



A Livery Company of the City of London

The Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators

Patron: HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh KG KT
Grand Master: HRH The Prince Andrew, Duke of York KG GCVO

PRESS RELEASE

21st August 2013

APOLLO 13 ASTRONAUT JIM LOVELL TO BE PRESENTED WITH GUILD AWARD OF HONOUR

AVIATION HEROISM AND PROFESSIONALISM REWARDED BY GUILD OF AIR PILOTS AND AIR NAVIGATORS

James Arthur (Jim) Lovell USN, who headed the crew of Apollo 13 to safety after an in-space explosion led to the immortal words “Houston we have a problem” will receive the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators’ premier award, joining aircrew across the whole spectrum of aviation at the Guild’s annual Trophy and Awards presentations in October. The awards for courage, achievement and highest standards of airmanship are regarded among the world’s premier aviation accolades.

The nominees will receive their awards at London’s medieval Guildhall on Wednesday 23 October 2013. Among those receiving awards are military aircrew, test pilots, flying instructors, private pilots and newly qualified trainees. All have been chosen for their commitment to the highest flying standards. The GAPAN awards are particularly noteworthy because the recipients are selected by fellow pilots.

Captain Lovell initially served as a US Navy night fighter pilot and test pilot before being accepted as an astronaut for the Gemini programme. He flew as pilot on Gemini 7 in 1965 and was launched again as Command Pilot on Gemini 12. He is the only man to have flown to the Moon twice, but not landed on it. He orbited the moon in Apollo 8, helping pave the way for Neil Armstrong’s first steps and as Commander of Apollo 13; his coolness under pressure gave us the immortal phrase known the world over: “Houston, we have a problem.”

The Apollo 13 spacecraft had lifted off on April 11th 1970 to land Captain Lovell and Fred Haise on the Moon, with Jack Swigert to pilot the service module. An oxygen tank explosion two days later crippled the spacecraft 200,000 miles away from Earth, threatening to maroon the three men in space, far beyond the help of any human agency. Lovell and his crew, improvising under conditions of extreme hardship and pressure, brought Apollo 13 home safely, with Captain Lovell adjusting course by manually firing the lunar module’s thrusters and engine, using his watch for timing.

Other 2013 Guild Award recipients have shown equal fortitude and courage. They include RAF **Sergeant Rachel Robinson**, a winch woman on a Sea King search and helicopter who made six attempts in mountainous seas, before rescuing a seriously injured crewman from a French fishing vessel. So violent were the seas that Rachel was repeatedly snatched from the heaving deck as the boat plunged into wave troughs faster than the winch cable could be paid out.

Other rescue crews recognised include **Lieutenant Commander Vince Jansen**, who was pilot in command of a US Coast Guard MH-60T which rescued four shipwrecked fishermen from the the Gulf of Alaska in the face of twenty foot seas, near-zero visibility, blowing rain and icing conditions. Another crew, ‘**Rescue 912**’ from **103 Sqn SAR RCAF** will be awarded the Prince Philip Helicopter Rescue Award after successfully retrieving three hunters from a Newfoundland ice flow in blizzard conditions with winds so strong that the helicopter flew the final two miles to the rescue point backwards, placing the nose into the storm to provide a more stable flying platform.

Other awards include recognition of **Squadron Leader Simon Mellor** for his role in the success of the RAF’s Sentinel R1 programme and BAe Systems experimental test pilot **Peter Wilson** for his work as Chief STOVL Test Pilot on the F35 Joint Strike Fighter. Flight training is recognised with awards to **Andy Dunstan** of CAE Oxford and to **Peter Moxham** for his role as flag carrier and ambassador for UK professional flight training within EASA, as well to the **RAF Search and Rescue Training Unit** in recognition of their 50 years of specialist training at RAF Valley.

Also recognised by a Master's Commendation is the **British Helicopter Team**, who returned from the 2012 FAI World Helicopter Championships in Moscow, with the Team Silver Medal. It is the best-ever placing by the self-funded British Team against often state-supported, world-class competition.

One of the Awards' youngest recipients this year is **Miriam Gardezabal**, aged 19, who began the Integrated ATPL course at FTE Jerez in April 2012. She successfully exercised her leadership skills as President of the Students Committee at a time when a changeover to EASA regulation came into force, requiring the restructuring and rescheduling of training courses. Inevitably, the students became concerned about the changes but Miriam's calm, determined leadership and negotiating skills restored their confidence.

Regional Awards reflect the equally diverse range of skills and expertise of Guild members worldwide. The Grand Master's Australian Medal is awarded to **Emergency Management Queensland Helicopter Rescue** in recognition of 34 years of outstanding professional performance and dedication. Most recently, during the devastating Bundaberg Floods of 2013, fifty individuals were rescued on a single day. Significantly, the Rescue Crew Officer (RCO) on the day had only recently received his qualifications and performed both his first and fiftieth operational winch rescue during this single task. A further ten night rescues were performed on the same night by another crew.

The Australian Bi-Centennial Award is awarded to renowned aerobatic pilot **Chris Sperou**, who retired from display flying this year after flying career which began in 1960. He will be long remembered for his unlimited routine of low level aerobatics down to 50 feet in his Pitts Super Special and he is the only pilot in Australia approved to carry out the "inverted ribbon cut" cutting a ribbon stretched between 2 poles at 25 feet.

Lewis (Lew) Jenkins is the recipient of the Jean Batten Memorial Award for an outstanding individual contribution to New Zealand aviation, in training and leading professionals in his chosen disciplines of air navigation services. A former navigator in the Royal New Zealand Air Force, as an air traffic controller, he created a legacy of innovation and the pursuit of excellence in the sector. Most recently as Chief of Air Traffic services, Lew combined improved efficiency in international control towers in New Zealand with a strong personal awareness of customer safety and staff well-being, both at a strategic level and at times of crises like the volcanic ash events and earthquakes.

ENDS

(A full list of Award winners and citations is attached).

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. *About the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators.*

The Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators was established in 1929. It is based in London but has an internationally based membership of professional and private pilots.

The principal activities of the Guild are centred on developing action and activities to ensure that aircraft are piloted and navigated safely by aviators who are highly competent, self-reliant, dependable and respected.

The Guild supports the education and training of pilots and navigators from the initial training of the young pilot to the specialist training of the highest levels. Through its charitable activities, education and training, technical committee work, aircrew selection, scholarships and sponsorships, advice and recognition of the achievements of fellow aviators worldwide, the Guild keeps itself at the forefront of the aviation world.

2. *A small number of places may be available for journalists to meet astronaut Jim Lovell over an informal lunch in London on Wednesday 23rd October. If you are interested in using this as an interview opportunity in association with a feature on the Guild and its Awards, please contact Stephen Slater (contact details below)*

3. *We regret that there will be no media access for interviews or filming during the awards ceremony at the Guildhall. However high resolution images will be made available after the event and interview appointments may be possible before or on the morning after the event. Please email the PR team (details below).*

4. *His Honour Judge Tudor Owen FRAeS, well known as "the Flying Lawyer" and more recently "the Flying Judge", is the 2013 Master of the Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators.*

Judge Owen has combined his passion for aviation with a highly successful legal career since learning to fly in Chipmunk aircraft with the University of London Air Squadron in the early 1970s. He subsequently gained his private pilots license for helicopters in 1995. Judge Owen has owned and flown such exciting machinery as a Russian Yak-11 military trainer and a Westland Gazelle helicopter. An action-packed lifestyle has included racing historic Grand Prix cars and riding the Cresta Run at St Moritz.

For further information.

Please contact the Guild of Air Pilots & Air Navigators PR team:

Steve Slater: +44 (0)7967 381884 or pr1@gapan.org
GAPAN offices +44 (0)20 7404 4032 gapan@gapan.org