15Es while battle-managing a 430 nautical-mile-wide area of responsibility.

They led their four-ship to achieve dozens of shootdowns in complete darkness and extreme proximity to the ground. Noticing an unprecedented number of enemy drones and missiles remaining and available missiles running low, they requested extra fighter launches to bring fresh missiles to the fight. After achieving six air-to-air shootdowns, Coffey returned to base, handling a malfunctioning live AIM-120 missile while Hester arranged for a replacement F-15E.

While the base was receiving hostile fire, and ignoring defensive and offensive fire, they were airborne again within 25min. and received directions to intercept an additional mass wave of enemy low-altitude aircraft. Having used all their remaining missiles to achieve two additional shootdowns, they continued fighting with their aerial gun.

Using a combination of targeting pod, laser marker and night vision goggles to aim the 20mm cannon, they accepted significant risk to themselves to down another drone and then repositioned their aircraft to be an essential Command and Control node. Despite handling a second aircraft emergency, they successfully co-ordinated engagement of the remaining threats and directed the final US shootdown. Their unrelenting courage solidified a record-breaking 80 air-to-air shootdowns.



THE MASTER'S MEDAL 2025

1312 FLIGHT RAF AND RESCUE 1

On 22 July 2024, two aircraft of 1312 Flight RAF, and a civil SAR helicopter based at Stanley in the Falklands, 'Rescue 1', undertook a complex search and rescue operation in the South Atlantic which resulted in the successful rescue of 14 sailors from the fishing vessel *Argos Georgia* which had suffered storm damage and was taking on water 190nm East of the Falkland Islands in extreme weather conditions.

When *Argos Georgia* issued a distress call, authorities initiated a search and rescue operation involving an RAF Airbus A400M Atlas and 'Rescue 1'. The A400M captain and initial on-scene commander located the survivors and directed the helicopter to maximise its limited time on scene. The vessel was sinking and listing at 45°, with two fully-inflated and one partially-inflated life rafts, and one life jacket visible in the water. As *Rescue 1* arrived on scene, with only a potential 20min on task, the life jacket was declared empty and the focus moved to the casualties still on the vessel.

Rescue 1 positioned in a hover alongside the vessel which had only part of the stern out of the water. The crew could see four people still onboard and clinging to the highest point of the stern, but with the deck height fluctuating 30-50ft rapidly and also pitching, it was deemed unsafe for both casualties and the winch-paramedic to attempt to board.

The decision was made to reposition to the nearest life raft which was only partially inflated and had three survivors visible. The plan was to establish contact with the life raft, deploy a hi-line, and then the winch-paramedic would detach from the winch cable, place two casualties in rescue strops whilst he controlled any swing from below with the hi-line. This would leave him vulnerable as he would be detached from the aircraft and, ultimately, if the aircraft had to depart the scene he would be left behind.

With only 10min remaining on scene, on the third attempt to winch to the raft, the winch paramedic was engulfed by a wave from behind and the life raft was swept away. Having sustained an injury to his neck and shoulder he was recovered to the aircraft, but with only five minutes remaining on scene, an injured winch-paramedic and 190 nautical miles return journey, it was apparent that a further attempt on the life-raft was not feasible. The winch-operator then spotted a person floating in the water just ahead and it was agreed to attempt to recover the casualty, who was



The crews of Flight 1312 (above) and Rescue 1 (below)

unresponsive when a strop was attached and who slipped from the strop and fell back into the sea during winching. *Rescue 1* was now two minutes past fuel endurance and so had to return to Stanley. This left the A400M as the only asset available to maintain oversight and the captain initiated a surface vessel rescue while maintaining visual contact with the life rafts.

The on-scene conditions and eastward drift of the life-rafts meant a further helicopter rescue attempt that night would be fruitless and it was impossible to launch a subsequent sortie the next day.

As night fell, and nearing the limit of aircraft endurance, the A400M crew co-ordinated a handover with an RAF Airbus Voyager, which had been scrambled from the Falklands to assume overwatch duties - a role for which the Voyager was neither designed nor equipped. Operating in severe turbulence and thunderstorms at low level - a remarkable feat given the Voyager's size and weight - without night vision and with salt spray obstructing visibility, the Voyager crew adapted air-to-air refuelling navigation procedures to create an improvised search pattern to keep the rafts in sight. The Voyager maintained operational focus throughout the nine-hour mission and when the first surface vessel to arrive struggled to locate the rafts in the rough seas, established communications and guided it to the survivors.



THE HUGH GORDON-BURGE MEMORIAL AWARD 2025

AIRMAN FIRST CLASS MICHAEL MICCIO

During a routine cross-country training mission from Hurlburt Field, Florida, to Kirtland Air Force Base,

New Mexico, Lockheed Martin MC-130J experienced a sudden and rapid loss of utility hydraulic system pressure at 23,000ft. Despite being the sole loadmaster on board and only a recent graduate of initial qualification training, A1C Miccio initiated emergency procedures to isolate the system, quickly identifying a hydraulic fluid leak from the #2 engine that threatened to significantly degrade flight control authority.

The crew, having determined that the leak could not be isolated and that critical systems, including landing gear, flaps, and brakes, were compromised, then declared an in-flight emergency to air traffic control, and Miccio prepared the aircraft for an emergency diversion to Dyess Air Force Base, Texas. He quickly executed a free-fall extension of the landing gear. When the right main gear failed to extend fully, he swiftly employed the emergency hand crank system.

Miccio then briefed the crew on all relevant emergency procedures and took the additional step of securing the main landing gear with 10,000lb (4,500kg)-rated chains. Thanks to his thoroughness and composure, the crew safely landed the aircraft using no-flap and emergency braking procedures.

On 7th December 2024, the LifeFlight Mount Isa-based crew was tasked to locate a missing couple in northwest Queensland. The pair had not arrived at Kowanyama as expected, and flooded roads meant Queensland Police Service (QPS) was unable to reach the couple, who had been stranded in 40° heat for three days.

The vastness of the search area, difficulties around securing jet fuel, lack of cell coverage, and the conditions in which the patients were found made it especially challenging. After taking off at 8:40am, the crew had no communications contact until they arrived in Normanton several hours later to refuel. They were then able to confirm the QPS-nominated triangulated search area based on the missing couple's last known location and direction of travel.

The pilots' primary consideration throughout was fuel consumption. Fuel stations are limited and not always manned in these areas, which meant keeping an extremely close eye on the fuel gauge. They continued heading north, towards Kowanyama until they hit the road the couple had likely been traveling on. They began their airborne search, all four crew scanning 800m either side of the road.

Success would entirely depend on how quickly the couple could be located and having sufficient fuel and weight allowance to take the couple onboard without detouring to refuel again first. Luckily, they soon spotted the man and two SOS signs he'd inscribed in the dusty road. The crew quickly agreed there was enough fuel and space to land nearby. The couple was treated for dehydration and exposure, and airlifted with their two dogs to Normanton for further medical attention. Overall, the mission covered around 1,090km over 8h, five of which were spent flying.

THE BARRY MARSDEN MEMORIAL AWARD 2025

LIFEFLIGHT



Mark Overton



Wayne Clifford



Mike Adair



Andrew Jempson

THE SIR BARNES WALLIS MEDAL 2025

WO2 (SERGEANT MAJOR INSTRUCTOR GUNNERY) MARC COOK

Warrant Officer Class 2 (Sergeant Major Instructor Gunnery) Cook has made an outstanding and innovative contribution to the testing and development of uncrewed air systems. His work in the first-person-view UAS field has been nothing short of transformative, establishing entirely new capability where none existed before, and doing so with exceptional intelligence, and determination.

A relative newcomer to air test & evaluation, Cook undertook an intensive period of training to rapidly upskill in the highly technical and demanding domain of first-person-view flying. From a standing start, he not only



mastered the technical and operational requirements of this discipline but also developed a comprehensive testing and training capability from scratch – now a cornerstone of the 744 Naval Air Sqn's (the Air & Space Warfare Centre's Joint UAS test and evaluation squadron) ability to trial and implement emerging Uncrewed Air Systems technologies.

Of particular note, his contribution to the HORNETS NEST trial which involved first-person-view flying from a Boeing CH-47, goes well beyond what can normally be expected. As a Remote Pilot he has bridged the gap between engineers, operators, and command teams.



THE GRAND MASTER'S MEDAL 2025

LANCE BOMBARDIER PENNIE RUMSBY-FERRIS

Lance Bombardier Rumsby-Ferris has shown outstanding performance as a very junior Thales Watchkeeper remotely piloted air system

(RPAS) pilot on 47 Regiment Royal Artillery, the Army's only tactical UAS regiment. Whilst only commencing pilot training in June 2024, she has already displayed an exceptionally high level of professional competence and leadership that belies both her age and rank.

During the Watchkeeper Pilot Course LBdr Rumsby-Ferris rapidly demonstrated her quick thinking, analytical skills, technical acumen and airmanship, moving from the theory to the practical phase and completing the live flying component in the USA, in 18 weeks.

Once qualified, she participated on Exercise ATHENA EAGLE at the Watchkeeper Flying School in Fort Bliss, Texas. LBdr Rumsby-Ferris was selected as one of two line pilots for the initial deployment on Exercise ATHENA SHIELD 25 in Estonia. This was a demanding exercise, operating in unfamiliar airspace, marginal Baltic weather and under the constant threat of Russian GPS interference. She has achieved a very significant amount in less than a year; and will no doubt quickly achieve her Aircraft Commander status; and in time will be part of the core team that will help to deliver a Watchkeeper replacement capability in 2026.



THE BRACKLEY MEMORIAL TROPHY 2025

CAPT CHRISTIAN MAUDE USAF

In recognition of the 80th anniversary of Operation Overlord during World War Two, US Air

Forces in Europe's 86th Airlift Wing conducted D-Day commemoration flights with Lockheed Martin C-130J Super Hercules aircraft from 2nd to 7th June 2024.

Based at Cherbourg Airport in Normandy, the deployment was organised by Capt Christian Maude, and included airframes deployed from US Air Force and Air National Guard airlift squadrons from around the world, many with lineage dating back to World War Two.

The commemorative events were designed to honour the sacrifices of U.S. and allied service members made 80 years ago and to inspire future generations to value a collective vision of global peace. They included high-tempo training operations, flying media and VIPs to showcase the capabilities of today's air forces while participating in anniversary memorial services.

During the deployment overseen by Capt Maude 11 C-130Js flew 114 sorties totalling 323.1h; 121 ceremonies, 73 of which were supported with flyovers, were attended; 1,311 static line jumpers were dropped from 20 aircraft from seven countries including France, UK, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and Canada; four veterans were flown and the arrivals and departures of 165 VIPs were successfully handled.



THE JOHNSTON MEMORIAL TROPHY 2025

WO2 HYRONIMUS JANSEN

Warrant Officer Class 2 (WO2) Jansen has shown exceptional expertise, leadership and outstanding performance in the operation of the Thales Watchkeeper remotely piloted air system

(RPAS). His unparalleled technical and tactical knowledge of the Watchkeeper RPAS, coupled with his exceptional operational skills and dedication to advancing operational capabilities, are unmatched.

His comprehensive understanding of the system has been instrumental in enhancing 47Rgt's operational effectiveness and readiness. It has been a critical enabler in establishing new flying locations in the UK during Op DEVERAN (the MoD support to the Home Office monitoring of migrant crossings of the English Channel), two new locations in the USA and Oman and the live fire integration with attack helicopters as marked in the Grand Master's Medal award.

Beyond his technical prowess, Jansen's in-depth knowledge of operating procedures and regulations for the Watchkeeper RPAS sets him apart as a subject matter expert in his field.

THE PRINCE PHILIP HELICOPTER RESCUE AWARD 2025

CREW OF RESCUE 936

FOR THEIR ACTIONS DURING THE RESCUE OF A FALLEN CLIMBER ON YR WYDDFA (SNOWDON)



Charlie Brown



Dave Kenyon



Mark Tomlin



Neil Cooper

The crew of R936 was tasked at 15:42 on 18th November 2024 to assist Llanberis Mountain Rescue Team (LLMRT) with a casualty reported to have suffered head and spinal injuries following a significant fall in poor weather on the Yr Wyddfa horseshoe.

The sortie was flown day into night with very poor weather; heavy snow showers reducing visibility to less than 1km out of cloud and with substantial cloud down to ground level. R936 routed around Yr Wyddfa to the scene of the reported casualty as quickly as possible. When the crew came to the hover it became clear that the casualty was located on the upslopes in dense cloud cover. Because of the casualty's serious injuries, the crew elected to ascend the slope despite visibility of mere metres, and in a significant snow shower. R936 ascended approximately 500ft in cloud to reach the LLMRT team and the casualty.

At this point, due to falling light levels and deteriorating weather the crew decided that R936 would land at the base of the cliffs to await a LLMRT stretcher carry-down of the casualty. The crew slowly descended to safely get the aircraft out of cloud and land at the base of the slope.

It then became clear, after medical assessment by the Winch-Paramedic, that the casualty had sustained severe life-threatening injuries to his head and spine that required immediate evacuation. At this point the weather had worsened, with low cloud and a heavy snow shower now engulfing the area. Once the casualty was packaged and carried to a suitable winching site, R936 returned through cloud using a

combination of white light and night vision goggles. Ascending a significant slope on NVGs, in cloud and heavy snow with rotor tips close to the cliff face, and with the potential disorientation from the heavy snow, the crew elected to climb up the slope metre by metre.

Despite the conditions the crew agreed to recover the casualty, with the intention of a rendezvous with a road ambulance at Caernarfon. This required a very slow descent of approximately 700ft in cloud, again relying on exceptional CRM and teamwork with the co-pilot and winch-operator working together to provide pattern and clearances. Finally, the crew recovered to the area where they previously landed. Unfortunately, the weather had declined further, and the time taken to climb and descend the slope meant that the helicopter's fuel levels were now too low to allow a recovery back to Caernarfon.

With visibility just metres, the crew identified the pipeline that leaves the Llyn Llydaw reservoir and drops down into valley east of Yr Wyddfa. Using this as the sole reference, R936 hover taxied along the pipeline, using it as a "handrail" to descend the mountainside. Once in the valley below, in further deteriorating weather with heavy snow showers, and with limited fuel, R936 was forced to land at a remote farm location, shut down and await medical support by road. During this period, the winchman-paramedic continued to deliver care in the cold, dim and confined space of the shutdown aircraft until an ambulance arrived to take the casualty to hospital. R936 recovered to Caernarfon the following morning after the weather cleared.



THE SWORD OF HONOUR 2025

GEORGE BACON

George Bacon's career began with the RAF before becoming an Army pilot in 1981. He left the military to become a specialist in manned airborne surveillance projects for

Britten-Norman and consultant to the wider defence industry before returning to Army Aviation as a fixed wing specialist, Head of Recruiting, Pilot Selection and Displays for the AAC and a CAA Air Accident Investigator.

After defence funding was withdrawn from the Army's Historic Aircraft Flight in 2012, George undertook a monumental effort to preserve this unique fleet of aircraft within a charitable trust, formally established in 2015 and known as the Historic Army Aircraft Flight (HAAF).

Starting with just five grounded aircraft in a hangar at Middle Wallop, George built a flying organisation from the ground up. He recruited ex-AAC aircrew and engineers to get the Auster AOP9, de Havilland Beaver and Westland Sioux and Scout flying and developed a compelling mixed fixed- and rotary-wing display routine, seen across the UK's airshow circuit.

George was for 15 years the founding CEO of the British Air Display Association (BADA), during which time he played a pivotal role in professionalising and supporting the UK's air display industry while also managing the AAC Blue Eagles display team for 20 years. He remains an active pilot, a busy and sought after FDD, an Aerobility ambassador and one of the most recognisable airshow commentators in the country.



THE MYLES BICKERTON TROPHY 2025

CAPT NIGEL REID

When a teenage Air Cadet, Nigel Reid learned to fly at Thruxton in a Piper Vagabond and later he converted onto his father's de Havilland DH.60G Gipsy Moth.

Nigel joined the Royal Air Force on a short service commission and, following officer training at RAF Henlow, underwent training at Church Fenton, Valley and Brawdy before he was posted onto SEPECAT Jaguars with No 20 Sqn in Germany and No 54 Sqn at RAF Coltishall.

At the end of his RAF commission Nigel joined British Caledonian Airways flying the Boeing 757 after the company merged with British Airways in 1988 after which he was promoted to command on the 747 and now the

777. In the 1990s he commenced restoration to airworthy condition of a second DH.60G Gipsy Moth which had been rescued by his father. As an avid RAF Reservist, Nigel flies AEF sorties at Boscombe Down has also taken an interest in gliding, particularly in South Africa.

As a rated civilian instructor, Nigel taught his wife and two sons at 16 and 17 years of age to fly from scratch to PPL on a family Gipsy Moth. One of the two family Gipsy Moths is unique in having an aerobatic category Permit: Nigel displays it and is a member of the Van's RV-4 Firefly Display Team as well as being a DA Examiner. Nigel is a self-taught aircraft engineer: and maintains both Gipsy Moths, his RV-4 and an Andreasson BA-4.

He has been the de Havilland Moth Club Safety Officer for over 10 years and writes a regular *Keeping it Safe* column for its magazine, has produced a series of safety-related videos dealing specifically with Moth training and operational issues, and lectures on safety matters at Moth Club Forums.



THE HANNA TROPHY 2025 JON GOWDY

Jon Gowdy started flying as a 14-year-old with the Southdown Gliding Club and at 18 was introduced to display flying as the tow pilot for a glider/tug display. A year later, he joined Air Atlantique at Coventry and rose to

become the Deputy Chief Pilot on the 'Classic Flight', displaying such aircraft as the de Havilland Dragon Rapide, Chipmunk and Devon, Percival Pembroke and Prentice, Scottish Aviation Twin Pioneer and, later, the de Havilland Vampire. Having moved to fly the Airbus A320 and Boeing 747, 767 and 787 with British Airways, he continued display flying with Silence Twister aircraft and his own team flying Van's RV4s. At the age of 27, he took a year in Antarctica flying for the British Antarctic Survey on the de Havilland DHC-6 Twin Otter.

Having started warbird flying with the Supermarine Spitfire, he has not only become one of the foremost display pilots on these high-performance aircraft, but he has also trained and mentored many others and is a CAA Display Authorisation Evaluator for aerobatics.

He is now the Chief Pilot for the Aircraft Restoration Company at Duxford, where he is responsible for overseeing all flying operations for the business. Jon has now been display flying for 24 years, and at only 42 years of age, he has already amassed a total of 11,600h in a total of 82 aircraft types.



THE ERIC 'WINKLE' BROWN MEMORIAL TROPHY 2025

744 NAVAL AIR SQUADRON, 22 SQUADRON AND ROTARY WING TEST AND EVALUATION SQUADRON



(L-R) MAcr Aaron Neal [22SQN], Flt Lt Nick Farren [RWTES], WO2 Marc Cook [744NAS], Mr Pete Coughlin [744NAS/QinetiQ], Sgt Joe Bartlett [RWTES], Flt Lt Dean Gibson [22SQN], Maj Ash Davidson AAC [744NAS]

Seeking evidence that first-person-video uncrewed air systems can be successfully launched and controlled from airborne helicopters, trials were conducted from a Boeing CH-47 Chinook in a variety of role-representative flight profiles with the drone operator both in the helicopter and on the ground. A team was established based upon members of 744, 22 and the Rotary Wing Test & Evaluation Squadrons.

With no prior experience of operating comparable drones from an airborne platform, tasks included establishing effective and maximum ranges for communication and data feeds necessary to maintain control of the drone, analysis of electromagnetic compatibility issues, and the effects of complex airflows when dispatching the drone. Human factors assessments tested operators' ability to successfully gain and maintain control of the drone onboard a moving platform, and drop tests proved of controlled flight following dispatch. Significant hurdles overcome included calibrating the gyroscopes of the drone on the moving Chinook and the airflow inducing reverse flow of the props during dispatch. The trial safely fulfilled all outcomes and achieved the significant milestone of the first launch and operation of a UAS from a UK military aircraft, with first flight to successful launch and control of the drone in a range of configurations in just over 10 weeks.

THE SIR JAMES MARTIN AWARD 2025

THE RAF POSEIDON SURVIVE, EVADE, RESIST, EXTRACT TEAM

Entry of the Boeing Poseidon aircraft into RAF service has required the Force to regrow its knowledge of survival

in the long-range maritime patrol domain, essentially from scratch. The Poseidon Survive, Evade, Resist, Extract (SERE) Team, is a small group of dedicated Non-Commissioned (L-R) Flt Sgt Robert Montgomerie, Sgt Aircrew, tasked with delivering survival and aircraft emergency egress training for aircrew and engineers alongside their demanding primary role as Weapons System Operators.



(L-R) Flt Sgt Robert Montgomerie, Sgt Garry Padbury, Sgt James Lawrence

The team acts as the interface between the Force Headquarters, the flying squadrons and the Defence SERE Training Organisation. It has established a standardised and structured means of tracking training and currencies for all aircrew and deployed engineering personnel.

In addition to delivering classroom training in the use of the aircraft's life rafts and sea survival and location equipment, the team works closely with RAF Lossiemouth Physical Education Flight on drills in the pool and at sea, and the RAF Regiment Force Protection Training Flight to give practice with combat survival and location equipment, as well as running immersive, practical outdoor sessions.

Most impressively, without direction, the Team identified that the aircraft egress, abandonment and ditching training could be hugely improved, and has completely revamped the way that the drill is practised.



THE CUMBERBATCH TROPHY 2025

MARK GREENFIELD

Mark Greenfield is widely recognised as a masterful instructor in UPRT. His reputation is not only built on technical knowledge, but on his outstanding ability to teach. After

RAF fast jet training, a medical condition paused his flying career; but 10 years later, after regaining his Class One medical, he returned to aviation with renewed passion—this time with a mission to teach. He played a central role in shaping modern UPRT standards, representing the UK on the EASA Rule-Making Group which mandated on-aircraft UPRT in 2019.

As the lead UPRT instructor at Ultimate High, Greenfield has worked with pilots at every level, from ab initio cadets to test pilots and airline training captains. He is especially skilled at guiding students through the critical psychological

elements of UPRT - particularly the startle and surprise effects that can undermine decision-making during real-world upsets.

Under his leadership, Ultimate High has become a centre of instructional excellence in UPRT, trusted by major organisations including Rolls-Royce, Boeing, AirTanker, and the Air Accidents Investigation Branch.

Greenfield regularly presents at major conferences such as EATS, speaks at safety seminars, and contributes to industry publications. His advice is sought by regulatory bodies including CASA (Australia) and the Kenyan CAA, and through webinars, livestreams, and public writing, he continues to improve how UPRT is understood and delivered across the industry.



THE GLOVER TROPHY 2025

FLT LT MATTHEW ROPER RAF

Flt Lt Matthew Roper has been the highest performing graduate on 11 Sqn Qatar Emiri Air Force (QEAF) and is ranked as number one of 28 trainees to have graduated from the Joint QEAF/UK training

squadron since it was established in 2021. He immediately demonstrated his strong work ethic and preparation during ground school, finishing top of his course. However just as significantly, Roper was intrinsic to the cohesiveness of only the second-ever joint RAF-QEAF course.

Displaying a level of cultural astuteness remarkable for his level of experience, Roper was the cornerstone of arranging social events that were inclusive to his Qatari course mates whilst simultaneously promoting the *esprit de corps* of a fast jet squadron. This performance on the ground was only exceeded by Roper's performance in the air. His instructors noted early on his flair for aerobatics and the accuracy of his close-formation flying, and throughout the most taxing element of the course, Tactics and Weapons, Roper continued to excel. Roper concluded his final-solo check on the Squadron by leading a 4-ship of aircraft into RAF Coningsby, a level of responsibility far beyond the scope of the course.



THE CENTRAL FLYING SCHOOL TROPHY 2025

LT CDR PHIL BARRON RN

Lt Cdr Phil Barron made an outstanding contribution to improving the training environment and culture at 825 Naval Air Squadron during his

tenure as a Qualified Observer Instructor, Jan 23-Dec 24. As an experienced A2 Leonardo Lynx and Wildcat instructor of 22 years, his evident passions for instruction and aviation were reignited to such an extent that, by the end of his tour, he had achieved the first Royal Navy A1 instructor re-categorisation in 30 years.

When he joined 825, the training culture was under scrutiny for its untenably high Observer withdrawal rate of 45% in the previous three years. Stepping up to the role of Senior Observer, Barron targeted areas for improvement and played a key role in implementing a number of initiatives that saw this withdrawal rate reduced to zero during his tenure.

Additionally, when Barron joined, the Wildcat Maritime Force was facing a critical shortfall in Observers. This led to calls from Higher Command that, as well as improving the training environment, 825 was to take more trainees and deliver them faster. Barron embraced these competing demands and took it upon himself to act as the Course Officer for the largest Wildcat ab-initio course in five years, ensuring that Observers were delivered to the front line in 16 months. This represented the quickest Operational Conversion the WMF has seen in its 10-year history; over six months faster than the previous 22-month average.



THE PIKE TROPHY 2025

LIVERYMAN CAPT ALAN WRIGLEY JP

Alan Wrigley took his first training flight in a glider in 1988 and quickly rose to be a junior instructor within the British Gliding Association. He

then went on to obtain a PPL, initially in motor gliders but very shortly thereafter in what were then called Group A (Single Engine Piston) aircraft. Wrigley then trained to be an instructor and took up his first post at Sherburn-in-Elmet in 1995. By 1997, he was an examiner.

Having gained an instructor rating for twin-engine aircraft, he became a commercial instructor at Humberside. Subsequently, he became Head of Training for a start-up school in the Czech Republic, then moved to the Pilot Training College in Waterford (Republic of Ireland) as Chief Flight Instructor.

His next move was to Teesside as Head of Training (HT) of Cleveland Flying School, where he brought the establishment up to standard to commence training pilots under the JAA modular system towards their CPL/IRs. He then joined Eastern Airways, where he gained his command on the BAe Jetstream 41 and became the

company's deputy safety officer.

Later, he returned to his first love of instruction, with a job as HT at Atlantic Flight Training in Coventry and was instrumental in opening the school's first overseas base in Huesca (northern Spain). He was an early CAA-approved IR examiner and has continued to undertake work with FTE in Jerez, Southern Spain.

He also continued in his voluntary role within the gliding movement, became a senior examiner in gliders and served as both CFI and Chairman of his club at Rufforth with a total of 15 years in committee positions. Alan is the only person known to have held simultaneously EASA and CAA Senior Examiner certificates for both powered aircraft and sailplanes along with FRTOL Senior Examiner. He has some 9,500h flying plus 4,500 in simulators.

THE SIR ALAN COBHAM MEMORIAL AWARD 2025 LIVERYMAN PM CAPT DAVID MAULEVERER



David Mauleverer has been a member of the Air Pilots since 1971 and a Liveryman for over 50 years, having his City of London Freeman's certificate being dated 28th April 1975. He had been inspired to join the then-Guild by PM Sir Alan Cobham. In later years David's friendship with Sir Alan's son Sir Michael Cobham led to the latter's assistance with the purchase of the Guild's previous office at Cobham House.

David served on the Guild's Technical Committee for some 25 years, and was Master in 1991-92, with his Master's year being marked by two significant ventures. The most enduring was his success in persuading the City authorities that the Guild should be allowed to hold its annual Trophies & Awards Banquet (previously held at The Mansion House) in the Great Hall of the Guildhall, where it is held to this day.

His other great initiative in 1991 was turning the annual

Guild Garden Party into a full-blown airshow at North Weald – an event distinguished by being the only recorded occasion on which a Concorde and an Avro Vulcan flew together – and by the rest of the airshow being rained off, an outcome fortunately covered by event insurance...

Once his flying career with BEA and BOAC (for which he flew the Vickers VC.10 and Boeing 747) had ended, he took a greater interest in City affairs. In 2001 he was elected as Sheriff – the first (and so far, only) Air Pilot to be thus elected in the name of the Company. Four years later David was elected Alderman for the City Ward of Walbrook – again, the only Air Pilots Liveryman to have been accorded this honour in the name of the Company.



THE GRAND MASTER'S AUSTRALIAN MEDAL 2025

JACKIE DUJMOVIC

After an early career in the international global maritime industry, Jackie Dujmovic saw an opportunity to enter the emerging drone technology

industry, becoming a licensed drone pilot and gaining her commercial operator's certificate.

She founded Hover UAV in 2015, using drones to deliver high-quality aerial imagery, research, video and data, and also conducting shark surveillance trials and whale research. During this time, she drove the introduction of drones for shark mitigation for beach safety for the NSW Department of Primary Industry and Surf Life Saving and inventing and commercialising life-saving procedures/devices using drones.

Her drone flying also included running daily flight operations for companies such as Google, whose drone delivery arm 'Wing' first trialled drone deliveries in Australia's capital territory (ACT) and Queensland. She and her Hover UAV team have developed a beyond-visual-line-of-sight (BVLOS) Hub, which operators can access to learn about the required process to obtain BVLOS approvals. She helps operators obtain their regulatory approvals and has a deep understanding of the specific operational risk assessment (SORA) process many regulators require for approvals.

She is active on UTM (uncrewed traffic management) working groups, is a board member of the Australian Association of Uncrewed Systems (AAUS), the board secretary for Safeskie Australia, a board member of the Vertical Flight Society, and on the board of advisors for the humanitarian technology/robotics organisation, We Robotics.



THE AUSTRALIAN BI-CENTENNIAL AWARD 2025
MARJ DAVIS GILLESPIE OAM

Marj Davis Gillespie learnt to fly in 1983, owned her own Mooney, for 10 years, has flown all over Australia and has contributed to the administration and regulations of the flying training industry.

She was President of Manning River Aero Club of Taree NSW for 24 years and was Secretary for 18 months prior to that. In 2001 she was the inaugural President of Old Bar Heritage Air Strip Committee, which was successful in achieving heritage listing and enabling continuing operation for the Airstrip.

She was President of the Royal Federation of Aero Clubs of Australia from 1997 to 2019, continuing as Treasurer and successfully lobbied the then Department of Transport to remove the Goods and Services Tax from flying training in not-for-profit RFACA Aero Clubs.

She also was instrumental in getting dispensation for colour blind pilots. She organized the annual conferences, reports, auditors, guest speakers and the announcement of winners of scholarships from Air Services and also organised and managed the annual Australian Light Aircraft Championships and the Trans-Tasman "Wings International Competition".

Marj is an elected member of the Council of The Australian Strategic Air Traffic Management Group (ASTRA), represents the RFACA on the Australian Aviation Associations Forum and is also the RFACA representative at AusSAR Consultative Council Meetings. In 2007 she was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for "...services to the development of the aviation industry through a range of executive and administrative roles, particularly with aero clubs" and in 2014 was appointed to the Aviation Industry Consultative Committee.



THE CAPT JOHN ASHTON MEMORIAL AWARD 2025
CAPT NEALE LANGDON

Neale Langdon's aviation career began at the age of 15 in Melbourne. After obtaining his Commercial Pilot Licence, he became a flight instructor. At Skybird Aviation, Essendon Airport, he quickly rose to

the roles of Chief Flying Instructor and Chief Pilot.

In 1986, Neale began his airline career with TAA, flying the de Havilland Twin Otter, Fokker F27, and Douglas

DC-3. During the Australian pilots' dispute, he flew F27s with Malaysian Airlines, before returning home to fly with Australian Regional Airlines. Neale then joined Singapore Airlines on the Boeing 747/200/300/400, before achieving his first jet command on the 777.

After 19 years abroad, Neale joined Virgin Australia, progressing from Captain to Training Captain. In this role, he guided pilots at every career stage and was pivotal in transitioning pilots across multiple aircraft types, including the Boeing 777 and Airbus A330, ultimately managing training and checking operations for Virgin's international long-haul fleet.

Since 2024 Neale has been Acting Head of Training and Standards for Virgin Australia, overseeing pilot, cabin crew, and ground staff training. Notably, he has led the implementation of Evidence-Based Training (EBT). Neale is currently the CEO and Head of Operations for Virgin Australia's Part 142 training organisation, while also serving as 737 Fleet Standards Manager and acting Head of Training and Checking.



THE JEAN BATTEN MEMORIAL AWARD 2025
LIVERYMAN CAPT ALLAN J BOYCE JP

Allan Boyce was a founder member of the New Zealand Region and has been a member of the Company (in New Zealand) since September

1989, serving continuously on the New Zealand Regional Committee since 1993.

Between 1993 and 1997, he was the Regional Technical Director and then Chairman of the Region until 2001 while also being elected an Assistant to the Court in 2006. He served on the Court until 2014, during which time he attended almost every meeting in London until he retired from Air New Zealand. In 2019, he was 'persuaded' into again becoming Chairman of the New Zealand Region until he finally retired from active involvement in Region affairs in 2025. Allan has therefore enjoyed 37 continuous years of service to the Company in the NZ Region, and also on the Court.

Allan (together with the New Zealand Region Chaplain) has been actively involved with the annual Mt Erebus commemorations and work towards a physical memorial. This activity has significantly increased the Company's profile within New Zealand while also highlighting efforts to commemorate the worst disaster in New Zealand aviation history. He has also represented the Company at the New Zealand Aviation Federation.





THE JIM COWAN MEMORIAL AWARD 2025 ASSOCIATE LACHLAN HYDE

As the President and General Manager of the Royal Aero Club of New South Wales, Lachlan Hyde has been instrumental in revitalizing this historic organization.

Under his leadership, the club has transformed from an inactive entity into a dynamic and progressive flying club, marked by innovative training programmes and a thriving membership base.

Lachlan's passion for aviation emerged early, cultivated through formative experiences around aerodromes with his family and hands-on involvement with the Australian Air League Cadets. At the club he has developed collaborative, member-driven training pathways that support both aspiring pilots and seasoned instructors. The club's recognition as CASA's Aero Club of the Year in 2025, less than two years after its revival, is a testament to his strategic leadership.

In 2023, he was named the CASA Wings Awards Young Achiever of the Year and was recognised as the Rising Star at the 2024 Australian Aviation Awards. He is also a Justice of the Peace and member of the Institute of Community Directors Australia.

THE HUGH FIELD MEMORIAL AWARD FOR AVIATION JOURNALISM 2025

RAF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS – TOP GUNS TEAM



RAF Media & Communications: Mark Tattersall and Alanah Donnell

In February 2025 the second season of *Top Guns: Inside the RAF* was broadcast to millions on the UK's Channel 4 TV, giving unprecedented access to Air Force life. To achieve this, the RAF team worked tirelessly over 14 months to create opportunities for partner True North to film scenarios and personnel that showcased service aviation at its finest.

The RAF team was able to secure footage of pilots, weapons systems operators and intelligence analysts working inside Remotely Piloted Air Systems, and cockpit cameras captured real-time footage of RAF Eurofighter Typhoons operating alongside allies to intercept Iranian drones targeted at Israel, and RAF strikes against Houthi rebels blocking the Red Sea.

The team successfully lobbied to capture quick reaction alert scrambles, world-class fast jet training, and air policing over the borders of Romania. This included footage of the Boeing Poseidon P-8 on operations over the Black Sea, escorted by Typhoons as they met hostile Russian aircraft.

The fatal Supermarine Spitfire crash of Sqn Ldr Mark Long was captured during production, and the handling of this incident, working with his family and peers to create a sensitive tribute to his service, is deserving of a special mention.

The series was a huge success, receiving widespread plaudits from TV reviewers, defence commentators and internal audiences. The RAF recruitment website received an unprecedented number of registrations of interest during this period, and visits to the RAF website also hit record-highs.



THE JOHN LANDYMORE TROPHY

BASEL HAMMOND

Basel Hammond won the Lane-Burslem BALPA BF PPL Scholarship and completed his training with Booker Aviation. From the initial impression that he made upon the scholarship selection committee to the

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



THE MASTER'S TROPHY – AUSTRALIAN REGION 2025

GP CAPT PETER NORFORD AM CSC

Gp Capt Peter Norford has made an extraordinary and sustained contribution to aviation and the Company through over four decades of

service, professionalism, and dedication.

A graduate of the RAAF Pilot's Course in 1978, Peter served as an operational and search and rescue helicopter pilot, before becoming a QFI across fixed and rotary wing aircraft. He held senior instructional and command roles in flying training and was awarded the Conspicuous Service Cross in 1994 for exemplary service as Chief Flying Instructor at No. 2 Flying Training School. Other appointments included Director of Defence Aviation and Air Force Safety, and RAAF Adviser and Air Attaché in London. Gp Capt Norford has served as Honorary Secretary of the Australian Region since 2013 and Chair of the ACT Working Group since 2015. His diligence, reliability, and deep knowledge of the Defence and Government environment have been invaluable - particularly in coordinating high-level meetings for the annual Master's visit and personally chauffeuring visiting dignitaries. Peter has also played an active role in the Region's scholarship programme.



THE MASTER'S TROPHY – HONG KONG REGION 2025

CAPT PATRICK VOIGT CFS RAF (RET'D)

Capt Pat Voigt joined the Royal Air Force in 1986, straight from school, where he had been an active member of the school CCF, completing a Flying Scholarship in 1980. Following Officer

training, he trained at RAF Linton-on-Ouse. During that training he was streamed 'Fast Jet' and on completion of the Wings Course on the BAe Hawk at RAF Valley he was selected to be 'Creamed-Off' to become a QFI.

Later given his choice of posting, he chose the BAe Harrier, on which he participated in the Allied efforts to keep the Iraqi armed forces at bay on Operation Northern Watch, operating out of Incirlik Air Base in Southern Turkey. In 1995 he was dropping the first bombs in Europe since World War Two, on a target near Sarajevo. During his time on the Harrier, Pat was the Role-Demo

pilot. Upon leaving the RAF in 2004, Pat joined Cathay Pacific as a First Officer on the Boeing 747 and then moved across to the 777 in Hong Kong, where he gained his command in 2016.

Pat left Cathay Pacific in 2022 to move back to the UK and renewed his ties with the RAF as a QFI on the Grob Prefect at Cranwell and Barkston Heath before rejoining Cathay Pacific in 2024 as a simulator instructor.

Having joined the Company in 2006, he has had an incredible effect especially on the Hong Kong Region, quickly becoming the Regional Vice Chairman to Locky Lawford and then Chairman in 2019. His efforts in both those roles propelled the Region to the successes it sees today. Upon his return to London Pat became an Assistant to the Court, and moving back to Hong Kong has seen Pat return to the General Committee of that Region.



THE MASTER'S TROPHY – NORTH AMERICAN REGION 2025

ELEVATE AVIATION

Founded with a mission to promote aviation opportunities for all, Elevate Aviation is a Canadian not-

for-profit organization committed to fostering diversity, accessibility, and engagement in the aviation sector. With national reach and a dedicated team of volunteers, Elevate Aviation has become a force for change, breaking down barriers and creating pathways to aviation careers, particularly for women and members of under-represented communities.

Through mentorship initiatives, strategic partnerships, and national outreach, including its annual Cross Country Tour, Elevate Aviation introduces youth and adults alike to the possibilities in aviation. Its partnerships with the Royal Canadian Air Force and other stakeholders reach across both civil and military aviation sectors.

Its Elevate Learning Centre delivers free-of-charge aviation-focused education to all age groups, with Junior Jets (ages 5–10) and Aviation Career Exploration (ACE) (ages 10–13) programmes spark early interest in aviation through hands-on learning, with instructors deliberately chosen to reflect the diversity Elevate seeks to promote. □



THE 2025 TYMMS LECTURE

RAF FIGHTER PILOT IN 1940, BY PM MICHAEL FOPP

Report by The Editor

PM Fopp, the son of a Battle of Britain pilot (one of 13 Australian pilots in the battle) delivered in the 2025 Tymms Memorial Lecture a comprehensive review of the leadership of the RAF of the time, and how the pilots were affected by that leadership and the wider circumstances of the battle. He began by saying that he



had always believed what he had read in the accounts written after the event – and that the pilots who by then were in their 40s had also believed what they had read, having known very little about what was going on in strategy etc while they were serving.

PM Michael Fopp

Now, his extensive research gave a much better view of who they were and what they went through. Very few of them had spoken about what they really felt, certainly not to their children – but some had, to their grandchildren.

FOUR THEMES

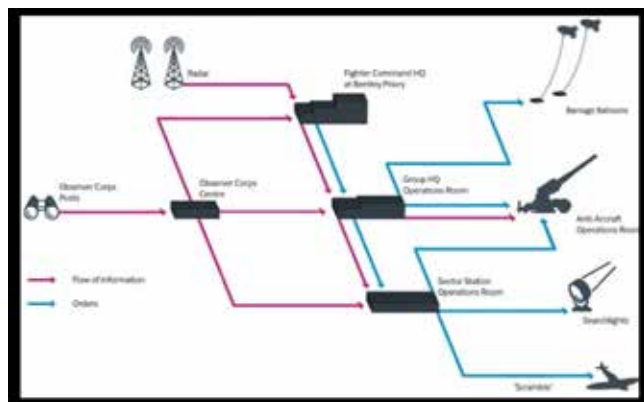
The lecture centred on four themes: strategic planning and leadership; tactical training development and leadership; unforced errors, successes and deficiencies; and the psychological impact of leadership, morale and combat capabilities.

After the Great War, he said, we had thought there would be no more wars for at least 10 years: governments of the day had set their policies to that, and each 10 years they had extended it for another 10 years. They had also assumed that any future air war would be fought in the way the Great War had been fought: Britain would be bombed, because it had been bombed then, and the bombers would get through. Nobody had anticipated, however, that the enemy would be 22 miles away, or that it wouldn't come over in nice, neat formations. "We were lucky", he said: "The system we put in to defend ourselves (the Dowding plan) was innovative, and Germans knew nothing about it."

The RAF itself at the start of the war had been made

up of a mixture of pilots, with people taken from various backgrounds, but the leaders at both squadron and Fighter Command levels were the product of a recruitment system which had been in place in the RAF since its inception. As it became clear that the German air force was getting bigger and bigger, the RAF would never be able to recruit enough people though the system that had been set up originally in 1918, so other methods were introduced.

The RAF College Cranwell opened in 1918 had been specifically designed to be the single point of entry prior to short service commissions. Lord Trenchard also set up an incredible training system for apprentices for the technical trades at Halton, which always had a mechanism whereby talent could be identified and allowed to become aircrew.

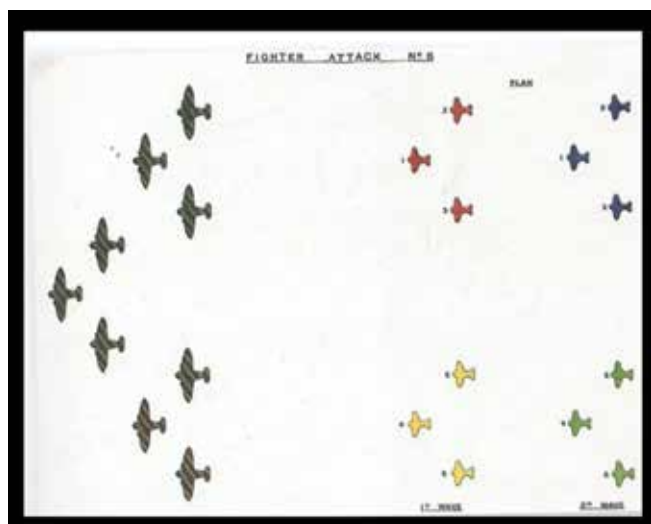


The Dowding system of command

WEEKEND PILOTS

Then there were the weekend pilots of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, very important in the 1930s. They had to be pilots already when they joined on short service commissions: they couldn't do this without money, so they came from a background with some form of financial assistance. In peacetime the RAF was the only service that offered that route. Those on short service commissions and the Volunteer Reserve, which came in a couple of years before the war, made up the majority of pilots available in 1939.

However, he said, "The selection process was not very sophisticated – if you wanted to join the RAF in the pre-war years it helped enormously if you had been to a public school. It helped enormously if you knew



Pre-war Attack No 6

someone who was already in the Air Force, and they knew you – and when you went for interview there was no psychometric or psychological testing, there was no testing whether you had the ability to sustain the mental pressures. They wanted to know if you could play rugby, if you went horse-riding, if they knew your father, or had other connections." The system was, he said "...very, very amateur." One senior RAF officer had said that breeding was definitely of great importance: "It is unlikely that the son of a coward would become a hero – it is remarkable how heroism often runs in families."

The one thing that every one of them had was exceptional flying training, but not combat training. They all went through a process of flying training second to none, because the RAF had introduced the first codified system.

These days, the RAF had operational training units and operational conversion units, so that a pilot reaching a squadron should be aware of virtually everything he/she was expected to do – and once on the squadron there was continuation training and perfecting the skills. "It wasn't like that in 1940," he said: "You arrived at the squadron and you were taught tactics. As the Battle of Britain advanced, so many young men were turning up at the squadron with 10h flying time in a Spitfire or a Hurricane and no experience of doing loops or rolls or other aerobatic manoeuvres."

UNFORCED ERRORS, SUCCESSES AND DEFICIENCIES

The Battle of France was pretty disastrous for the RAF, he said (386 Hawker Hurricanes and 67 Supermarine Spitfires were lost): the first time it came up against the Luftwaffe the RAF realised the tactics it was using were not appropriate. However, it was very difficult for some of the squadron commanders and flight commanders to get to grips with what had to change, and there was no push

from above for them to change.

The defensive armament of our aircraft was minimal. Armoured plate behind the pilot and armoured glass in the windscreen were actually being fitted on the airfields in June 1940. Sealed fuel tanks were not brought in until quite late on. In the battle, the RAF had .303 ammunition when the enemy had cannon, and guns were harmonised according to the tactics it had learned earlier – 400 yds – when you needed to be within 150-200 yards to shoot at a German aeroplane.

The tactics used were straight out of the books for an airshow at Hendon, when they all flew past in great formations. "The Air Fighting Manual listed six forms of attack – as the leader was approaching the enemy he would call out 'Attack No 1, No 5 or No 6' and they would all be expected to move their formation around. The most favoured one was No 6, Line Astern, and everybody is trying their best to keep their very best formation – while the enemy was attacking them from various angles and various sides."

He added: "They realised what they were doing and they ended up making compromises, because they didn't want to break the rules, so they would take the most junior member of the squadron (usually a sergeant pilot) and get him to fly as 'Tail End Charlie'. I now know, from all the statistics I've read over the years, that it was sheer luck that my father was not killed doing that – because all his chums were looking at their leaders, and he was the only one looking behind."

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS

They didn't know anything about the psychological impact of leadership – things like PTSD, combat stress, all those terms we now take for granted, because we know about them. Eventually it became clear that age was a significant factor. The character of the leaders was hugely important and the motivation by the leaders was also critical. Veterans would glowingly talk about the leaders they respected – and Squadron Leaders and Commanders were taken off squadron as a result of negative feedback.

The regulars and the RAF reserve did not gel at first. There was a hierarchical separation which reflected the social structure of the country at the time. Now there was a war, suddenly it was not a game, not sport in the afternoon every Wednesday, or two weeks' leave every year, it was now very serious.

The speed of transition from student to pilot operations was so quick as to be dangerous, and also pilots became poster boys in the press. As soon as the battle got under way and politicians like Winston Churchill referred to them regularly on the radio, they became heroes. The vast majority of them were going around with the top button



Some of the books which informed early post-war views

of their tunic undone, so the public knew they were fighter pilots – but that was putting pressure on them, not only the pressure of combat and the pressure of their daily work, but also the fact that the public expected so much of them.

The public image was David vs Goliath: outnumbered, a heroic few supported by the entire nation, well equipped, well-motivated, highly trained, superbly led. Postwar, many read the books, some of which did reveal some of the difficulties but those were revealed by the authors in order to make drama, to sell books. PM Fopp pointed out that there is no footage of the battle from the period: there was a documentary made in 1941 which purports to show it, in black-and-white, but in 1969 a wonderful film [Battle of Britain] was made by Guy Hamilton, and nobody has bettered it.

He showed pictures of several pilots aged 21 – 23, and asked: "Can you see the tiredness in their faces, the stress they were under? Tiredness was the big thing that hit them the most."

DEFICIENT EQUIPMENT

Pilots were not always well equipped. The Spitfire rear view mirror was out of an Austin 7, fitted in the field by the pilot or his groundcrew – mirrors didn't come in on production aircraft until halfway through the battle. Lifesaving, he said, was "...zero - most of our pilots were picked up by the RNLI, fishing boats and the occasional rescue launch when they were available – not until later did we have a properly sorted air-sea rescue service." Pilots had no dinghy, and their Mae West life preserver was sea-green, so they were invisible from the air. The Germans had a dye which turned the sea bright green. In July 1940 RAF pilots had been issued with fluorescein dye packs: he compared the fates of two pilots shot down on the same day: one had sewn his fluorescein pack to his flying suit and survived, other didn't and died. Some 75% of aircrew crews lost in the battle went down in the sea and had drowned. The RAF had had better ammunition because it had bought an incendiary round, but its guns

were .303 and the Germans had bigger calibre weapons. It also had 100 octane fuel which gave its aircraft an extra 10mph flying speed.

Flying clothing was 'abysmal' in 1939/40, he said. Goggles had celluloid lenses, so when an aircraft caught fire they would melt into pilots' eyes, which is why most pilots bought motorcycle goggles. The oxygen mask was canvas, which didn't seal well, so many got hypoxia, as most fighting was at around 20,000ft. Pilots had to wear a collar and tie, on a shirt with a semi-stiff collar: most took the collar off, and wore a silk scarf or roll-neck sweater unless their commander didn't like it. The Irvin flying jacket had a big collar – with the collar up they couldn't see an aircraft behind, so lots of them cut the collar off, and got harangued for damage to government property!

PM Fopp was particularly critical of some of the strategic leadership of the RAF. He quoted Dowding: "Looking back on things now, I believe that I ought to have been very much firmer, in fact stricter, with [AM Sir Trafford] Leigh Mallory". Fopp continued: "It's people who are more interested in climbing the promotion ladder and putting somebody else out of a job than they are in the men who are fighting for them. In the case of Leigh-Mallory he wanted Park's job [CinC 11 Group]."

LACK OF MORAL FIBRE

He then addressed the issue of 'Lack of Moral Fibre', and quoted his father whose squadron had been posted to RAF Eastchurch, which he said was awkward for an operational squadron sharing the mess with other NCO/ officer aircrew posted there for LMF: "That's where you would be sent if you were a coward."

LMF wasn't a medical term, he said, nor was it a diagnosis, because the government had decreed that there would be no such thing as shellshock in World War Two. It was a medically diagnosed condition from World War One, and because of that there were still thousands of ex-servicemen receiving pensions for it. The term 'shellshock' was not allowed; the term 'coward' was not allowed; so the term 'LMF' was coined. Doctors were asked to examine pilots suffering thus, and if they couldn't find any medical condition, the pilots were passed back to the government, which sent them to 'Aircrew Disposal Units' or 'Aircrew Relocation Units. Everybody knew about this, he said, and it was "...hanging over everybody that if they did not perform, they would be categorised as LMF."

The philosophy was that the LMF man was a coward, and that people with strength of character would be immune to that. The RAF did not seem to get the connection between the fatigue and seeing your mate go down. Those things were happening every day, but they considered

Flying Clothing



Examples of Battle of Britain pilot clothing

neurosis was an infectious disease, and that it was catching. This got worse later in the war, with bomber crews with multiple crew members: it was deemed so infectious that people with it had to be removed immediately. He said: "So if somebody left immediately and you hadn't spoken to them before he left – nobody said anything, it was just assumed that it was LMF and the RAF was happy for this to continue." In fact, 35% of men classed LMF returned to squadrons, 5% returned to limited flying duties and 60% were permanently grounded.

PSEUDO-PSYCHIATRY

The RAF had a shortage of aircrew – the country was producing aeroplanes (more than the Germans) but not enough pilots. LMF, said Fopp, was "...a pseudo-psychiatric premise: there were huge disagreements within the medical profession but the service chiefs over-ruled them. There were special diagnostic centres, people were sent to hospitals, classed as 'back to duty', 'convalescence' or 'invaliding' – they missed out 'cashiering' and 'throwing out', because that's what everybody was threatened with," he said.

"In September 1940 they came up with another word, 'waverer'. These weren't just LMF, he said: "They were waverers, you couldn't rely on them. Worse than that, they would be told that. This wasn't a medical diagnosis; it was after the medics hadn't been able to find anything wrong with them. They were passed up the chain of command to station commanders usually. There was a hierarchy here: officers were invited to resign, or if they refused they were cashiered. If they were NCOs, they were sent to the infantry or to the mines. The things they were told were

quite shocking. They were told that they would be paraded in front of their cohort, and that before this, the sewing of their flying badges, of which they were so proud, and their badges of rank, would be loosened, and in front of their colleagues those badges would be ripped off."

It worked in the

sense that pilots of 1940 did not stop flying, for fear of the repercussions. They were more afraid of the RAF's LMF policy than they were of fighting, even when they were petrified. They fought on despite of the fears that they had. There were very few fearless pilots. At its height, the RAF establishment was 1,171,421 – and 0.3% were classified as LMF. They believed something so much that it affected their performance, but it actually affected so few people it wasn't real at all.

That's why the RAF now doesn't have NCO pilots, he said. "The role of an officer is to look after his men – but you can't do that if they're in a different mess and they're not socialising with you except occasionally in the pub – you can't put your arm around somebody in another mess when you're not allowed in there without permission." The NCOs suffered more than the others in more than one way. "When you think about it, the Few were even braver than we thought. The Few suffered things that we couldn't imagine today, but they carried on fighting, even when they knew they were going to be killed."

"The takeaway from this is that these men weren't just battling the Luftwaffe, they were battling the enemy in their own soul. They were going to work every day watching their friends die and they were doing it day after day, even when they might have been poorly led or that they knew that what they were being asked to do wasn't the right way of doing it. They were braver than we thought they were."

Once available, PM Fopp's full lecture will be viewable on the Company website at <https://www.airpilots.org/what-we-dollectures-and-presentations/> □



THE CENTENARY IN 20 ARTICLES

THE DE HAVILLAND 98 MOSQUITO

By Assistant Glen Fricker

Air Pilot's series of Centenary-focussed profiles of the individuals and aircraft which exemplify the Company's first century continues with the story of a truly multi-purpose machine.

Thoughts leading to the conception of the "wooden wonder" date back to 1938, when the De Havilland company, drawing on its expertise with the design and construction of wooden aircraft, had the idea of building a lightweight bomber aircraft that was not only able to outpace contemporary fighters, but would also have a range of 1,500 miles whilst carrying a bomb load of 1,000lb (450kg).

Initially the Air Ministry showed no interest in the project, which was "shelved" until late 1939, when Sir Wilfred Freeman, an Air Council member, had the foresight to re-examine De Havilland's proposal, and he was instrumental in the issue of design specification and contract B.1/40 on 1st March 1940 to De Havilland for 50 aircraft.



The prototype Mosquito - the first of 7,781 (B&W pics via Vic Flintham)

Design and initial construction work was carried out in secret at Salisbury Hall, London Colney, just five miles from DH's main facility at Hatfield aerodrome. Salisbury Hall continues to thrive today as the "Mosquito Museum," housing three Mosquitoes: the prototype W4050, TT (target Tug) Mk 35 TA634/G-AWJV which took part in the films *Mosquito Squadron* and *633 Squadron*, and newly restored FB.VI TA122 as well as several other DH types. It has been the subject of an enjoyable visit on quite a few occasions by the Company.

A feature of the Mosquito that was of particular importance to the Air Ministry was that the design made use of low-demand materials for its construction, and



One of the Mosquito B.VIs which took part in the Operation Jericho raid on Amiens Prison, February 1944

component parts could be built by companies not directly involved in aircraft manufacturing, such as furniture-makers.

All-wood

Designed by a team headed by R E Bishop, the Mosquito was envisaged as an all-wood aircraft, built of laminated cedar ply separated by layers of balsa wood. First power for the prototype Mosquito came from a pair of Rolls-Royce Merlin 21s rated at 1,250bhp (930kW). The prototype, initially carrying the registration E-0234, first flew from Hatfield in the capable hands of Geoffrey De Havilland Junior on 25th November 1940, less than 11 months from the start of design work: it was later given the military serial W4050. Official trials, which began on 19th February 1941, proved that the Mosquito was the fastest operational aircraft in the world at 437mph!

By May 1942 the first Mosquitoes had become operational in three main roles - as the B.Mk IV bomber it was able to carry not the initially planned 1000lb bomb load, but 2000lb! Its operational debut was four aircraft of 105 Sqn from RAF Marham, carrying out a daylight bombing raid on Cologne. (Marham has been the subject of a recent Company visit, being home to the Lockheed Martin F-35 fighter). Later precision bombing achievements were carried out by specialist 139 Sqn and include the destruction of the Gestapo Headquarters in Oslo on 26th September 1942, which was the first time there was official government public acknowledgement of the existence of the Mosquito. Further modifications to the Mosquito enabled it to carry a 4,000lb bomb to Berlin; the first record of this capability being used was on 30th January 1943.

DH (Canada) built 1,135 Mosquitoes – mainly the

bomber variants - between September 1942 and October 1945: one of these set a record 5h 30min Atlantic crossing time on its delivery to the UK. As well as at De Havilland at Hatfield, Chester, Leavesden and Toronto, Mosquitoes were built by De Havilland Australia in Sydney, Airspeed Ltd at Christchurch, Standard Motors at Coventry, and Percival Aircraft at Luton. A total production figure of 7,781 is quoted. The final bomber variant of the Mosquito was the B.35, the last of those rolling off the production line as late as August 1946.

PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE

Given its excellent speed and range, a natural role for the Mosquito was as a photo reconnaissance platform, once again, often operated unarmed deep into enemy territory. Designated as PR variants they were operated by both the RAF and USAF, seeing service in both the European and Far East theatres. The PR variants achieved a number of record-breaking flights post-war: RG241, a PR Mk.34, crewed by Wg Cdr J R H Merrifield and Flt Lt J H Spires, broke the east-west Atlantic crossing record on 6th September 1945, from St Mawgan to Gander in 7h, returning on 23rd October in 5h 10min. Another PR.34, RG238 in the hands of Sqn Ldrs H B Martin and E Sismore, made a trip from London to Cape Town in May 1947 flying the distance of 6,717 miles at an average speed of 279mph. The accolade of the RAF's last operational sortie with the Mosquito fell to a PR.34a operating in Malaya with 81 Sqn on 15th December, 1955.

The Mosquito's debut as a fighter aircraft came in 1942 when it entered squadron service as the NF Mk.2 variant, with 23 Sqn at Ford in May and 157 Sqn at Castle Camps in August of that year. The F Mk.2 only existed as a sole example, being replaced by the FB MK.VI, a fighter-bomber variant which became the most widely produced of all variants, with it accounting for around one-third of all Mosquitoes built.

Armament of the FB Mk.VI varied widely, with a mixture of four nose-mounted machine guns, four cannon mounted under the cockpit, underwing rockets, bombs and occasionally drop tanks, bombs and/or fuel tanks in the bomb bay and, for occasional passenger transport as with the BOAC-operated aircraft, even a passenger "capsule" in the bomb bay. A later variant of the FB was the Mk.XVIII, armed with a 57mm Molins cannon, very effectively used in the anti-shiping role.



BOAC's fleet of Mosquitoes on the 'Ball-bearings-to-passengers' runs to Sweden included G-AGGD

COMPANY PILOTS

Liveryman Flt Lt (Retired) Colin Bell DFC BEM AE, now 104 years old, flew over 50 missions in the FB variant whilst serving with 608 (Pathfinder) Sqn, including 13 raids on Berlin. He fondly remembers flying the Mosquito, very much impressed with its handling qualities. A few quotes from an interview with him in 2023 are: "It could fly on one engine as well as it could on two - slower, but it was very responsive"; "I was very lucky to be flying Mosquitoes; I was very lucky to be in the RAF as a pilot. I always regarded it as a privilege"; and "It was fast, it would respond to just the slightest pressure on the controls".

Another famous Company member who flew the

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

DE HAVILLAND DH.98 MOSQUITO FB MK.VI



Manufacturer	De Havilland Aircraft Ltd & Others
First Flight	November 1940 (prototype)
Number Built	7,781 (all variants)
Wingspan	54ft 2in (16.51m)
Length	40ft 6in (13.56m)
Height	15ft 3in (4.63m)
Empty Weight	2,000lb (907kg)
Max Take-off Weight	22,260lb (10,100kg)
Engines	2 x Rolls-Royce Merlin 21 (1,460hp)
Maximum Speed	378mph (608km/h)
Cruising Speed	255mph (410km/h)
Range	1,855 miles (2,985km)
Service Ceiling	33,000ft (10,065m)
Crew	Two

Mosquito was Gp Capt John Cunningham CBE DSO & 2 Bars DFC & Bar AE. As recounted in October's Air Pilot, he had earned the nickname "cat's eyes" whilst flying night fighter duties in the Bristol Blenheim and later Beaufighter. In January 1943 Cunningham was given command of 85 Sqn, flying the Mosquito NF Mk.2 from RAF Hunsdon. Whilst with 85 Sqn, Cunningham shot down at least two Focke-Wulf Fw 190s and two Junkers Ju 188s: his eventually tally was 16 enemy aircraft.

We may not have to wait too much longer to see an airworthy Mosquito again in the skies above Britain. Work is well underway on two potential examples: an FB.VI is being rebuilt by Retrotec in East Sussex for The People's Mosquito organisation, and another is being built for The Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar by Avspecs in New Zealand, which has already returned four examples to the air. □

The last Mosquitoes in RAF service were the PR.34s operating over Malaya until 1955



A LIVE MOSQUITO

Today a single example of the NF Mk.2 exists. It has been built from the components of at "least 50" different Mosquitoes, according to its owner and creator Tony Agar. I recently had the opportunity to meet Tony and have a good look at his Mosquito, HJ711. Given that the components of so many different aircraft have been incorporated into HJ711's restoration to taxiing status, I would imagine that many of our past and current members would have some sort of connection there!

Tony's labour of love started as far back as the late 1960s, when he began gathering parts for what would become HJ711, although by his own admission it's unlikely that any of the current parts had ever been on the original HJ711, which was shot down over Belgium in March 1944. Some of the parts do have a traceable provenance: engine cowling parts from the prototype, the fuselage from RS715 (ex the props department of the film *633 Squadron*); miscellaneous small parts from BOAC's civil variant G-AGGF to name but a few.

HJ711 made its public debut taxiing on 6th May 2019 at its current East Kirkby home with the Lincolnshire Heritage Aviation Centre, along with its stablemate, Avro Lancaster NX611 *Just Jane*. Both aircraft earn their keep by offering customers an 'up-close-and-personal' experience: an extended briefing and walk/talk round, followed by being a passenger (only one in the Mosquito) during a start-up and taxi ride around the airfield. The taxi ride culminates with a brief run-up to near take-off power on both engines, taking the



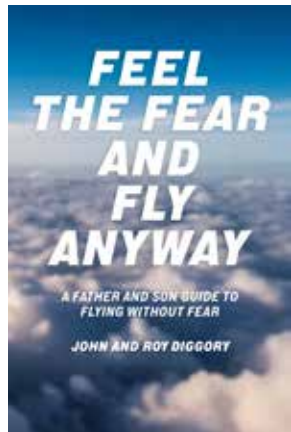
Tony Agar's NF.2 actively taxis at East Kirkby (Glen Fricker)

Mosquito up to around 30kt before the engines must be reduced back to idle to prevent too much of the available 600m grass runway being used up! Taxiing time tends to be limited to about 10min as the engine coolant temperatures tend to get too high after that time.

Whilst HJ711 is safe enough to taxi, many of its instruments and ancillary systems, such as the hydraulics, while fitted, are not yet restored to serviceable condition. Thus there is no gear, bomb door, or flap operation, and whilst the elevator and rudder are connected, the ailerons and rudder/elevator trimmers are not. East Kirkby has also been the subject of several Company visits, and I can thoroughly recommend that you add it to your bucket list!

BOOK REVIEW: *FEEL THE FEAR AND FLY ANYWAY* BY LIVERYMAN CAPT JOHN DIGGORY AND ROY DIGGORY

Review by The Deputy Editor



A surprisingly large segment of the population shares at least an apprehension, if not actual fear, of flying. Various cited as 25-40% of the population, it is apparent that a large proportion of the general public suffer from this syndrome, so it is immediately obvious that it is not a rare condition, and consequently anything which can help with

overcoming it is to be welcomed.

A team of a father, an experienced commercial pilot, and his son, an aerophobic passenger, have cooperated to present both sides of the issue. The book addresses the concerns of each step in the progression of the flight,

from the early stage of planning, through to the run up to the day of the flight and then the subsequent phases of the flight itself. It carefully calibrates the major concerns at each stage, and suggests concrete solutions and processes to both understand and then systematically address each of those concerns.

The strength of feeling expressed by the fearful flyer is surprising, but it does illustrate the scale of the problem, but happily this is counter-balanced by the calm logic of the professional flyer. The deliberate breaking down to a timeline of separate elements and the understanding of each phase and the mental adjustments to manage them could well help the reluctant flyer.

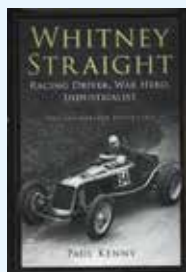
Feel the Fear and Fly Anyway, by John and Roy Diggory, published by Diggory Publishing and available on Amazon at £9.99; 126pp paperback;

ISBN: 978-1-0684724-0-4

□

SOME MORE READING...

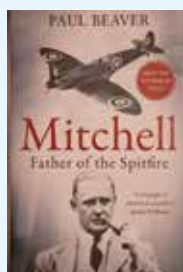
Two more books which might interest Air Pilots:



Half of the new biography of American-born British racing driver and businessman **Whitney Straight** is devoted to his aviation career, from the commissioning of the Miles Whitney Straight cabin monoplane to his management of a string of English aerodromes and the launch

of successful regional operator Western Airways. His wartime service, in Bristol Blenheims and Hawker Hurricanes, included a year as a prisoner of war and then the successful leading of a huge aerial logistics operation in North Africa and the Mediterranean, which led to Straight's postwar career as Deputy Chairman of British European Airways, Managing Director of British Overseas Airways Corporation, and non-executive director of Rolls-Royce. This is a fascinating biography of a complex man.

Whitney Straight: Racing Driver, War Hero, Industrialist, by Paul Kenney: 375pp hardback, published by The History Press (www.thehistorypress.co.uk); ISBN 978 1 80399 111 5; £25



Serial aviation historian Paul Beaver has written a new biography of **R J Mitchell**, 'the father' of the Supermarine Spitfire, in which the author, while emphasising the exceptional leadership and technical skill of Mitchell, also pays tribute to the small team of equally skilled

people working under him. The Chief Designer's office at Supermarine employed just seven people and created 30 different designs – all but a handful of which went into service – in just 17 years. That number includes, of course, just the first prototype of the Spitfire, the aircraft which has come to define his contribution to aviation, as none of the multiple variants of the basic design which were to be produced in their thousands was built before his premature death in 1937. Again, even if you think you know Mitchell's story, this is a fresh and insightful look at the man and the times, with much previously unseen material.

Mitchell, Father of the Spitfire, by Paul Beaver published by Elliott & Thompson (www.eandtbooks.com); 316pp hardback; ISBN 978 1 78396 903 6; £20

INTO THE OVERSHOOT

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

THE AIR PILOTS' LADY MAYOR'S SHOW

Alderwoman Dame Susan Langley, the 697th leader of the City of London, is not its first female Mayor, but is the first officially to be styled "Lady Mayor". She's almost certainly also the first ever whose early November Show on the streets of the City has featured a Consolidated PB5 Catalina flying above – courtesy of IPM Richie Piper. On the ground, the Company was represented by Master-Elect Elizabeth Walkinshaw, Warden Dave Singleton and Assistant Glen Fricker. □



ANTECEDENTS

As the Editor was sharing the drive of the Shuttleworth Collection's 1900 Panhard (a rather slower machine than its stable of active historic aircraft) on November's London-Brighton veteran car run, it struck him that he was surrounded by the ancestors of the aero-engine industry. When the Panhard was built, nobody had made a powered flight, but within 15 years the makers of the vast majority of the 400+ pre-1905 vehicles entered – names like Benz, De Dion-Bouton, Humber, Mercedes, Napier, Packard, Panhard, Peugeot, Renault, Sunbeam and Wolseley – were building successful, reliable aircraft engines. The cars weren't bad, either – around 90% of the veterans entered – all of them over 120 years old – made it the 60 miles (97km) to the finish. □



SUNBEAMS

Speaking of early aircraft engines, Sunbeam made just over 3,000 of them, mainly during World War One, but until recently only two were running anywhere in the world. Now the National Motor Museum has returned one of the two 22.45-litre, 400hp V12 Sunbeam Matabele engines which powered the "1,000HP" Sunbeam to a world land speed record of 202mph in 1927 to full running order; and the second will follow within months. When both are installed in the restored car, it will be the first time that multiple Sunbeam aero engines have run together in the same machine since the Airship R.33 (which had five Sunbeam Maori V12s) was retired 99 years ago in November 1926. □