



AIR PILOT



INSIDE

D-DAY DAKOTAS
CENTENARY PLANS
NEW ZEALAND MOTH



THE HONOURABLE COMPANY OF AIR PILOTS incorporating Air Navigators

PATRON:
His Majesty The King

MASTER:
Richie Piper Esq BSc(Hons) FRAeS

CLERK:
Paul J Tacon BA FCIS

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

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

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

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

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS:
The **final** copy date for the October 2024 issue is
Monday 2nd September 2024

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

PRINTED BY:
Printovation Ltd 01494 478870

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



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



DIARY



Applications for Visits and Events

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

AUGUST 2024

6 th	APFC Fly-in	Popham
18 th	APFC Summer Barbecue	White Waltham

SEPTEMBER 2024

10 th	APFC fly-in	Oaksey Park
11 th	APPL	APH
12 th	GP&F	APH
12 th	Court	Cutlers' Hall
18 th	AST	APH
25 th	Luncheon Club	RAF Club
25 th	Tymms Lecture	RAF Club

OCTOBER 2024

1 st	ACEC	APH
10 th	GP&F	APH
13 th	APFC Peter Davis lunch	White Waltham
20 th	APFC End of Season lunch	White Waltham
24 th	Trophies & Awards Banquet	Guildhall

Cover photos: Douglas C-47 Dakota *That's All Brother* of the D-Day Squadron during the D-Day 80th commemorations (Adam Simpkins/D-Day Squadron); DH Tiger Moth ZK-AKC abreast the Kaikoura Range, South Island, New Zealand (Brett Nicholls)

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...



Following the general election on 4th July, the UK has a new government whose avowed intention is to “turbocharge” housebuilding. To that end, it intends to legislate to impose housebuilding targets on local councils, and to encourage the building of homes on ‘Brownfield’ sites and ‘Greybelt’ land within the greenbelt but which has been developed in the past. There is no doubt of the need for more dwellings – but equally no doubt that this government’s drive to build them poses a heightened threat to the UK’s network of airfields – not all of them small or local.

For some years there has been a disturbing tendency amongst planners to regard airfields as Brownfield sites: the Government defines brownfield land as “...developed land that is, or was previously, occupied by a permanent structure.” While it is true that most airfields have at some stage had permanent structures on them, in the vast majority of cases buildings have occupied a tiny fraction of the total land area. Even on airfields which served major aircraft factories, like Brooklands, Filton, Hatfield and Woodford, buildings and runways were dwarfed by the grass surrounding them.

The general election put paid to the online petition which had gained thousands of signatures opposing the destruction of Nottingham’s Tollerton Airport to allow housebuilding. Opponents of that development must start their campaign again from scratch, while the council and developer press on. A fightback is underway, led by pressure group Popham Airfield Matters (www.pophamairfieldmatters.org) over the future of an Air Pilots favourite airfield, Popham in Hampshire, where the local council’s latest local plan – which envisages 3,000 homes being built on the airfield and surrounding Cxford Down – doesn’t even mention that the site is currently in use as an airfield...

These local fights – and so many like them – aside, the real battle is surely to get the government to accept the basic principle that airfields are just as integral and strategic a part of the national transport infrastructure as are the roads, railways and canals. In hindsight it can be seen that so many of the cuts to the railways initiated under Dr Richard Beeching in the 1960s were shortsighted, in that many of the axed railways are now needed to serve the new brownfield communities being encouraged by the government. Now, more than ever, the aviation community must fight to ensure that it does not suffer from its own “Beeching moment”, left without the airfields needed to sustain current and future aviation.

Allan Winn - Editor

IN THIS ISSUE...

NEWS

- 4 The Livery Dinner
- 5 Visit to London’s Air Ambulance
- 6 The Office goes flying
- 7 Visit: The Ceremony of the Keys
- 8 APFC fly-ins



P8

- 9 The Master’s garden party
- 10 The Master’s visit to Stow Maries
- 11 AIR Technical Group developments
- 11 *Gazette*

REPORTS

- 12 The Master’s message



YOUNG AIR PILOTS AUSTRALIA

P14

- 14 Regional Reports:
 - 14 Australia
 - 15 North America
 - 16 Hong Kong
- 17 The Young Air Pilots
- 18 From the Desk of the DAA
- 20 Centenary preparations

FEATURES

- 22 D-Day Dakotas
- 24 The Flight of the NZ Moth
- 28 Overshoot

NEWS ROUNDUP



LIVERY DINNER 2024

By The Editor

The Company's 2024 Livery Dinner was held on 23rd May at Drapers' Hall, where 115 members and their guests enjoyed an evening of fine dining and invigorating conversation. The Principal Guest was AVM Paul Godfrey, Commander of UK Space Command who, in proposing the toast to the Company, gave a thought-provoking resumé of space and its importance to modern life.

Noting that "People do not understand how space is critical" to everything from weather forecasting to controlling traffic lights, he shared the fact that even as early as 2018 loss of GPS would have cost the economy £1 billion/day. He likened the potential of precious metals on the Moon to the 1850s gold rush.

Militarily, in space "...we have access to the very highest ground": the first Gulf War had been "the first space war", and space eyes were playing a vital role in the private SpaceX Ukraine conflict, where that country's use of the Starlink constellation had led to "...a nation state

competing with a company.'

AVM Godfrey devoted considerable attention to the problem of space debris, noting that Russia's Sputnik 1 was "...the first piece of space junk." There were now more than 30,000 objects equal to or larger than a tennis ball orbiting the Earth, along with over 100million pinhead-sized pieces of debris. There were possibilities of cleaning up some of this debris: in 2021 China's SJ21 had grabbed a redundant satellite and towed it 2,000km to a 36,000km-altitude orbit. The problem was rising with the number of satellites in orbit: in 2000 there had been 750; in 2010 there were 1,000, with 2,000 in 2020 and an astonishing 10,000 now.

Before the dinner, a special meeting of the Court saw the clothing of five new liverymen: Sqn Ldr Reginald Brindley, Capt Mark Grigg, Capt Dhamseth Pallawela, Peter Allen and Will Wright. Other guests included the Masters of the Furniture Makers, Farmers, Chartered Accountants and Hackney Carriage Drivers. □



The new Liverymen, (l to r): Dhamseth Pallawela, Mark Grigg, The Master, Peter Allen, Reginald Brindley, Will Wright



The Master and his Principal Guests (l to r): Master Furniture Maker Brian Ahern, AVM Paul Godfrey OBE, The Master, Master Farmer Guy Brogdan, Master Chartered Accountant Kevin Parry OBE, Master Hackney Carriage Driver Wendy Sorrell



The Master speaks



Dining in the splendour of Drapers' Hall

COMPANY VISIT: LONDON AIR AMBULANCE

By Assistant Chris McGee

The London Air Ambulance charity was established in 1989 to save the lives of critically ill patients and the relationship with the Company of Air Pilots has been close for many years (we currently donate via our charities, and it has been the Master's Charity on several occasions). Therefore, we were delighted to be invited back to their helipad atop the Royal London Hospital to see their operations and meet some of the team.

Our first attempt had been postponed due to the helicopter being in maintenance but, finally, on a bright and sunny June afternoon, a group of enthusiastic Air Pilots was welcomed by Phoebe, Senior Philanthropy Officer, and escorted 300ft up to the pad. When we arrived, the helicopter was out on a mission but the panoramic view of London from 17 storeys up was stunning and rather terrifying at the same time! It was easy to see the strategic importance of the location, enabling rapid deployment to any part of the city within minutes.

Escorted by two members of the fire crew (Mark & Michael) and pilot Neil Jeffers, we were given a quick tour of the facilities of the 28msq rooftop helipad with its 80m walkway, AAAF fire suppression, flood and perimeter lighting as well as an oil separator. Opened in 2013, it is one of three such pads in London (with King's College and St George's) serving major trauma hospital units.

FEW PATIENTS CARRIED

We were very interested to learn that fewer than 4% of operations actually carry patients onboard as the main purpose of the operation is delivering advanced trauma care directly to the scene of critical incidents before transfer to hospital. The service operates 24/7, with the helicopter in action during daylight hours and rapid response vehicles taking over at night. Two teams are on duty throughout and overlap during the core hours between 14:00 and midnight.

Each medical team comprises three doctors including a paramedic (with advanced training) and a consultant who rotates through the main hospital on six-month placements, thus ensuring vital transfer of skills developed. The helicopter carries advanced medical equipment, including several unique devices pioneered by the trauma teams, and essentially is a flying operating theatre with ventilators, defibrillators, and blood transfusion kits.

We then descended to visit the operations room and met some more of the team. Lead clinician Anna explained that the 6,000+ calls made each day to 999 are pre-screened by the controller who passes about five tasks to the unit as being those who will most benefit from its

intervention. She added that the target to be airborne from the alarm is 4min or less, as even 30sec will make a major difference to trauma patients.

Pilot Neil Jeffers added that being classed as HEMS (Helicopter Emergency Medical Service), not an ambulance, provided more versatility in selecting landing sites as the sites did not have to be licensed. It was pilot preference not to have the specific sites surveyed as it would limit real time flexibility on selecting the optimum landing site.



The Air Pilots group with the soon-to-be-retired MD-902

By now the helicopter was returning, so we made our way back to the pad to watch its arrival, accompanied by a crew from Netflix shooting another series of its documentary about the unit. Rotors stopped, we were able to see the helicopter up close and chat with the crew about the machine itself and their operational limits. Once the call sign is appended with an "alpha" the crew is given priority over all other air traffic to meet the goal of reaching a scene in around 11 min.

NEW MACHINES APPEAL

The replacement Airbus H135 helicopters feature a more conventional tail rotor (fenestron) rather than the NOTAR (no tail rotor) of the present MD Helicopters MD-902s, but the crews were already trained on these new machines, and procedures to keep the public safe at landing sites had been developed. As soon as they have landed, the paramedic and co-pilot deplane and guard the helicopter until it lifts again.

Currently the charity is approaching its goal to raise £15million to fund the new H135s. Whilst it is on track to meet the September deadline, its work totally relies on donations so do please visit the website www.londonsairambulance.org.uk and check out the "Up against time" campaign. □

SECRETARIAT FLYING DAY

By The Clerk, Paul Tacon

Earlier this year, Court members decided that it would be very beneficial for the members of the secretariat to experience flight in a small aircraft and so be able to enjoy and appreciate the essence of what flying is all about. Accordingly, Assistant Chris McGee coordinated this plan and the very generous donations from her fellow Court members to make this happen. She, along with Liveryman Jeff Cleary, arranged a flight (two in fact) in Liveryman Peter Greenyer's de Havilland Dragonfly (known as *The Duchess*). This beautiful aircraft is one of the several vintage aircraft in the Shipping and Airlines fleet, based at Biggin Hill, and is one of only two flying Dragonfly aircraft in the world.

After a 'false start' in May – because of bad weather - the day was set for 27th June, which proved to be a sunny, warm, clear English summer's day. Early that morning, Jeff Cleary messaged me with the 'green light' for the day's flying and the secretariat team met in the early afternoon at the Shipping and Airlines hangar for a brief tour, a pre-flight briefing, lots of photos - and then off to go flying!



The Office team gather in front of The Duchess: (l to r) From L-R, they are Tony Habgood, Jeff Cleary, Anna, Angie, Eloise, James, Peter Greenyer and the Clerk.

The plan was for Peter to take two of the team in *The Duchess*, with the remaining two in a 'chase plane' (a Grumman AA-5B flown by Jeff) to take photos etc and to experience flying in a more contemporary light aircraft – and then the pairs would swap aircraft. Much to my delight, however, Peter mentioned to me on arrival at the hangar that I could also join him on the first flight (a very welcome additional detail to the original plan!) and so I got to sit in the right-hand seat - while Angie and Anna sat in the very comfortable passenger seating in the cabin area. After our flight, Eloise and James then boarded *The Duchess* for their flight while the other two flew with Jeff.

FROM THE COCKPIT: ELOISE

"Our afternoon at Biggin Hill, with the fabulous Shipping and Airlines crew, was a couple of months in the making. When we were first told of the opportunity the excitement in the office was tangible! None of us had flown in anything other

than an airliner before, and a couple of us wrestled with nervousness alongside excitement. I'm happy to say the closer we got to the day of the flight, the excitement started to take hold and the nerves were pushed to one side.

"The day itself was a corker – beautiful blue skies and bright sunshine! We were greeted by Peter Greenyer and Tony Habgood of Shipping and Airlines, and Jeff Cleary, with coffee and doughnuts (a treat in itself!), as well as the Master, Richie Piper, and IPM, Jonathan Legat. Then Peter talked us through what to expect from the flight and gave us some background on the beautiful Dragonfly. A truly beautiful plane with a great story behind her.

"We split into two groups: Paul, Angie and Anna took off with Peter in the Dragonfly while James and I settled into the Grumman with Jeff, who was a fantastic teacher. He explained what was going on with all the pre-flight checks and kept us informed all through the flight as to what was going on and where we were flying over. The flight itself was amazing! I had honestly prepared myself for my nerves to kick back in once we were up in the air, but it never happened. Jeff even allowed me to take the controls for a few moments - brave man. I'm not sure he'd like to get in a car with me having experienced my flying though!

"We could see for miles, and when the Dragonfly came into sight and we flew alongside for a few minutes, it felt like such a special moment. Now I understand why our Company is one of the largest in the City – who wouldn't want to fly planes and hang out with others who do the same?!"

After a short break back on firm ground we swapped planes, and James and I were taken up in the Dragonfly by Tony Habgood, chief pilot and chief engineer of Shipping & Airlines. I couldn't believe how comfortable it was inside and how 'normal' it felt to be up there – I really could get used to travelling like this. The whole experience was unlike anything I could have imagined. It really did feel like an incredible privilege for all of us to have been given this opportunity. What a fabulous company we're part of!"

FROM THE COCKPIT: ANGIE

"The weather was perfect, and we were excited to get going. After ensuring Anna and I were comfortable in the back, off we went! What an experience! It was great fun, definitely the way to travel, and I'm sure one we could very easily get used to. A highlight was seeing James and Eloise coming up alongside us in the Grumman! We spent a good half hour in the air heading down towards Tunbridge Wells then returning to Biggin Hill with the City skyline in the distance.

"Next it was our turn to go up with Jeff in the Grumman. Once up, Anna took the controls. I was impressed and

expect her PPL application form to be submitted next year! I think it's safe to say that we all had a great day and would very much like to thank all those who helped to make it happen. It was great too, to be able to share the experience with the Master and IPM who came along to provide the encouragement!"

As the personal accounts show, it was an amazing day and, for the secretariat team members who had never previously flown in a small aircraft (with all the various experiences which that entails), it was an extremely memorable occasion. Great appreciation and thanks on behalf of all the secretariat go to Peter, Jeff, Tony and Chris



Anna and Angie join Jeff Cleary in the Grumman

for the organisation and opportunity of the occasion – and, of course, also to all Court members who had the 'good idea' and who so generously enabled it. □

THE CEREMONY OF THE KEYS

By Liveryman Jeff Cleary

In late May, 40 members of the Company were very privileged to be invited to witness the Ceremony of the Keys at The Tower of London.

We arrived outside, promptly as we had been basically informed that there are NO late entries!!! We were introduced to the Yeoman Warder who would be our personal guide for the evening, and then told in the most entertaining way, the dark and somewhat morbid history of the Tower of London. The stories were of love, marriages, betrayal, loyalty and diplomatic unions - all of which appeared to generally end with someone losing their head - or good old fashioned murder!

We continued around the tower with stories about its 'reluctant residents', from the two boy princes, to Cardinals, Earls, Queens, Guy Fawkes (the only man to enter Parliament with honest intentions!) and Rudolf Hess.



The perfect venue for a drink after the Ceremony of the Keys

We took in the Bloody Tower, Traitors Gate, White Tower and Tower Green where the chopping block sits today. After our walking tour we retired to 'The Keys' – The Yeoman Warders' private Pub. We were encouraged to buy a 'domino' – basically a beer token for our guide. The interior has the history of the Yeoman Wardens with memorabilia and pictures adorning the walls.

At 21:40 we were ushered outside and put in position to witness the ceremony. We were told: "No photos and complete silence." At exactly 21:52 the Chief Yeoman Warder, dressed in Tudor watchcoat and bonnet, leaves

the Byward Tower and falls in with his guard, made up of six armed soldiers, in our case the Irish Guards in full ceremonial uniform.

The Warder gives his lamp to a soldier and then marches with the escort to the outer gate, locking that and middle gate. The Warder and escort march down Water Lane until they reach the Bloody Tower, at which point they are challenged by a sentry.

Sentry: "Halt! Who comes there?"

Warder: "The Keys."

Sentry: "Whose keys?"

Warder: "King Charles' Keys."

Sentry: "Pass King Charles' Keys. All's well".

The guard re-forms and marches off. At exactly 22:00 the last post is played and after that the guard is dismissed. The ceremony has gone on for over 700 years and only been late once, because of a Luftwaffe raid during the war.

We retired back to The Keys to partake of a further beverage, and chatted to the Yeoman warders about their duties and day-to-day life. Surprisingly, house and car insurance are eye wateringly expensive because of the postcode - and new food takeaways they wish to use usually require a personal visit to be persuaded they are who they say they are when they ask for delivery. At least there is always someone in for an Amazon delivery.

We bought a number of raffle tickets to help the Warders' charity, and with some nice memorabilia given as prizes (maybe apart from the coveted Tower mouse mat) and after the Master gave our thanks, the evening came to a close. Our thanks must go to Yeoman Sergeant John Donald, and Sergeant David Christie from Metropolitan Police Royalty Protection, who organised the whole evening for us. □

APFC VISITS TO OLD WARDEN, COMPTON ABBAS AND BROMESBERRY

By Liveryman Robert Owens

We eventually had 19 Club aircraft on the Old Warden airfield parking line on 15th May, despite six cancellations because of weather and other issues. The longest journey was by Andrew Bloom in his de Havilland Chipmunk from Popham; the shortest was Cynthia Robinson in the Cessna 152 from Halton.

Old Warden was once again very welcoming to the APFC and after the event stated we were a pleasure to deal with and that we had "...a very pleasing array of aircraft – always a bonus!" The airfield is looking forward to seeing us on another visit. This was an excellent start to the season. The Old Warden visit was followed by one to Compton Abbas on 5th June.

After some unfortunate cancellations arising from sickness and aircraft unserviceability 39 APFC members and 17 aircraft visited Bromesberry Estate over the two days of 20th/21st June. Our wonderful hosts Gilbert and Melissa Greenall provided the most enjoyable days.

Special features included a meet-and-greet with transport from the landing strip to the residential area, and a talk from Gilbert, with a lovely lunch followed by a tour of the main house and gardens led by both Gilbert and Melissa. There was the opportunity to purchase wine produced from the estate vineyard and signed copies of Gilbert's book *The Combat Civilian* on which his talk was based. This was a really memorable outing. □



Liverymen Adrian Keenan and Rob Owens, PM Wally Epton and Liverymen Sir Gerald Howarth and Charles Randall at Old Warden (David Clifford)



Air Pilots enjoy the Old Warden grass (David Clifford)



The DH Tiger Moth of APFC Secretary Liveryman Tom Kinnaird, with the Piper Tri-Pacer flown by Liverymen Dacre Watson and Chris Reynolds, at Compton Abbas



The Bromesberry crewbus



Air Pilots enjoy the lunch and lecture at Bromesberry



Warden Elizabeth Walkinshaw with Bromesberry host Gilbert Greenall's Westland Scout

THE MASTER'S GARDEN PARTY

By The Editor

This year's Master's Garden Party on 30th June could almost have been described as the Master's Porsche Party, as hundreds of those German sporting motorcars were sharing the Brooklands Museum venue with the 90-odd Air Pilots and their guests.

With the party not coinciding with any of the few days each year on which the Museum can land aircraft at Mercedes-Benz World next door, 'flying' for the day was confined to differing aspects of Concorde. Seven lucky Air Pilots had slots on the world's only operating Concorde

simulator, with PM Capt Mike Bannister instructing from the right-hand seat, and more took part in the immersive half-hour experience aboard Concorde G-BBDG.

Before and after the splendid lunch held in the historic Brooklands Clubhouse's Napier Room, guests had ample time to explore the Museum's other aviation and motoring exhibits, including having the rare opportunity to get up to the Vickers Vimy replica's spartan cockpit and to get closer than usual to the 1969 Transatlantic Air Race-winning BAe Harrier GR1 XV741. □



Lunch in the historic Clubhouse (A Winn)



Upper Freeman Neil Pollard does his Concorde type rating with PM Mike Bannister (R Piper)



When I Was On Harriers: Assistant Pat Voigt introduces a young visitor to the Transatlantic race-winner, XV741 (A Winn)

THE MASTER'S VISIT TO STOW MARIES GREAT WAR AERODROME

By Liveryman Capt Peter Hewitt

Last summer, I visited Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome (SMGWA) for an air show. The atmosphere was unique and took me aback as I wandered around. Whether it was the sense of stepping back to an aerodrome that predates the RAF, the dedicated volunteers who keep this World War One aerodrome operational, or the impressive museum I couldn't say: whatever it was, I found myself volunteering to support this wonderful charity.



Eleanor Ivory, Spencer Norton, Peter Hewitt and The Master at Stow Maries

In March of this year, I joined the team and was delighted to be able to invite some high-profile guests to our Wings

and Wheels event on Sunday, 26th May. Having been a member of the Air Pilots since I first joined an airline as a young man, I decided to invite our Master, Richie Piper, who arrived flying his Van's RV-8, accompanied by Assistant Dr Eleanor Ivory.

As the new boy on the street, I attempted to show my guests - including Upper Freeman Capt Spencer Norton from BA - around, but it wasn't long before I noticed that our Master seemed to know everything about all the aviation exhibitions. Surreptitiously, I slid down the line and allowed Richie to show us around. As you would expect, he was masterful.

Stow Maries hasn't been immunised from the current financial crisis and not only are we approaching our Critical Point, but our Point of No Return could be upon us too. We have our Wings and Wags (friendly dog show) on 4th August; our Festival of the Air (Propwash) on 18th August; and our Autumn fly-in on Sunday, 12th October. Could we make this an Air Pilots reunion? Can you support us? If you end up flying in, please mention that you are an Air Pilots member when obtaining your PPR so I know to meet and greet you. Happy Landings. □



FARNBOROUGH AIRSHOW SNAPSHOTS

(L) At the recent Farnborough International Airshow, Boom unveiled the flightdeck for its Overture next-generation supersonic airliner. Here PM Mike Bannister gets to grip with the sidestick controllers and Honeywell Anthem integrated modular avionics, with fellow Concorde pilot Brian Oliver. Boom also announced that its 35,000lb (156kN)-thrust Symphony engine will be built by Standard Aero in San Antonio in Texas.



(R) US energy company Radia showed its planned Windrunner heavy-lifter, designed specifically to transport turbine blades up to 105m long, which are too big to move by road, to onshore windfarm sites. The Windrunner would have an overall length of 108m, span of 80m, MTOW of 310t and a payload of 72.575t. With a cruising speed of M0.6 and a range of 1,080 nautical miles (2,000km) it would operate onto temporary 1,800m runways...

UPDATE: AIR TECHNICAL GROUP

By Upper Freeman Hal Newberry, Chairman

The Airspace Technical Group (TG) has undergone a transformation, becoming the Airspace, Innovation & Research (AIR) TG. The TG owes its origins to the UK Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA) publication in December 2018 of the *Airspace Modernisation Strategy (AMS)*, a comprehensive initiative aimed at modernising the UK's airspace infrastructure to counter its perceived inefficiency and capacity limitations.

With a horizon extending to 2040, the CAA commits to continually reviewing and updating the strategy in response to evolving circumstances, necessitating stakeholder input. Hence, the formation of the Airspace TG, tasked with providing the pilot's perspective to enrich the AMS framework.

Since its inception, the Airspace TG has transitioned beyond its initial focus on AMS feedback, engaging with a spectrum of challenges confronting aviation, both present and future. With interests ranging from the dynamic world of advanced air mobility to the sobering realities of runway incursions and their tragic consequences, the

group has evolved into the AIR TG. Guided by a set of core principles, the group's mandate now extends to:

- Actively monitoring, researching, and remaining abreast of prevailing trends in the aviation sector;
- Identifying and addressing challenges that pose risks to the safety and efficiency of air operations;
- Providing informed critique and strategic counsel to enhance safety protocols and operational efficacy within the industry.

The AIR TG invites participation from Company members to contribute to shaping a safer, more resilient and efficient aviation landscape. The group also seeks input from pilots occupying roles such as training managers, chief pilots, or directors of flight operations, particularly concerning runway incursions and preventive measures. All perspectives are valued and encouraged as we collectively strive towards a safer aviation environment. If you would like to join the AIR TG or become involved in the runway incursions project, please email

hal.newberry@gmail.com

□

GAZETTE APPROVED BY THE COURT 11 JULY 2024

ADMISSIONS

As Upper Freeman

Leila ASKARI (AUS)
Peter CHIN (AUS)
Charlotte Vanessa DADSWELL
Christopher Richard FIELD (HK)
Matthew Simon HINDES (AUS)
Benjamin John MACKNEY (AUS)
David Ross MAGUIRE (AUS)
Brian Wallis MILLEN (AUS)
Richard John MILWARD
Angus Morton MUIR (AUS)
Nicholas Niels Grindlay NIELSEN (AUS)
Juan Antonio PONCE RAMIREZ (HK)
Justin Paul PRICE (AUS)
Richard Robert THOMAS (AUS)
Timothy QUILLIAN

As Freeman

Marcus John BARTON
Simon Joseph Edward HAY

Bianca Ann Marie HINDES (AUS)
Matthew Thomas MORLEY (AUS)
Aaron Daniel SOLOMON (AUS)

As Associate

Finleigh Michael Henry DAVIS
Laura FARIA
Lachlan Connor HYDE (AUS)
Joel Matthew RODNEY (AUS)
Nathan ROGERS

ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE COURT 11 July 2024

REINSTATEMENT

As Associate

Perrin TURNER (NZ)

REGRAIDING

To Livery

William WRIGHT
Peter ELLIOTT
Alan CHAPMAN

RESIGNATIONS

Ian ALLAN (AUS)

Harry APIAFI
Nicholas BIRD
Paul BRADY (AUS)
Finlay BUNT (AUS)
Jonathan CHARLTON
Chantal DIDENKO (AUS)
Annie HAYNES (AUS)
Aminta HENNESSY (AUS)
David PITMAN
Kirsty SMITH (HK)

Cameron STEWART
Graham STOKES (AUS)
Carl VAN DER SYDE (AUS)

FORFEIT ALL BENEFITS

Nicholas ARMAN (AUS)
David BODNER (NA)
Peter Carter (AUS)
Samuel CAVE (AUS)
Paul GRIMES (AUS)
Callum HODGSON (AUS)
Barry HUBBARD (NA)

Lachlan MACARTHUR-ONSLOW (AUS)

Paul MCKEOWN (AUS)

Lisa SASSE (NA)

Kobus SWART (AUS)

Maxime TEBBIT (AUS)

Spencer THOMAS (NA)

Richard THRELFALL (NA)

Geoff WILLIAMS (AUS)

Peter WILSON (AUS)

DECEASED

Eric GROVE (NA)

Alan STOCKS

Michael WEBB





THE MASTER'S MESSAGE

By The Master, Richie Piper

There are some times when a Master's role carries a sombre duty. The loss of Sqn Ldr Mark Long in a Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF) Supermarine Spitfire at Coningsby was a tragedy for his family and friends. The BBMF is a highly valued national commemorative organisation and an Affiliated Unit of the Air Pilots. In consultation with our Liaison Officer Past Master Cliff Spink, I immediately wrote to the Officer Commanding BBMF, Sqn Ldr Mark Sugden, to offer sincere condolences from myself and all Air Pilots and our support to the flight. Cliff has, naturally, also written to express his condolences, given his strong connections to the flight.



The Company's thoughts are with the BBMF

Merlin, and the BBMF works hard not only to attend airshows but also to perform flypasts at events ranging from State and memorial occasions to local fetes. The BBMF was inaugurated on 11th July 1957 at RAF Biggin Hill, and this is its first-ever fatality during 67 years of operations. That somehow makes the loss of Mark even more poignant after such a long period of safe flying. The BBMF takes safety very seriously and protects its national assets by operating to tighter limitations than applied by other Spitfire operators. As we all know, flying powerful former combat aircraft will never be risk-free but the record over nearly 70 years shows how carefully safety is prioritised. A number of our members have flown for the BBMF and are part of that history of safe operation.

AN AVIATION INSPIRATION

When the BBMF determines that the time is right, we will welcome its return to serve the nation as a highly valued national memorial and aviation inspiration. The recent D-Day 80 commemorations, from which it was understandably absent, also amply demonstrated its

importance, as an Airbus A400M flypast is not an effective substitute. In the meantime, Mark's family and friends are in our thoughts.

We have so many members who quietly get on with things on behalf of others. I would like to highlight a few here. Liveryman Gerry Gerrard has wanted to arrange for a memorial window dedicated to RAF Warmwell to be installed in the local church. RAF Warmwell was initially used for air-to-ground firing and bombing on ranges set up off the south coast of Dorset at Chesil Bank, but increasingly its role was to protect important naval facilities at Portland and Portsmouth, as well as working in 10 Group as part of the fighter defences for the south-west of England.

Gerry has worked tirelessly for many years on this project, to not only raise the funds but also to patiently overcome many obstacles along the way. Liverymen Ian Whittle and Colin Bell have supported the fundraising by giving very successful talks. Gerry is hoping to have the window installed in time for this year's national memorial day. Gerry, I salute you.

This time of year sees our Scholars starting their flying after a major selection programme to filter down the massive number of applications to those who are awarded a Scholarship. As an indication of how significant the task is, we had over 1,000 applicants to sift, review, interview and select from this year, and nearly 100 Scholarships were awarded. In addition to this, we have arranged for over 300 young people to attend a Youth Gliding day to get their first taste of aviation.



The Company is introducing youngsters to the joy and excitement of flight through gliding

We hold a Scholars Supper in November for the PPL and Flying Instructor Scholars and their families to celebrate their success and award them their certificates. I am also very fortunate to be able to meet some of our gliding



London's Air Ambulance needs a final flood of support for its new helicopters

Scholars as they complete their training. The atmosphere of excitement and the sheer joy of flight is palpable in the room and a heady thing to observe. But it's more than that; it is a transformative experience of working as a team, ensuring everyone's safety and gaining real rather than virtual skills. New friendships are formed that will last.

The team that works so hard to deliver these Scholarships may be rightly proud of what it makes possible for young people but also of the success they achieve. The graduates of our Scholarships are rightly respected across the industry. Thank you to all those who make it possible – you literally change lives.

HIGH STANDARDS

The technical committees, coordinated by our Director of Aviation and chair of the International Technical Forum, do much unsung work to ensure high standards in aviation are maintained. I get an opportunity later in the year to support this work by highlighting key messages to aviation authorities and industry bodies during the Master's Tour. As you will read elsewhere, the company is seeking to establish a clear position on the future of single-pilot operation of Commercial Air Transport as airlines and manufacturers seek to establish such operations. This work is ongoing, and the input from members is welcomed. On another front, the AIR Technical Group is working to make recommendations on reducing runway incursions. If you wish to comment, please contact the DAA via the office.

Company members had a superb visit to the London Air Ambulance (LAA) recently, as detailed elsewhere in the magazine. It is probably the leading HEMS operation in the world and people from around the globe join it for one-year Fellowships to learn how it operates. It is a very impressive combination of aviation and medical disciplines working as a highly motivated team. We were lucky that Neil Jeffers could give us so much of his time as he is focussed on the introduction of the two new helicopters by the end of October.

Members are probably aware the LAA is fighting against time to raise £15m, on top of normal running cost donations, to purchase and equip these two new helicopters, following withdrawal of support for its existing aircraft. It is true to say that, despite much hard work, the LAA is a little behind the drag curve, but the recent announcement by Omaze of a prize draw in its support gives it a real chance to achieve its goal, as long as other commitments are delivered on.

Finally, one of my three pillars for the year was to **Enjoy** being an Air Pilot. Earlier today as I write this, we held a well-supported Garden Party at Brooklands, the home of British motor racing as well as an early flying training facility and an important manufacturing base for Vickers and Hawker aircraft up to and beyond World War Two. The museum provided a wealth of aviation and motor racing historic exhibits to enjoy, and seven members "flew" in the Concorde simulator, ably looked after by PM and Concorde Captain Mike Bannister. Our Editor did much to ensure we were well looked after and even showed guests around the museum's Vickers Vimy replica. During the lunch I was delighted to be handed a vintage car horn to attract the attention of the guests so we could thank the team that hosted us. Could it replace the gavel in Court meetings? □

The Master with his new audio-gavel!





REGIONAL REPORTS



Regional Report: Australia

By Liveryman Capt Adrian Young, Chairman

The Australian Region Executive Council has been busy activating various initiatives aligned with its ‘three pillar’ strategy of Engage, Inspire and Support. These initiatives include:

YOUNG AIR PILOTS AUSTRALIA

To support our young members, Young Air Pilots Australia has been launched, with a dedicated committee being led by two wonderful young leaders, Upper Freeman William Kay, Chair, and Rosina Helbig, Deputy Chair. This is an historic moment, as it is the first time a Young Air Pilots branch has been formed outside the UK. Freeman Dom Registe, current Chair of the ‘parent’ Young Air Pilots, has been extremely supportive and collaborative with Will and Rosina.

The YAPA committee will work with the Australian Region Executive Council to support young members, along with working with their counterparts in London to share lessons learnt and ideas. Like UK YAP, YAPA has established a communications medium (Instagram) which will share and promote YAPA: <https://www.instagram.com/youngairpilotsaustralia>.

AUSTRALIAN REGION WEBINARS

Building on the great Webinar work conducted by the New Zealand Region, the Executive Council and I are planning a series of webinars for our members on a variety of topics. We have been able to secure some great speakers and we are planning to commence monthly webinars from late July. Some of the topics will include: Innovation and Technology in Aviation; Electric Flight; UPRT for Pilots; and Airmanship and Resilience in Aviation.

AUSTRALIAN REGION LINKEDIN PAGE

The Australian Region has launched a LinkedIn page to promote the work that the Company is doing across Australia but, more importantly, to encourage new members from those residing in the Australian region. Our followers continue to grow in number, which is also translating to new members.

TECHNICAL AND AIR SAFETY

Liveryman Capt Brian Greeves has been extremely busy responding and engaging on various technical matters in Australia. Two key submissions to the Australian government were on the Draft State Safety Plan (SSP) & National Aviation Safety Plan, and the National Air Navigation Plan. The Region made a general point that the Plans are aspirational and that current issues which need

to be addressed include:

- Shortage of Air Traffic Controllers;
- Reduction in the Rescue and Firefighting Categories at various airports;
- Protection of Airspace;
- Constraints on General Aviation;
- Shortage of pilots and other aviation critical workers.

One of the proposed actions is that the Region would have a ‘seat at the table’ on SSP Working Groups dealing with meteorology, medical, runway safety, wildlife hazards and the Council of the Australian Strategic Air Traffic Management Group (ASTRA). All these groups have representatives from a wide range of the aviation industry, and Company representation will enable us to participate in the discussions and solutions. To support Brian, our Technical and Air Safety Committee has been expanded to five people.

2024 AUSTRALIAN REGION SCHOLARSHIPS

2024 has seen an unprecedented rise in scholarship applications, along with the introduction of a new gliding scholarship in conjunction with Gliding Federation Australia, open to young pilots. Each year the Region also offers ATPL, Multi-Crew Co-operation, IF Sim currency and training, Helicopter Underwater Escape Training/ Emergency Breathing Systems, and job application coaching scholarships. There were 80 applications to review this year and, following the interviews, 12 applicants have been approved as scholarship recipients. Negotiations are well advanced on introducing another scholarship in 2025 – a General Aviation (GA) Ready Course in Darwin for a fresh CPL pilot.

Finally, our largest membership working group, the New South Wales (NSW) Working Group, is

currently being re-activated with the appointment of new Chair – Upper Freeman Tammy Camilleri. Tammy is a wonderful aviator, advocate and aviation ambassador who is currently based in regional NSW, operating and managing a training and charter operation. Additionally, Tammy became one of the first women to fly a training fighter jet aircraft in Australia, qualified as the fifth woman in the world to fly with the Reno Air Racing Jet class. □



William Kay and Rosina Helbig lead up the new Young Air Pilots Australia





Regional Report: North America

By Assistant Mark Tousey

In early 2023, I made a presentation to the North America Region board of directors proposing the formation of a new USA-based charitable foundation to offer scholarships to American and Canadian students. The Company has a long history of encouraging young people in the UK to embark on a career in aviation through providing scholarships for gliding, PPLs, and flight instructor training, but the North America Region has not yet had that provision.

The NA Region board approved the proposal and, a few months later, the first board meeting was convened of the HCAP Aeronautical Scholarship Foundation, Inc (ASF), a USA-based charity. The board consists of myself as Chairman, Liveryman Peter Allen and Upper Freeman Dave White (Treasurer) and Lucy Young Secretary). The board of ASF is delighted to announce that the US Internal Revenue Service approved its application to become a 501(c)(3) organization in the spring of 2024.

The ASF board is busy establishing policies covering scholarship eligibility, approval processes, and governance but, armed with the IRS approval, we are now pleased to open the foundation to donations from NA Region members.



Scholarships will initially help fund ATPLs and type ratings (iStock)

GRANTS IN 2024

The goal of the ASF is to begin granting scholarships of \$US5,000 each by late 2024. Over the next two years, while funds build up, scholarships will be exclusively focussed on those students who already have their commercial license (or who will have completed it by the time the scholarship is paid out) who are working toward their ATPL or type ratings. This will maximise the benefit of the ASF to generate applicants who will soon be ready

to apply for jobs in the industry. Once the ASF has more substantial assets, applicants for PPL, IR, and CPL training will be eligible to apply.

The promotion of the ASF will be made through regular announcements from the NA Region as well as through a group of Ambassador-advisors, who are well established individuals in the aviation and aeronautical industries.

The scholarship foundation is initially focused on US charitable status; however, as the foundation is built and Canadian donors seek equivalent Canadian tax status, a Canadian foundation will be established to provide Canadian participants a similar tax status to that enjoyed by their US colleagues.

HOW TO GIVE

All contributions are tax-deductible for US taxpayers. You may make a donation either via PayPal or by sending a US dollar cheque. All donations will be acknowledged with a receipt for tax purposes.

For PayPal, our account name is HCAP Aerospace Scholarship Foundation. US dollar checks made out to HCAP Aerospace Scholarship Foundation Inc should be sent to HCAP ASF, care of Dave White, 3409 Colt Drive, Plano TX, 75074-2827.

It is worthwhile checking if your employer offers a matching programme under which they will match your donation. We are aware that Boeing, Delta, United Technologies, Lockheed Martin, General Electric, Northrup Grumman, and Raytheon offer charitable donation matches at no additional cost to the donor.

Additional ways to support There are three ways you can support the early stages of the ASF beyond your financial contributions:

1. Spread the word about the Foundation to colleagues and friends;
2. Notify us of any grant making bodies that you know support education and aviation, and we would be happy either to follow up directly with them or by way of an introduction;
3. Share your suggestions for candidates for Ambassador-advisors.

This is an exciting development for the North America Region that will serve to broaden its renown and highlight its support for young pilots and the aviation sector in general in the US and Canada. The ASF board will be most grateful for your support. You may reach us at

AirPilotsASF@gmail.com.





Regional report: Hong Kong

By Liveryman Rob Jones, Chairman

Within a few weeks of taking over as Chairman of the Hong Kong Region I had the privilege of flying, as a passenger I might add, into the most northerly commercial airport in the world, Svalbard. From here I set sail around the Norwegian archipelago and passed a lone metal structure to which was attached a story of aviation daring, exploration and adventure.

I learned that evening of the intrepid Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen. Born on 16th July 1872, near Oslo, Norway, Amundsen's life was characterized by an insatiable curiosity and a passion for exploration, but he was also a keen aviation enthusiast. As the 20th century dawned, he embarked on a series of ground-breaking expeditions that would redefine polar travel.

Amundsen first gained fame by successfully navigating the treacherous Northwest Passage - a sea route connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans through the Canadian arctic archipelago. His historic expedition to the South Pole, in which he outpaced his British rival, Capt Robert Falcon Scott CVO RN, followed, thus becoming the first person to reach the southernmost point on Earth.

Following this success Amundsen set his sights on the emerging field of aviation and a daring new adventure. He learned to fly in March 1914, passing his exam in June that year, and was awarded Norwegian Pilot Licence serial Number One on 18 Sept 1915, despite crashing the aircraft he used for his test.



Dornier Wal N24 was damaged taking off from the ice and had to be abandoned (National Library of Norway)

Unfortunately, because of the outbreak of hostilities it was not until after World War One that Amundsen could pursue his new goal, to be the first to cross the North Pole by air and to discern whether there was land in the inner arctic ocean. He was convinced that the significant improvement in the field of aviation during the war meant that crossing the North Pole by air would be the best method, eventually settling on flying boats.

Despite a series of financial setbacks and crashed aircraft

Amundsen, through the help of a benefactor, purchased two German Dornier Wal machines, registered as N24 and N25. The aircraft were dismantled and shipped to Ny-Ålesund, Svalbard. The two aircraft were loaded with supplies and survival equipment for their flight North. Originally the aircraft were supposed to depart from the water, but because they were so heavily laden it was decided they should depart from the surface of the ice instead.

LOST ON THE ICE

Both aircraft departed and flew 8h until the crews became unsure of their position and decided to land on water amongst the fractured sea



Norge NI's mast at Spitsbergen still stands

ice to determine their whereabouts. Unbeknown to its crew, during the take-off roll N24 had suffered damage and began taking on water on alighting, and had to be abandoned. The two aircraft had also landed so far apart that it would take a full 24h before the crews found each other again. For three-and-a-half weeks, equipped with only basic tools, they laboured in the ice to create an area to take off from, surviving on limited rations and crammed into the remaining aircraft for shelter.

Miraculously all six men made it airborne in N25, though barely. With 8h of fuel onboard they flew for exactly 8h and landed safely off the north coast of Svalbard. They had made it all the way to 87°43' N and back. Unfortunately for Amundsen he had neither made it to the North Pole, nor achieved a flight across it, but Amundsen's aerial adventures did not end there.

In 1926, he joined forces with Italian aeronautical engineer Umberto Nobile and a crew of 15 men on the airship *Norge NI*. Together, they achieved the first confirmed flight over the North Pole, departing from the metal structure I saw, which was the airship mast, from Spitsbergen on 11th May 1926, and landing in Alaska two days later.

Amundsen's crossing of the North Pole by air was more than just a geographical conquest; it was a symbol of the human spirit's unyielding desire to explore and conquer the unknown. His expeditions laid the groundwork for modern polar research and aviation, proving that even the most daunting frontiers could be breached with determination and innovation. □





REPORT: THE YOUNG AIR PILOTS

By Freeman Dominic Registe, Chairman

As aircrew we are accustomed to occupational stresses and high-workload environments, and are indeed trained rigorously to remain calm under pressure and make effective decisions when necessary. Pilots are not infallible, however, and the aforementioned is an acquired skill rather than an innate ability. The point at which task demands exceed our capacity creates a learning opportunity, and taking advantage of these moments forms the foundations of the competent aircrew we all strive to be. Proactively engaging with fellow pilots and sharing experiences undoubtedly aids this endeavour and remains a core component of Air Pilots membership.

Further strengthening Young Air Pilot relationships remains an on-going aim and it gives me great pleasure to see the formation of the inaugural Australian YAP Committee, chaired by Upper Freeman Will Kay and Rosina Helbig. Great things are most definitely on the horizon, and I look forward to uniting the regions and forging a strong partnership in the process.

RED ARROWS

May also saw a particularly special visit to meet the RAF aerobatic team The Red Arrows at their new home, RAF Waddington. As guests of The Red Arrows Trust, Assistant Katherine Hodge and I were invited at a particularly pertinent phase of the season, with the team only just returning from Exercise *Springhawk*. During *Springhawk* the team is assessed by senior officers, with the aim of gaining Public Display Authority. If this is awarded, the team's pilots are permitted to change from green coveralls into their famous red flying suits and the ground crew are allowed to wear their royal blue display coveralls.

We gathered in the team's briefing room and eagerly anticipated the morning brief when a team of red flying suits entered the room, followed by Red 1, Sqn Ldr Jon Bond (Bondy), who kindly greeted the visitors seated towards the rear and set the scene: "There has never been a perfect display in Red Arrows history, however we aim for perfection on every occasion". The exacting standards the team is famous for were abundantly clear in that moment and with normal business the order of the day, the team was briefed for the day's tasking – a practice display in preparation for a public display the following day.

There are three types of display the Team Leader can elect to fly – full, rolling or flat. To carry out a full display, the base of the cloud must be above 5,500ft to avoid the aircraft entering cloud at the top of the loop. With cloud base a limiting factor for the day, a rolling display

was briefed, along with the flat alternative should the cloud base deteriorate further. The 2024 display season is the Red Arrows' 60th, and the team will also return to its trademark 'diamond nine' formation, not seen since 2021. Needless to say, it was an absolute privilege to observe the Red Arrows display for the upcoming season, in what proved to be challenging windy conditions.



Dom Registe and Kat Hodge accept the Red Arrows Trust scholarship cheque

RECOGNISING IMPERFECTIONS

Soon after we gathered back in the briefing room for the all-important debrief. With each practice display recorded from the vantage point of the observer, it is the first opportunity the pilots have to critique their own performance. As the video progresses each pilot concisely verbalises their own formation positioning imperfections in real time. Although several respective observations are often voiced simultaneously, Red 1 has the capacity to recognise each individual's voice as well as the autonomy to rewind and re-address specific manoeuvres if he does not hear the appropriate calls. Numbers are used rather than individual names and the efficiency with which learning points are identified and remedied was exceptional to witness. The team performance is always the focal point rather than any one individual, fostering a culture of transparency and continuous improvement that is quite simply world-leading.

The Red Arrows Trust generously sponsored six of this year's Air Pilots gliding scholarships and special thanks must be extended to the entire team for the tireless work that goes on behind the scenes to support the next generation of aviators. With a busy summer schedule ahead, we wish the Red Arrows and the Red Arrows Trust favourable conditions for their 60th display season. □



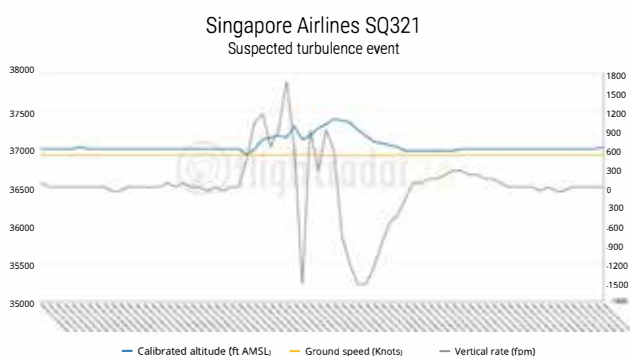
DEALING WITH EXTREME TURBULENCE

From the Desk of the DAA, PM Nick Goodwyn

After some recent and notable reporting on aircraft encountering more severe weather events, is this a question of an increasing trend and can authorities and operators do more to safeguard those on board and, in particular, crew? Presciently, in June 2023, the Air Pilots' Commercial Air Transport (CAT) Safety Network published one of its excellent series of Safety Briefing Notes (SBNs) on 'Minimising En-Route Turbulence Injuries'. It noted that: "Whilst turbulence injuries to both cabin crew and passengers cannot be eliminated, they continue to occur with no evidence that risk management is reducing the overall scale of the problem, especially - but not only - in long haul operations. Available occurrence data suggest that the serious risk of injury for a member of cabin crew is greater than for an individual passenger... Whilst all occupants are vulnerable to turbulence injury if unsecured, the safety of cabin crew must remain paramount whilst still seeking to also protect passengers from similar injury."

INCIDENT OVER MYANMAR

On Tuesday 21st May, Singapore Airlines Boeing 777-300 ER, Flight No SQ321 from London to Singapore, encountered what the airline described after the event as sudden, extreme turbulence while flying over Myanmar. Early investigations by the Singapore Transport Safety Investigation Bureau (TSIB) stated that the flight had operated as normal until it probably flew over an area of "developing convective activity" while passing over the south of Myanmar at 37,000ft (11,300m).



SQ321's turbulence encounter was short but violent (FlightRadar24)

At 07:49:40 GMT, after a period of upward acceleration, it had quickly accelerated downwards over 0.6 seconds, which presumably "resulted in the occupants who were not belted up to become airborne". The plane had then accelerated up again for four seconds, meaning those who were airborne fell back down. Although initial unaccredited and highly inaccurate reports suggested that the aircraft had dropped 6000ft, flight data showed that it

had diverged around 178ft over 4.6sec - significant in itself.

There were reports that of the 211 passengers and 18 crew on board, around 100 were hurt: subsequently 6 six people were treated for skull and brain injuries, 22 for spinal injuries and 13 for bone, muscle and other injuries. Tragically one passenger on board died during the incident. Many of the injured were the cabin crew who were operating service at the time of the event.

Subsequently, Singapore Airlines announced that it would modify its cabin service routines. In addition to the suspension of hot beverage service when the seat belt sign was on, meal service would also be suspended. The current policy of crew members securing all loose items and equipment in the cabin during poor weather conditions would continue.

On 11th June, Austrian Airlines flight OS434, an Airbus A320 travelling from Palma de Mallorca in Spain to Vienna in Austria, suffered damage to its nose and windscreen from a hailstorm while on approach to Vienna Airport. The crew said that the thunderstorm cell did not show on its weather radar, nor was it reported. There were no reported injuries to passengers or crew.

TWO 777 INCIDENTS

The UK Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB) reported in its AAIB Bulletin: 1/2024 published on 11th January on two separate events, both involving British Airways Boeing 777s.

Approximately 1h 50min after departing Singapore en route London, G-STBL encountered severe turbulence over the Bay of Bengal and unsecured cabin crew were thrown around in the cabin. Two crew members were seriously injured and three sustained minor injuries.

The aircraft returned to Singapore. In a similar event, G-YMML encountered what the commander described as "moderate chop" around 15mins before landing at Beijing Daxing Airport and while manoeuvring to avoid convective weather seen on radar. A serious injury was sustained by one of the crew during the turbulence.

In both cases, the pilots took action to avoid areas of poor weather and turbulence but, nevertheless, their aircraft encountered turbulence of sufficient severity to injure unsecured crew. When route weather forecasts cover large areas and contain general predictions of the likelihood of encountering turbulence, pilots may not be able to identify specific areas in flight where it will actually be encountered.

Last year, *Geophysical Research Letters* published *Evidence for Large Increases in Clear-Air Turbulence Over the Past Four Decades*. This in-depth academic study noted that:



“Clear-air turbulence (CAT) is hazardous to aircraft and is projected to intensify in response to future climate change.”

The paper analysed CAT trends globally during 1979–2020 in a modern re-analysis data set using 21 diagnostics. It found clear evidence of large increases around the mid-latitudes at aircraft cruising altitudes.

For example, at an average point over the North Atlantic, the total annual duration of light-or-greater CAT increased by 17% from 466.5h in 1979 to 546.8h in 2020, with even larger relative changes for moderate-or-greater CAT (increasing by 37% from 70.0 to 96.1h) and severe-or-greater CAT (increasing by 55% from 17.7 to 27.4h). Similar increases are also found over the continental USA. The study represents the best evidence yet that CAT has increased over the past four decades consistent with the expected effects of climate change and that the evidence translates globally.

EASA RECOMMENDATIONS

In May 2024, EASA published an article *Managing Turbulence* and noted that:

“If turbulence is expected, the crew must set the SEAT BELTS switch to ON to prepare passengers and prevent injuries in the cabin. All loose equipment must be secured in both the cockpit and the cabin...It is essential for the cabin and flight crew to work together as one team to effectively manage the risks associated with turbulence. Practice shows that turbulence in the rear galley is likely to be perceived as worse than in the front of the cabin.

“Having reviewed the relevant charts and weather information, the flight crew should use the interactive briefing to inform the cabin crew about the potential for turbulence and provide further information on the type, severity, duration and location of any expected turbulence.

“When expecting turbulence in the descent to destination, consider asking the cabin crew to prepare the cabin for landing at such a time so that the cabin is secure when the turbulence is expected to start (contrary to asking the crew to prepare the cabin for landing when the turbulence starts). Cabin crew are instructed to sit down and protect themselves when it is considered unsafe to move through the cabin. This may mean that the cabin is otherwise not secured on time.

“When severe turbulence is either encountered or expected and insufficient time is available for normal procedures, make a PA to instruct the cabin crew



Hailstone damage to Austrian Airlines flight OS434 (Instagram.com/exithamster)

and passengers to be seated immediately. When it is subsequently safe to move again in the cabin, make a further PA to return to normal cabin crew operations. Making a PA both in advance and during turbulence is considered a great way to keep your customers informed and reassured.”

The Air Pilots CAT Safety Network in the related SBN raises a number of safety recommendations for both aircraft operators and to crew. Its publication last year was very timely and with the significant likelihood of an increase in weather-related events affecting airline operations in coming years, it is time to put due emphasis on crew as well as passenger safety.

<https://www.airpilots.org/catsafetybriefingnotes/>

<https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1029/2023gl103814>

<https://www.easa.europa.eu/community/topics/managing-turbulence>

<https://airlinesafety.blog>

□

The 'From the Desk of the DAA' article in *Air Pilot* May 2003 highlighted the concepts of Extended Minimum Crew Operations (eMCO) or Single Pilot Operations (SiPO), noting that EASA has been working on a safety risk assessment and framework through two objectives:

- To assess the issues and the feasibility of the implementation of eMCOs in the EU regulatory framework by developing a reference risk-assessment framework and investigating a series of key safety hazards and mitigations;
- To assess the issues and the feasibility of the implementation of SiPOs in the EU regulatory framework through a preliminary analysis of the related main safety hazards.

As was reported in *Air Pilot*, many UK and EU representative bodies have significant concerns that they wish to be addressed on these initiatives and this was reflected more broadly in the USA by the over-240 pilots from the Air Line Pilots Association who converged on Capitol Hill to meet with 170 members of Congress. These meetings were sparked by the belief that Airbus and the European regulatory body EASA, yet to complete and publish the comprehensive safety study, are forging ahead with plans to certify the A350 for partial single-pilot operations.

At the June GP&F meeting, the DAA was tasked to garner the thoughts of Air Pilots members to potentially inform the drafting of an Air Pilots position paper on this subject. This can be done via email to DAA@airpilots.org





PLANNING, PLANNING AND MORE CENTENARY PLANNING

By Assistant Sebastian Pooley

Since I wrote my last article for *Air Pilot* back in March 2023, the Company has passed the five-year mark for the start of our Centenary Celebrations which will officially start on 10th April 2029.



Regular visitors to the Air Pilots website will have noticed that we now have a timer on the front page counting down the remaining years, months and days to this auspicious date. Over the coming months, the Centenary image below the timer will link to dedicated pages detailing our

plans, including dates and events as they firm up. It will also start to feature interesting pieces from the archives and articles on interesting characters from the Company's history as well as interviews with Past Masters as they reflect on their contribution to enriching the Air Pilots and making it the Livery Company we are so proud of today.



Illustrious Air Pilots: Sir Michael Cobham, Sir Peter Vanneck (the first Air Pilot to be Lord Mayor of London), Capt O P Jones (one of the first seven Wardens in 1929) and Mrs Jones

PROGRESS

The Centenary Steering Committee has convened twice since my last article. The meetings, held on 19th July 2023 and 8th May 2024, have paved the way for the establishment of a number of sub-committees in order that we distribute the enormous amount of work and take advantage of some of the expertise available to us from amongst the membership of the Company. I am incredibly grateful to those who have volunteered their time to assist us over the coming years in making the very most of our Centenary year and, importantly, the preparations for it.

NEW MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

We are delighted to welcome to the Committee Warden David Singleton, who will be Master in the year leading

up to our Centenary, and PM Robin Keegan, who as Master set the ball rolling by establishing the Committee and was an ex officio member, and has now joined on a permanent basis.

SUB-COMMITTEES

We have established seven Centenary sub-committees (with Chairs in brackets):

1. History & Archives (Assistant Sebastian Pooley)
2. Lord Mayor's Show Float (Warden Elizabeth Walkinshaw)
3. Regions (Assistant Sebastian Pooley)
4. PR (Liveryman Ben Griffiths)
5. Merchandise (Assistant Sebastian Pooley)
6. Films & Footage (Assistant Kat Hodge)
7. Events (Liveryman David Curgenvin)

CENTENARY HISTORY BOOK

Past Master Michael Fopp has started the gargantuan task of writing the Company's history. He is not following on from Ian Frow's book which covered the years from 1965-2004 (or David Brown's earlier work covering 1929-64) but starting from the very beginning and with a fresh perspective. His will be a social history focusing on the personalities involved, highlighting the crucial moments in our Company's history and will no doubt be an absolutely superb addition to our Centenary celebrations.

DATES

For those of you whose diaries get filled up early, here are some potential dates and events in 2028/29 that are being planned (mixing the traditional with those which will be unique to the Centenary):

- Veteran dinner at Rules - 5th December 2028
- December 2028 - Carol Service
- First Meeting of Air Pilots at Rules – 1st February 2029
- AGM (possibly Mansion House if larger event) – March 2029
- Air Pilots Formation Dinner at Rules – 10th April 2029
- White Tie Dinner at Guildhall – 12th April 2029
- Cobham Lecture – April 2029
- Livery Dinner – May 2029
- Summer Event (potentially incorporating the Master's



Garden Party) – July 2029

- Tymms's Lecture – Sep 2029
- T&A – October 2029
- Commemorating the 'Results of the postal ballot' – 7th Oct 2029 (when the members of the first Court were announced)
- First General meeting – 19th Oct 2029 at Hotel Cecil (which no longer exists. There was a discussion regarding holding a drinks reception in the courtyard of the building which is currently there).
- First Court meeting at Rules – 28th Oct 2029
- Lord Mayor's Show with float – 10th November 2029
- Centenary Carol Service – December 2029

REGIONS

We were delighted to discover that three of our four regions will be celebrating their own significant anniversaries in 2029. Australia will be 60 years old, New Zealand 40 and North America 20, while Hong Kong will be celebrating 45 years in 2027. By the time this edition of *Air Pilot* lands on your doorstep, I will have been in contact with all our regional Chairs to discuss how they would like to celebrate our Company's Centenary locally and how we can involve them as closely as possible in everything we are planning. The regions are an integral part of our unique identity in the City of London, and it is important that we demonstrate how proud we are to have them. Although our regions will not be 100 years old in 2029, we are one Company, and we can look forward to



Will he be in your Top 10 Air Pilots? The first Master, AVM Sir Sefton Brancker (National Portrait Gallery)

celebrating as one. We want to show interesting and key elements of it to as many members of the Company as possible and use it to highlight the incredible people, work and influence of the Company over the last 100 years. We want to do this internally, of course but also within

celebrating as one.

HISTORY & ARCHIVES

I am grateful for the input of our Honourable Archivist, Liveryman Peter Elliott, and Upper Freeman Jason Phillips, with whom I have worked on how we can bring the history of the Company and

the City, the aviation industry and throughout our regions. Ultimately, we want to use our Centenary to remind our members of who we are and what we have achieved and to inspire the next generation who will fly the flag for us in the future. My thanks to PMs Michael Fopp and Peter Buggé, who have also agreed to join this sub-committee. We could not ask for a more knowledgeable team.

PR COMMITTEE

My thanks to Liverymen Ben Griffiths and Steve Bridgewater who currently make up the PR Committee. Our remit is to best showcase the Company, raise awareness of what we do, make the Company more accessible, bring our history alive and celebrate the Centenary with as many members as possible. The PR Committee, working with the History & Archives sub-committee, wishes to highlight 10 key people in the Company from the last 100 years - one from each decade - and to deliver an article on each in *Air Pilot*. Furthermore, we would like to highlight 10 British aircraft, again one from each decade and we would like your help in this...

Tell us which British aircraft you would like to see highlighted in *Air Pilot* and which member of the Company you would like to know more about...



Is Concorde one of the Top 10 aircraft of our first 100 years?

I am calling on all members to visit the Centenary page on the Air Pilots website and complete the form

there. We have chosen a range of aircraft and Company members from each decade for you to choose from, but should a particular choice not appear, please select 'other' and make your suggestion. The most popular will be profiled in future editions of *Air Pilot* although we reserve the right to throw in a few wildcards!

IDEAS AND VOLUNTEERS, PLEASE...

We have an opportunity to use the Centenary to bring more of us together than ever before. There is going to be a great amount of work to do in the coming years that the Committee simply cannot achieve alone and without the help of volunteers. To volunteer, please send me an email with the subject – CENTENARY VOLUNTEER.

As a Committee, we still want to hear your ideas and suggestions on how we can best celebrate this milestone. If you have ideas you would like to share, please send me an email with the subject – CENTENARY IDEAS: **sebastian.pooley@pooleys.com**. My continued thanks to all those who have also volunteered their time on our Centenary Committee and Sub-Committees. □

DAKOTAS FOR D-DAY

By The Editor

Although they were never going to be as extensive in aeronautical terms as the 75th anniversary in 2019, the events surrounding the 80th anniversary of D-Day did promise the welcome return of a number of USA-based Douglas DC-3/C-47 Dakotas, flying as The D-Day Squadron, to European skies at the beginning of June. In the end, after various mechanical and other issues had intervened, three Dakotas – all veterans of the 1944 invasion – made it across the Atlantic to join up with two British-based machines for a series of flying appearances and parachute drops in the UK and France.



Two of the D-Day Squadron's Dakotas in formation: That's All Brother shot from Placid Lassie (Adam Simpkins/D-Day Squadron)

The D-Day 80 Dakotas activity was hosted by, and very much the initiative of, North Weald-based Aero Legends, whose MD Keith Perkins emphasised in a press briefing earlier in May the importance of marking the 80th anniversary, widely accepted to be the last time that a significant number of veterans of the landings would be present. "People get complacent very quickly," he said, noting that his own interest in keeping the story and lessons of D-Day alive had been triggered by taking his own sons around the Normandy graveyards.

PIVOTAL ROLE

At that press briefing – masterminded by Liveryman Ben Griffiths – historian Paul Beaver underlined the sheer scale of the invasion which began on the night of 5th-6th June 1944, and the pivotal role which the Dakota had paid in that effort. In what he said was probably the largest number of aircraft deployed in a single operation, 25,000 aircraft had taken part, with Dakota-towed gliders opening the action with the assault on Pegasus Bridge. Not only had the Dakota been one of General Eisenhower's "four tools of victory" (alongside the Jeep, the Bazooka and the



Some of the 1,300 "Round-chute" paratroopers who took part in the 80th Anniversary (Adam Simpkins/D-Day Squadron)

atomic bomb) but it had also become one of the symbols of D-Day, being involved in paratropping, glider-towing and resupply in every part of the theatre.

The aim at that stage was that the US-based Dakotas and Aero Legends' own two would drop some 1,300 paratroops in the week-long commemorations. Emphasising the level of commitment that such an undertaking involved, Perkins noted that the cost of bringing a Dakota across the Atlantic was "at least \$US150,000", and that the crew and passengers on those Atlantic crossings, and the paratroops who would be dropped, were all paying towards those costs.



Placid Lassie has, uniquely for a restored heritage aircraft, made three double-Atlantic crossings (Karolina Marek/D-Day Squadron)

TRANSATLANTIC CHALLENGES

The briefing also heard from Liveryman Colin Bell – one of the few surviving pilots who had delivered aircraft across the Atlantic during World War Two – on the challenges and perils of making those flights. He had delivered de Havilland Mosquitos "3½ times" (the half was only from Reykjavik in Iceland), with each of the four

legs of the flight from London, Ontario, via Goose Bay, Greenland Blue WI, and Reykjavik to Prestwick taking around 3h 30min. With magnetic compasses unreliable in those northern areas, the flights were conducted VFR and dead-reckoning, so that on the leg from Goose Bay he would "...aim for North Greenland and follow the coast down". On one occasion, flying in very bad cloud, with a 300ft base, over the sea he had had to reduce altitude as he approached the coast "...and flew straight past a large iceberg!"



The Dakotas regularly paired up with fighters during the commemorations: this is the Aerial Collective's four-ship of Spitfires, Hurricane and Mustang (A Winn)

He expected that now, with better navigation equipment, the biggest challenge would be mechanical failure. Back then, he said, the aircraft "...were operated by trained amateurs, but would now have the best engineers and navigation."

A couple of weeks later one of the pilots who made that crossing for this year's events described what it really was like in 2024. Eric Zipkin, who was flying the Tunison Foundation's C-47 *Placid Lassie*, said that the challenges of the crossing now were distance and uncertainty. "Eighty years ago they had none of the GPS etc that we have now – and it was 19-year-old kids doing the flying." Like Colin Bell, he was able to do the Atlantic crossing in four legs: *Placid Lassie* was fitted with 500USgal (1,890l) ferry tanks, giving a total of 1,300gal (4,920l) fuel capacity for the 25h elapsed time of crossing. He explained that, while the crew carried immersion suits, they were not usually worn during the crossing: "With one engine failure, we would have time to put it on. What we do wear is cold-weather gear: flying at between 1,000ft and 11,000ft, we were getting temperatures as low as -20°C in the cockpit."

ENCOURAGING THE YOUNG

Zipkin's own journey to being in Europe for the 80th

anniversary of D-Day had its roots in his own family's connection with World War Two. "At a personal level, in this because of my Dad [his father served in Africa]: World War Two was so pivotal in human history, and the remaining lessons of the war are so important for today". The younger Zipkin works in air charter, managing a fleet of 31 Pilatus PC-12s and three Cessna Citation CJ3s, and got involved in the world of Dakotas when a client, James Lyle, bought *Placid Lassie* which was eventually placed in the Tunison Foundation, named after the radio navigator who flew on the aircraft in World War Two.

This was one of the two USA-based Dakotas which took part in the 70th anniversary D-Day commemorations in 2014, and was the lead aircraft in a 15-strong contingent which crossed the Atlantic for the 75th anniversary in 2019. With its participation in the 80th anniversary, *Placid Lassie* is claimed to have become the first preserved aircraft to have made three return crossings of the Atlantic. The aim of the Foundation "...is to get another generation flying: the average age of the crew that flew *Placid Lassie* across the Atlantic, which included his own 19-year-old son as co-pilot, was 27." Zipkin urges people to "...study history: for most of it the human condition changed so little compared with the last 100 years, and World War Two was pivotal in that."



Close formation! Two Spitfires on Placid Lassie's wingtip, Upper Freeman Sam Worthington-Leese flying PT46215W-A (A Winn)

As part of the D-Day Squadron's preparations for the for the displays at Duxford, Shuttleworth, Upottery and Normandy in the period 1st – 7th June, *Placid Lassie* undertook a 1h photographic sortie from Duxford on 29th May, flying in formation with two Supermarine Spitfires, a Hawker Hurricane and a North American P-51 Mustang – all two-seaters – put aloft by the Aerial Collective. The Editor was fortunate to be on the C-47 for this evocative flight, with four of the most significant types to have been in the air on D-Day flying together. □



WINTER TIGER TALES

By Freeman Brett Nicholls

The thought of flying a newly purchased de Havilland DH-82A Tiger Moth (ZK-AKC/DHZN97/NZ847)

from one of the southernmost cities in New Zealand (and the world for that matter) to one of the northernmost cities in the country, Auckland, was somewhat daunting.

To do it in late autumn when New Zealand was experiencing two of its coldest nights of the year thus far, with a southerly Antarctic airmass hitting the country (some areas of New Zealand were getting down to -9.7°C, which is very cold for non-alpine New Zealand), added to the challenge (or foolishness).

As many of you will be aware, with World War Two looming de Havilland opened a number of factories around the Commonwealth, and world, to produce the iconic DH 82A Tiger Moth. De Havilland opened a factory in Rongotai, Wellington, New Zealand in 1939 with the first Tiger (DHNZ1) rolling off the production line in

July 1940 from a kit sent from the United Kingdom. Overall, 181 Tigers were produced at Rongotai, with many more being built from UK-shipped kits, AKC being the 97th off the line (DHZN97).

As a side note, the old DH Rongotai hangars eventually became the base structure for the terminal of the new Wellington Airport at Rongotai until the 1990s.



The route up both islands of NZ

When I purchased AKC, after it had been meticulously maintained for 34 years by the previous owner, I set about thinking how to fly her from Dunedin (Taieri Airfield or NZTI), Otago, north to my home airport at Ardmore (NZAR), Auckland.

Taieri was a very early New Zealand airfield, built for the Otago Aero Club, New Zealand's oldest aero club, in 1927. In 1939 it became a key Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) base having the first elementary flying training school (1 EFTS) in the country formed there. Naturally, many pilots had their initial training on Tiger Moths at 1 EFTS prior to going to Canada, Europe or other advanced training bases in New Zealand. AKC served at Taieri from late 1942 to 1946.



Pre-departure at Taieri under grey skies, AKC's previous owner Sir Julian Smith at right

DETAILED PLANNING

The planning for the trip was detailed. Given the length of the journey, approximately 625 nautical miles, I ideally wanted a second pilot (to share the flying and two sets of hands help speed up the refuelling stops) and a big Southern Ocean high to gently move from west to east (remember we are in the southern hemisphere) and, ideally, a southerly breeze to waft us up the country (this is a cold wind).

As it happened, a few days after purchase the long-range forecast had a large and strong high (1038hPa or 30.65in) drifting out of the Southern Ocean across New Zealand and establishing itself over the country on a weekend – perfect for such a flight!

For the second pilot, I asked Kevin Paulsen, the engineer who works on my other aircraft, a North American Harvard, to come along. He is Tiger Moth rated, flies a Van's RV-8, Piper Cub and a Bristol Fighter replica. He, obviously, could fix small items that broke along the way - bringing some tools and spares with him.

ZK-AKC is operated on the New Zealand Civil Aviation Authority standard aircraft category, which is the same as that which modern-day Cessna aircraft and the like



operate in. It also has alloy cylinder heads so it can use avgas (100LL) which made for easier planning, as many airfields in New Zealand don't have mogas (motor vehicle fuel which in New Zealand is normally either 91 or 95 octane) - AKC can run on either avgas or mogas.

A COLD START

Very early (before 05:00!) on a cold Friday morning in mid-May (autumn in the southern hemisphere), we parked our cars at the New Zealand Warbird Association hangars at Ardmore Airport, hopeful that we would return in a Tiger Moth, and caught a taxi to the Auckland Domestic Airport to fly on Air New Zealand to Dunedin.



Heading up the Kaikoura coast

It was interesting to reflect during our flight down the length of the country and looking at the snow-capped Southern Alps, which run the length of the South Island, that within a few short hours we would be heading the other way in an open cockpit, a lot lower in altitude and a lot colder.

On arriving in Dunedin, unfortunately, the weather was as forecast - showery fronts moving through the lower eastern corner of the South Island as a deep low was moving off into the eastern Pacific. It was grey and wet when we landed and the thought of having to stay a night in Taieri was on my mind.

We were very kindly picked up from Dunedin airport and driven to Taieri to start to get AKC ready. All went smoothly and then it was time to don the long johns, gloves, balaclavas and Irvin jackets for a couple of test flights prior to heading north. As forecast, the south-westerly fronts had moved through, and the weather was clearing - time to fly. Both Kevin and I did a number of

circuits with quite a crowd watching (gulp!) - the previous owner, Sir Julian Smith, owns a nationally significant newspaper, the *Otago Daily Times*, and had his reporters there to take some images for posterity. So, no pressure!

FIRST LEG

All went well with the test flights (thankfully) and we fuelled up ready to launch to Ashburton (NZAS), a farming and service town in the lower central east coast of New Zealand's South Island. This was expected to take 1h 45min, but with a southerly wind blowing us up the island it only took a little over 1h 30min. The views flying up the stunning Otago harbour and peninsula were incredible - golden sand beaches with azure, blue water presented amazing views, albeit 20°C colder (or more) than its tropical appearance.

Ashburton Airfield is always a favourite of mine to land at and another original World War Two RNZAF training base, 2 EFTS, with lots of all-grass vectors, so an into-wind runway is always an option. It's a friendly place with a remarkably good aircraft museum that has a stunning collection of static aircraft - even a BAe Harrier that flew in the Falkland Islands conflict.

We fuelled up and assessed our next leg to Rangiora Airfield (NZRT), a busy airfield to the north west of the South Island's largest city, Christchurch. We assessed the winds and, unfortunately, it looked like there was a significant cross wind at the field and, as it was mid-afternoon and overnight hangarage was available at the local aero club, we elected to stay the night. This also gave me the option to do some circuits at Ashburton. Flying a Tiger Moth at an ex-RNZAF grass airfield in the late autumnal light with the wind straight down the runway was pretty special.

SECOND DAWN

Next morning we were up early, aiming to get away not long after daylight, on what we hoped was our last day of flying - Ashburton to Ardmore, Auckland - roughly 488 nautical miles. Sunrise was about 07:40 and we managed to launch from Ashburton at 08:15 on our first leg of the day. It was another record low overnight temperatures for that time of the year, so we were wrapped up warm. We decided to change our route because of fog and, rather than flying up through the Southern Alps, we instead headed up the South Island's east coast to Kaikoura - famous for watching hump-back whales and amazing seafood. Kaikoura (NZKI), like many coastal airfields in New Zealand, follows the coast, so is cross-wind prone, rather than being perpendicular and therefore being into the sea breeze.

The forecast promised light winds and no cross wind - however, as luck would have it and it was my leg to fly,

there turned out to be quite a cross wind. We arrived after 1h 30min, which was quicker than the planned 1h 45min because of the southerly breeze. Although it was cold, looking at the snow-capped seaward Kaikoura Range, with its highest peaks reaching 8,000ft, was stunning. After a quick refuel and sip of water we were off on a shorter hop, under an hour, to Omaka, near Blenheim, Marlborough on the north eastern tip of the South Island (and our launch spot to cross the Cook Strait to the North Island).



Over the vineyards into Omaka

The Marlborough region is famous for being the largest wine growing area of New Zealand, producing 70% of New Zealand's grapes focused mostly on the Sauvignon Blanc variety. It is quite a sight flying through the rugged mountains seeing isolated vineyards dotted throughout the hills. However, once we climbed over these and reached the Marlborough valley, vineyards stretched for as far as the eye could see.

We landed at another ex-RNZAF training airfield, Omaka, a few kilometres from the joint civilian and RNZAF base at Woodbourne. Marlborough Aero Club, which owns the airfield, is one of the oldest aeroclubs in New Zealand and the aerodrome was an RNZAF base during World War Two. Like many old RNZAF airfields, it has all-grass vectors that are, mostly, into wind. It is also unique in that it is surrounded by vineyards. Omaka is also home to a world-famous aviation museum that houses Sir Peter Jackson's (of *Lord of the Rings* fame) World War One aircraft and memorabilia collection. It was just a quick top-up of oil, fuel, don lifejackets and time to hit the air again to head for Whanganui, in the lower part of the central North Island. This leg was meant to last just under 2h.

ACROSS THE STRAIT

For those unfamiliar with New Zealand geography, New Zealand has two main islands named, in a burst of originality, the North Island and the South Island. The water separating the two is called the Cook Strait (no prizes for guessing who this is named after) which can be one of the roughest pieces of water in the world, particularly when an Antarctic southerly storm hits. There isn't much choice of how to cross the Strait in a warbird aircraft – the 30 nautical mile crossing can be done one of two ways: get high at 5,000ft - 10,000ft via a controlled VFR clearance or stay out of air traffic control's way and cross at 2,500ft or below. As we were in a Tiger Moth with less-than-ideal radios, going into controlled airspace wasn't an option – so it was 2,500ft or below for us.

Crossing the Strait, as I have done many times in a Harvard or other aircraft, high or lower level is one thing; crossing it in a Tiger Moth is quite another. With the cliffs of the Marlborough Sounds on the port side, with no forced landing options, and the mountains of the lower North Island, Cape Terawhiti, Ohau Point and Mana Island in the far distance, it was a case of sitting there and counting down the miles of the crossing, all the while intently listening to the sound of the engine (and looking for boats in case we had to ditch). It is always a long 15 or 20min.

This time luck was on our side, as we still had the southerly breeze nudging us along, so our ground speed was in the low 80kt range (my electronic flight bag app on my phone came in very handy on the trip).

Once across the Strait (phew!), the west side of the lower North Island is fairly rugged and, while there aren't many forced landing options, being in sight of land and civilization does wonders for the spirit. We followed the coast until we reached a large outer Wellington suburb of Kapiti at which point the Tararua Ranges start to run inland, towards the north east. From here there is 60 nautical miles of sandy beach curving in a wide arc running north and then west to direct us all the way to Whanganui. With the southerly breeze this leg only took us 1h 40min.

INTO WARMER CLIMES

Getting out of the Tiger in Whanganui was a relief in a number of ways – we were able to stretch our legs, it was much warmer than the South Island and we had lunch and hot coffee waiting for us! I had an RNZAF pilot friend, who lives nearby, come over and bring us coffee, while Kevin's wife and brother-in-law came down from Ardmore in an RV to bring us some lunch and to carry some fuel for us as our next stop didn't have any available. Having had some lunch and assessed the next leg, we

knew we could make Ardmore well before evening civil twilight (ECT) at 17:47: however, it was now 14:20 and we still had 2h 20min worth of flying ahead, plus a stop.

Refreshed and somewhat defrosted, we stowed our lifejackets, jumped into AKC and our ground crew swung the prop for the 50min flight to Taumarunui. This is a 1,200m (4,000ft) long grass strip in the central North Island with an elevation of 650ft. For those who know New Zealand it is 25 nautical miles west of Lake Taupo – a very large lake in the middle of New Zealand's North Island. The Taumarunui strip was built to support agricultural top dressing, using aircraft to spread fertilizer on local farms, hence why the strip is relatively long for such a small community. At its peak aerial-topdressing Douglas DC-3s were flying into the strip and filling up with fertilizer for spreading on land in the district.

It was a relatively straightforward flight from Whanganui to Taumarunui, being effectively due north with a slight dog-leg over the small central North Island town of Raetihi to allow for forced landing options. The largest mountain in the North Island (and active volcano), Mt Ruapehu at 9,200ft, is only a few nautical miles to the east of track – so long as one kept the mountain slightly to the right, one couldn't get lost. No matter how many times I have flown this route, the sight of a snow-capped active volcano is breath-taking.



The views to port (the northern tip of the South Island) and starboard (the southern tip of the North Island), over Cook Strait

Landing at Taumarunui, the longest part of this stop was the taxi to and from the aircraft parking area – where we conducted, what can only be described as a Formula One-esque pit-stop. The fuel was waiting and we refuelled, checked the oil and aircraft and we were back taxiing down the strip in under 10min for the 1h 30min leg to Ardmore. With Taumarunui being in a basin, surrounded by hills, one has to climb out over the field before setting course. However, as luck would have it, with the big high pressure slowly moving toward New Zealand visibility was fantastic and I could clearly see my waypoint, the eastern side of Mt Pirongia 50 nautical

miles away (a 3,150ft mountain to the west of Hamilton city). All I had to do was steer to the eastern slope of the mountain, remain below 2,500ft to stay out of Hamilton's control zone, and head north – easy.

ALMOST HOME

It was another spectacular leg, with the autumnal light in the late afternoon sun, gliding past the slopes of Mt Pirongia, the Tasman Sea glinting to the west, the Waikato plans off to the east – magic!



Safely tucked up in the NZ Warbirds hangar at Ardmore

Pretty soon we were passing Huntly, a large power station in the upper Waikato region, which is a good marker, with its large smoke stacks, that one is almost home. The visibility remained incredible and from Huntly we could see Rangitoto Island, an 850ft extinct volcano in the middle of Auckland harbour, 50 nautical miles away. All we had to do was head towards it and we were home. Getting close to Ardmore, following Auckland's Southern Motorway in the late afternoon sun was a very special way to bring an aircraft back to where she had been based in the 1970s and 1980s.

Joining overhead at Ardmore, New Zealand's busiest airfield, we were lucky that flying seemed to have ended for the day – it was just us alone in the still, cool evening air. I was slightly concerned that my cold and stiff feet and knees would make landing on runway 21's grass a challenge, but this fear did not eventuate. With an uneventful landing and large cheers from both of us, we taxied to one of the New Zealand Warbird hangars. It was time to put her to bed – not quite believing we had flown a Tiger Moth in the coldest part of the year thus far, virtually the length of New Zealand with six fuel stops and no issues. In fact, the more we flew AKC the better she performed. This is a testament to the care and maintenance provided by the previous owner and his maintenance shop.

After sorting out the aircraft, we wandered down to the New Zealand Warbirds bar to have a beer, stand by the roaring fire (to defrost) and reflect on an incredible flight. □

INTO THE OVERSHOOT

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



WALKING ON AIR

On 23rd June Warden Elizabeth Walkinshaw took to wing-walking in the skies above Rendcomb Airfield in Gloucestershire on one of AeroSuperBatics' Boeing Stearman biplanes. The flight was in aid of the Royal Air Forces Association, for which a considerable sum of money was raised. Elizabeth will henceforth be known as Warden Wingwalkingshaw... □



STAMP OF APPROVAL

UK Royal Mail has a special series of stamps to mark the 60th display season of Company Affiliated Unit the Red Arrows. Royal Mail says: "Each stamp in the main set of eight tells a story of precision, skill and sheer daring as the Red Arrows paint the sky with their trademark red, white and blue trails. An additional sheet of four stamps showcases the Red Arrows' performances on the world stage, including iconic landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower; the Pyramids in Egypt and Niagara Falls." The stamps are available from www.royalmail.com/redarrows and by telephone on +44 3457 641 641: a presentation pack including all 12 stamps is priced at £22.00. □



CATALINA COMMEMORATION

Over 16th-18th July Liveryman Jeff Boyling flew a tribute to the aircrew of World War Two Coastal Command with the Consolidated PB5 Catalina *Miss Pickup*. Timed to mark the 80th anniversary of the award in 1944 of the Victoria Cross to F/O John Cruickshank after the sinking of U-Boat U-361 in which he and his crew suffered one fatality and numerous injuries to themselves and their Catalina [full story in *Air Pilot* August 2020], the tribute included a flyover of the now-104-year-old Cruickshank's Aberdeen home. The Catalina was also due to fly over Lerwick, where Cruickshank's navigator is buried, and other Scottish sites linked to Coastal Command including Sullom Voe, where Cruickshank beached his stricken aircraft in 1944. □