



# Air Pilot

APRIL 2018 ISSUE 26





# AIR PILOT

THE HONOURABLE  
COMPANY OF  
AIR PILOTS  
incorporating  
Air Navigators

**PATRON:**

His Royal Highness  
The Prince Philip  
Duke of Edinburgh KG KT

**GRAND MASTER:**

His Royal Highness  
The Prince Andrew  
Duke of York KG GCVO

**MASTER:**

Captain Colin Cox

**CLERK:**

Paul J Tacon BA FCIS

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

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# Diary

## APRIL 2018

1st	RAF Centenary Service	St. Clement Danes
10th	Court Lunch with the Poulterers	Cutlers' Hall
11th	Cobham Lecture	RAF Club
12th	General Purposes & Finance Committee	Cutlers' Hall
14th	Pilot Careers Live	Heathrow
18th	AST/APT	Dowgate Hill House
19th	Air Pilots Benevolent Fund	Dowgate Hill House
20th	RAF Centenary Banquet	Guildhall
25th	Luncheon Club	RAF Club

## MAY 2018

10th	General Purposes & Finance Committee	Cutlers' Hall
10th	Court	Cutlers' Hall
24th	Livery Dinner	Drapers' Hall

## JUNE 2018

14th	General Purposes & Finance Committee	Cutlers' Hall
26th	Election of Sheriffs	Guildhall
27th	AST/APT	Dowgate Hill House
28th	T&A Committee	Dowgate Hill House

## VISITS PROGRAMME

Please see the flyers accompanying this issue of Air Pilot or contact Liveryman David Curgenven at visits@airpilots.org.

These flyers can also be downloaded from the Company's website.

Please check on the Company website for visits that are to be confirmed.

## GOLF CLUB EVENTS

Please check on Company website for latest information

Cover photo: A Bombardier CRJ-200 as flown by Upper Freeman Capt. John Daly for SkyWest Airlines. It was taken at sunrise in Palm Springs, California in 2012. John also runs a professional photography website <https://2-john-daly.pixels.com/> Do not be surprised to see more of his fine work in the magazine!

# A message from your Editor...

Another year starts for the Company, its Master, and the Court. The issues remain largely unchanged from 12 months ago: whilst we have shifted from our Cobham House office, the transaction has yet to complete, and our new Master will be in charge of finding a new permanent home. On a slightly broader canvas, aviation is beginning to occupy more Government time. Brexit continues to loom large over aviation in the UK. The CAA has recently told a Parliamentary committee that it has done no work on planning for a 'standalone' regulatory solution post-Brexit, because continued participation (in some form) in EASA is, in its view, the only sensible outcome. The All-Party Parliamentary Group in General Aviation is beginning to gain momentum (see News).



The long-postulated Third Runway for the South-East of England is a topic of great interest to many members. Recent press coverage has raised questions about whether the owners of Heathrow (an international consortium headed by Ferrovial, but including a Canadian pensions giant, a Singaporean investment fund, the Qatari Sovereign Wealth Fund, the China Investment Corporation, and Britain's beleaguered Universities Superannuation Scheme) are the most cost-effective managers of such a large project. They have a habit of spending uneconomic amounts on capital projects – some of which work goes to Ferrovial subsidiaries, creating an obvious conflict of interest.

Heathrow Holdings paid dividends of £525m last year, yet allowed gearing to drift up to 87%. If LHR were to be granted permission for the third runway, should they be allowed to push up debt further? Should the CAA let LHR bump up passenger charges (currently at the top end of global levels at £20 a head)? The CAA and the Secretary of State for Transport (Chris Grayling) have much on their plates.

*Paul Smiddy - Editor*

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# News Round Up

## BIGGIN HILL

The management of Biggin Hill airport has given 6 months' notice to all flying schools to cease training at the airport. This announcement came at broadly the same time as one giving the news that the airport had received planning consent to construct a hotel adjacent to where the schools currently operate.

GA in the South East of England is under threat as never before.

## APPG UPDATE

The latest update from the APPG spokesman Matthew Bolshaw: It's been a busy couple of months since I gave my last update to stakeholders about the work of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on General Aviation.

Firstly, since our stakeholder list has pretty much doubled in the last couple of months a brief recap is called for.

### Who we are and what we do

This All-Party Group (APPG on GA) was set up just over a year ago to become the voice of General Aviation in Parliament, which of course leads into the Aviation sector as a whole. We support the Government's official objective of making the United Kingdom the best country in the world for General Aviation. Our focus on General Aviation supports the wider Aviation Sector, worth a staggering £60 billion a year to the UK economy.

In the past you may have felt that General Aviation was a subject on the margins of interest for our parliamentarians, so it's pleasing to report that our APPG now has 146 parliamentary members from across all parties and both Houses of Parliament. They're an influential bunch, including 13 former Cabinet Ministers, 4 former Transport Ministers and even a current party leader.

The Department of Transport is of course the main Whitehall sponsor for aviation, but until we got going it was difficult to get them involved. That has all

changed with real engagement from the Secretary of State Chris Grayling, and Aviation Minister Baroness Sugg. They are now battling the case for General Aviation more broadly in Whitehall and it's starting to pay dividends.

### What's been happening?

Since my last update we have set up four Working Groups. These are on Airfields, Airspace, Tax & Regulation and Heritage Aircraft. They are filled with experts from across General Aviation. We are delighted to be working closely with organisations such as AOPA, GAAC, BGA and many... many more. We hope that with our strong voice in Parliament we can progress changes needed by these organisations and by General Aviation as a whole.

### Where can I find out the detail?

You can download the Work Programmes for each of the first three Working Groups on our website:

Airfields:

<http://www.generalaviationappg.uk/airfields/>

Airspace:

<http://www.generalaviationappg.uk/airspace/>

Tax & Regs:

<http://www.generalaviationappg.uk/tax-and-regulations/>

And, as you'll see, each Group is undertaking a huge schedule of work!

More details on the Heritage Working Group will be added to the website following its inaugural meeting next week.

I should say that we are extremely grateful to the Working Groups and the support we receive from the various organisations and individuals. Without them we would not be able to obtain all the relevant information needed when we approach the various Ministers.

### General Aviation is getting recognised at last!

One of the biggest issues facing General Aviation is ensuring that a network of airfields survive. Nearly all our

aerodromes were built during the two World Wars and once they close, they're gone for good.

The document which controls planning policy is called the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and last week a formal redraft was launched by the Government consultation. We are delighted to report that General Aviation gets a specific paragraph of its own for the first time. This should prove critical in trying to stem airfield closures.

The new paragraph states: "*Planning policies should [...] recognise the importance of maintaining a national network of general aviation facilities – taking into account their economic value in serving business, leisure, training and emergency service needs, and the Government's General Aviation strategy*".

This is a step in the right direction, but it doesn't go far enough. So the APPG is therefore preparing further amendments to the NPPF and we'll be writing back to you to ask you to respond to the Government's consultation with the amendments General Aviation needs to be able to continue to provide the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics jobs and economic growth.

## STOL COMPETITION

Inveterate expedition organiser, Upper Freeman Sam Rutherford, is organising a STOL competition – on a Belgian beach (Knokke Heist) – on 14-17 June. As he lives in Belgium, one expects he knows where the sand is landable! As ever with Sam, vintage aircraft are encouraged, but this time modern types are also welcome. More details are available to those who register on the website <http://www.zouteairtrophy.com/>

## LAST FLIGHTS

Air Chief Marshal Sir Peter Squire died on February 19, 2018, at the early age of 72. A former leader of the Reds, the highlight of Sir Peter's operational flying was probably his command of 1(F) Sqn

during the Falklands War. He was CAS from April 2000 to August 2003, and was one of the most widely liked – by all ranks – men to have held that role in recent years. Sir Peter joined the Company when Group Captain in 1986, was made Liveryman in 1998, and received a Master Air Pilot certificate in 2008.



### INTER LIVERY PANCAKE RACE

Victory for the Air Pilots! Eloise from our office won the Ladies Race, held as usual, in Guildhall Yard.

### FIRST NAVAL AIR SQUADRON EMBARKS ON CARRIER

The two Merlin Mk2 helicopters of 820 NAS, usually based at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose, have been working with HMS Queen Elizabeth since she sailed for the first time from Rosyth in June last year. Until 5 February however, the Squadron's aircraft, equipment and personnel had been based ashore and simply flown on and off the ship. But from that day the Squadron have been living and operating from the ship 24 hours a day. The Merlins have joined two additional Merlins, from the Aircraft Test and Evaluation Centre at MOD Boscombe Down, and two Chinooks already on-board.



### RAF CENTENARY BANQUET

Those who have applied for tickets for the RAF Centenary Banquet to be held at the Guildhall on Friday April 20th, should already have been notified whether their application has been successful. Please note that this event is not organised by the Company.

### 2017 DAWN TO DUSK

The Company took a higher profile than usual in the recent awards ceremony for last year's competition. The awards were sponsored by Pooleys, hence the attendance of Sebastian Pooley. The then Master, Chris Spurrier, presented the awards.



*Master Chris Spurrier and Paula Spurrier*



*Past Master Chris Hodgkinson looks surprised*



*Sebastian Pooley with a peace offering of a poignard for Past Master Clive Elton*



*Master Chris Spurrier with Sebastian Pooley*



*Sebastian Pooley with prizewinners*



*Past Master Peacock-Edwards presents a Master Air Navigator certificate to Robin Suckling*

# Profile of the new Master Captain Colin Cox

**By the Editor**

Colin was destined to be a pilot, born as he was at West Middlesex Hospital in West London, under the approach paths of Heathrow Airport's westerly runways. His mother and father were both employed by one of the forerunners of British Airways, the British Overseas Airways Corporation, better known as BOAC.

In 1957 Colin's father secured a position in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) in a town called Chingola near the Congolese border. Shortly afterwards, at the age of four Colin's mother took him out to join his father on his first flight, in a BOAC Argonaut (G-ALHV), initially under the command of a certain Captain D.H. Hider, routing London-Rome-Benghazi-Khartoum-Entebbe-Ndola.

This flight is documented in a Junior Jet Club logbook issued at the time by BOAC when Captain O.P. Jones was in charge of the Junior Jet Club, an innovative idea to get young people enthused with aviation. That same Captain O.P. Jones is to be seen in that

well-documented early Guild photograph of the famous meeting at Rules restaurant in 1930. Little did Colin know of the significance of this at the tender age of four. Interestingly Captain Hider took Colin back to Ndola in a BOAC VC10 in December 1967 – direct! How things had changed in just the short space of 10 years back in those days.

Africa's power struggles were not very different in the early 1960s from what they are today. Furthermore, Congo's problems looked like spilling over the border causing Colin's parents to re-evaluate the family's position. A decision was made to return to the UK and Colin eventually found himself attending Isleworth Grammar School, this time directly under the approach path of Heathrow's newly-designated RW27R.

Moving along, in February 1969, an insurance policy matured which Colin's father had taken out when he was born, and he was given the £100 maturity value to pursue his dream of becoming a

pilot. At the age of 16 he enrolled with Air Gregory at Denham and commenced training on a Cessna 150 at the exorbitant rate of £8 7s 6d an hour. Three months after his 17th birthday he gained his PPL and had now achieved his first step towards a career in aviation.

Needless to say, the path was not an easy one, but now was a carefree time for Colin and he worked at all sorts of part-time jobs to pay for as many hours he could muster to consolidate on his new-found passion. Meanwhile he was studying for the requisite educational qualifications in order to gain entry to the College of Air Training at Hamble in Hampshire. Successfully achieving this end, Colin was accepted for a course starting in September 1971, but his dreams were dashed when the first oil crisis of the 70s hit, and the offer of a place was withdrawn. This was his first taste of the peaks and troughs of elation and disappointment that have dogged the working lives of many a pilot throughout their careers.

By this time Colin's father had accepted a job with Ethiopian Airlines in Addis Ababa, in what would nowadays be known as their IT department. With early aspirations of entering the airlines now scuppered, Colin decamped to join the family in Ethiopia where he found



1991 Stansted

1992 Saumur



1993 Livery Certificate



work as a trainee computer programmer through his father's connections in that particular discipline. At the same time, he established a rapport with a couple of American ground engineers working for Ethiopian Airlines who owned respectively a C172 and a PA28, and were quite happy to let Colin have the use of their aeroplanes at cost.

A book can be written about scaring off feral cattle from field strips and all sorts of adventures that Colin had in those days, but that will have to be left for another time. Work permit issues unfortunately dictated that Colin had to leave Ethiopia, but he was offered a position as a computer programmer in Johannesburg. Whilst in Joburg one day he got wind of the fact that Hamble was recruiting again so he reapplied immediately. Returning to England and, having passed the selection process once, it was simply a case of updating his CV and he was offered a second chance, finally entering Hamble in April 1974.

Graduating in 1976 to a 'no job in BA' scenario, (BOAC and BEA had by then merged) and armed with 250 hours and a Frozen ATPL, Colin took an Assistant Flying Instructor's course at Booker Airfield with a venerable instructor called John Loveridge, checking out at

Blackbushe with an equally venerable, though somewhat intimidating examiner, John Varley. Colin passed the test with Capt. Varley's less than inspiring endorsement ringing in his ears even to this day, "I suppose you will make some sort of reasonably proficient apprentice Assistant Flying Instructor."

That was on a Friday. He adjourned to the Flying Club bar to celebrate (no surprise there!), and bumped into an ex-Hamble colleague who informed him that there was an AFI position going in Amman, Jordan. Having elicited the appropriate telephone number, the following Wednesday he found himself delivering a brand-new Piper Seneca from CSE Aviation, Kidlington to the Royal Jordanian Air Academy in Amman. The twists and turns of aviation – funny old business!

Sqn. Ldr. Lee Jones (first leader of the Red Arrows) was the Director of the Academy at the time and through a policy of Staff Continuation Training, many CFS A1 and A2 instructors passed on their invaluable experience of low-level formation and aerobatic experience to Colin.

Almost two years later and now at the ripe old age of 25, it was time to move on. Colin returned to the UK and was faced with the depressingly familiar story

of no airline jobs. Luckily, through the good offices of a friend, he was able to secure a position with a small company called Eastern Air Executive at Sturgate Airfield in Lincolnshire under the stewardship of the late Air Cdre. E.W. Merriman.

Operating just three PA23 Aztecs, a Cessna 421C Golden Eagle, and a BE200 King Air, this was a thoroughly enjoyable interlude in Colin's flying career. Cutting one's teeth by operating in the most demanding of conditions to some of Britain's most challenging far-flung northern outposts in the days of the North Sea oil boom should be the apprenticeship of every budding airline pilot. Colin was certainly privileged to have had access to the experience, although this fact was probably not quite appreciated to its fullest at the time.

All comes to he who waits, however, and the answer to Colin's prayers came in 1979 with an advertisement in Flight International magazine: "Boeing 707 F/Os required – no experience necessary". Colin answered the ad with the cheeky claim that he had studied B707 systems, which indeed he had, at Hamble (along with Viscount systems, VC10 systems, Concorde systems etc). Well, to cut a long story short, he got the job: Transasian Airlines (aka, Templewood



1995 Chairman



2015 Pudsey

2016  
Camping it  
up with  
Wally Upton



Aviation, Tempair) – the last of Britain’s great ‘cowboy outfits’. They went bust as Air Transcontinental in 1980 when they made the mistake of putting their three B720Bs on the British civil register. The one leased B707 was on the American register. So, out of work and not having been paid for three months things were not looking too bright when, out of the blue.....along came Monarch Airlines to the rescue.

Monarch had a lien on the aircraft through their maintenance subsidiary, Monarch Airlines Engineering Limited, having carried out Transasian’s maintenance at Luton. Of course, MAEL hadn’t been paid either. The one thing Colin did have by now was the magic Boeing 707/720 endorsement on his licence, and Monarch picked up one of the contracts Transasian had with Air Malta. Finally, Colin had secured a position with a reputable airline!

In the course of his time with Monarch, Colin found the lady who was to become his ‘constant companion’ (as he and Denise joked about their relationship at the time), marrying in July 1981. During their courtship Colin felt it incumbent upon him to take Denise down to Hamble to see his old stomping grounds. On the day they turned up it just so happened that Liveryman David Lewry and fellow Hamble instructor, Roy Noyes were taking a Cherokee up for an air test/jolly and offered Denise a

ride. David and Denise continue to remain firm friends to this day.

The B720s were gradually phased out of Monarch’s operations, and Colin transferred to the B737 for a short while before being given the opportunity to go to Seattle for a B757 conversion. The lure of the East proved too much however and, whilst Cathay Pacific had always been an exotic but unattainable dream, one day the news came through that his application to join that highly regarded airline had borne fruit and Cathay were offering him a course on the mighty Boeing 747.

Sad though it was to leave Monarch, a whole new chapter in Colin’s life was opening up and one that was to see him through right up to the present day.

For once, Colin happened to be in the right place at the right time. Cathay had just embarked upon a rapid period of expansion, and Colin gained his command on the 747 is a little under four years at the age of just 35. Three years later Colin was offered the position of Training Captain and then Check Captain, a position he subsequently retained throughout his flying career with CX which totalled thirty-three years in all.

Early 1991 and the First Gulf War had kicked off. Cathay became involved with Operation Granby, leasing a white-tailed B747 Freighter to the MoD, based initially out of Stansted, and subsequently

Brize Norton. Up until this point Cathay’s passenger flights had operated into London Gatwick Airport, rather than the perceived jewel-in-the-crown of Heathrow and leasing an aircraft to the ‘cause’ secured Heathrow landing rights. Who said the Swire Group were daft?

Operations were conducted under an RAF callsign of Ascot 888 (a very lucky number in Chinese), ostensibly flying non-contentious supplies to Dhahran in Saudi Arabia. The aircraft (VR-HVY) was painted completely white and, as a result, became known to crews as the ‘Stealth Freighter’. Some wires got crossed in the Cathay Flight Operations Department, and Colin was called in to see if he would like to volunteer to take part. CX ideally wanted ex-military personnel for the exercise, and Colin played along with the misapprehension that he had served in the RAF until it was too late for them to do anything about it. This had been too good an opportunity to miss. During the Falklands War of 1982 there had been some talk of the MoD requisitioning Monarch’s B757 aircraft as troop carriers, and Denise was going to hide Colin away in the loft so that he could not be press-ganged into service. Ten years of married life later she was only too happy for her husband to take part in this particular venture. She couldn’t pack his bags quickly enough!



2018 Despatch

2016  
With some of our  
affiliated unit



# Profile of the new Warden

## Captain Robin B Keegan FRAeS

### By the Editor

Robin's lifelong love of aviation was triggered by his first flight as a passenger in a Vickers Viscount aircraft at the age of eleven. He immediately tried to join the Air Training Corps but had to wait until the minimum enrolment age of 13. During his teens he enjoyed all the cadet activities and summer camps on RAF Stations, both in the UK and Germany. Latterly he was awarded a Flying Scholarship and Gliding A & B certificate, and became a Cadet Warrant Officer.

On leaving school, he applied to join the RAF as a pilot on an 8 year short service commission and underwent the 4-day selection process. On successful completion of the selection procedure, the RAF offered him pilot training but on the condition he signed on for 16 years. This seemed like a lifetime at that young age he says, so subsequently he turned his ambition towards civil aviation.

A short period as a PPL Assistant Flying Instructor was followed by him joining an executive aircraft operator who sponsored him for a CPL/IR. The condition was that Robin stayed for three years but they then offered to sponsor him for an ATPL so he eventually stayed for 10. The first aircraft was a Piper PA31 Navajo but this was quickly followed by a Beechcraft King Air. This was a "brilliant" aeroplane to fly - incredibly reliable and extremely versatile, able to land not only at major airports but also able to land on grass strips using reverse thrust as the aircraft was fitted with balloon tyres. The PT6 turboprop engines together with cabin pressurisation made it very comfortable for the passengers. As there was no operational support, everything had to be done by the pilots from planning routes, arranging handling agents updating airway manuals, serving inflight drinks and even baggage handling! It proved to be a fantastic apprenticeship for Robin and he loved every minute of it.

One memorable event was landing at a

small grass airfield in central France which in reality was only a gliding site. There was very little available information about the airfield and no ATC. "As a precaution, we circled the airfield several times before landing. The passengers were whisked away in chauffeur driven cars and we settled down for a cup of coffee awaiting their return. After a short while, there was a knock on the door and it seemed like half the local village population, having heard the aircraft coming in to land, had decided to come and have a look around the aircraft all taking their shoes off in turn at the bottom of the aircraft steps before entering!"

Robin then joined Britannia Airways where he stayed for the rest of his career first on the Boeing 737-200. It was on this aircraft that he became a Training First Officer teaching technical ground school to new recruits in the classroom and was subsequently promoted to Captain after 7 years.

When Flight Data Monitoring was introduced to Britannia, Robin became the first 'Honest Broker', being the only person who could identify and subsequently talk to the crew members concerned following an event which had been identified by FDM.

The 737-200 was being phased out and Robin changed fleets to become dual-rated on the Boeing 757/767 where he became a Line Training Captain progressing to Type Rating Instructor and finally Type Rating Examiner. Most of all he loved flying the RB211 powered B757. He likens it to the GTI version of an airliner that had bags of take-off performance, fantastic braking capability and probably the most attractive looking profile when airborne. "We even flew them Trans-Atlantic to Florida although this did require the occasional 'splash and dash' refuelling at Bangor when flying Westbound if the winds were not in our favour." Half a season of Hajj flying on the B767-300 was also memorable, operating 11 - 12 hour sectors from



Indonesia to Jeddah with 3 pilots and a crew bunk installed in order to take in-flight rest. Another fleet change onto the B737-800NG was on the cards before retirement.

Robin joined GAPAN at the start of his professional flying career and has been a member ever since. After a long period of service on the Technical and Air Safety Committee ended, he then joined the Aviation Careers and Education Committee, shortly thereafter becoming Chair where he remains to this day. In this role he is also a Trustee Director of the Livery Schools Link Charity. Other current trustee roles include as Secretary of the Air Pilots Benevolent Fund and as a trustee of two pension funds. He was elected to the Court in 2015 and regularly assists in manning the Honourable Company stand at the Guildhall Careers Showcase event for schools and also helps with debriefing candidates at the Company Aptitude Assessment Days held at RAF Cranwell. Last year he sat on the interview panel for the award of the City University Bursaries.

Robin is married to Eileen, and they have two adult children and five grandchildren. For relaxation, he enjoys riding his Harley-Davidson motorbike but mainly in warmer summer weather. He is very proud that he was born at St. Bartholomew's Hospital and that his middle name is taken from the place where he was born. "If I am fortunate enough to progress to Master of the Honourable Company, I will be the head of a City Livery Company who was actually born in the City of London. I don't know of many Masters who can claim that"!

# The Master's Message

By Captain Colin Cox

Spring is a time of renewal and each year heralds the arrival of a new Master, a new Warden and new Assistants to the Court. I took the opportunity at my Installation at the recent AGM of congratulating all those who had been elected or re-elected to serve their respective terms. I would also like to reiterate here my heartfelt thanks to the tremendous effort our IPM Chris Spurrier, and his wife Paula, put in during the past year in representing our Company, often over and above the call of duty. In particular Chris has overseen our move from 9 Warwick Court and, at the time of writing, it can only be hoped that we might soon see a conclusion to the process so that we can start our search for a new home.

I have recently retired from Cathay Pacific Airways having been tempted by the lure of the Orient over thirty-three years ago. It was back in 1985 that I joined the then Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators, progressing through the ranks of various committees until becoming Chairman of the HK Region in 1995. I cannot help but be quite proud of the fact that I am the first Master to have come through the HK Region and in that regard, I feel that part of my remit as Master, specifically during my term, is to foster the renewal of the enthusiasm for our Company and all it stands for throughout our worldwide network. I know that our Regional Chairmen and their committees do not lack in enthusiasm themselves, and I hope to engage with them in expanding our membership by promoting the values of the Company as outlined in the Strategic Review, so ably compiled under the stewardship of Master Elect, Malcolm White.

For me 1985 does seem only like yesterday. It is a truism that the older one gets the faster the years seem to pass by. However, the Fast Forward button has been pressed and here we are in 2018 and the Chinese Year of the Dog. It might seem strange my mentioning this, but it is in keeping with acknowledging my connection with Hong Kong.

Come April 1st we will find ourselves joining with Britain's Royal Air Force in

commemorating its centenary year. We will be celebrating with them at various events, but this is 'their show', and our contribution to the celebrations will be very much confined to lending our support. That said we have commissioned a sword through Past Master Robert Pooley's company to be presented at a City Livery Centennial Tribute Banquet at Guildhall in London later this month. Another exciting development in the offing is our coming affiliation with HMS Prince of Wales, the second of the United Kingdom's Queen Elizabeth-Class aircraft carriers. We have been approached by the Senior Naval Officer of HMS Prince of Wales to discuss how best we can take this affiliation forward. Our formal affiliation will transfer with the decommissioning of HMS Ocean.

We will continue with our usual mix of committee activity across our areas of interest: technical, educational, charitable and benevolence. On the social side we can promise a rich and diverse programme of events being put together by David Curgenven and his team on the Visits Committee. The Luncheon Club continues to thrive with Past Master Chris Ford having taken on the mantle of organising these very popular events. We mustn't forget the Flying Club too and here we congratulate Richie Piper on taking over the helm from Dacre Watson after many years, ably assisted by John Denyer as secretary.

I can promise you a very interesting Garden Party this year as we have been invited to participate in a celebration marking another centenary - that of the end of the First World War, which is being held over the weekend of 8th-9th September at Highclere Castle (aka Downton Abbey). Along with the Royal Air Force we shall be having a presence on Sunday 9th September when a memorial is to be unveiled after which we can expect to witness various aeronautical 'treats'. We shall be earnestly invoking the power of the 'weather gods' but, over the years, September has proven to be a good month, so we must all keep our fingers crossed that continues to be the case.



1980 Cherokee

2018 Chocks On



So far, so good. What I would like to say is, that in my year as Master, expect continuation and consolidation on what we as a Company have achieved and continue to achieve year after year. Our finances are still on a solid footing, through the good offices of our Hon. Treasurer, Nick Goulding, but one area where we must proceed with caution is getting the choice of our new home right. We have done well so far in achieving a satisfactory outcome with the sale of Cobham House, no small thanks being due to the sterling efforts of our Learned Clerk, IPM Chris Spurrier and Past Master Peter Benn. A small Premises Working Group is being formed to oversee the search for new offices, but we are not going to be pressed into making a hasty decision. For the time being the arrangement we have entered into at Dowgate Hill House serves our purposes as a perfectly adequate interim measure.

Finally, I commend to you the Strategic Review that I have already mentioned. We continue to seek to expand our membership (an exhortation every Master will make) and if anyone asks, as they continue to do, "What are we all about?", the answers lie in the mission statements summarised in that document. There is much to do and I could go on at length about the many and varied matters our teams are actively

involved in through our committees, all volunteering their services unstintingly.

Every Master has his own personal ambition for the year ahead. As I mentioned before, my main thrust will be to engage with the Regions, but I would also really like to engage with our young members with whom the future of this Company lies. To do that, us old 'fuddy duddies' are going to have to get with it. Get on Facebook – it's not dangerous! Get your grandchildren to protect you through the appropriate use of its security settings. You probably wouldn't be looking for a job through LinkedIn but it's another useful media tool for keeping in touch. Then there's Twitter. Sign up for a Twitter account.

You don't have to be the Donald Trump of Stow-on-the-Wold. In fact, you don't have to tweet at all, but there's some useful information out there which will keep you up to speed with whatever you choose – as it happens.

This is especially true in our case with relation to the aviation industry. I wonder how many of you know that we have our own presence on Twitter through our Publicity Guru - Ben Griffiths. It's not the future, it's now, and we're going to get cast aside as an irrelevance if, as an organisation, we don't embrace the 'now'.

I could fill the pages of this periodical, but I must draw this piece to a close now

as the publication deadline looms and I will be subject to the disapprobation of our Honorary Editor, Mr Paul Smiddy, who does such a sterling job putting together Air Pilot magazine.

I thank each and every one of you for supporting our organisation in whichever way you seek to do so, whether it be through fly-ins, luncheon club, golf society, whatever. We can always do with more help on the organisational front however, so if you have some time available please do consider throwing your hat in the ring. Your contribution will be very welcome and through doing so you will help our Honourable Company of Air Pilots in continuing to flourish, root and branch.

## The Company's Annual General Meeting 12th March 2018

### By the Editor

Captain Colin Cox was installed as Master for the Company's 89th year, in succession to Captain Chris Spurrier, with IPM Peter Benn joining the back benches. Very recently retired from Cathay, Colin's full profile can be found on page 6. Warden Malcolm White therefore becomes Master Elect, and Captain Robin Keegan was elected to become the new Warden; his profile is on page 8.

After the annual service at St Michael's Cornhill, conducted by our Honorary Chaplains, the congregation repaired to Merchant Taylors' Hall for the AGM and Installation ceremony. Master Chris Spurrier presented his annual report (to be found on the Company website) – yet again the year had been dominated by the challenge of withdrawing from our head office building. The perhaps lesser challenge of finding a replacement falls to our new Master.

The Learned Clerk presented the report of the Hon. Treasurer, Liveryman Nick Goulding, in the latter's absence. The Honourable Company's financial result for the year ended 30 September 2017 was a satisfactory operating surplus of 1.1% compared with 4.6% in 2016 (the 2016 percentage as adjusted for the significant windfall donation received that year).

Fees, quarterage and Livery fines in 2017 were 3.49% higher than in 2016 while Investment income declined by 10% due to the effect of part of the portfolio being placed on deposit pending investment. Total operating income in the year was therefore 1.3% lower than 2016 (after adjusting for the windfall donation re-ceived that year).

Operating expenditure in 2017 was some 2.29% higher than the level incurred in 2016, mainly due to inflation related cost increases.

In addition to the operating surplus, the Honourable Company benefitted from realised and unrealised capital gains on its investment portfolio which amounted to 30% of total recurring income (2016 – 34%). These gains were reflected also in the value of the Honourable Company's investments which increased by 6.7%. As a result, the balance sheet at 30th September 2017 indicated that net assets had increased in the year by 5%. The financial result for 2017 can therefore reasonably be regarded as a satisfactory outcome."

The Treasurer also indicated that whilst the Honourable Company's budget for 2018 envisaged a small operating deficit, due to the costs of moving office, this was before taking into account any



*Our new Master, Captain Colin Cox*

investment gains or losses which may arise in the year. Therefore, a degree of caution should continue to be exercised in anticipating the potential outturn. Regular monitoring of income and expenditure against the budget would continue throughout the year so that appropriate action could be taken if it became necessary. Similarly, the performance of the Honourable Company's investment portfolio, which had benefitted in recent years from the general increases in capital markets valuations but was also exposed to the recent market correction, would be carefully monitored.

In conclusion, the Treasurer expressed his grateful thanks to the Learned Clerk and

his staff for their willing help and support throughout the year. He also thanked the other members of the General Purposes and Finance Committee and the Auditors for their professional assistance.

The results of the Court Elections were announced: Liverymen John Denyer, Jonathan Legat, Rick Thomas and Marion Wooldridge were re-elected; and the Court welcomes Liverymen Elizabeth Walkinshaw, Richard Hall, and Ed Pooley as newly elected members. The new Court was sworn in, the appointments of the Company's Honorary Officers were confirmed, and the new Master, Colin Cox, was installed. Afterwards Colin and his wife Denise greeted members and guests at a champagne reception before dinner in the Great Hall.

In his speech Colin took a certain pride in becoming the first Master to come through from the Regions. He looked forward to our impending affiliation with HMS Prince of Wales, the second of our Queen Elizabeth-Class aircraft carriers. He recounted how he had attended the annual Field Day of our associated unit, the London Wing of the Air Training Corps, and had been much impressed by the air-mindedness of the youth on display that day. On a less PC note, our new Master gave some examples of how his name has been mispronounced in cabin PA announcements over the years in Cathay!

Colin concluded with the Company's traditional toast - "The Honourable Company of Air Pilots, may it flourish root and branch forever."

*The Master and Su Ingle await the start of the first waltz*



*The Master, IPM and Wardens with our Beadle*



*Paula Spurrier hands the Consort's badge to Denise Cox*



*The Beadle guards the pedestrian crossing enroute to the service*



*The new Master greets PM Hugh Field*



*The Assistants who attended the AGM*



*The new Master shares a moment with Past Master Clive Elton*



*The Master Elect overcomes his natural reticence*



*The Master, Denise Cox and the Beadle enjoy a joke*

# From the Desk of the Director Aviation Affairs

**Liveryman John Turner**

In these changing times, it was good to see the British government finally make it clear that they wished to remain within EASA after Brexit. Although the intent is only the first step, its announcement by the Prime Minister last week was accompanied by news that UK would be ready to pay for its continued membership.

Logically, there could be no other course; EASA benefits from UK CAA involvement in a number of its work streams, and EU airlines and other aviators benefit from unencumbered access to UK airspace and airfields in the same way that UK airlines and other aviators benefit from access to the EU. Let us hope that when negotiating the final arrangements no illogical barriers are generated.

Over the last year I have watched the progressive movement in direction of civilian drone development. Civilian drone tasks appear to be expanding from the surveying and monitoring roles in which they are highly successful, not only in mission accomplishment but also in reduced time and cost to completion, to thoughts – and some trials – of door-step delivery with supporting air traffic management concepts following close on

the developers' heels. Now the drone as 'flying taxi' is almost ubiquitous as designs spring up around the world, and from the stables of highly respected airplane builders such as Airbus. Googling "Airbus UAV" or "Boeing UAV" will show just how heavily involved both companies have become in civilian and military drone development.

Returning to the flying taxi, Airbus, Ehang, NASA, Lillium and many others are developing designs that will fly without passenger intervention; will it soon be routine for people without a pilot's licence of any sort to plan a trip by air? In January, the Times of London carried a report on the Autonomous Flight Y6S, which said it would be able to carry two people at up to 1,500 feet and 70 mph within an 80 mile radius of its controller. This would need approval to operate Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) – which is not unknown but currently restricted very much to the professional end of drone operations. What was really surprising about this lithium-ion powered vehicle was not its performance but its reported price point of £20,000 and operating costs of only £25 to take two commuters across London in less than 15 minutes.

These are exciting times as aviation continues to morph into new concepts and poses new challenges to regulators and operators alike. Still, as a once Experimental Test Pilot, I find myself wondering about how fail-safe and fail-operate will be incorporated into people-carrying 'drone' designs. Obviously there will no longer be an option for the safety case to state, "then the aircraft will produce a warning to which the trained pilot will react by taking control and flying manually." Will there instead be a set of lights – green, amber and red – that will indicate to the passenger that everything is working normally – green – that something has happened but the vehicle will continue to its planned destination (but will require maintenance before further trips) – amber – and that this journey will not end where (and perhaps how?) the passenger expected – RED?

In the early days of un-manned aviation, it was human nature to expect an unmanned flying object to be safe, simply because it was capable of flight like an airliner. Unmanned vehicle loss rates quickly pointed out that being able to fly, and being airworthy or safe, are not the same thing. Let us hope that, having celebrated an exceptionally safe year in jet commercial aviation in 2017, the lessons of software and system safety adopted so successfully in manned aviation can be transferred into the manned un-manned machines of the future.

## GAZETTE

APPROVED BY THE COURT 6 MARCH 2018

### ADMISSIONS

#### As Upper Freeman

William HOLLAND  
Pamela MELROY (AUS)  
Andrew WANGLER (AUS)  
Paul WATSON

#### As Freeman

Josephine COCKINGS  
James CONOLLY  
Cezar GALAN  
Thomas NIMENKO

#### As Associate

Gemma JEFFRIES

### ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE COURT 6 MARCH 2018

#### REGRADE

##### As Upper Freeman

Samuel CHEONG (HK)

#### REINSTATEMENT

##### As Upper Freeman

Richard ATKINSON

#### DECEASED

Christopher ORLEBAR  
James SHAW  
Sir Peter SQUIRE  
John THURLOW

#### RESIGNATIONS

Taghrid AKASHEH (OS)  
Robert COOK  
Ian D'ARCY-BEAN (OS)

Michael HOWARD

Gavin HOWSE (NZ)

David JONES

Graham JONES

Leslie OLDHAM

Jacquie PERRIN (NA)

Gus REED (OS)

Vijendra SINGH (NA)

Ian SMITH

Bader STEITYEH (OS)

Peter STOCKWELL (NZ)

James VERBURG

#### FORFEIT ALL BENEFITS

Richard BREAKSPEAR

Thomas DUNNE (NA)

# A different sort of aviation museum

By the Editor

Every pilot needs an understanding wife or partner. In this I am blessed: at the end of a joyous holiday in Sri Lanka last November, we had visited the war grave of my great uncle. Only 24 hours previously I had noticed that the nation's aviation museum was only a few kilometres from the cemetery. Tina was surprisingly acquiescent when I suggested a visit would make the perfect finale to our Asian trip!

The museum (<http://www.airforcemuseum.lk/>) is within an active base of the Sri Lankan Air Force (SLAF) at the former international airport at Kandawala in the

southern suburbs of the capital, Colombo. One passes the wonderful Art Deco old terminal building on the access road to the SLAF entrance, where visitors undergo an understandable level of enhanced security checks. The modern international airport of Bandaranaike (CMB) opened in 1967.

In a nation where air travel is more entrenched than in Europe, the importance of such a museum to encourage air-mindedness, and to inspire the young, is doubly important. The SLAF museum appears to be achieving high scores on both counts. At the time

of our visit (midweek, and not in school holidays as far as we could judge), it was absolutely mobbed.

One point of differentiation from, say, the RAF Museum, is that the staff are all serving SLAF members – predominantly NCOs. This makes a strong impression on the visitor from the outset. The SLAF uniform is almost identical to that of our Air Force – indeed the nation bears its colonial history with none of the jaundice that sometimes afflicts say the Indians, or the Malaysians. Furthermore, the staff with whom I conversed were universally charming, well turned out, and interested in my own aviation background. Having serving military around definitely enhances the recruitment power regarding the hordes of youths visiting the site. In the outsourced, privatised UK military of 2018, it is perhaps too much to hope that we would ever revert to this staffing practice.

The exhibits reflect well the country's transition from colonial satellite to independent nation. The older exhibits will be familiar to British enthusiasts with a plethora of Chippies, the occasional Pembroke or Prentice. More modern exhibits have Soviet provenance – reflecting the young nation's desire to cut its ties with mother! There are several SF 260s, which were employed in both the ground attack and training roles. Indeed some of the most interesting displays in the hangars relate to how the SLAF was used during the protracted civil war (1983 – 2009) against the Tamil Tigers. This included precision supply drops to the garrison at Jaffna, at the North of the island.

Two further points of contrast with British museums: firstly, there are plenty of airframes for children to crawl over, and through, and aircraft for adults to walk through, free of charge. An Avro 748 was particularly popular. Secondly, in the myriad of displays in the hangars is a column display which charts the career of the current CAS. It shows him undergoing his IOT, as a fresh-faced flight lieutenant on his first squadron, and



*Slumbering Dove*

*Low flying Chipmunk*



so on up through his career path. This underlines to young visitors that the way to the top is open to anyone, and is surely an idea worth stealing by British museums.

Amongst the aircraft exhibits, one that caught my eye was a microlight built by trainees, ostensibly from scaffold poles. The test pilot must have required some stiff drinks after his first flight in that. One hangar contained possibly then shiniest Chippie in the world. Goodness knows how many tins of Dulux gloss must have been used.

There is an extremely good value shop with which one can round off the visit. Overall it provided a very interesting couple of hours, and I would urge any member visiting the island put it in their schedule. Thanks are due to my wife Tina, for her forbearance (well, she later claimed she found the museum interesting), and the SLAF, for their hospitality.



*Rare Boulton Paul Balliol*



*Would you fly in this?*



*SF260s in line astern*



*A different sort of interactive display*



*The Avro 748 is popular*



*Possibly the shiniest Chippie in the world*

# The Inter-Livery Ski Championships, Morzine January 2018

By Upper Freeman Sam Rutherford

The Inter-Livery Ski Championships were founded in 2010 by George Bastin of the Ironmongers' Company. They provide an opportunity for liverymen and women to represent their own company in a unique 'international' event. Whether competitor or spectator it is a chance to meet members of our own company and many members of other livery companies. The event is a huge amount of fun, and the competition can be as serious (or not) as desired!

Ours is distinct from the other companies, most notably our 'relative' youth (the company, not the team

members!), our size (we are many times larger than any other company), and that we are nearly all actually active in the industry of our name. Unlike, for example, the Tanners, the Tallow Chandlers and the Weavers (to name but three).

In 2016 I took part for the first time as a solo Air Pilot. I thoroughly enjoyed it, but there was room for improvement (more, and faster, air pilots needed). Last year you may have seen various messages calling for skiers (successful, and including our honourable editor Paul Smiddy!), and this resulted in some

individual medals and one 5th place team result. Good, but still room for improvement. The call went out again... We fielded our biggest team ever this year (seven racers), to compete against 30 other livery companies. We had a great result, with two team bronze results (categories: fastest team, and best team – age corrected). Caroline Gough-Cooper (two gold medals, one bronze) and Will Fanshawe (one gold medal, two bronze) did particularly well.

The 10th running of the event will be 24-25 January 2019, again in Morzine – and I am still on the lookout for pilots on planks so do please get in touch if interested. I am particularly seeking the elusive Ladies Team result for which we need one more member of the fairer sex to have a shot at the trophy. Competitive, me? Of course not...



Air Pilot winners - Caroline, Will and Sam





# Air Pilots Luncheon Club, 53rd Lunch, 20th February 'Off The Beaten Track'

## Liveryman Tom Eeles

On Tuesday 20th February 86 stalwart members of the Luncheon Club and their guests gathered in the RAF Club for the 53rd Luncheon. After Grace, delivered by Freeman John Harvey, and an excellent meal supported by the RAF Club's Sauvignon and Claret the Master first introduced the guest speaker, Jack Hemmings, aged 96. Jack joined the RAF in 1941 and flew Blenheims, Hudsons and Dakotas during the Second World War. After the War Jack joined the Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) and flew with it extensively in Africa. He also toured Europe in light aircraft, did an aerobatics course in Russia in the 1970s and was an active PPL holder until recently, when the CAA declined to renew his licence on age grounds. He and his wife still travel widely around Europe in their camper van. His son Chris, who was present, joined the RAF, flew Tornados and is now a BA Captain on B777s. Then, much to the recipient's surprise, the Master presented Jack with his Master Air Pilot Certificate, a reward

richly deserved, to universal acclaim from all present.

Jack's talk was titled 'Off the Beaten Track'. He described how he and a colleague, Murray Kenden, decided to try to use an aircraft for constructive purposes in Africa just after the end of the war when there was a great need for support in many remote rural areas. He went to the MAF offices to seek sponsorship, was told to look after the office for a week, but in the end stayed with the MAF for over 4 years. The aircraft chosen for the survey work was a Miles Gemini, which they planned to base in Nairobi. It was not an ideal aircraft for the hot, high, primitive and unforgiving environment it was to be operated in, but, as Jack said, 'One manages!'.

The ferry flight out to Africa encountered many diverse challenges, including terrible weather over France, icing, night operations using car headlights to illuminate a landing strip, buying radio crystals in a Cairo Souk and



*Jack being presented with his MAP certificate at the lunch*

getting very uncertain of position (lost) over the desert. A take off from Asmara at 7000ft AMSL proved particularly challenging in that it only succeeded at the third attempt. Miraculously the Gemini was undamaged by the two aborted take offs which ended up in some pretty rough terrain. Jack and his friend Murray then flew numerous survey sorties from Nairobi in the

*The Gemini at Croydon prior to departure*



underpowered Gemini, covering a huge area of central Africa. Jack described many of their landings as being 'Abnormal', with the wheels being bounced off the surface to check suitability before landing. In one case prisoners from the local jail were released to cut the landing strip's grass by hand. Jack illustrated his talk with some fascinating photographs taken at the

time. After many hours in the air and adventures on the ground the inhospitable African terrain finally caught them out. An African hill's rate of climb exceeded the Gemini's and the aircraft crashed, becoming a total write-off. Amazingly, neither occupant suffered more than minor scratches, a testament to Miles's construction techniques.

Despite his 96 years Jack delivered his talk eloquently and fluidly, without recourse to any notes. It was a masterly performance that was recognized with acclaim by all present, many of whom continued to entertain, and be entertained, by Jack afterwards in the Running Horse Bar. Yet again, the Luncheon Club had another highly successful event.

*The Gemini after being out-climbed by an African hill*

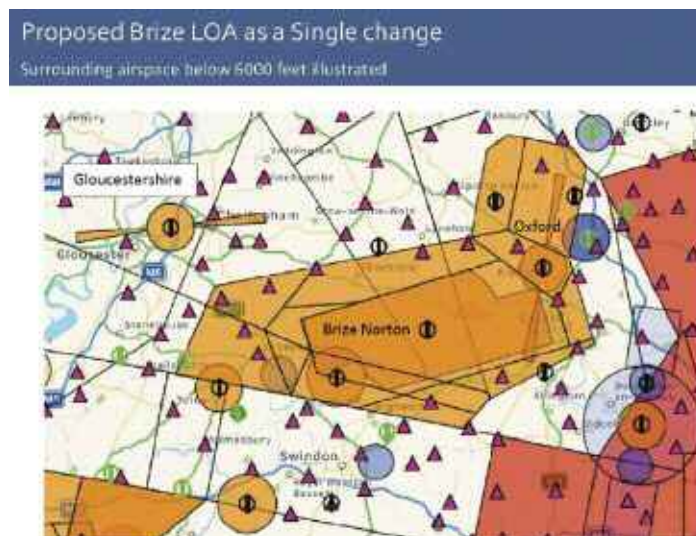
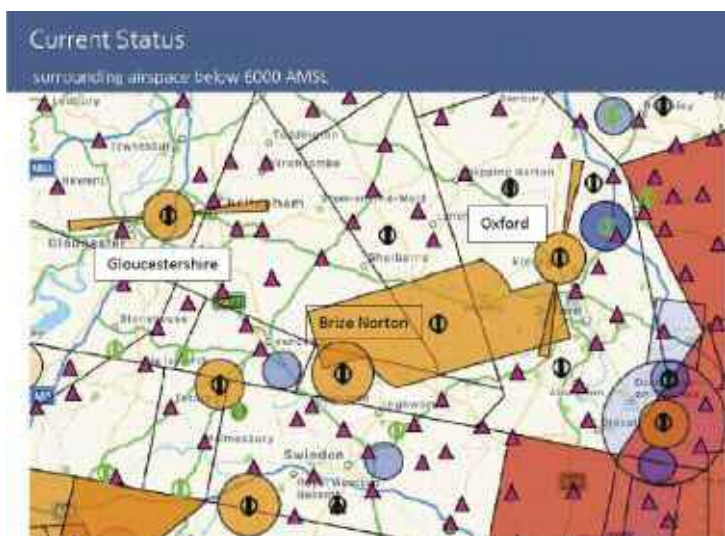


*A curious group of Chiefs examine the Gemini and its crew*



# Oxford and Brize Norton Airspace Change Proposal

Some thoughts by Liveryman Steve Slater



Even by the standards of recent Airspace Change Proposals, the consultations launched by Osprey CSL on behalf of RAF Brize Norton and London Oxford Airport, potentially represent one of the most devastating blows to VFR flying ever seen in the already congested airspace of southern England. The combined bids would increase the area their respective CTRs and CTAs by a factor of roughly three, bringing it close to the size of Luton, a scale which is totally disproportionate to even the most optimistic calculation of air traffic movements for the two airfields and in contradiction of UK airspace policy as laid down by DfT and the CAA; that the default airspace is class G and that restricted airspace must be fully justified. Worse still, the proposed airspace is poorly designed, clearly with no conception of flight outside controlled airspace. It takes no account of prominent ground features for VFR navigation, such as the M40 motorway and the giant runway at Upper Heyford. The 12 extra segments of controlled airspace have bases at seven different heights - making it a prime target for air space busts from traffic attempting to circumnavigate the airspace.

## PINCH POINTS

To the north of Oxford, the proposed controlled airspace will extend to Barford St. John, just south of Banbury. Take a

look at the top right corner of the second of the two diagrams produced by the BGA, and you'll see a pronounced pinch-point, routing traffic which cannot enter the airspace within 1nm of Hinton in the Hedges, which in addition to being a busy GA airfield also hosts a VERY active parachute drop zone. I will leave the potential consequences to your imagination!

This northward extension of controlled airspace is allegedly to accommodate procedural approaches into Oxford's runway 19. In fact, few such approaches are made. Even the local Oxford-based air training operations prefer to use Gloucestershire for such exercises, operating in Class G airspace with just an ATZ, despite handling more than twice the movements of Oxford.

London Oxford however, are using this as justification to potentially block E-W traffic from a heavily used swathe of airspace to the north of Oxford, restricting and excluding those known to be operating from Weston on the Green, Shotteswell, Bicester, Hinton and Enstone, as well as several private airfields in the area. It will also impact airfield utilisation at Chiltern Park, Turweston, Sywell, Wellesbourne and further afield, as en-route traffic will almost certainly be affected.

In addition, to the west, the proposed Brize Norton Class C airspace will

extend beyond Kemble, creating a significant impediment to north-south traffic. Combined with the proposed airspace surrounding Farnborough, it has the potential to create at very least more 'pinch points', at worst, an impenetrable barrier to VFR navigation. Again, there appears only tenuous evidence that Brize Norton's procedural training requirements for aircraft such as the Hercules, Globemaster, Atlas and Voyager justify the scale of the proposed airspace. The majority of this training can now be done, at a lower cost to the environment and the taxpayer, in simulators. In fact, in the whole of December, the airfield's total number of training sorties numbered 27, and their busiest day in January saw just nine sorties flown. Hardly Heathrow is it?

As with the Farnborough airspace bid, the gliding community are set to be most heavily penalized, with Lasham, Nympsfield and Aston Down, three of the biggest (and most ambitious in terms of cross country gliding) in the country, struggling to see how many of their 'goal' flights could be achieved. Sites close the restricted airspace such as Bicester, Enstone and Shenington, will see their training flights inevitably restricted, while some locations such as Weston on the Green may potentially have to close. Competition glider flights are very accurately tracked, therefore we can

readily see just how much they could be affected.

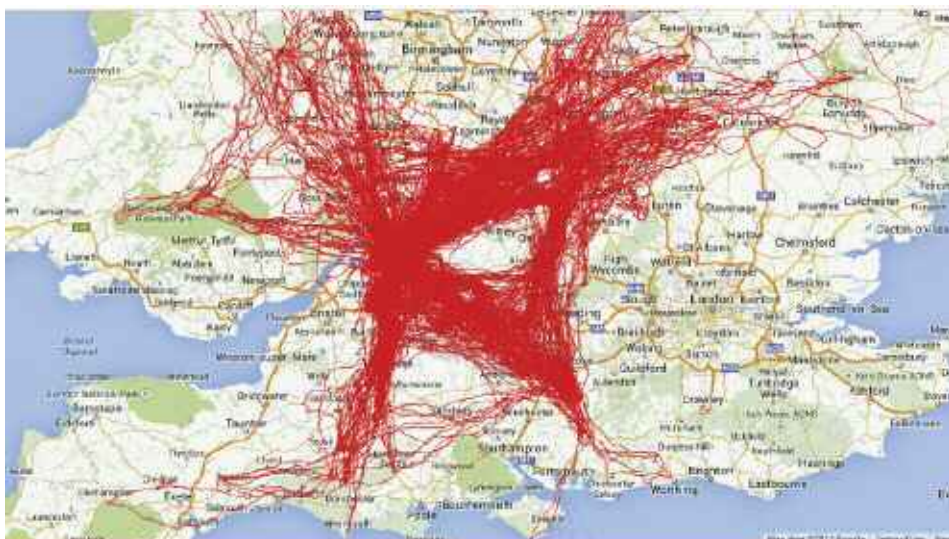
Take a look at the diagram on the right for flights from just one location (Aston Down) and figure how on a good soaring weekend, if access to the controlled airspace is restricted how busy those 'pinch points' are going to become!

## LACK OF TRANSPARENCY

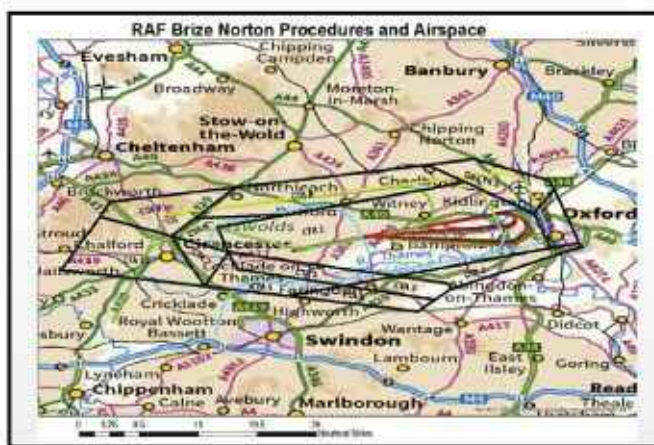
Adding insult to injury in all of this is the somewhat cynical manner in which the information surrounding the consultation has been presented. Although initial scoping discussions began in 2014, it is obvious that the official consultation documents were hastily rushed out on 15th December 2017, largely one suspects to beat the deadline of 2nd January 2018, when new Airspace Change consultation rules came into force, with CAP1616 demanding greater transparency.

Certainly there are signs that in Osprey's haste to beat the deadline, a number of errors have crept in. For example, a significant number of diagrams have been distorted, deliberately or otherwise, with their vertical scales compressed, giving an inaccurate impression of the scale of the proposed airspace. In addition, the two ACPs for Brize and Oxford are only presented individually. Nowhere in their lengthy documents (121 pages for Oxford and 84 pages for Brize) will you see images, as at the top of this page, showing the full extent of the total controlled airspace they propose.

There are other howlers too; some of the (up to a decade or more-old) 'airproxes' quoted in justification of the expanded Class D airspace are erroneous: one conflict (20140809) only occurred when the aircraft in question inadvertently entered the Oxford ATZ and came into conflict with another aircraft downwind on a visual circuit to Runway 19. Meanwhile 27 out of the 43 Brize Norton recorded as 'aircraft caused to deviate' involved aircraft arriving at or departing from Kemble. These should have been dealt with under a letter of agreement and extending the controlled airspace would not have mitigated the alleged risk.



*Typical examples of distorted scales in the consultation documents.*



## SO WHAT ARE WE DOING?

The LAA, as part of the General Aviation Alliance, is already assisting in a strategic approach, both in a formal letter of objection to the two consultations, while the GA Alliance is also in discussion with both the CAA and the Department for Transport. The lead organisation in framing this response is the BGA, with LAA and Bristol and Gloucester Gliding Club member Steve Noujaim heading the team.

We are also considering writing to Osprey and the CAA, proposing that until accurate documents are presented, we should not consider the consultation period to have started. If this were to be

accepted, it would of course mean that the consultations will be required to follow the new, more transparent ACP2 process.

With thanks to Steve Noujaim, Peter Stratten, Geoff Weighell and David Joyce for the supporting information.

Consultation on these proposed changes closes on 5th April.

*Editor's note: this article first appeared in the February edition of the magazine of the LAA (of which Steve is CEO). I would of course welcome representations from London/Oxford, or RAF Brize Norton.*

# Book Reviews

## WINGS OF EMPIRE

The forgotten wars of the Royal Air Force 1919-1939.

by Barry Renfrew, *The History Press* (RRP £25)

## AIR FORCE BLUE

The RAF in World War Two, Spearhead of Victory.

by Patrick Bishop, *William Collins* (RRP £20)

## ADVENTURES OF A COLD WAR FAST JET NAVIGATOR

The Buccaneer Years

by Wg Cdr David Herriot, *Pen and Sword* (RRP £25)

**Reviewed by Liveryman Group Captain Tom Eeles**

With the 100th Anniversary of the RAF now fast approaching, this trilogy of books that I have just read provide a fascinating illustration of three important eras in RAF history.

The first, *Wings of Empire*, covers the years following the end of the First World War up to the outbreak of the Second, a period when the very existence of an independent RAF was under considerable threat from not only a government that was desperate to save money, but also from the other two Services who were determined to strangle this upstart infant as soon as possible after its birth. At the end of hostilities in Europe in November 1918 the future of the seven-month old RAF looked bleak. Its saviour came in the form of the extensive overseas territories of the British Empire, recently expanded as a consequence of Germany and Turkey's defeat, which now needed policing and the maintenance of law and order. To undertake this task using traditional ground forces was enormously costly in men and material and was a very slow process.

Trenchard, now appointed as Chief of Air Staff, devised a scheme that he called Air Control. Rather than use ponderous army formations to quell dissident tribes, he offered the use of aircraft, which could

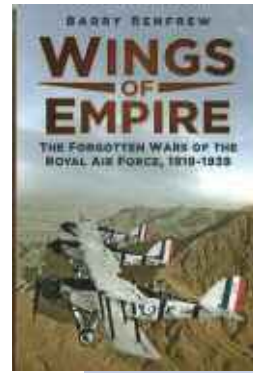
react far more quickly, deliver warnings, and if needed bomb any dissidents into submission, should they refuse to cooperate with the Colonial authorities. The concept of Air Control enraged the army but delighted the politicians, who realized how cheap it could be in comparison to traditional methods. The ethical question about whether it was right to attack defenceless villages and probably kill innocent women and children was rather ignored. To quote from Barry Renfrew's prologue, 'Almost forgotten is how the RAF in the interwar years waged one of the most extraordinary conflicts in the history of the British Empire. With British power crumbling in the wake of the First World War, a ragtag band of visionaries and aviators set out to show that the aeroplane, the wonder weapon of the age, would save the Empire. A generation of young airmen in primitive wood and canvas biplanes fought a series of campaigns over Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and other battlefields where, almost a century later, the West is still locked in a battle for power and beliefs. The airmen derided the Army and Navy as redundant, able only to crawl across the face of the earth like slugs. Air power alone, with its speed, force and flexibility, they argued, could hold down vast stretches of territory and the warlike

people who inhabited them.'

This book tells this story in all its fascinating aspects. Air Control undoubtedly ensured that the RAF survived as an independent service during the '20s and '30s to face the much greater threat of the Second World War. My only criticism is that there are no maps to illustrate where these far away battles took place, but there are plenty of very evocative black and white illustrations.

The second book, *Air Force Blue*, takes up the story of the RAF at the outbreak of the Second World War. Patrick Bishop describes how the RAF, despite a period of frantic expansion in the late 1930s, went into the war with inadequate aircraft, training, and tactics. The early phase was littered with setbacks and debacles. Unescorted daylight bombing resulted in huge casualties and accuracy in night bombing was non-existent.

Then, in the summer of 1940, in full view of the population, Fighter Command won one of the decisive battles of the war. Thereafter the RAF was gilded with an aura of success that never tarnished. Unlike the Army and the Navy, the RAF was far more democratic in its nature. Bishop quotes in his prologue 'Officers and men in the RAF share a common spirit which is unknown



either in the Army or the Navy. So much of the Navy's time is spent in scrubbing decks, so much of the Army's in massed drilling. But the Air Force machines have to fly every day and the crews of each are bent on keeping them in tip-top condition.'

Bishop describes how social status had much less influence in the RAF. Competency in one's job was more important than background, but it was not a completely classless organization - that would have been a step too far. The book covers the wider social aspects of life in the RAF for both aircrew and those serving on the ground. Some facts are a bit disturbing, such as the grave concerns felt by senior staffs on the high prevalence of venereal disease amongst aircrew; but, given the low survival probability for those flying in bombers over Germany at night, it is hardly surprising that these young men took their chances with the ladies whenever they could.

The controversial use of bombing to flatten German cities is well described, representing as it did the strongly held belief by the Bomber Barons that this was the best use of independent air power. By way of contrast, the birth and employment of Tactical Air Forces as developed by Air Marshals Coningham and Tedder is covered in detail; indeed, Bishop feels that this use of air power was the RAF's outstanding contribution to ultimate victory in the Second World War. Coastal Command, often forgotten, is also well covered.

Again, in his prologue, Bishop describes how the chief information officer with the RAF's permanent delegation in Washington DC reported back to London in 1944 'We cannot hope to enhance the prestige of the RAF. Throughout the world it is a household word, and in the United States its reputation is so high that in some quarters it is almost regarded as something apart from, and superior to, Britain.' Smug words indeed, but the Americans were not easily impressed and it shows how far the RAF had come since the dark days of 1939. The book is

well illustrated with copious maps of all areas of RAF operations in the war, and many colour and black & white photographs. In conclusion, Air Force Blue is a wonderful piece of military and social history and is highly recommended.

Moving on now to the third book, *Adventures of a Cold War Fast Jet Navigator, the Buccaneer Year*, this book covers a period in the RAF's history - 1969 to 1984 - when the RAF was heavily committed to providing tactical air forces in support of NATO, both in the Central Region, the Northern Region, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. There was a time in the RAF when the V Force reigned supreme, to the detriment of the tactical elements of the Service that was mainly based in Germany and equipped with ageing Canberra light bombers and Hunters.

By the late Sixties, following the cancellation of the TSR2 and F111 programmes, the tactical element of the RAF was re-equipping with fast jets such as the Phantom, Harrier, Jaguar and Buccaneer. This was the time when young David Herriot joined the RAF, hoping at first to be a pilot but ending up as a navigator. Whilst the authors of the first two books, Barry Renfrew and Patrick Bishop, are without doubt professional historians and writers, David Herriot is by his own admission an amateur in this activity. This shows in the content of his book, where more rigorous editing and proof reading would have improved it enormously. In particular there is an excessive use of exclamation marks that debases their value as punctuation. Some readers, especially those not familiar with fast jet flying, may also find the extensive use of acronyms annoying but there is a long list of them after the main text.

That said, the main interest in this book are the descriptions of RAF navigator training, operational conversion to the Buccaneer, and the writer's subsequent flying experience on four different Buccaneer squadrons. Two of these squadrons, XV and 16, were based at RAF Laarbruch in West Germany, and in

addition to their impressive conventional attack capabilities maintained nuclear QRA and a tactical nuclear strike role. The other two, 12 Squadron and 237 OCU, were employed in the maritime strike/attack role and the operational flying training of Buccaneer crews respectively.

The author's professionalism and capability as a navigator is very evident in the wide range of operational fast jet flying he describes. In particular I loved the story of how, when challenged to attack Akrotiri airfield by the resident Phantom squadron, the Buccaneer crews succeeded in avoiding being intercepted by a mixture of cunning and guile and attacked successfully without loss. Interlaced with these tales of front line daring-do are equally hair-raising descriptions of off-duty parties, drinking sessions and generally riotous behaviour much loved and indulged in by the young aircrew of that era. It might seem all rather excessive by today's standards, but we should bear in mind that during the Cold War every time the base hooter sounded for an alert, or you received a call-out from home in the middle of the night, it might be for real, not an exercise. Indeed, this did happen once on 12 Squadron, although nothing came of it in the end, as described on pages 173 to 174. I recall that I was the last member of the squadron to get back from leave that day, the only occasion I can ever remember of being called back from leave for real operational tasking. So we tended to live life to the full in the fast lane. In summary, skim quickly through the first part and concentrate on Chapters 6 to 11 and enjoy a fast and action-packed ride.

Overall these three books offer a fascinating insight into three important eras in the RAF's century of existence. Any one of them will make a worthy addition to your aviation library.

## A PASSION FOR SPEED

The daring life of Mildred, the Honourable Mrs Victor Bruce  
by Paul Smiddy, *The History Press*, September 2017 (RRP  
£14.99)

*A Passion for Speed* is the story of a woman of exceptional energy, ambition, and determination. The achievements of the Honourable Mrs. Victor Bruce (née Mildred Petre) in motor rallying and aviation in the 1920s and '30s, and then later as an aviation entrepreneur, place her firmly in the ranks of the more colourful and unconventional characters of her era.

The author has tackled his subject with an enthusiasm for detailed research to match his subject's passion for speed. At first the volume of detail can seem rather daunting, but it is essential to a real understanding of the context and motivation of Mildred's famous flight and of her other activities.

Family and family connections had introduced her to speed at an early age; indeed, she claimed to be the first woman to receive a speeding ticket, and she was only fifteen at the time. Motor sport in the form of endurance racing was her first love, and this proved an excellent and probably life-saving preparation for her later flying exploits. Her motoring and then power boating adventures lasted until she ran out of records to attempt to break, and for her, as for others in her day, moving on to challenge flying records was the next logical step on her chosen path to fame and fortune.

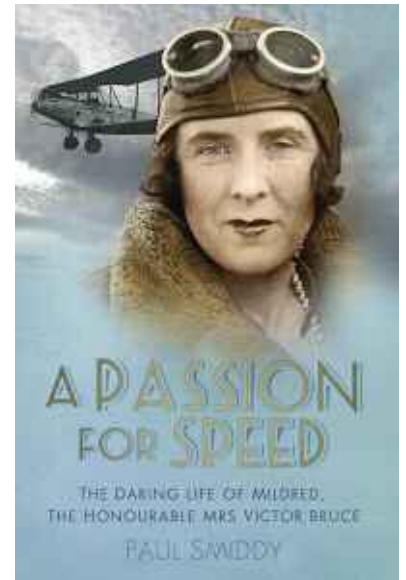
Mildred's well known autobiographical account of how she came to conceive of the idea of her round the world flight has her walking to a lunch appointment down Burlington Gardens, where she saw a little aeroplane called 'Bluebird' in a shop window. On a whim, she says, she asked the 'charming' salesman if one could fly round the world in it, and then went home and plotted her route using a Times Atlas while waiting for her husband to come home for dinner.....

It makes for a wonderful tale, but, as she

did so often, Mildred embellished the truth to create a better story for her admirers and potential sponsors. She was nothing if not a brilliant self-publicist. Of course, she had to be: it had come to a point where she realised that furthering her passion for speed would necessitate serious sponsorship. Far from undertaking her flying adventures on a whim, as she wanted people to believe, Mildred had in fact been exposed to the aviation world for some time. Nonetheless, it is true that she set off in 1930 in her Blackburn Bluebird with only about forty hours in her logbook and with very little idea indeed of what lay ahead. What follows makes a rip-roaring story, involving brushes with death that resulted sometimes from bad luck and mechanical failure, and sometimes from inexperience or poor navigation. She showed a naive disregard for political sensitivities, and was fortunate to be able to talk herself out of some dicey situations. But she did it, and her feats of endurance were at times almost incredible.

As with other aviators of her day, there are extraordinary tales of assistance and hospitality in far flung corners of the Empire, much enhanced by the author's background research. Mildred overdramatised some of her own descriptions of her adventures, and what distinguishes this book from many other accounts of the flying exploits of that time is the author's ability to use his knowledge to add to the basic story. Both the text and the notes at the end of the book provide fascinating details and informed speculation.

Her round the world flight achieved the fame and fortune Mildred craved, but was not the end of her story. Despite all the risks she took, she lived into her nineties. She lectured around the country, did more motor rallying and



returned to her old love of horses, including taking second place in the Horse of the Year show at Olympia in 1938. She continued to fly, but became more and more involved in commercial aviation as an entrepreneur, setting up and running various companies and continuing to be a force to be reckoned with. Ever resourceful, she was quick to realise the implications of the outbreak of WWII, and secured a contract to repair aircraft wings. Post-war her commercial and personal interests developed away from aviation.

This book is well written and with a light touch, and will appeal to both the social historian and the adventure story reader alike. It is as much about the 1920s and '30s as about Mildred Bruce herself, and the read is all the richer for that. The central story of Mildred's famous flight is greatly enhanced by the way the author sets the scene through his detailed research into her family and connections, and into the general commercial, motoring, aviation and social landscape of the inter-war era. Many interesting and influential characters of the time come to life, and we see how industrialists, diplomats and even spies all played a role in her activities and in the choices she made.

# A visit to Goldsmiths' Hall

By the Master's Consort, Paula Spurrier

After a wet, cold and windy weekend, Monday the 12th February dawned still cold but at least dry and sunny, as 23 ladies visited Goldsmiths' Hall. Goldsmiths is situated on the corner of Gresham Street and Fosters Lane in the City of London. The Goldsmiths Company is one of the Great Twelve Livery Companies and, although this is their third building, there has been a hall on the site since 1339. The Company received its first royal charter in 1327, giving it the right to enforce good authority, the standards within the trade, and emphasising its standing over provincial goldsmiths. This marked the beginnings of the Company's formal existence as a craft guild, with St. Dunstan as its patron saint.

Our guide was the deputy clerk, Nick Harland, who is a retired Royal Navy Commodore. Nick did mention, once or twice, the sad demise of navigators from our title. We assured him that 'Incorporating Air Navigators' is still there but he wasn't convinced! He was

an extremely informative guide who imparted his great depth of knowledge in an entertaining way. The Goldsmiths Company is indeed wealthy, owning the freehold of many sites in London. One benefactor, lacking any heirs, left them her cottage and three acres of land. It does help the bank balance when the land in question is off Fleet Street. Another interesting fact we were told is the number of items assayed. It is currently around nine million items per annum but, before the financial crash in 2008, it was around thirty-five million. There is a long road to recovery. The photograph is taken in the magnificent Great Hall with a backdrop of some rather fine gold plate. As you can imagine, on display is the most beautiful gold and silver ware, as well some very fine paintings and sculptures. The annual Goldsmiths Fair provides the ideal opportunity to visit and admire this beautiful Hall.

After the tour we crossed the lane for an excellent lunch at The Bottlescree, a



most convivial (and warm) wine bar with an excellent menu. This provided an ideal opportunity to catch up with old friends and to make new ones. Following lunch, those who had some spare time walked around the corner to Postmans' Park, where we admired the memorial (designed by George Frederick Watts) to commemorate those ordinary people who had lost their lives performing great acts of bravery. Another place which is worth a visit and, quite by chance, it's opposite another rather good pub.

An excellent day and I must thank all those ladies who have supported the visits in my year. It's been a pleasure and long may they continue!



USAF Heritage Flight at Huntington, West Virginia  
(courtesy of Upper Freeman John Daly)